

April 15, 2022

Via Electronic Mail

Christina Horrisberger, Community Development Director
Zach Dahl, Deputy Community Development Director
City of San Mateo
330 West 20th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403

RE: Hillsdale Shopping Center—Preferred Land Use Scenario

Dear Ms. Horrisberger and Mr. Dahl,

We are writing on behalf of the Bohannon Development Company and our joint venture partner, Northwood Investments Corporation, the owners of the Hillsdale Shopping Center (the “Owners”) located at 60 31st Avenue in San Mateo, CA (the “Site”). Thank you for the opportunity to submit our preferred land use map for the City Council’s consideration on April 18, 2022.

While the City of San Mateo (the “City”) has been studying land use alternative scenarios for the Strive San Mateo General Plan Update process, we have been carefully considering the future of the Site, keeping in mind that the current changes in the retail market present special opportunities for the evolution of the Hillsdale Shopping Center and how it responds to the shifting needs of San Mateans and the Peninsula community at large. Both the General Plan Subcommittee and the Planning Commission recommended Mixed-Use High for the Site in recognition of this special opportunity for transit-oriented development in the heart of San Mateo.

While we have not established a set vision for the Site, we now intend to embark on a robust community engagement effort to help us plan for the future. We do know through our early listening that providing a mix of uses, including residential, retail and commercial spaces, would establish the appropriate land use framework with the necessary flexibility to create a special place that will meet market needs, exceed the community’s expectations, and protect the City’s fiscal health, all while respecting and blending with the edges adjacent to the existing neighborhoods.

Therefore, as you can see on the attached “Preferred Alternative” exhibit, we are proposing the Mixed-Use High designation for the parcels closest to the Hillsdale Caltrain Station and along El Camino Real, while proposing Mixed-Use Medium for the interior of the Site, with a Transitional Buffer zone to the adjacent neighborhood. We also would like to adjust the boundary of the Study Area to include parcel 042-121-090 currently a portion of the Hillsdale Garden Apartments. The exclusion of this parcel, contiguous to the Hillsdale Mall parcel (South Block), creates a mid-block transition that we think hinders the flexibility necessary to plan for the site in the future. This site is

currently occupied with aging housing stock that will be in need of investment in the coming years. Inclusion of this land in the study area will allow greater flexibility in how we answer the community's call for adding housing, especially affordable housing, in reimagining Hillsdale. Inclusion of this parcel, provides an opportunity to think holistically about the future of Hillsdale and avoids having awkward mid-block transitions that can be an impediment to good design and planning.

We believe that the unique size and location of the Site warrant a fresh approach by showing more intensity along El Camino Real and the Transit Corridor and stepping down the intensity toward the existing neighborhoods. This combination of Mixed-Use High and Mixed-Use Medium designations will allow for the greatest master planning flexibility that, in turn, will not over burden the City's existing infrastructure and will protect San Mateo's neighborhoods.

Importantly, this proposed combination provides for the flexibility necessary to achieve a viable and feasible plan for redevelopment of the Site that is deliverable to the marketplace, while also preserving its role as a place for San Mateo residents to gather, shop, and enjoy. Not only will this balance of uses allow us to create an ecosystem that minimizes impacts, but it will create a realistic opportunity to deliver both market-rate and affordable housing that will significantly contribute to the City's housing needs.

We look forward to our ongoing collaboration with the City as it moves forward with the General Plan Update process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Bohannon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Bohannon

Attachment 1: Preferred Land Use Map

cc: Drew Corbett, City Manager
Rick Bonilla, Mayor
Diane Papan, Vice Mayor
Eric Rodriguez, Council Member
Joe Goethals, Council Member
Amourence Lee, Council Member
Margaret Williams, Planning Commission Chair
John Ebnetter, Planning Commissioner
Adam Nugent, Planning Commissioner
Seema Patel, Planning Commissioner

