

Comment letter regarding North Forty Phase 1 Application

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August 9, 2016

Los Gatos Town Council
110 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95030

Sent via email

Dear Mayor Specter, Vice-Mayor Sayoc, and Town Council Members Jensen, Leonardis, and Rennie:

RE: August 9, 2016: Town Council Meeting on North 40 Phase 1 Application

Through our five programs, the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley, a non-profit legal services organization, serves a wide range of Silicon Valley residents, including people living with physical and mental disabilities, low-income families, and young adults aging out of the foster care system. Many of our clients are homeless, have been homeless, or are at risk of becoming homeless due to housing instability. We see daily the effects of the housing crisis in our clients' lives and are acutely aware of the need for more affordable housing options in our community. The well-known shortfall of affordable and even market-rate housing is one of the primary drivers of the housing affordability crisis. Accordingly, we support efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing units and housing units in general, especially in a high opportunity area like Los Gatos.

I regret that I am unable to attend the Town Council meeting to express these comments. However, I write to strongly urge the Town Council to grant approval to the North Forty Phase 1 (Project) application. The Project will create an estimated 320 new homes, including 50 affordable homes for seniors, that will serve to partially address Los Gatos' severe housing needs.

All California communities need to take action to meet the regional housing needs. In the previous Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) cycle (2007 to 2014), the Town permitted a total of 228 units, representing 41% of its share of housing. The North 40 Project-- the culmination of many years of planning, countless opportunities to seek input, and careful review and thoughtful feedback from many stakeholders-- will enable the Town to meet 43% (270 homes out of 619 homes required) of its share of housing growth for the current RHNA cycle (2015 to 2022). While this action will enable the Town to meet its goals for market-rate housing, the 50 senior units represent only a small percentage of the affordable homes needed, so more work must be invested to plan for and develop new homes for lower- and moderate-income families who work and live in our community.

We also write to express concern about the extensive public and official comments expressed during hearings on the North Forth Specific Plan that indicated an intention to discourage families with children from residing in the North Forty development. We trust that you are aware that federal and state fair housing laws forbid local governments from taking actions that would discriminate against families with children. We encourage you not to

make any decisions about the North Forty that are intended to or have the effect of making North Forty housing unavailable to families with children.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me with any questions that you might have about these comments.

Sincerely,

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