

February 17, 2021  
General Public Comment, Open Session

We heartily applaud South Pasadena's Planning Department for proposing an inclusionary zoning ordinance. We are asking the Councilmembers to endorse key components of the draft ordinance, and instruct the Planning Commission to move swiftly to finalize its recommendation.

The Planning Department's ordinance will maximize affordable housing development in the city. New housing developments with more than 10 units will be required to include between 15% to 20% affordable units, and developments with more than 25 units will have to build 20% affordable units. These robust requirements for affordable development are on par with what the city of Pasadena requires. Pasadena has observed no disincentive to development since strengthening its inclusionary zoning ordinance.<sup>1</sup>

We support the Planning Department's decision to allow developments with three or fewer units to pay in-lieu of fees rather than develop affordable units. This provision will optimize South Pasadena's development of affordable housing by not taking smaller developments with four or more units off the table. In-lieu of fees are generally ineffective. Small cities face special challenges in collecting and leveraging such fees to develop affordable housing.

It is imperative for South Pasadena to adopt an aggressive ordinance, and quickly. First, and most critically, your constituents in South Pasadena support development of affordable housing. The pandemic has illustrated the grave public health crisis caused by a lack of affordable housing in our broader community: people forced to crowd into apartments and houses to make the rent are infected with and die from COVID-19 at significantly higher rates than people who do not live in overcrowded housing.<sup>2</sup> COVID-19 deaths in our greater Los Angeles County are disproportionately impacting Black and Latinx households—increasing by 1000% from November to January—due largely to overcrowded housing and the lack of affordable housing which increases the spread of the virus.<sup>3</sup> This is neither the first nor last public health crisis we will face. The city's moral responsibility to build affordable housing has never been more stark.

Second, the city has fallen far behind in the production of affordable housing. ***In six years, from 2013-2019, the city produced merely 10 affordable units*** out of 93 total units. The city has approved a number of developments in the heart of downtown that contain zero affordable units, like Mission Bell and Seven Patios. The ordinance is designed to make up ground on this disappointing record.

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<sup>1</sup> PASADENA NOW, January 25, 2021, "Developers Not Discouraged by Inclusionary Housing Ordinance Amendment." Available online at <https://www.pasadenanow.com/main/developers-not-discouraged-by-inclusionary-housing-ordinance-amendment/>

<sup>2</sup> Mejia, Brittny, LOS ANGELES TIMES, January 29, 2021, "When coronavirus invaded their small apartment, children desperately tried to protect dad." Available online at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-01-29/how-overcrowded-housing-led-to-covid-death-la-family>

<sup>3</sup> Lin, Rong-Gong & Money, Luke, LOS ANGELES TIMES, January 30, 2021, "Latino COVID-19 deaths hit 'horrifying' levels, up 1,000% since November in L.A. County." Available online at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-01-29/la-latino-covid-19-deaths-up-1000-percent-since-november>

Finally, South Pasadena appealed its RHNA allocation on the basis that the city is built out and no room remains for new construction. The appeal was unsuccessful; the city would be prudent to operate as though the RHNA allocation will stand. If space is a precious commodity, South Pasadena must optimize remaining sites to develop 1,151 affordable units required by state law.

At the Planning Commission meeting, a number of the commissioners expressed concern that the ordinance seemed rushed. It is not. Inclusionary zoning has been on the city's agenda since 2018. There have been multiple stakeholder meetings about it. The commissioners have previously lamented their inability to require developers to build affordable units without an inclusionary zoning ordinance.

We agree with Commissioner Padilla, who appealed to her colleagues that, "speaking from [her] heart," the inclusionary zoning ordinance is the most critical work the Planning Commission has before it. Commissioner Padilla urged her colleagues to be bold. She cast doubt on fears that the ordinance will deter developers from building in South Pasadena. After all, South Pasadena has the trifecta of outstanding schools, metro access, and walkable streets.

We ask the Council to direct the Planning Commission to recommend the Planning Department's inclusionary zoning ordinance at its next upcoming meeting, and send it to the City Council for first reading by **March 3, 2021**.

Signed,

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|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Sean Abajian           | 24. Sarah Erlich         |
| 2. Alexander Aquino       | 25. Margaret Farrand     |
| 3. Ahilan Arulanantham    | 26. Will Hoadley-Brill   |
| 4. Anne Bagasao           | 27. Laboni Hoq           |
| 5. Kerrie Barbato         | 28. Che Hurley           |
| 6. Matthew Barbato        | 29. Ella Hushagen        |
| 7. Chris Becker           | 30. Phung Huynh          |
| 8. Robin Becker           | 31. Amy Davis Jones      |
| 9. Sierra Betinis         | 32. Mariana Huerta Jones |
| 10. Katrina Bleckley      | 33. Amber Jaeger         |
| 11. Felicie Borredon      | 34. William Kelly        |
| 12. Laurent Borredon      | 35. Afshin Ketabi        |
| 13. Anny Celsi            | 36. Caroline Kimbel      |
| 14. Amber Chen            | 37. Kristen Kuhlman      |
| 15. Janna Conner-Niclaes  | 38. Caitlin Lainoff      |
| 16. Frederick Eberhardt   | 39. Alexandria Levitt    |
| 17. Jonathan M. Eisenberg | 40. Jacinta Linke        |
| 18. Richard Elbaum        | 41. Tony Lockhart        |
| 19. Owen Ellickson        | 42. Tiana Lopez          |
| 20. Alan Ehrlich          | 43. Ian Marshall         |
| 21. Justin Ehrlich        | 44. Jan Marshall         |
| 22. Stephanie Ehrlich     | 45. Richard Marshall     |
| 23. Betty Emirharian      | 46. Robin Meyer          |

47. Abby McCrate  
48. Jenny Munninopas  
49. Ayaka Nakaji  
50. Raf Niclaes  
51. Joanne Nuckols  
52. Victoria Patterson  
53. Noah Perez-Silverman  
54. Sarah Perez-Silverman  
55. Myron Dean Quon  
56. Alexandra Ramirez  
57. Minoli Ratnatunga  
58. Allie Schreiner  
59. Barrett Schreiner  
60. Andrea Seigel

61. Delaine Shane  
62. Alexandra Shannon  
63. Sean Singleton  
64. Allison Smith  
65. Christopher Smith  
66. John Srebalus  
67. Levi Srebalus  
68. Kathleen Telser  
69. Andrew Terhune  
70. Casssandra Terhune  
71. Amy Turk  
72. Helen Tran  
73. Jean Yu