

February 13, 2018

TO: San Jose Mayor and City Council

Re: Agenda Item 3.5 (Actions Related to Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Organization/Staffing)

Dear Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor and Councilmembers:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the organization and staffing of the Planning, Building and Code Enforcement Department. **We strongly support the staff-recommended reorganization and staffing additions.**

Through Envision 2040, San Jose has set out an ambitious planning vision. There are nearly 70 Urban Village plans and several other projects and plans in the works, on top of a healthy pipeline of development projects currently undergoing review. Unfortunately, the Planning Division of the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement does not have sufficient resources to review all of these plans and implement San Jose's vision.

In order to understand the big picture of budgeting and staffing city planning functions, SPUR analyzed several other large California cities including San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, San Diego and Sacramento in our 2017 *Room for More* report. The San Jose Planning Division's resources are smaller per capita than those of other large California cities, regardless of whether the funding comes from the general fund, grants or departmental fee revenues. In fiscal year 2016–17, San Jose's Planning Division had fewer than seven full-time employees working on long-range planning efforts, which encompass the Envision 2040 General Plan and its 70 Urban Villages, any updates to the 17 area plans/ policies and specific plans already in place (e.g., downtown, North San Jose), updates to the zoning code and more. This leaves little room for proactive, forward-thinking projects.

For a city of San Jose's size and population, let alone its ambitions, this insufficient staff capacity is limiting our ability to meet economic development, housing, transportation and other goals that depend on an integrated citywide land use plan. These investments in planning will reap future benefits for all San Jose residents.

Sincerely,



Teresa Alvarado, San Jose Director

cc: Kim Walesh, Rosalynn Hughey