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October 20, 2021

Environmental Planning Commission  
City of Mountain View  
500 Castro Street  
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

Re: Housing Element Update 2023-31

Dear Honorable Environmental Planning Commission members:

We know parents choose to reside here for the quality of work and life in Mountain View, driven primarily by our quality schools. While parks, city services, transportation and other amenities play a role, ultimately, families choose to stay in Mountain View because of our wonderful schools. Enrollment growth is a certainty, and we need your help to provide for our community's students. We are asking for formal inclusion into policy along with MVLA and LASD to provide for the students who will live in these future homes.

**Growth is coming.** It's been estimated that up to 20,000 new residential units will be added in Mountain View in the next 10 to 15 years. The recent RHNA requirement, coupled with already approved projects (2349 that impact MVWSD) and an upcoming master facility plan for North Bayshore, East Whisman and possibly Terra Bella further cements that growth in our area is a certainty. As of our last estimate, this growth likely will result in more than 2000 new students to our schools (Link to: [MVWSD Board meeting presentation, 9/9/2021](#)). This is more than the future needs of Los Altos (LASD) and Mountain View Los Altos High School (MVLA) districts combined.

**Affordable housing is important to families.** MVWSD welcomes housing of all kinds; especially ones that make it more affordable for our families, teachers and staff to live within the great confines of our city. The actions of our Board of Trustees over the past seven years complement the city's approach. In the coming years, MVWSD will contribute to creating close to 175 affordable housing units in Mountain View or in a neighboring community. We applaud the leadership that Mountain View City Council, the staff and the community has taken to create more stable housing for all. More importantly, we are extremely grateful for, and encouraged by, our upcoming meetings with city staff to find a solution.

**Neighborhood schools.** As outlined in the City staff report (10/20/2021), the HCD provides guidance on factors that should be used to select housing sites. Second on the list is the "equitable access to high-resource areas (high-performing schools and jobs)." I am confident in our community's ability to provide the jobs, and I am hoping that we can work together to create the schools. Our community has come to expect elementary schools that are within a mile radius of the neighborhoods that they serve. But without the community's (businesses, City Council, residents) assistance, I fear that the promise of an equitable education will only be afforded to those who reside in certain pockets of our community.

**A billion-dollar facilities problem.** Achieving that promise, especially for our most vulnerable families, will require considerable resources that stretch beyond what the District can currently absorb. As you know, MVWSD is faced with a billion-dollar facilities problem (the cost of land and facilities for a new middle school and three new elementary schools). Alone we do not have the ability to raise the necessary capital or leverage alternative revenue streams to completely fund the cost of building additional schools. We will be forced to not only reevaluate our District's physical and organizational milieu, but also consider unconventional funding and land strategies.

**Resources are needed no matter where new schools are located.** Additional school facilities, which are often the civic center of any community, should be nestled into burgeoning new communities. But no matter where future housing is located, MVWSD is required to provide the schools necessary for enrollment growth. For example, relocating new housing toward the southern part of the city to avoid the formation of a community facilities district (CFD) only puts a strain on school sites that are already overburdened. It will inevitably force boundary changes, and the possible building of schools on existing district lands where schools are currently not located (Sylvan & Cooper). Boundary changes will only solve our immediate short term needs. Avoiding a CFD could potentially shift the resource burden to a general bond measure that taxes all current and future residents.

Together, we can create the communities that our future neighbors deserve. Building housing, especially affordable housing, should never be a zero sum game. We all have a moral obligation to build a vibrant community that serves as a beacon of hope for all.

We are proud to serve the students and families of this vibrant, dynamic community. Moreover, we are grateful for your direction to develop a solution, and for the ongoing dialogue and thoughtfulness that City staff has shown over the past seven years while we worked toward a solution.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AR', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr. Ayindé Rudolph  
Superintendent

Cc:  
City Council  
Kimbra McCarthy  
Aarti Shrivastava  
MVWSD Trustees