

DATE: December 16, 2014

CATEGORY: New Business

DEPT.: Community Development

TITLE: ROEM NOFA Proposal – 779 East

Evelyn Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

The NOFA (Notice of Funding Availability) Review Committee recommends that the City Council:

- 1. Reserve funding for the ROEM NOFA application and consider the following two options:
 - a. Option 1—Reserve \$15.5 million in affordable housing funds for an 81-unit affordable family development; or
 - b. Option 2—Add \$6.0 million in affordable housing funds to the NOFA and reserve a total of \$21.5 million for a 116-unit affordable workforce housing development.

Staff recommends the City Council:

- 1. Appropriate \$1.12 million in BMR In-Lieu fees for predevelopment costs and authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with ROEM Development Corporation for use of the predevelopment funds and appropriate \$246,000 in Housing Impact fees for environmental, parking, and other special studies required for this project. (Five votes required)
- 2. Allow two additional NOFA projects to proceed with the funding reservation process.
- 3. Authorize the assignment of staff resources for consideration of a General Plan Land Use Map Amendment for 1.93 acres from Industrial to Residential and rezoning request from developer to remove the Sylvan-Dale Area Plan and replace

- it with R(3) Multiple-Family Residential or R(4) High-Density Multiple-Family Residential.
- 4. Amend the composition of the NOFA Review Committee to be comprised of the City Manager, two City Councilmembers appointed by the Mayor, and an Environmental Planning Commissioner and a Human Relations Commissioner, both appointed by the respective Commission Chairs.

BACKGROUND

In February 2014, the City of Mountain View released a NOFA in the amount of \$12.5 million for affordable rental and ownership housing developments. In addition to the \$12.5 million, \$3.0 million was also made available for exceptional projects. These funds were to be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Although there has been significant interest in the NOFA, it has taken some time for affordable housing developers to secure sites in this competitive real estate market.

The purpose of the December 16 meeting is for the City Council to: (1) consider the NOFA proposal from ROEM, which consists of two possible options; and (2) determine which of the two options, if any, should receive a funding reservation and be allowed to continue in the entitlement process. If the City Council approves a reservation of funding, the proposal will go through the City's Development and Design Review Process, which is anticipated to take approximately 12 months. During this time, there will be opportunities for public input at neighborhood meetings, Zoning Administrator hearings, Development Review Committee meetings, and other public hearings. ROEM's NOFA application contains a preliminary design concept for the site that will become more defined as the project moves through the entitlement process. The final funding commitment will only occur after there has been careful consideration of all the project details and upon final approval by the City Council.

ANALYSIS

NOFA Review Committee

At the October 29, 2013 City Council meeting, Council directed staff to release a first come, first served NOFA and established a committee to review the NOFA funding applications. The NOFA Review Committee is comprised of the City Manager, Community Development Director, Administrative and Neighborhood Services Manager, and two City Councilmembers appointed by the Mayor. The two Councilmembers currently serving are Councilmembers Ronit Bryant and Margaret Abe-Koga. The purpose of the Committee is to provide an initial review of any

proposal to determine whether the proposals should move forward to the City Council for consideration.

On October 30, the NOFA Review Committee met for the first time to review the ROEM NOFA proposal for an 81-unit affordable housing development at 779 East Evelyn Avenue (Attachment 1). The Committee expressed concern that the site was not an ideal location for affordable housing. Of particular concern was lack of proximity to public transportation, services, and schools. Other Committee members stated that ideal residential sites are difficult to find in the current real estate market and more difficult for affordable housing developers to secure.

The Committee voted to move the project forward to Council for a reservation of funding and requested that the developer explore a higher-density option, potentially up to 60 dwelling units (d.u.) per acre. ROEM has since developed a higher-density option for the City Council to consider (Attachment 2). Committee members also suggested the developer explore transportation options from the development to the nearby Edith Landels Elementary School, since walking from the project to the school would be difficult. These issues will be studied during the entitlement process.

Leading up to the NOFA Review Committee meeting, staff realized there might be a perceived conflict of interest with Community Development Department staff members working with the NOFA applicants and also serving on the Committee. Therefore, a change to the NOFA Review Committee composition is being recommended by removing the Administrative and Neighborhood Services Manager and the Community Development Director and replacing these positions with one member each from the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) and the Human Relations Commission (HRC). With this change, the NOFA Review Committee would be comprised of the City Manager, two City Councilmembers appointed by the Mayor, and an EPC and an HRC member, both appointed by the respective Commission Chairs.

Project Proposal

ROEM has prepared two options for Council consideration as requested by the NOFA Review Committee. Both options would provide two levels of parking, a range of unit types from studios to three-bedroom units, and similar architectural design. The two options share characteristics such as location, design elements, and the same entitlement process. These areas are summarized in the following sections.

Site Location

The 1.93-acre site is located near the corner of East Evelyn and South Bernardo Avenues along the Mountain View and Sunnyvale border. It is adjacent to residential



apartments to the of the south property, a gas station on the northern boundindustrial ary, buildings to the west, and storage facility to the east. Services are not within close proximity to the site, although two bus stops are within few a blocks.

Walkability and pedestrian access, particularly for school-aged children, may prove to be challenging. Edith Landels Elementary School is located 1.2 miles from the East Evelyn site. The most direct walking route would take pedestrians along East Evelyn Avenue to Moorpark Way and then to East Dana Street. The route crosses over Highway 237 and through industrial sections of East Dana Street before arriving at the school.

Currently, the site contains two office buildings totaling 27,000 square feet which would be demolished to make room for the affordable housing. These office buildings are currently rented and occupied by three tenants. ROEM has reserved \$500,000 in the development budget to cover potential relocation expenses.

<u>Developer Site Control</u>

ROEM has entered into a purchase and sale agreement for the site. The total land cost for the 1.93-acre site is \$11.5 million or \$5.95 million per acre. The appraisal is based on the current, allowed office use. The high property cost results in a high project cost for this proposed development. However, Mountain View's land prices are even higher in other areas of the City. Finding residential sites in Mountain View has been difficult for

affordable housing developers and the prime sites have been secured by market-rate developers who can afford to pay more for the properties.

Project Design

Both options have parking at the ground level and below grade. The ground-level parking stalls would be screened by first-floor residential units that would wrap around the residential garage structure. Garage access to the underground and podium parking would be from South Bernardo Avenue. The proposed parking ratio of 1.8 spaces per unit is consistent with the parking ratio used for the Franklin Street Family Apartments, a recently completed 51-unit subsidized development serving extremely low- and very low-income families.

The amount of required parking influences the number of units that can be built on a site and has a direct impact on the project design and costs. As part of the Development Review Process, a parking study that analyzes parking demand would be prepared and brought to the Council for review early in the entitlement process. Based on Council action, the required on-site parking may be different than the proposed parking ratios in the initial proposal. If the Council decides to reserve funding for this project, the applicant will proceed with the required parking study in addition to the General Plan and zoning amendments, environmental review, and the Development Review Permit.

On the podium, a landscaped courtyard and tot lot would be situated in the center of residential units. In addition to the outdoor community space, 6,060 square feet of



residential amenity space, such as a fitness center, leasing office, and a community room, is also included. fitness center and the leasing office will be designed as store-fronts facing Bernardo South Avenue to create a pedestrian oriented facade.

Entitlement Requirements

Currently, the site is in the Sylvan-Dale Area Plan and has an Industrial Land Use Designation that does not permit the proposed residential use. A Gatekeeper request has been submitted for a General Plan Amendment to amend the Land Use Designation from Industrial to Residential, and to amend the Sylvan-Dale Area Plan and rezone to either an R-3 Zoning District (Multiple-Family Residential) for Option 1 (81 units) or R-4 Zoning District (High-Density Multiple-Family Residential) for Option 2 (116 units). Two properties west of the subject parcel, on Evelyn Avenue, is the Mondrian development by Shea Homes, a 151-unit rowhouse project that was rezoned from the Sylvan Dale Area Plan to the R-3 Zoning District (Multiple-Family Residential) in 2006.

NOFA Evaluation

When the NOFA was released in February 2015, it was structured as \$12.5 million being available for affordable housing with an additional \$3.0 million available for "exceptional" development projects. The concept was to reserve some additional funding for a development that might come along after all the NOFA money was reserved. The definition of "exceptional" was not defined at that time. ROEM has cited the difficulty for an affordable housing developer to find land in the competitive real estate market along with the sustainable and attractive design as attributes that make this proposal "exceptional."

The NOFA application also identifies 12 project goals and two housing priorities that would be used to evaluate the proposals (Attachment 6, Pages 2 and 3). Attachment 3 contains the discussion of how the project meets each of these goals and priorities. Both options are consistent with most of the identified goals and priorities listed in the NOFA application. The main drawback of this location is the limited transit opportunities and services. For family housing, walking to Edith Landels Elementary School would also be difficult.

Comparison of Options

Although both Option 1 and Option 2 are viable and provide the opportunity to produce a significant amount of affordable units, there are key funding and design differences that Council may want to consider when selecting an option. These differences are shown in Table 1 and discussed in the following sections.

Table 1: Summary of Options

Proposed Characteristics	Option 1 - 81 units	Option 2 - 116 units	
Number of Units	81	116	
Density/Zoning	42 d.u./Acre R-3 with Density Bonus	60 d.u./Acre R-4	
Building Height/Number of Stories	41.3′ 3 Stories	51.4′ 3 and 4 Stories	
Parking Spaces	146 Spaces	209	
Unit Mix	4 Studios 26 One-Bedroom Units 26 Two-Bedroom Units 25 Three-Bedroom Units	7 Studios 39 One-Bedroom Units 36 Two-Bedroom Units 34 Three-Bedroom Units	
Targeted Income Levels	30% to 60% AMI	60% AMI	
City Subsidy	\$15.5 Million	\$21.5 Million	
Per Unit City Subsidy	\$191,358/Unit	\$185,345/Unit	
Total Project Cost	\$44.9 Million	\$56.9 Million	
Tax Credit Scenario/Financing	9 Percent Competitive	4 Percent Noncompetitive	

For comparison purposes, the City subsidy per unit for the three most recent affordable developments have been \$172,296/unit for First Community Housing's 1585 Studios project, \$183,673/unit for ROEM/Eden Housing's 819 North Rengstorff Avenue development, and \$246,000/unit for ROEM's Franklin Street Family Apartments.

Tax Credit Financing and City Subsidy

Each of the two options under consideration, Option 1 with 81 units and Option 2 at 116 units, can be funded with either 4 percent or 9 percent tax credits. For each option, the developer provided a pro forma showing the subsidy required from the City for both tax credit scenarios. For the 81-unit Option 1, the 9 percent tax credit scenario resulted in units targeted at very low and extremely low incomes and a City subsidy of \$15.5 million. ROEM has stated they believe this option will compete effectively for the 9 percent tax credits. Taking the same 81-unit Option 1 and applying a 4 percent tax credit scenario resulted in an increase in the City subsidy of \$4.5 million. The \$4.5 million increase makes the 4 percent tax credit an expensive option with a per-unit

subsidy of \$246,914/unit. For this reason, Option 1 with a 9 percent tax credit funding scenario is preferred over the 4 percent tax credit scenario.

The 9 percent and 4 percent tax credit scenarios were also evaluated for the 116-unit Option 2. A 9 percent tax credit scenario resulted in a \$20 million subsidy from the City, which equates to a subsidy of \$172,414/unit. ROEM would need \$21.5 million from the City for a 4 percent noncompetitive tax credit application or a per-unit subsidy of \$185,345/unit. To make the 4 percent option financially viable and limit the City subsidy to \$21.5 million, the 116 unit project would target workforce housing and households earning between 50 percent and 60 percent AMI and primarily 60 percent AMI. Since the 4 percent tax credit scenario also targets a higher income category, 60 percent AMI, the rent revenues increase in this scenario. The increased revenue combined with the higher unit count results in a smaller overall increase in City subsidy between the 9 percent and 4 percent options. The 4 percent tax credit also allows more flexibility in the type of tenancy, so the project can be workforce housing that is also available to families. These households would typically rely less on the proximity to services and mass transit than family households earning between 30 percent and 60 Another benefit of the 4 percent tax credit program is that it is percent AMI. noncompetitive so funding is essentially guaranteed and applications can be submitted six times each year. Since the 4 percent tax credit option provides increased flexibility and could expedite securing tax credit funding, it is considered the most viable financing scenario for Option 2.

In addition to the City subsidy and the tax credit funding discussed earlier, ROEM will also apply for funding from Citi Community Capital. Table 2 below shows the amount of City subsidy and compares the amount of funding required from each funding source for each of the options.

Table 2: Project Funding for Options 1 and 2

Permanent Sources	Option 1, 81 Units 9% Tax Credits	Option 2, 116 Units, 4% Tax Credits
Investor Capital	\$18,412,248	\$12,866,913
Permanent Loan	\$6,377,891	\$15,242,000
City of Mountain View – NOFA	\$15,500,000	\$21,500,000
Citi Community Capital	\$2,430,000	\$3,480,000
Deferred Interest and Fees	\$2,170,643	\$3,816,085
Total	\$44,890,782	\$56,904,998

Key Design Differences

Both options are similar in design with a few key differences in height, massing, and density. Option 1 is a three-story, 81-unit development proposed at a density of 42 d.u./acre. With this option, ROEM is requesting a rezoning of the site to the R3 Zoning District which allows a maximum density of 35 d.u./acre and a density bonus under the State Density Bonus Ordinance. ROEM would qualify for the maximum 35 percent density bonus since all of the units would be affordable to very low-income households.

Option 2 is similar in design to Option 1 with the addition of a fourth floor to create 35 additional units and additional excavation for the subterranean parking structure. Option 2 would accommodate 63 additional parking stalls and 209 total parking spaces on the site. This option would require rezoning the property to R4 to achieve the 116 units of affordable housing. The density under this option would be 60 d.u./acre. Unlike Option 1, Option 2 would not require a density bonus since the R4 zoning allows for a maximum density of up to 80 d.u./acre. Rezoning from Industrial to the R4 zoning does create some potential challenges. Should ROEM receive entitlements and not be able to construct the development, the R4 zoning would remain in place and another developer could propose a market-rate project under the maximum density.

Option 2 does provide 35 more affordable units than Option 1, although at a density and height that some may not feel is entirely compatible for the area right now. In comparison to more recent residential development along East Evelyn Avenue, the Shea Homes Mondrian development at 505 East Evelyn Avenue has 151 rowhouse units that are three stories in height and 36′ tall. Option 2, with a front elevation height of 51′5″, would be taller than the Mondrian development and taller than the one- and two-story buildings surrounding the property. Development along this section of Evelyn Avenue may eventually transition into having more three- or four-story housing developments, but currently Option 2 would be the tallest and largest structure in this area.

<u>Targeted Income Levels</u>

While both options provide critically needed affordable units, Option 1 would serve families earning less than 50 percent AMI and Option 2 would target primarily 60 percent AMI households and potentially serve as family and workforce housing. Although Option 1 focuses on extremely low- and very low-income families, the units will not be in close proximity to services and have limited transportation options. Since Option 2 targets a slightly higher income bracket than Option 1, this may result in households that are more likely to have cars and can drive to services and the nearby elementary school.

Funding Considerations

Another key factor for Council consideration is the amount of funding required for each of the two development options that have been presented. Option 1 with 81 units would require all of the existing \$15.5 million from the NOFA while Option 2 with 116 units would require \$6.0 million in addition to the NOFA funding.

When the NOFA was considered in October 2013, the Council initially authorized \$12.5 million with an additional \$3.0 million for exceptional projects. As of October 31, 2014, approximately \$9.7 million in additional affordable housing funds is available, for a total of \$25.2 million. This amount would allow the City to fully fund either of the ROEM project options. With Option 1, \$9.7 million in housing funds would be available for other NOFA projects: only \$3.7 million would be available under Option 2.

The City has received two additional NOFA applications that present opportunities to add 100 additional affordable units. MidPen Housing submitted the second proposal on October 1, 2014 for 51 additional family units at the Shorebreeze Apartments (Shorebreeze) that would require a \$9 million City subsidy. Shorebreeze is an existing subsidized development originally built in 1980 and acquired by MidPen Housing in 1997 to preserve affordability. The apartment complex is located at 460 North Shoreline Boulevard and is comprised of a combination of 120 senior and family units. This location is close to downtown, transit, jobs, and services. MidPen Housing's proposal is to demolish 12 townhouse-style units and replace the units with 63 family apartment units for a net increase of 51 family units.

On November 26, 2014, Palo Alto Housing Corporation (PAHC) submitted the third NOFA proposal requesting a City subsidy of \$7.49 million to develop 49 senior units located at 1701-1707 West El Camino Real. The proposed development would consist of mostly one-bedroom and junior one-bedroom units for seniors. The site is near transit, jobs, and services. PAHC would apply for Stanford Affordable Housing Funds and 9 percent tax credits.

Over the past couple of years, affordable housing revenue has averaged about \$9 million a year. Table 3 shows the revenue collected since 2003. As of October 31, 2014, the City had a balance of \$25.2 million in affordable housing funds. Even with a conservative estimate of \$6.0 million in annual revenue collected from the housing fees, adequate funding should be available when the projects require those resources since the project timelines will be staggered. On December 9, the City Council voted to increase the Rental Housing Impact Fee from \$10.26 per square foot to \$17.00 per square foot and the Housing Impact Fee for Office/High Tech/Industrial development from

\$10.26 per square foot to \$25.00 per square foot. This should result in increased housing fund revenues in the future.

The City could potentially fund either of the ROEM projects along with the other two NOFA applications over the next few years given the revenues generated by affordable housing fees. Staff is requesting direction from Council on whether to allow these two projects to proceed in the NOFA process based on anticipated future affordable housing revenues.

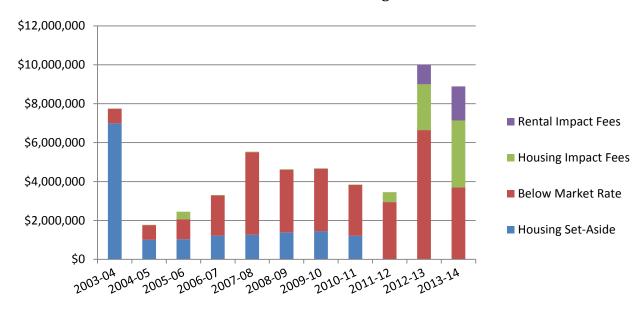


Table 3: Affordable Housing Revenues

There are three periods in the development timeline where City funding would be needed: during the predevelopment phase, to close escrow on the property acquisition, and during construction. The timelines for the three of the NOFA proposals would be staggered as they enter the land use entitlement process. Although all three proposals could receive a reservation of funding and predevelopment appropriations from the Council within the next year, the majority of City funding would not typically be needed until the entitlement process has been completed, which takes 12 to 15 months on average. After the Council approves entitlement permits and gives final funding approval, the developers can complete their property acquisition, and apply for building permits and construction financing from other sources such as the tax credit and bond programs. Table 4 shows key dates when the expenditures would be anticipated for each of the three NOFA applications if they proceed through the NOFA process.

Table 4: Expenditure Timeline

	Predevelopment Appropriation	Property Purchase	Construction Begins
ROEM Proposal	December 2014	February 2016	November 2016
MidPen Housing Proposal	April 2015	N/A	March 2017
PAHC Proposal	July 2015	July 2016	December 2017

For the two additional NOFA applications, the Council could reserve future funding for these developments when they are considered for a reservation of funding. If the Council allows these projects to continue in the funding reservation process, the MidPen Housing NOFA proposal will be considered next for a reservation of funding in April 2015 followed by the PAHC proposal in July 2015. This approach will help ensure that housing funds are expended expeditiously.

Gatekeeper Request

ROEM Development Corporation is also requesting Gatekeeper approval (Attachment 4) for consideration of a General Plan Amendment to the Land Use Designation from Industrial to Residential and rezoned from the Sylvan-Dale Area Plan to either the R3 (Multiple-Family Residential) or R4 (High-Density Multiple-Family Residential) Zoning District. These proposed changes will be analyzed as part of the entitlement process. However, these changes are also part of Council's consideration whether to reserve funding for the project and approve the Gatekeeper. In addition to the Gatekeeper consideration, the Council has adopted an Industrial Conversion Policy that affects the Gatekeeper request. Staff thinks this project does substantially comply with the policy criteria for the following reasons.

1. Projects have a minimum lot size of two acres for conversion.

The intent of this criterion is to ensure that units resulting from an application would be proportional to staff resources. The site is just short of the 2-acre requirement at 1.93 acres. Staff feels comfortable that the intent of this criterion would be satisfied since the proposal is to develop the site at a minimum of 42 d.u./acre (includes a density bonus).

2. Projects are contiguous with existing residential zones.

Sites sharing one or more property lines with residential zones would meet this criterion. This ensures that the conversion from Industrial to Residential are

logical conversions and do not create residential islands surrounded by incompatible industrial uses. In this case, the subject site does share a property line with residential apartments located in Sunnyvale. Furthermore, the Evelyn Avenue Corridor is experiencing a transition to residential as evidenced by the Shea Homes sites located to the west of the subject property.

3. Allow to maintain operations of existing adjacent businesses.

This criterion would not be an issue for conversion of this site. The adjacent storage facility could coexist and continue operation. There is also a gas station adjacent to the property. Although gas stations and residential uses sometimes conflict, the residential use would not hinder the continued operation of the gas station.

4. Do not create islands of residential or industrial properties.

The intent of this criterion is to prevent the creation of industrial islands surrounded by residential uses which could affect the operation of existing businesses and limit their ability to expand. In the case of this parcel, a General Plan and Zoning Amendment from Industrial to Residential would be consistent with the evolving residential character of the Evelyn Avenue Corridor and adjacent residential development.

It is recommended that Council grant the Gatekeeper request because of the critical need for affordable housing. Furthermore, the allocated predevelopment funding will cover staff-related costs for this project.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING INPUT

A neighborhood meeting was held on November 18, 2014 at Edith Landels Elementary School and was attended by five people (meeting notes are provided under Attachment 5). Concerns were expressed about the lack of proximity to transit options and the difficulty for children walking to the elementary school. One participant suggested that the community shuttle be extended into this area of the City. Questions also centered on the construction and development impacts to surrounding neighbors. Attendees were provided additional information on construction mitigation techniques and the purpose of the environmental studies required during the Design Review Process.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund. The City Council is being asked to reserve \$15.5 to \$21.5 million in local housing funds for the NOFA proposal and appropriate \$1,366,000 from these reserved funds for predevelopment expenses during the Development and Design Review Phase. The funding would be provided in the form of a deferred low-interest loan. The loan payments would begin once the development begins producing excess revenue. If the project is not approved, the funds will become available for other NOFA applicants.

Next Steps

Should the City Council choose to recommend a funding reservation for one of the two proposed options and approve the Gatekeeper request, the following are the next steps:

- 1. Developer will submit an application to the Planning Division to proceed with the rezoning request, General Plan Amendment, and Development Review Application.
- 2. A parking study will be prepared to determine an appropriate parking rate for the proposed development.
- 3. Neighborhood meetings will be held to include neighborhood input in the design.
- 4. Council Study Session and public hearings on the project will occur.

CONCLUSION

Earlier this year, ROEM Development Corporation submitted a NOFA application requesting \$15.5 million to develop 81 units of affordable family housing at 779 East Evelyn Avenue. In October 2014, the NOFA Review Committee met to review the request and the Committee has forwarded the request for a reservation of funding to the City Council along with direction for ROEM to develop a second option at a higher density. Both options are similar in architecture, site design, and parking. Key differences between the options are as follows:

- Tax credit funding scenarios.
- City subsidy required.
- Height, mass, and density.

- Targeted income levels and population.
- Number of units.

The City has sufficient funds to finance either option. The most recent NOFA applications, one from MidPen Housing to increase family units at an existing affordable apartment development and an application from Palo Alto Housing Corporation for a 49-unit affordable senior development on West El Camino Real, could be funded with future revenues since the projects will be staggered as they enter the land use entitlement process and require City funding.

ALTERNATIVES

- 1. Choose not to reserve funding for this proposal.
- 2. Provide direction on preferred changes to the project design.
- 3. Direct staff not to proceed with the remaining two NOFA applications until more housing funds have accumulated.
- 4. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING

The meeting agenda and Council report have been posted on the City's website and announced on Channel 26 cable television. Notices have been sent to all property owners and tenants within a one-quarter-mile radius of the site, affordable housing advocates, affordable housing developers, market-rate developers, and other interested parties. In addition, the City of Sunnyvale has also been notified about the development proposal.

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VG-RA-LL/7/CAM 894-12-16-14CR-E

Attachments: 1. Revised NOFA Application from ROEM Development

Corporation – R3 Option

- 2. R4 Option from ROEM Development Corporation
- 3. Analysis of ROEM Proposal in Context of NOFA Goals and Priorities
- 4. Gatekeeper Request Letter from ROEM Development Corporation
- 5. Neighborhood Meeting Notes
- 6. City of Mountain View Affordable Housing NOFA
- 7. HUD Income Limits for Santa Clara County