

McGill, Pam

From: Cox, Robert [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 12:37 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Livable Mountain View comments on Item 3.1: Study Session on "Displacement Response Strategy"

CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL - Ensure you trust this email before clicking on any links or attachments.

Mayor Showalter, Vice Mayor Matichak, and Members of the Mountain View City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Item 3.1: Study Session on "Displacement Response Strategy"

The staff report is replete with details and options that cover a very broad spectrum of choices and related questions. As we know, there is also a myriad of statutes, policies and interests that will affect what actions the Council will choose to explore further. We offer the perspective that Council first decide on their basic priorities as a guide for programs that will best support an effective displacement response strategy.

We offer the following:

1. **Distinguish between programs that the Housing Element requires city staff to explore and those which are required to be implemented.** The staff report includes a long list of possible programs to which staff time can be devoted. As always, staff time is a limiting constraint. We therefore recommend that the council select a short list of projects on which staff will spend significant time, targeted to have the maximum positive impact.
2. **Focus on programs that have the widest possible impact.** Our city and many others in the Bay Area have devoted much of our time and treasure to implement programs that are of great benefit to a very small number of people. Displacement is a serious concern affecting Mountain View's renters, who are a majority of its population. When evaluating these programs, please ask how the typical Mountain View resident facing displacement will benefit from each program and whether it will provide meaningful relief.
3. **Select programs that you will support with votes on related land use issues.** For example, there has been much discussion on whether land on which CSFRA protected apartments have been built should be upzoned to make market-rate redevelopment more feasible. Such upzoning will make the land more expensive, and undercut the ability of groups who hope to use Opportunity to Purchase Act legislation (e.g. community land trusts, etc.) to acquire apartment complexes and convert them to ownership properties. At the same time, programs to preserve existing apartments and minimize displacement also remove such buildings from the list of sites that would be torn down and rebuilt to increase density.

Thank you for your consideration on this important topic.

Robert Cox, Louise Katz, Maureen Blando, Muriel Sivyer-Lee, Nazanin Dashtara, Leslie Friedman, Toni Rath, and Mike Finley
For the Steering Committee of Livable Mountain View

McGill, Pam

From: Fondo de Solidaridad Mountain View [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 12:13 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Olga G; Marilucuestaflores; Paige Hill; Anthony Chang
Subject: Fondo | MV CLT 3/19 study session comment letter
Attachments: 2024-03-19 City of Mountain View Displacement Response Letter.pdf

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Dear Mountain View City Council members,

We, Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT (also known as Mountain View Solidarity Fund), are writing to comment on the March 19, 2024 study session on displacement response strategy, and particularly on city staff's first recommendation on creating an acquisition and preservation pooled fund.

First, we would like to thank city staff and city council for all of their efforts over the years to respond to our housing crisis and displacement in our community through supporting the production of new affordable housing, implementation of the CSFRA and the work of the rent stabilization division of the housing department, and more.

We especially appreciate the city's efforts to listen to the community, including people on the frontlines of the risk of displacement in our community - working class and low-income families, immigrants, undocumented and mixed status families. We feel heard as we have advocated for the city to support alternative, community-led solutions to displacement like community ownership of housing, including community land trusts. And we applaud the city including community ownership of housing goals in our most recent Housing Element.

Second, we want to thank city staff for all the work that went into the recommendations for this study session to advance the city's goals around displacement response and community ownership. We believe that staff recommendations are directionally positive towards achieving our shared goals of preventing displacement. In particular, we support the recommendation to dedicate \$4 million of city funds towards acquisition and preservation via a community ownership of housing model, as well as recognizing the possibility of deploying these funds before the community ownership action plan is completed if opportunities to channel funds to community-based groups to acquire and preserve properties for community ownership surface in the near term.

Lastly, we do have several recommendations and suggested adjustments to the city staff recommendation that we are asking city council to consider in order to enhance the likelihood of achieving objectives of preventing displacement; further listen to the perspective of most impacted working class families in our community; and strengthen our collective efforts towards the Housing Element goals.

Here is a summary of our recommendations. Please see the full length of our letter to understand our nuanced rationale behind our recommendations. We suggest that Council:

- Instead of a binary yes or no to staff question #1, **commit \$4 million in City housing funds towards acquisition and preservation projects with community ownership of housing, in a way where working class-led community-based groups** (e.g. community land trusts, mobile home residents coming together to buy a mobile home park, tenant unions, and more) **can access these funds if they create feasible projects that secure external funding commitments that leverage city funding at a 4:1 ratio** (and not set up a \$20 million fund that will require raising an additional \$16 million in capital, that might lengthen the timeline and might not provide the capital that community groups need)
- **NOT require that external funds at time of acquisition must stay in the project long term**
- **Make clear that the \$4 million in city funds be dedicated specifically for community ownership of housing**

- **Make sure that the process - whether through the city itself or through an intermediary - for accessing the acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership is simple, accessible and equitable, especially to working class-led community based groups (community land trusts, mobile home residents coming together to buy a mobile home park, tenant unions, and more), including asking groups what they need**
- **Set up a pilot program with up to 1-3 trusted community-based groups working on community ownership of housing to quickly move this initial \$4 million in acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership and complete 2-3 projects**

We have attached a PDF of this letter in case that is easier to read.

Again, thank you to the city for all the work it has done and is doing to prevent displacement of more working class and low-income families from our community. We appreciate the direction of the Housing Element commitments and the staff recommendations, and we hope that our perspective and suggestions can help strengthen our collective response to this housing crisis.

With gratitude,

Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT

Co-leaders (Azucena Castañon, Isabel Salazar, Marilú Cuesta, Nadia Mora, Olga Melo, Paula Perez, Sonia Sequieros)
Volunteers (Anthony Chang, Clara Roa, Laura Blakely, Makenzie Gallego, Maria Munoz Yepez, Paige Hill, Sarah Livnat)

MORE DETAIL ON RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Alternative to Council Question No. 1: Does Council support committing up to \$4 million in City housing funds to catalyze outside funding of at least \$16 million, for a total fund of \$20 million minimum, or have other direction?**

Instead of a binary yes or no to this question, **we suggest that the Council support committing \$4 million in City housing funds towards acquisition and preservation projects with community ownership of housing, in a way where working class-led community-based groups** (e.g. community land trusts, mobile home residents coming together to buy a mobile home park, tenant unions, and more) **can access these funds if they create feasible projects that secure external funding commitments that leverage city funding at a 4:1 ratio** (e.g. a \$5 million acquisition and rehab project that has \$4 million in external funding and \$1 million in city funding).

Our suggestion is meant to broaden the possibilities for our community to realize acquisition and preservation projects with community ownership of housing and increase the chance that we achieve our displacement prevention goals in our Housing Element.

Our assessment of the city staff recommendation is that it may unnecessarily limit and possibly delay the possibilities of acquisition and preservation projects for community ownership for the following reasons or risks:

- Our understanding of the staff recommendation is that a total pool of \$20 million, and at least \$16 million in external funding, would need to be secured before any of the funding could be deployed into projects.
- We are concerned that if the kind of capital raised for the proposed fund is not grants, then the capital (i.e. loans at some interest rate with some length of term) may or may not be the right fit for the projects and/or community based groups that would take on these projects
- We are unclear who might have responsibility for raising the additional \$16 million, the feasibility of the city and/or a third party partner being able to do so, and/or how long it might take
- We imagine there is a risk that at least \$16 million is never raised and that the \$4 million allocated for this purpose goes unused in this scenario

Our suggestion intends to widen the set of possibilities by which the city can leverage \$4 million in city housing funds to attract an additional \$16 million for acquisition and preservation projects with community ownership of housing.

- First, it doesn't limit the deployment of acquisition and preservation funds until a \$20 million pool is fully raised
- Second, the city does not have to bear the sole responsibility of raising funds for this - there is a significant responsibility on community-based groups who want to complete an acquisition and preservation project with community ownership of housing to raise external funds that leverage the city dollars
- Lastly, just making available this dedicated pool of funding is a positive signal to external funding sources around community ownership in Mountain View, and can potentially enable community based groups to pull down additional external sources of funding (e.g. philanthropy, county, state, federal resources, lenders, etc.) for their projects

We see a parallel in this approach with how the city has directed city funds on production of new affordable housing units, where affordable housing developers prepare a pro forma that identifies feasible sources of funding that the developer will secure and that leverages city funding.

- **Assess feasibility of projects, but do not require external funds at time of acquisition to stay in long term**

On the bottom of page 9 of the Study Session memo, it says that one of the conditions for external funds leveraged by city funds is to "stay in the project long term."

In a similar spirit as above in widening the set of possibilities by which the city can leverage \$4 million in city housing funds to attract an additional \$16 million for acquisition and preservation projects with community ownership of housing, **we suggest that council give input and direction to staff NOT to require that external funds at time of acquisition must stay in the project long term.**

In our research (in collaboration with Stanford Urban Studies department and with members of the CA Community Land Trust Network, which we are happy to provide), we have found that in many cases, community land trusts and other community ownership of housing projects use acquisition bridge loans to help acquire properties. In these scenarios, a project may use something like a 5-year bridge loan to cover part of the cost of acquiring a property. This tool provides a reasonable runway for the group/project to secure the right mix of long-term funding, including potential combinations of foundation grants, public funding from county or regional or state resources (including bonds like the November 2024 BAHFA housing bond), or long-term no/low cost debt. This is very common, and sometimes necessary for projects to get completed.

By restricting external funds at acquisition to stay in projects long term, this unnecessarily limits the options that projects have in pulling together the financial resources to complete a project.

Alternatively, the allocation of these acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership can assess the financial feasibility of a project, including the long-term capital stack and project viability.

- **\$4 million in city funds for acquisition and preservation for community ownership of housing**

Although it may have been intended and/or implied in the city staff recommendation, **we suggest that council make clear that the \$4 million in city funds be dedicated specifically for community ownership of housing.**

If this was not intended or implied in the staff recommendation, we want to reference Table 1 on page 3 of the Study Session Memo where the Housing Element has specific language referencing this: *"Apply for outside funding sources and develop funding partnerships to invest at least \$10 million to support the preservation/acquisition of naturally affordable units via the community ownership model."*

- **Simple, accessible and equitable process for working class-led community-based groups to acquire and preserve naturally affordable housing via community ownership**

We suggest that council give input and direction to staff to make sure that the process - whether through the city itself or through an intermediary - for accessing the acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership is simple, accessible and equitable, especially to working class-led community based groups (community land trusts, mobile home residents coming together to buy a mobile home park, tenant unions, and more), including asking groups what they need.

Incredible working class leaders in community-based groups in Mountain View (and throughout the region, state, and country) are building capacity to actualize community ownership of housing models - learning and exercising muscles around collective governance, community engagement, real estate acquisition, property management, financing, and more. There are already so many barriers to overcome along the way. The process of accessing these critical acquisition and preservation funds does not need to unnecessarily add to the layers of obstacles along the way. Community based groups like ours are not necessarily multi-million dollar budget non-profit organizations with dozens of paid professional staff (like some affordable housing developers are), but we are community leaders with the lived experience best positioned to design the solutions that work for our community, and who have always been resourceful and creative and determined to do the work that will lift up and create resilience in our community.

And although we understand the current NOFA for BMR housing funds serves a purpose, we believe it should not be a template for accessing the acquisition and preservation funds because it is too complicated and burdensome for this purpose. We see a potential parallel with how some microlenders / community development financial institutions (CDFIs) that focus on serving working class, immigrant communities of color have adapted their loan process to streamline process and eliminate unnecessary paperwork; rely on conversation, interviews, site visits and reference checks as much or more than written applications; and focus on the basics of feasibility and repayment instead of conventional bank underwriting criteria in making funding decisions.

- **Going one step beyond a simple, accessible process by doing a pilot with the acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership with trusted community partners**

Our final suggestion on our wish list is the biggest stretch of the imagination, but one in which we believe could really catalyze and accelerate the city's efforts towards achieving Housing Element anti-displacement goals. **We suggest the city set up a pilot program with 1-3 trusted community-based groups working on community ownership of housing to quickly move this initial \$4 million in acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership and complete 2-3 projects.**

Through the community engagement process around the Housing Element, we imagine that the city has already been in touch with a few groups like Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT who have expressed strong interest in and/or are actively working on projects around community ownership of housing. Specifically in the case of Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT, we have been exchanging information about CLTs with city staff with whom we already have a deep working relationship, and have demonstrated significant organizational capacity in distributing the \$1.8 million in flexible financial assistance during the pandemic. We imagine the city might have built or could build deep relationships with a couple other groups on this. Instead of spending many months and countless hours of staff and community time on an application process that may result in the exact groups that the city already knows are best positioned for these funds, we propose leveraging this asset of our pre-existing relationship and instead get a jump start on preventing displacement, keeping working class and low-income families in their homes in our community, and achieving our Housing Element goals.

The faster commitments are made (and the less uncertainty around securing funding for projects), the easier it will be for projects to attract additional capital from external sources. Conversely, the more up in the air the process and timeline and certainty of funding are, the harder it will be for projects to attract external funding. With the prospect of additional preservation funding through the November 2024 BAHFA housing bond, we understand that Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing is already preparing for the possibility of deploying those funds as soon as they are available. By leveraging this initial \$4 million with \$16 million in external funding, these projects could be demonstrations where we could potentially attract another \$24 million in external funding with \$6 million in future acquisition and preservation funding for community ownership.

Lastly, we see the urgency and need every day to prevent further displacement in our community. Multi-family properties are being marketed to outside real estate investors as investment windfalls by buying properties, figuring out how to get current tenants (in rent controlled apartments) out, and significantly increasing rents. Our families and our neighbors are confronting this now, and we have the opportunity to collectively start addressing this soon by accelerating the deployment of city funding to catalyze external funding to make these projects feasible. We adamantly encourage the city to move at the pace required to address this issue and prevent further displacement in our community.

McGill, Pam

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 11:26 AM
To: City Council
Cc: Chen, Wayne; McCarthy, Kimbra; Glaser, Heather; housing@lwvlamv.org
Subject: Agenda Item 3.1
Attachments: 3-19-24 MVCC.pdf

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Dear Mayor Showalter and Members of the City Council:

Attached is a letter from the League of Women Voters regarding item 3.1 on the March 19, 2024, City Council agenda.

Sincerely,

Katie Zoglin

President

Los Altos-Mountain View Area League of Women Voters



March 18, 2024

Re: March 19, 2024, Agenda Item 3.1 – Displacement Response Strategy

Dear Mayor Showalter and Members of the City Council:

The League of Women Voters (LWV) supports policies that increase the stock of affordable housing and allow lower income families to continue to live where they are as tenants or as homeowners.

The League supports the City providing funds to meet its Housing Element obligation to preserve affordable units and to progress on the community ownership action plan, as staff lays out in the memo.

The League also supports staff's recommendations on "alternatives to displacement," including broadening the effort to find interim housing options for tenants whose units are redeveloped. It would be helpful to have greater details on the timeline and next steps for "first right of refusal requirements" beyond the general Housing Element deadline of 2028. While redevelopment may currently be low, the City should be ready in case the situation changes.

Please send any questions about this letter to Kevin Ma, Co-Chair of the Housing Committee, at housing@lwvlamv.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Katie Zoglin".

Katie Zoglin
President
Los Altos-Mountain View Area LWV

C: Wayne Chen
Kimbra McCarthy
Heather Glaser

McGill, Pam

From: Christian Arana [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 11:19 AM
To: City Council
Cc: [REDACTED] Anthony Chang; Eduardo Garcia
Subject: Letter from Latino Community Foundation - Study Session on Displacement Response Strategy
Attachments: Letter from Latino Community Foundation - Study Session on Displacement Response Strategy.pdf

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Dear Members of the Mountain View City Council,

On behalf of the Latino Community Foundation, the nation's largest Latino-serving foundation in the nation, I respectfully submit this letter for your consideration regarding the study session on displacement response strategies in the City of Mountain View, CA.

Thank you,
Christian

Christian Arana, (he/him/él), Vice President of Policy
[Latino Community Foundation](#) | [REDACTED]
601 S. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA 90017 | T: 415-236-5145
[REDACTED]





March 18, 2024

City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street, 3rd Floor
Mountain View, CA 94041-2010

RE: Study Session on Displacement Response Strategy

Dear Members of the Mountain View City Council:

On behalf of the Latino Community Foundation, I write to provide feedback regarding the city's displacement response strategy, particularly on the initial recommendation by city staff to create an acquisition and preservation pooled fund. Finding solutions to the affordable housing shortage is crucial, particularly in light of recent data showing that the City of Mountain View has overtaken San Francisco as the most expensive place to live in the Bay Area.ⁱ

We endorse allocating \$4 million towards the acquisition and preservation of housing for community ownership. However, we propose allocating these funds directly to community land trusts and similar projects rather than pooling them into a fund requiring a minimum of \$20 million. This approach would enable these initiatives to leverage city funds to attract additional external financing, akin to the process employed in developing new affordable housing projects.

We also advocate for a streamlined and inclusive process to access these funds, especially for community-based groups led by working-class individuals like community land trusts, tenants purchasing buildings, and mobile home park residents acquiring their parks.

Finally, I urge you to strengthen partnerships with community-based organizations like the Mountain View Solidarity Fund (MVSF). These community leaders possess invaluable insight and the profound trust of the communities most profoundly affected by the housing crisis in the region and can play a key role in accelerating the deployment of these funds. Our organization has been in partnership with MVSF since the onset of COVID-19 and they have joined us in affordable housing advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C.

The Latino Community Foundation (LCF) is the nation's largest Latino-serving foundation. LCF has the largest network of Latino philanthropists in the country and has invested \$25 million to build Latino civic and political power and leadership.

With deep respect,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christian Arana", written over a horizontal line.

Christian Arana
Vice President of Civic Power

ⁱ "New report finds Mountain View is the most expensive city to rent an apartment in the Bay Area," *Mountain View Voice*, February 5, 2024, <https://www.mv-voice.com/news/2023/02/22/new-report-finds-mountain-view-is-the-most-expensive-city-to-rent-an-apartment-in-the-bay-area/>

McGill, Pam

From: Jeanine Valadez <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 1:43 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Public Comment Item 3.1 MV CC Anti-Displacement Study Session

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Hon. Mayor Showalter, VM Matichak, and CMs Abe-Koga, Hicks, Kamei, Ramirez, and Ramos,

I hereby respectfully submit my public comment for your consideration before you study Agenda Item 3.1 "Displacement Response..." on Tues, 3/19/2024.

As a local advocate for progressive strategies to achieve social and racial equity and increase affordable housing, I have always been troubled by the intense challenges that young middle class families and recent high school- and college graduates face in finding jobs and housing in our local area. I include my own son and his wife in that category.

Yet, despite the obstacles people like my son work to overcome, the challenges they face absolutely pale in comparison to those faced by members of marginalized communities in our highly privileged region. In particular, the obstacles faced by underserved communities of color are extraordinary, and they constantly impress me with how they have created organic cooperative mechanisms to help each other, to aggregate and share resources, and to mitigate risks.

I have observed these group dynamics in action in my community volunteering in early childhood literacy in the Whisman School District's pre-school programs. Thanks to the devotion and skill of educators like Imelda Barragan, volunteers like me come to understand quickly that any of our efforts to help must provide solutions that embrace community connections. Programs that consider the whole child, the whole family, and the whole local community have the greatest chance of becoming scalable and sustainable means to narrow

gaps in educational attainment, income-production, housing security, mental and physical health, and happiness.

It is well known that civic and private investment in programs that enable wholistic community uplift enjoy MUCH higher societal returns and greater levels of public safety than allocating investments towards, say, increasing law enforcement presence, or financially incentivizing households to vacate, or distributing displaced households into housing developments that offer small quantities of inclusionary housing in a single-unit-at-a-time, catch-as-catch-can, allocation methodology. These approaches do not preserve extant communities.

I have concluded that even the most earnest advocacy to increase affordable housing in MV, Los Altos and other local cities, often fails to create solutions that recognize, let alone value, and maintain, the ties that bind marginalized communities. Community mobilization is the best way to manifest self-determination.

Councilmembers, you have before you the opportunity to serve your constituents in the most wholesome, engaging, nourishing, and respectful way possible by formulating the proposed ordinance in line with a community-focused philosophy. I hope that in rendering your direction to staff, you choose the path that demonstrates the greatest trust in your own residents who have already proven their competence, trustworthiness, selflessness, and devotion to community.

Towards this end, I advocate for the following policies:

1. Don't hold hostage investment dollars waiting for some larger sums to materialize down the road. Every minute a city stalls action to leverage a dollar they have in a fund into externally-sourced dollars diminishes the productivity of the investment endeavor.
2. Streamline every process to reduce barriers, minimize paperwork, and eliminate lengthy applications. Unencumber processes from onerous qualification requirements. The leaders of your local marginalized communities who face displacement on the daily have already demonstrated the ability to be trustworthy, equitable, action-oriented, and quite savvy in distributing a large sum of community aid funding.
3. Support solutions that prioritize and establish individual- and community-based OWNERSHIP. Make sure your policies are explicit about ownership as the overarching goal, with anti-displacement solutions as enabling tactics. It is only through ownership

that generational wealth-building can return to the lexicon of those in poverty or the lower middle-class. Rental solutions, while helpful in some instances, are just stop-gaps.

4. Remain agnostic as to the nature of anti-displacement tactics and solutions as long as they result in ownership. Whether the outcomes are apartments, condos, trailer parks, pre-fabs, even cooperative housing solutions, these are all a means to an end and there is no single one-size-fits-all formula to prescribe.
5. Remain open-minded and set policy that widens or diversifies funding formulations. Some plans may be comprised of short-term instruments, like matching funds or bridge loans; some may be conditioned on city investment, like some grants; some may be long term sources willing to delay their ROI (yay!). Please don't hamstring your community members' fiscal creativity.
6. Continue to work with Fondo de Solidaridad de Mountain View/CLT. They have a vision and the community support to manifest it. I recently interacted with them (Mr. Chang was there) and they were able to answer all my questions. They impressed me with their understanding of the task at hand. As an aside, my previous experience with housing trust mechanisms has been through a friend from Housing Trust Silicon Valley. They have a different model, but my friend has been a source of education about the options out there. I am a fan of community land trusts as one way to turn performative policy stances into real action to correct past wrongs or to increase equity.

I ground the above policy stances in the following principle that I apply to my own decisions about where to donate, how to volunteer, which legislators to back, and which civic policies to support. This is how I "guide" myself when it comes to working to help underserved families:

"If your policies and actions can keep kids in their school, can keep parent social circles intact, and can preserve the neighborhood's fabric of cooperation and self-determination, while recognizing the hope of every parent to enable their child to enjoy a better life than they did, then you are well on track to doing the right thing."

Thanks for your consideration,

Jeanine Valadez

Disclosure: I am Chair of the Los Altos Parks, Arts, Recreation, and Cultural (PARC) Commission, but am submitting these comments as a member of the public. I am a resident of Los Altos since 1989.

McGill, Pam

From: Sarah Livnat [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2024 10:38 PM
To: City Council
Cc: [REDACTED] Olga Melo; Marilu Cuesta; Paige Hill; Anthony Chang; Jill Rakestraw; Tania Connell; Ligia Verona Salcedo Gutiérrez; Mychal Copeland; Maria Dinard; Diana Wegbreit; Makenzie Gallego
Subject: Letter from Listos Mountain View regarding MV Council study session on displacement response strategy
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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March 17, 2024

Re: March 19, 2024 Study Session on Displacement Response Strategy

Dear Mountain View City Council members,

We, Listos Mountain View, are writing to comment on the March 19, 2024 study session on displacement response strategy, and particularly on city staff's first recommendation on creating an acquisition and preservation pooled fund.

Listos Mountain View supports and advocates for the needs of children of immigrant families in Mountain View to empower families and create a stronger community. We deeply understand the pressures rising housing costs in Mountain View have put on our working class families and the detrimental impacts it has had on their children. Community housing that is affordable would make a world of difference for these families and result in positive downstream impacts for generations.

In 2016 at its founding, Listos Mountain View collaborated with members of the Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT to provide immigrant services and support in the wake of the 2016 election. We share the same mission to empower our families and create a stronger community and so we are fully in support of the City of Mountain View's goals to prevent displacement of working class families and create community ownership of housing.

We appreciate the staff recommendations that will help prevent displacement and create community ownership of housing, especially the recommendation to dedicate \$4 million of city funds towards acquisition and preservation via a community ownership of housing model.

We'd also like to suggest additions and alternatives to the city staff recommendations that may enhance the community's ability to achieve goals around anti-displacement and community ownership:

- Support committing \$4 million for acquisition and preservation for community ownership of housing, but not in a pooled fund with a minimum \$20 million. Instead, we suggest making these funds available to community land trusts and other community ownership of housing projects, where they can leverage city funds to attract external funding, much like what happens in the building of new affordable housing projects.
- Ensure a simple and accessible process for getting these funds, especially for community-based groups led by working class people like community land trusts, tenants buying buildings, mobile home park residents buying their mobile home park, etc.

- Accelerate the deployment of these funds into projects by creating a pilot program directly with trusted community partners like Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT, who we understand the city has already worked with to distribute \$1.8 million in flexible financial assistance to 700+ low-income families in the community.

Sincerely,

Listos Mountain View

Founding Members (Sarah Livnat, Diana Wegbreit, Jill Rakestraw, Makenzie Gallego, Mychal Copeland, Ligia Verona Salcedo Gutierrez)

McGill, Pam

From: Ligia Verona Salcedo Gutiérrez [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2024 7:06 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Study Session on Displacement Response Strategy

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Mountain View City Council members,

I, Ligia Salcedo, From Liso Mountain View, support the recommendation that Fondo de Solidaridad Mountain View is recommending for a displacement response strategy.

We, Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT (also known as Mountain View Solidarity Fund), are writing to comment on the March 19, 2024 study session on displacement response strategy, and particularly on city staff's first recommendation on creating an acquisition and preservation pooled fund.

First, we would like to thank city staff and city council for all of their efforts over the years to respond to our housing crisis and displacement in our community through supporting the production of new affordable housing, implementation of the CSFRA and the work of the rent stabilization division of the housing department, and more.

We especially appreciate the city's efforts to listen to the community, including people on the frontlines of the risk of displacement in our community - working class and low-income families, immigrants, undocumented and mixed status families. We feel heard as we have advocated for the city to support alternative, community-led solutions to displacement like community ownership of housing, including community land trusts. And we applaud the city including community ownership of housing goals in our most recent Housing Element.

Second, we want to thank city staff for all the work that went into the recommendations for this study session to advance the city's goals around displacement response and community ownership. We believe that staff recommendations are directionally positive towards achieving our shared goals of preventing displacement. In particular, we support the recommendation to dedicate \$4 million of city funds towards acquisition and preservation via a community ownership of housing model, as well as recognizing the possibility of deploying these funds before the community ownership action plan is completed if opportunities to channel funds to community-based groups to acquire and preserve properties for community ownership surface in the near term.

Lastly, we do have several recommendations and suggested adjustments to the city staff recommendation that we are asking city council to consider in order to enhance the likelihood of achieving objectives of preventing displacement; further listen to the perspective of most impacted working class families in our community; and strengthen our collective efforts towards the Housing Element goals.

Here is a summary of our recommendations. Please see the full length of our letter to understand our nuanced rationale behind our recommendations. We suggest that Council:

- Instead of a binary yes or no to staff question #1, **commit \$4 million in City housing funds towards acquisition and preservation projects with community ownership of housing, in a way where working class-led community-based groups** (e.g. community land trusts, mobile home residents coming together to buy a mobile home park, tenant unions, and more) **can access these funds if they create feasible projects that secure external funding commitments that leverage city funding at a 4:1 ratio** (and not set up a \$20 million fund that will require raising an additional \$16 million in capital, that might lengthen the timeline and might not provide the capital that community groups need)

- **NOT require that external funds at time of acquisition must stay in the project long term**
- **Make clear that the \$4 million in city funds be dedicated specifically for community ownership of housing**
- **Make sure that the process - whether through the city itself or through an intermediary - for accessing the acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership is simple, accessible and equitable, especially to working class-led community based groups (community land trusts, mobile home residents coming together to buy a mobile home park, tenant unions, and more)**
- **Set up a pilot program with 1-3 trusted community-based groups working on community ownership of housing to quickly move this initial \$4 million in acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership and complete 2-3 projects**

Again, thank you to the city for all the work it has done and is doing to prevent displacement of more working class and low-income families from our community. We appreciate the direction of the Housing Element commitments and the staff recommendations, and we hope that our perspective and suggestions can help strengthen our collective response to this housing crisis.

With gratitude,

Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT

Co-leaders (Azucena Castañon, Isabel Salazar, Marilú Cuesta, Nadia Mora, Olga Melo, Paula Perez, Sonia Sequieros)
Volunteers (Anthony Chang, Clara Roa, Laura Blakely, Makenzie Gallego, Maria Munoz Yopez, Paige Hill, Sarah Livnat)

MORE DETAIL ON RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Alternative to Council Question No. 1: Does Council support committing up to \$4 million in City housing funds to catalyze outside funding of at least \$16 million, for a total fund of \$20 million minimum, or have other direction?**

Instead of a binary yes or no to this question, **we suggest that the Council support committing \$4 million in City housing funds towards acquisition and preservation projects with community ownership of housing, in a way where working class-led community-based groups** (e.g. community land trusts, mobile home residents coming together to buy a mobile home park, tenant unions, and more) **can access these funds if they create feasible projects that secure external funding commitments that leverage city funding at a 4:1 ratio** (e.g. a \$5 million acquisition and rehab project that has \$4 million in external funding and \$1 million in city funding).

Our suggestion is meant to broaden the possibilities for our community to realize acquisition and preservation projects with community ownership of housing and increase the chance that we achieve our displacement prevention goals in our Housing Element.

Our assessment of the city staff recommendation is that it may unnecessarily limit and possibly delay the possibilities of acquisition and preservation projects for community ownership for the following reasons or risks:

- Our understanding of the staff recommendation is that a total pool of \$20 million, and at least \$16 million in external funding, would need to be secured before any of the funding could be deployed into projects.
- We are concerned that if the kind of capital raised for the proposed fund is not grants, then the capital (i.e. loans at some interest rate with some length of term) may or may not be the right fit for the projects and/or community based groups that would take on these projects
- We are unclear who might have responsibility for raising the additional \$16 million, the feasibility of the city and/or a third party partner being able to do so, and/or how long it might take
- We imagine there is a risk that at least \$16 million is never raised and that the \$4 million allocated for this purpose goes unused in this scenario

Our suggestion intends to widen the set of possibilities by which the city can leverage \$4 million in city housing funds to attract an additional \$16 million for acquisition and preservation projects with community ownership of housing.

- First, it doesn't limit the deployment of acquisition and preservation funds until a \$20 million pool is fully raised
- Second, the city does not have to bear the sole responsibility of raising funds for this - there is a significant responsibility on community-based groups who want to complete an acquisition and preservation project with community ownership of housing to raise external funds that leverage the city dollars
- Lastly, just making available this dedicated pool of funding is a positive signal to external funding sources around community ownership in Mountain View, and can potentially enable community based groups to pull down additional external sources of funding (e.g. philanthropy, county, state, federal resources, lenders, etc.) for their projects

We see a parallel in this approach with how the city has directed city funds on production of new affordable housing units, where affordable housing developers prepare a pro forma that identifies feasible sources of funding that the developer will secure and that leverages city funding.

- **Assess feasibility of projects, but do not require external funds at time of acquisition to stay in long term**

On the bottom of page 9 of the Study Session memo, it says that one of the conditions for external funds leveraged by city funds is to "stay in the project long term."

In a similar spirit as above in widening the set of possibilities by which the city can leverage \$4 million in city housing funds to attract an additional \$16 million for acquisition and preservation projects with community ownership of housing, **we suggest that council give input and direction to staff NOT to require that external funds at time of acquisition must stay in the project long term.**

In our research (in collaboration with Stanford Urban Studies department and with members of the CA Community Land Trust Network, which we are happy to provide), we have found that in many cases, community land trusts and other community ownership of housing projects use acquisition bridge loans to help acquire properties. In these scenarios, a project may use something like a 5-year bridge loan to cover part of the cost of acquiring a property. This tool provides a reasonable runway for the group/project to secure the right mix of long-term funding, including potential combinations of foundation grants, public funding from county or regional or state resources (including bonds like the November 2024 BAHFA housing bond), or long-term no/low cost debt. This is very common, and sometimes necessary for projects to get completed.

By restricting external funds at acquisition to stay in projects long term, this unnecessarily limits the options that projects have in pulling together the financial resources to complete a project.

Alternatively, the allocation of these acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership can assess the financial feasibility of a project, including the long-term capital stack and project viability.

- **\$4 million in city funds for acquisition and preservation for community ownership of housing**

Although it may have been intended and/or implied in the city staff recommendation, **we suggest that council make clear that the \$4 million in city funds be dedicated specifically for community ownership of housing.**

If this was not intended or implied in the staff recommendation, we want to reference Table 1 on page 3 of the Study Session Memo where the Housing Element has specific language referencing this: *"Apply for outside funding sources and develop funding partnerships to invest at least \$10 million to support the preservation/acquisition of naturally affordable units via the community ownership model."*

- **Simple, accessible and equitable process for working class-led community-based groups to acquire and preserve naturally affordable housing via community ownership**

We suggest that council give input and direction to staff to make sure that the process - whether through the city itself or through an intermediary - for accessing the acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership is simple, accessible and equitable, especially to working class-led community

based groups (community land trusts, mobile home residents coming together to buy a mobile home park, tenant unions, and more).

Incredible working class leaders in community-based groups in Mountain View (and throughout the region, state, and country) are building capacity to actualize community ownership of housing models - learning and exercising muscles around collective governance, community engagement, real estate acquisition, property management, financing, and more. There are already so many barriers to overcome along the way. The process of accessing these critical acquisition and preservation funds does not need to unnecessarily add to the layers of obstacles along the way. Community based groups like ours are not necessarily multi-million dollar budget non-profit organizations with dozens of paid professional staff (like some affordable housing developers are), but we are community leaders with the lived experience best positioned to design the solutions that work for our community, and who have always been resourceful and creative and determined to do the work that will lift up and create resilience in our community.

And although we understand the current NOFA for BMR housing funds serves a purpose, we believe it should not be a template for accessing the acquisition and preservation funds because it is too complicated and burdensome for this purpose. We see a potential parallel with how some microlenders / community development financial institutions (CDFIs) that focus on serving working class, immigrant communities of color have adapted their loan process to streamline process and eliminate unnecessary paperwork; rely on conversation, interviews, site visits and reference checks as much or more than written applications; and focus on the basics of feasibility and repayment instead of conventional bank underwriting criteria in making funding decisions.

- **Going one step beyond a simple, accessible process by doing a pilot with the acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership with trusted community partners**

Our final suggestion on our wish list is the biggest stretch of the imagination, but one in which we believe could really catalyze and accelerate the city's efforts towards achieving Housing Element anti-displacement goals. **We suggest the city set up a pilot program with 1-3 trusted community-based groups working on community ownership of housing to quickly move this initial \$4 million in acquisition and preservation funds for community ownership and complete 2-3 projects.**

Through the community engagement process around the Housing Element, we imagine that the city has already been in touch with a few groups like Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT who have expressed strong interest in and/or are actively working on projects around community ownership of housing. Specifically in the case of Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT, we have been exchanging information about CLTs with city staff with whom we already have a deep working relationship, and have demonstrated significant organizational capacity in distributing the \$1.8 million in flexible financial assistance during the pandemic. We imagine the city might have built or could build deep relationships with a couple other groups on this. Instead of spending many months and countless hours of staff and community time on an application process that may result in the exact groups that the city already knows are best positioned for these funds, we propose leveraging this asset of our pre-existing relationship and instead get a jump start on preventing displacement, keeping working class and low-income families in their homes in our community, and achieving our Housing Element goals.

The faster commitments are made (and the less uncertainty around securing funding for projects), the easier it will be for projects to attract additional capital from external sources. Conversely, the more up in the air the process and timeline and certainty of funding are, the harder it will be for projects to attract external funding. With the prospect of additional preservation funding through the November 2024 BAHFA housing bond, we understand that Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing is already preparing for the possibility of deploying those funds as soon as they are available. By leveraging this initial \$4 million with \$16 million in external funding, these projects could be demonstrations where we could potentially attract another \$24 million in external funding with \$6 million in future acquisition and preservation funding for community ownership.

Lastly, we see the urgency and need every day to prevent further displacement in our community. Multi-family properties are being marketed to outside real estate investors as investment windfalls by buying properties, figuring out how to get current tenants (in rent controlled apartments) out, and significantly increasing rents. Our families and our neighbors are confronting this now, and we have the opportunity to collectively start addressing this soon by accelerating the deployment of city funding to catalyze external funding to make these projects feasible. We adamantly encourage the city to move at the pace required to address this issue and prevent further displacement in our community.

McGill, Pam

From: Sally Ahnger [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 16, 2024 9:16 PM
To: City Council
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Study Session on Displacement Response Strategy
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL - Ensure you trust this email before clicking on any links or attachments.

Dear Council members,

I appreciate the staff recommendations that will help prevent displacement and create community ownership of housing, especially the recommendation to dedicate \$4 million of city funds towards acquisition and preservation via a community ownership of housing model.

I suggest instead of a pooled fund with a minimum \$20 million. make these funds available to community land trusts and other community ownership of housing projects, where they can leverage city funds to attract external funding, much like what happens in the building of new affordable housing projects.

The city could accelerate the deployment of these funds into projects by creating a pilot program directly with 1-3 community based organizations working towards community ownership of housing (e.g. community land trusts, tenant unions, mobile home park residents interested in buying their mobile home park, etc.), including groups like Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT, who we understand the city has already worked with to distribute \$1.8 million in flexible financial assistance to 700+ low-income families in the community.

Thanks,
Sally Ahnger
Mountain View resident since 1981

March 18, 2024

Re: March 19, 2024 Study Session on Displacement Response Strategy

Dear Mountain View City Council members,

We, [Community in Action Team CAT](#), are writing to comment on the March 19, 2024 study session on displacement response strategy, and particularly on city staff's first recommendation on creating an acquisition and preservation pooled fund.

[Community in Action Team CAT, we cares about displacement prevention and/or community ownership of housing or community land trusts](#)

[We Community in Action Team have a good relationship and/or collaboration with Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT, and we are excited to support them and they will contribute towards the City of Mountain View's goals to prevent displacement of working class families and create community ownership of housing or other related outcomes\]](#)

We appreciate the staff recommendations that will help prevent displacement and create community ownership of housing, especially the recommendation to dedicate \$4 million of city funds towards acquisition and preservation via a community ownership of housing model.

We'd also like to suggest additions and alternatives to the city staff recommendations that may enhance the community's ability to achieve goals around anti-displacement and community ownership:

- Support committing \$4 million for acquisition and preservation for community ownership of housing, but not in a pooled fund with a minimum \$20 million. Instead, we suggest making these funds available to community land trusts and other community ownership of housing projects, where they can leverage city funds to attract external funding, much like what happens in the building of new affordable housing projects.
- Ensure a simple and accessible process for getting these funds, especially for community-based groups led by working class people like community land trusts, tenants buying buildings, mobile home park residents buying their mobile home park, etc.
- Accelerate the deployment of these funds into projects by creating a pilot program directly with 1-3 community based organizations working towards community ownership of housing (e.g. community land trusts, tenant unions, mobile home park residents interested in buying their mobile home park, etc.), including groups like Fondo de Solidaridad | Mountain View CLT, who we understand the city has already worked with to distribute \$1.8 million in flexible financial assistance to 700+ low-income families in the community.

Sincerely,

[Olga Melo](#)
[CAT President](#)

