

February 25, 2015

John Swiecki
Community Development Director
City of Brisbane
50 Park Place
Brisbane, CA 94005

RE: Comments on the City of Brisbane Housing Element

Dear John,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Housing Element for 2015-2023¹. I am writing on behalf on the **Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo County (HLC)**. HLC represents those in San Mateo County who support, build, and finance the creation of affordable housing. Our mission is to work with the leadership of San Mateo County jurisdictions to promote and preserve affordable housing. Our county has been consistently listed as one of the least affordable counties in which to rent in the United States, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)². Recent California Association of Realtors data also shows that San Mateo County is the least affordable county in California for buyers as well³. At HLC, we have three goals to address the need for more housing that is also more available to residents at all income levels:

Advocate for **more housing** to be built
Support **higher-density housing along the transit corridor**
Promote **more choices** for housing customers

The Brisbane Draft Housing Element proposes to re-zone an area near downtown to redevelop as affordable housing. This complies with the requirement and provides an opportunity to build affordable housing in Brisbane sometime in the future. As advocates for affordable housing, HLC recognizes the care and effort made by the City to plan for more housing and for more affordable housing in particular.

¹ Draft Housing Element refers to the copy available at <http://www.ci.brisbane.ca.us/planning/2015-2022-housing-element> as of February 2, 2015

² NLIHC, *Out of Reach 2014 Report*, <http://nlihc.org/oor/2014>

³ CAR, *May 2014 home sales and price report*, <http://www.car.org/newsstand/newsreleases/2014releases/may2014sales>

Having described our work at HLC, our main concern regarding the draft Housing Element is the omission of any discussion of the Brisbane Baylands Specific Plan. This plan has been part of the community conversation for years and has completed its EIR. The Baylands plan, among other things, provides the potential for a significant amount of housing units that can help accommodate the rapidly growing population of this region. The Baylands Specific Plan identifies four total residential land uses that will help achieve a range of density and housing types. According to the Plan, the residential land use program has the potential to yield approximately 3,950 residential flats and 484 townhomes within the Planning area⁴.

While the City's draft Housing Element identifies sufficient opportunity sites to meet its RHNA requirement, we strongly urge the City to consider taking the necessary steps to move forward with the Baylands Specific Plan. Not only will this Plan provide essential services and amenities, such as housing, retail, transit, and infrastructure improvements, but will also help alleviate some of the overwhelming market pressures many households are facing as they find jobs and seek to live in this region.

Sincerely,



Tracy Choi
Community Builder
Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo County

⁴ Brisbane Baylands Specific Plan, Chapter 8, <http://www.brisbaneca.org/sites/default/files/Chapter8.pdf>