

Balboa Area Station Specific Plan
City of San Diego, Land Use and Housing Committee

2/6/19

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Mary Lydon and I am here representing the Housing You Matters Coalition, an advocacy organization focused on responsibly increasing housing for all income levels.

Housing You Matters is here today to support the Balboa Area Station Specific Plan. This plan codifies a new transit station that is part of a bigger vision originally created by SANDAG in 2006 called the Smart Growth Map. It was approved by all the Mayor's in our region at the time who understood that due to our population growth and the Multiple Species Conservation Program we were out of major developable land and that our future required that we plan for our growth by densifying around our current and planned transit stations and corridors.

Since the Smart Growth Map was approved our planning has evolved to include Climate Action Plans, affordable housing requirements, and sustainable building practices. The Balboa Area Station Specific Plan incorporates all of these and is a model for future Station Specific Plans in San Diego.

As it relates to housing, our focus, the components of an additional 3508 units that includes workforce and senior housing is great news. The Mixed Use Village environment helps create a housing employment balance which is key to getting us out of our cars, reducing congestion on the roadways and an overall enhanced quality of life with less commute time.

This specific plan is updated with citywide zoning allowing developers a more streamlined process which creates a cascade effect by reducing the time to develop a project, which lowers the cost of building, which can lower the cost of rents needed to support a financially feasible development.

There are community criticisms about this plan and we invite you to find mitigating measures as much as possible but without delaying this approval. As they say, we can't allow perfection to be the enemy of progress. Now is the time that we all need to get with the program that change is coming, compromise is essential, and saying no is outdated. We need to manage the change that is coming at us from all sides as best as possible in order to secure a future for San Diego that is economically sound, sustainable and equitable for all.

We ask you to move this forward to City Council for approval. Thank you.