



August 9, 2024

To: planning@prcity.com

ATTN: Spring Street Affordable Housing and Mixed-Use Project

Dear Planning Commission members,

We are writing to you today, on behalf of the Healthy Communities Work Group, regarding the 1745 Spring Street Affordable Housing and Mixed-Use Project.

We are encouraged by the location of this project and the potential for alternative transportation options such as walking, biking, and transit, as the project is centrally located downtown, close to services, employment opportunities, and educational facilities, like the early HeadStart and Glen Speck Elementary School. As stated in the project's 2023 Transportation Analysis, the report recommends measures to address the expected increase in pedestrian traffic in the area.ⁱ

The parcel was also identified in SLOCOG's Housing Efficiency Analysis as an 'efficient' area for future development – the highest rating available.ⁱⁱ The Housing Efficiency Analysis looks at three factors: transportation access, water capacity, and wastewater capacity. These three factors were combined to identify areas that would best accommodate future housing based on current conditions and readiness.

Beyond the location designated for this project, we also support it's thoughtful multi-story, mixed-use design, which maximizes density and provides shared common space for residents. Research shows adults and youth are more likely to walk if they live in neighborhoods with high population density and mixed land use.ⁱⁱⁱ

Environments with shared common space can also promote well-being and feelings of social cohesion,^{iv} combatting the harmful effects of social isolation.^v We also support the inclusion of bicycle parking with the parcel, which may further promote physical activity among residents.^{vi}

Given the site's location and the inclusion of a hotel, there are concerns about whether the 1-bedroom units will be truly affordable. All units are proposed to be less than 600 square feet, which may make the market-rate apartments more affordable by design. We are also pleased that the developer has included one deed-restricted 1-bedroom unit for very-low-income residents and hope that future projects will add more units that support residents at all income

COALITION PARTNERS:

Bike SLO County
Cal Poly State University
Caltrans District 5
City of San Luis Obispo
Community Action Partnership of SLO
First 5 of San Luis Obispo County
Los Osos Pickleball
Oceano Community Services District
SLO Council of Governments
SLO County Air Pollution Control District
SLO County Department Public Health
SLO County Parks and Recreation
SLO County YIMBY
SLO Legal Assistance Foundation
Smart Share Housing Solutions

RESOURCES:

www.slohealthcounts.org

[Building Healthy Communities: Residential Checklist](#)

levels - in support of a vibrant community and Paso Robles' larger Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) targets.^{vii}

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bob Jorgensen, Healthy Communities Work Group co-chair

Notes

ⁱ Tobin James, "CEQA Environmental Initial Study Checklist Form," <https://files.ceqanet.opr.ca.gov>

ⁱⁱ San Luis Obispo Council of Governments, "The Housing & Infrastructure Regional Framework," <https://slocog.org/programs/housing/housing-infrastructure-regional-framework>

ⁱⁱⁱ Healthy Communities Work Group, "Building Health Communities: Residential Checklist," <https://www.slohealthcounts.org/hcwg>

^{iv} Wan, et al. Underlying relationships between public urban green spaces and social cohesion: A systematic literature review - ScienceDirect

^v U.S. Surgeon General. Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community. <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>.

^{vi} Healthy Communities Work Group, "Building Health Communities: Residential Checklist,".

^{vii} San Luis Obispo Council of Governments. Housing Dashboard. <https://data-drive-slocog.hub.arcgis.com/pages/housing>.