



Date: April 18th, 2023

Darcy Delgado
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COALITION PARTNERS:

Bike SLO County
Cal Poly State University
Caltrans District 5
City of San Luis Obispo
Community Action Partnership of SLO County
First 5 San Luis Obispo County
Housing Authority of the City of San Luis Obispo
People's Self-Help Housing
Rideshare – Safe Routes to School
Smart Share Housing Solutions
SLO Council of Governments
SLO County Department of Public Health
SLO County Air Pollution Control District
SLO County YIMBY
SLO Legal Assistance Foundation

RESOURCES:

[Data Dashboard, SLO Health Counts](#)

[Community Health Improvement Plan](#)

[Building Healthy Communities: Residential Checklist](#)

From: The Healthy Communities Work Group

RE: Rolling Hills Apartment Project

Dear Darcy Delgado,

The Healthy Communities Work Group (HCWG) is a collaboration between public health officials, local planning and transportation officials, community-based organizations, academia, and community members, working to improve health through community design. We provide research and evidence-based recommendations from a health perspective on proposed land use projects, ordinance and general plan amendments, and special projects.

The Healthy Communities Work Group has reviewed the proposed Rolling Hills Apartment project. HCWG considers the project an ideal location for housing, given the proximity to schools, services, and Centennial Park. Proximity to schools or a bus route within one mile is associated with increased attendance in schools.¹ Neighborhoods that include destinations to schools and amenities within 1-mile are also linked to increased physical activity of residents and students.²

HCWG supports this project's inclusion of open spaces and recreational facilities for residents, such as a central tot lot, a community clubhouse, and a pool. Recreational facilities and open spaces may promote physical activity and community cohesion among the residents.³ HCWG also supports bicycle racks being provided for the residents.

HCWG also has several recommendations for the project to promote community health.

Provide deed-restricted affordable apartment units.

HCWG strongly recommends a portion of the units be designated as deed-restricted affordable for low-income and very low-income levels. Approximately 21% of low-income renters in this community of Paso Robles pay more than 50% of their income on housing costs.⁴ Research has linked housing instability to elevated stress levels, depression and an increase in certain chronic health conditions.⁵ Access to affordable housing can enable residents to use their income on basic needs such as food and medical care, which can improve residents' health outcomes.

Include improvements to the circulation system.

According to the Environmental Initial Study, the proposed development is anticipated to impact traffic circulation on Creston Road and Rolling Hills Road. HCWG supports the improvements outlined in the study to reduce traffic congestion. HCWG further recommends Class IV bike lanes within the project area to promote the health of residents and their children who ride their bicycle to school and nearby services. Active transportation can also reduce daily CO2 emissions associated with travel, as well as improve individual wellbeing.⁶

Consider solar carports to improve energy efficiency.

HCWG recommends developers consider solar paneling for the proposed carports. California multifamily affordable housing properties can qualify for state-funded solar panel incentives through the SOMAH program.⁷

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project.



Bob Jorgensen, Healthy Communities Work Group Co-Chair



Kealoha Ghiglia, Healthy Communities Work Group Co-Chair

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- ¹. Healthy Communities Working Group. Building Healthy Communities: Residential Checklist.
https://www.slohealthcounts.org/content/sites/slodph/Building_Healthy_Communities_Residential_Checklist.%5B1%5D.pdf
 - ². Ibid.
 - ³. Ibid.
 - ⁴. Public Health Alliance (n.d.). *Healthy Places Index*. Retrieved April 12th, 2023:
<https://map.healthyplacesindex.org/?redirect=false>
 - ⁵. SLO Health Counts (2019). *Community Health Improvement Plan*.
https://www.slohealthcounts.org/content/sites/slodph/SLO_County_Community_Health_Improvement_Plan_2018-2023.pdf
 - ⁶. Brand et al. (2021). *The climate change mitigation effects of daily active travel in cities*. Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment, 93(102764), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trd.2021.102764>
 - ⁷. State of California Public Utilities Commission. SOMAH program.
<https://calsomah.org/>