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October 7, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor
California State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 650 (Papan): Planning and Zoning: Housing Element: Regional Housing Needs Allocation – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

Larry Klein
Mayor

Linda Sell
Vice Mayor

Alysa Cisneros
Councilmember

Richard Mehlinger
Councilmember

Murali Srinivasan
Councilmember

Charlsie Chang
Councilmember

Eileen Le
Councilmember

On behalf of the City of Sunnyvale, we request your signature for AB 650, which would allow local governments to begin the housing element update process six months earlier. Between initial planning, community engagement, and HCD review, the housing element update process can take an extensive amount of time. AB 650 would address these issues by requiring the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to move up the timeline for the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process. In turn, this will allow local governments to begin updating their Housing Element six months earlier. The bill would also require HCD to provide specific text and analysis that must be included in the housing element to remedy deficiencies. This provision ensures that local governments are not penalized if HCD identifies additional deficiencies and are provided clear, constructive guidance to ensure compliance with State law.

Since 1969, California's local governments, including the City of Sunnyvale, have planned and selected sites for housing at all income levels through the housing element of a local government's general plan. But cities and counties do not exist in a vacuum. Proper community engagement takes time and involves meeting with the public, including residents, developers, property owners, housing advocates, and other community groups, to hear feedback about housing needs, site selection, and policies and programs. Incorporating public feedback as well as comments from HCD takes even more time and makes each subsequent revision a serious undertaking that can easily consume multiple months.

As detailed in the City's General Plan Policy H-1.1 and City Council Long-term Advocacy Position 5.6(3), the City of Sunnyvale supports encouraging the State to create

a fair and reasonable RHNA and for the City to provide adequate housing sites. This bill would allow the City more time to plan for adequate housing sites and identify programs as well as to engage in robust community engagement throughout the housing element update process. Additionally, AB 650 will increase clarity in the housing element review process, which will allow the City to address HCD comments in a meaningful and timely manner. These changes will ensure that the City can meet the housing needs of our community and complete an adopted, certified housing element by the statutory deadline. For these reasons Sunnyvale requests you sign AB 650 into law.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Trudi Ryan, Director of Community Development, at tryan@sunnyvale.ca.gov, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Larry Klein
Mayor

cc: Senator Dr. Aisha Wahab
Assembly Member Patrick Ahrens
Assembly Member Diane Papan
City Council
Tim Kirby, City Manager
Sarah Johnson-Rios, Assistant City Manager
Trudi Ryan, Director of Community Development