

June 1, 2015

The Palo Alto City Council
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301

Dear Honorable Members of the Palo Alto City Council:

Like you, we have been concerned about the proposed closure of the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park - concerned about the eviction of the 400 residents and the loss to the community of a scarce source of affordable housing.

Recent actions, however, provide cause for some optimism. We're encouraged by the potential for collaboration between the City of Palo Alto, the County of Santa Clara, and a qualified non-profit, Caritas. The understanding that a market rate offer could be pulled together using affordable housing funds set aside by the City and County, in combination with the issuance of a Tax Exempt Revenue Bond, make keeping the Buena Vista open as a mobile home park and permanent source of affordable housing a real possibility.

As current and former members of the Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education, we understand that there are always more needs than there are resources. Still, we feel that this opportunity is too important to let it pass without taking every reasonable step to prevent the closure.

Based on our years of service we know preserving Palo Alto's economic diversity is a value shared by both the Council and the community. As development pressures increase, it only becomes more difficult to find suitable sites for affordable housing projects. If the park closes and its residents are forced to re-locate, Palo Alto will not only be poorer for the loss of those 400 residents, but finding a way to replace close to 120 lost housing units will pose a daunting challenge for years to come. The most practical solution is simply to preserve the units in place at the Buena Vista.

We urge your every effort to make that happen.

Sincerely,

Melissa Baten Caswell

Current Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Ken Dauber

Current Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Heidi Emberling

Current Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Terry Godfrey

Current Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Camille Townsend

Current Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

John Barton

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Alan Davis

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Julie Jerome

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Barbara Klausner

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Cathy Kroymann

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Hank Levin

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Amado Padilla

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Gail Price

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Diane Reklis

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Susie Richardson

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Dana Tom

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Carolyn Tucher

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member

Don Way

Former Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education Member