



*Families lead, kids succeed.*



March 1, 2024

San Rafael City Council  
Mayor Kate Colin  
Councilmember Maika Llorens Gulati  
Councilmember Eli Hill  
Councilmember Maribeth Bushey  
Councilmember Rachel Kertz

RE: Tenant Protections in the Opportunity Zone

Dear Esteemed Elected Officials:

There is a well-documented displacement crisis taking place in the Opportunity Zone in San Rafael's Canal neighborhood. **We stand with local tenants in their pleas for relief and we urge your immediate action to prevent further mass displacement and gentrification by passing a temporary ordinance to protect renters in the Opportunity Zone.**

Aggressive investor activity and predatory housing practices targeted in the Canal neighborhood is causing an immediate threat to the homes of some of the County's most vulnerable residents. This Council has taken action in the past to provide much-needed protections in this area and we call on you to do so now with urgency. Families are experiencing unjust treatment. They are bearing incredible levels of stress and disruption to their daily lives. They are losing their housing and being forced to remove their children from school and leave Marin. Local businesses struggle to find and retain the workers that fuel our local economy. These realities undermine the strength of our community and they are wholly unacceptable to our shared values of racial and economic justice. We can do better.

We urge you to take action without further delay to pass a temporary ordinance that will stop unjust rent hikes and evictions with the following provisions:

- Limit rent increases to 3% annually, in all units permitted under state law
- Limit displacement of renters for substantial repairs to a temporary displacement with a right to return, not eviction

Understanding that the City is assessing various options and strategies to address the broader housing crisis through its implementation of the Housing Element, we stand ready to continue our partnership with you and contribute to these efforts. However, time is of the essence to prevent the further displacement of San Rafael's lowest income residents. Temporary protections for the Opportunity Zone are needed now, to be followed by permanent citywide action to protect all vulnerable San Rafael renters.

Our agencies work alongside and on behalf of thousands of San Rafael residents, particularly people of color and people of low-income who are disproportionately impacted by the current housing crisis. These individuals and families are important members of our San Rafael community. They are our neighbors, our co-workers, and our friends. Residents of the Canal neighborhood represent a critical part of the City and County's workforce. The City has a vested interest and a moral responsibility to take strong and immediate action to protect its residents and we urge you to take immediate action.

Sincerely,

Chandra Alexandre  
Community Action Marin

Tahirah Dean  
Public Advocates

Omar Carrera  
Canal Alliance

Wendy Kallins  
Sustainable Marin

Laura McMahon  
Legal Aid of Marin

Anne Grey  
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Howard Schwartz and Annika Osborn  
Sustainable San Rafael

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Marin Democratic Socialists of America

Jennifer Silva  
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Aurelia Vargas, Cruz Vargas, Gloria Barrios,  
Zoila Rios and Marina Palma  
Voces del Canal

Maureen Sedonaen  
Habitat for Humanity Greater San  
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Caroline Peattie  
Fair Housing Advocates of Northern  
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Marco Berger  
Multicultural Center of Marin

Cc: Cristine Allilovich, City Manager