



July 25, 2025

RE: Tentative Map Appeal at 1979 Mission Street, Board File #250735

Dear President Mandelman and Supervisors -

It has come to our attention that an appeal has been filed to prevent the three-lot subdivision at 1979 Mission in order to block the affordable housing project, La Maravilla, at this site.

As many of you know, the Latino and American Indian community of the Mission, led by the Plaza 16 Coalition, fought for years to acquire 1979 Mission for desperately needed affordable housing in our community that has been devastated by gentrification and has seen the displacement of over 14,000 Mission residents, many of whom were displaced into homelessness during the fight for this site.

The multi-ethnic cultural reality of the Mission District leads our community members to stay in their neighborhood where they find a language and cultural identification. The Mission District becomes their home and their universe. It is therefore natural that when these existing residents are evicted, lose their jobs, or experience a sudden trauma that leads to displacement and homelessness, that they stay close.

In addition to fighting for affordable housing sites for our neighbors who have been displaced outside the Mission, into conditions of overcrowding or into the street, our community has long fought - and continues to fight - for an effective plan that will help the city pivot to a holistic solution to homelessness focused on securing supportive and stable housing for our most vulnerable neighbors. This includes fighting for the acquisition of permanently supportive housing (PSH) sites.

It is well documented that housing is a key factor in healing from trauma and health related conditions, including substance abuse disorder. **Supportive housing that meets the needs of formerly unhoused residents is not a harbinger of homelessness or crime.** It is a key part of the solution for helping individuals exit homelessness. Evidence from years of research shows that PSH provides cost-effective housing and supportive services to help people experiencing chronic homelessness remain stably housed.^{1 2}

¹ Turner Center for Housing Innovation, *Permanent Supportive Housing: Building On What Works To End Chronic Homelessness*, University of California Berkeley (January 7, 2025).
https://turnercenter.berkeley.edu/research-and-policy/permanent-supportive-housing-building-on-what-works-to-end-chronic-homelessness/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

² Kurtzman, Laura, *Study Finds Permanent Supportive Housing is Effective for Highest Risk Chronically Homeless People*, University of California San Francisco (September 17, 2020).

Today, American Indian people continue to experience the highest rates of homelessness and some of the most severe health disparities in San Francisco. For the American Indian community, this site and the surrounding neighborhood hold deep significance, not only because of our historic connection to the land, but because of the legacy of relocation that brought many Native families to San Francisco in search of a better life. Today, this community has persevered, particularly in the Mission District, where we have the first American Indian Cultural District, a milestone that represents decades of advocacy, resilience, and cultural preservation. Affordable housing like La Maravilla is urgently needed to support our elders, unhoused youth, and single individuals who are trying to remain in the communities they helped build.

It is also critical that affordable housing and permanently supportive housing projects like La Maravilla be built on transit rich corridors because **data supports the long recognized actuality that low-income residents, unlike their wealthy counterparts, are less likely to own vehicles, instead relying on public transit systems such as MUNI and BART.**^{3 4}

Affordable housing at this site will also relieve the use of vehicles by displaced residents who currently commute to the Mission to keep their children in their schools of origin, maintain their jobs and maintain connections with their community. As an example, a family from our community that was displaced to Napa was able to secure an apartment utilizing a housing voucher at 15th and Mission that allowed them to end their daily 4 hour car commute between Napa and San Francisco. Their child now walks to school and the parents use public transit to get to work downtown.

Lastly, the Mission District has maintained community processes and robust conversations for all of our affordable housing sites, and La Maravilla is no different. It is during these conversations, including open community meetings, that we co-create with our affordable housing developers to advance the vision of contextual and culturally resonant projects that reflect the community in which these projects are developed. Affordable housing like La Maravilla is urgently needed to support our elders, unhoused youth, and single individuals who are trying to remain in the communities they helped build.

We ask that Supervisors unanimously vote against this thinly veiled attempt to subvert the Latino and American Indian communities in their process to co-create the affordable and permanently supportive housing for which we have long fought. The process is open to all neighbors, and we hope that neighbors with concerns will work within this communal process rather than taking outside actions to undermine our self-determination.

Sincerely,

United to Save the Mission
San Francisco Latino Task Force
San Francisco Latino Parity and Equity Coalition

<https://www.ucsf.edu/news/2020/09/418546/study-finds-permanent-supportive-housing-effective-highest-risk-chronically>

³ Christopher, Ben, *How gentrification is killing the bus: California's rising rents are pushing out commuters*, Cal Matters (May 29, 2025). <https://calmatters.org/housing/2025/05/la-gentrification-public-transit/>

⁴ Boarnet M., Eisenlohr A., Bostic R.W., Rodnyansky S., Burinskiy E., Jamme H., Santiago-Barolomei R., *Rich versus Poor, Near versus Far from Transit: Who Travels More?*, Transfers Magazine, Issue 7 (Spring 2021). <https://transfersmagazine.org/magazine-article/issue-7/rich-versus-poor-near-versus-far-from-transit-who-travels-more/>