



September 11, 2023

Re: Eureka Housing for All Letter of Opposition

Ha'wa'lou,

This letter serves as the Wiyot Tribe's opposition to the *Eureka Housing for All and Downtown Vitality Initiative* ("Initiative"). As of August 28th, proponents of the Initiative claim to have collected and delivered 2,811 signatures to the city, to be included on the ballot in March 2024. It is the intention of the Wiyot Tribe to make public and clear to the citizens, City Council, and Mayor of the City of Eureka that this ballot initiative *does not support the housing needs of this community*, and is in fact pro-parking.

If the Initiative passes it will amend the City of Eureka's General Plan by:

1. Rezoning the vacant Jacobs Middle School building for housing for all income levels.
2. Require the preservation of all existing parking spaces in Eureka.
3. Mandate that all new housing projects provide additional parking to accommodate site tenants.

While the Initiative specifically exempts the two parking lots, Sites 4 & 5, recently awarded to the Wiyot Tribe for the Parking Lots to Affordable Housing Plan, the exemption would not apply to any future sites. In fact, the initiative brings additional legal challenges to the City's Housing Element and use of the Surplus Land Act, which could have the effect of severely increasing the time and cost incurred by the Wiyot Tribe in moving forward with our proposed development.

*The Wiyot Tribe was never consulted about this plan, nor did we request for our project to be excluded from the Initiative.* The Initiative was written to appear to be in support of the Tribe, however, its backers are simultaneously working 'behind the scenes' to further their own agenda. Specifically, Eureka City Manager, Miles Slatterly and Rob Arkley have attempted to broker a deal in which the Tribe would relinquish one of the two parking lot sites we were awarded in July in exchange for a different site that would be subject to the Initiative's Off-Street Public Parking ("OSPP") Overlay.

The initiative would halt the development of the Eureka Regional Transit and Housing Center (EaRTH Center), a mass transit hub paired with commercial units, apartments for healthcare workers and other affordable housing. Our proposal shows how you can meet resident mobility needs without increasing car traffic or parking needs through the use of electric vehicle car share programs, access to public transportation, and increasing bicycle usage. These innovative strategies are necessary to meet climate goals and increase livability. Cities should be for people, not cars.

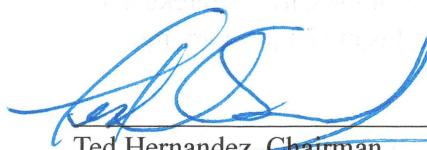
In addition, according to the Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities there are 57 acres in downtown Eureka devoted to parking lots (not including covered garages or on-street parking). That's about 34% of developable land devoted to parking in one of the most walkable areas in the whole region. Cities should be for people, not cars.

It is the opinion of the Wiyot Tribe that the *Eureka Housing for All and Downtown Vitality Initiative* is a dishonest initiative being promoted as pro-housing, when it in fact is pro-parking lots. Its leaders are marketing this Initiative in a way that is tricking the citizens of Eureka to believe that these changes will



improve the Downtown community and business district, and supports the efforts of the Wiyot Tribe. We believe these claims to be false. The Tribe supports the City's continuation of developing surplus lands into affordable housing in culturally and environmentally conscious ways to improve the health of Eureka's citizens, and of us all.

Rra'dutwas,



Ted Hernandez, Chairman



Marnie Atkins, Secretary

We the Wiyot Tribe, the oldest Native American tribe in California, and the only tribe in the state that has never been terminated, hereby state our position on the proposed development of the former Kresge building in Eureka. We believe that the proposed development of the building is a positive step forward for the City of Eureka and the surrounding community.

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