



For Immediate Release

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Councilmember LaCava Doubles Down on Scaling up Affordable Housing on City Land

San Diego — Today, at the Land Use and Housing Committee, Councilmember LaCava voted “no” on the proposed Orchard Apartments I, Orchards II, and Cedar Shores Apartments lease extensions, stating the proposed agreements did not maximize affordable housing opportunities on City owned land.

“These extensions are driven by the single bottom line of finances; however, in an era of housing crisis, we must look at the triple bottom line: financial, environmental and social gains,” **said Councilmember LaCava**. “We have a precious opportunity to capitalize on these 14 acres of City owned land and scale-up affordable housing; with these lease renewals, this opportunity will not return for 50 years.”

Today’s items proposed renewing existing leases for new, 50-year terms. As approved, the new leases will add only 47 new units of affordable housing to the City’s housing stock. Currently, the Orchard I and II leases expire in 2032 and 2036, respectively, and Orchard I is already 100% affordable, while Orchard II has 20% of its units as affordable. The new leases will retain Orchard I’s affordable housing percentage and increase Orchard II’s by ten percent. Cedar Shores, where the lease would expire in 2026, affordability increases from 0 to 15 percent.

“While the proposal reflects improvements over the existing leases, they are inconsistent with our progressive housing policies and goals” **said Councilmember LaCava**. “We have a commitment to providing the best use of City land, which includes maximizing density and affordability for San Diegans.”

Since the City and lessee originally penciled this deal in 2018, much has changed, including:

- The City adopted Complete Communities, expanding density bonuses to incentivize building more affordable housing;
- Voters approved “Measure E,” excepting the Midway Community Planning Area – and these sites - from the coastal 30-foot height limit;
- Mayor Gloria released a progressive housing policy package “Homes for All of Us” and established the middle-income working group to tackle the city’s affordable housing crisis; and,
- Councilmember LaCava introduced a “scaling up” housing proposal to leverage public lands for major affordable housing development.

Councilmember Joe LaCava represents San Diego City Council District 1, which includes the communities of Carmel Valley, Del Mar Heights, Del Mar Mesa, La Jolla, Pacific Highlands Ranch, Torrey Hills, Torrey Pines, and University City.

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