

Levesque, Jennifer

From: Timothy Robertson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 19, 2021 10:28 AM
To: cityclerk
Subject: NVLF Support Letter for Inclusionary Zoning
Attachments: NVLF Letter of Support for IZ 2021-04-19.docx

Please see the NVLF's support letter encouraging that the City of Merced explore an inclusionary zoning policy. It is attached and copied below.

April 19, 2021

Merced City Council
City of Merced
678 West 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340

Re: Support for an Inclusionary Zoning Program in the City of Merced

Dear Mayor Serratto and Council Members,

I am writing to express the North Valley Labor Federation's strong support for developing and adopting an inclusionary zoning program for the city of Merced. We are encouraged that the council will be giving this issue serious consideration this evening and we strongly urge you to direct staff to move forward with developing a program that will benefit working people in the city of Merced.

As a coalition of working people and union members in the North San Joaquin Valley — representing over 70,000 workers and their families — we are committed to fighting for the rights and dignity of all working people in the workplace and in their community.

This past year has reminded all of us what is truly essential and brought into sharp focus the heavy burden that is carried by essential workers in food, agriculture, healthcare, education, and many other critical industries. Many of these workers spent the past year facing dangerous working conditions for poverty wages, yet far too often discussions about growth and prosperity ignore or exclude these working people.

So, as you consider whether or not to move forward with developing an inclusionary zoning program for the city of Merced we hope you will consider what's at stake. While there is no panacea to the statewide and national housing crisis, inclusionary zoning programs are a proven and effective tool for increasing the production of affordable housing. In California alone, hundreds of cities over several decades, these programs have directly led to the construction of tens of thousands of affordable homes that simply would not have been built otherwise.

After examining the extensive body of research on inclusionary zoning programs and speaking with stakeholders who have practical experience working with these programs it is clear that it is entirely possible to create a meaningful inclusionary zoning program without disrupting the necessary growth of Merced's market rate housing supply. Even more importantly though, the needs of working people in Merced are not in any way secondary or disposable. Building an equitable mix of affordable and market rate housing should be a top planning goal for the city and any tool that can help us get there should be given thorough consideration.

The bottom line is that a well crafted inclusionary zoning could provide hundreds or possibly thousands of families with quality affordable housing in the coming years. Surely this merits further study and we hope you will direct staff to give this policy option the proper consideration.

Sincerely,



Timothy Robertson
Executive Director
North Valley Labor Federation

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