



October 16, 2006

The Honorable Mayor and City Council
200 East Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

**RE: CONSOLIDATION OF HOUSING ADVISORY COMMISSION AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT STEERING COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA 10/17**

Dear Honorable Mayor and City Council:

The Housing Advisory Commission (HAC) held a meeting on October 12, 2006, to discuss the consolidation of the Housing Advisory Commission with the Community Development Block Grant Steering Committee. At this meeting, the HAC voted to support staff's recommendation to consolidate the HAC and the CDBG Steering Committee and create the Housing and Community Development Advisory Commission.

Although there was concern that the additional workload might inhibit the HAC's ability to fully examine housing policy issues, on balance, the Commission saw an advantage in being able to enhance the quality and success rate of low-income housing through CDBG grants. These grants can finance vital services to residents, as well as increase the supply of housing by providing funds for acquisition and rehabilitation of existing multi-family developments.

At this meeting, the HAC discussed their concerns with the proposed composition of the Housing and Community Development Advisory Commission (2 appointments from Council Districts 3, 5, and 7 and 3 at-large appointments from the other Council Districts). Although the HAC did not formally take a position on this issue, Commissioners felt that there should be more City-wide representation on the new Commission. Specifically, the HAC discussed the possibility that requiring appointments from districts 3, 5, and 7, though well-intended, would not necessarily guarantee representation from low-income residents. In addition, Commissioners raised the idea that it might be more effective to make appointments based on community stakeholder interest rather than on geographic origin. The HAC agreed to re-visit this issue in the future and make a recommendation to the Housing Department. In addition, the HAC recommended that the merger of both Commissions be re-evaluated in one year and, if needed, be modified and improved.

We appreciate your attention to our recommendation. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

TOM FINK
Housing Advisory Commission, Chair