



City of East Palo Alto

Office of the City Manager

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East Palo Alto Collaboration Wins \$20 million for Affordable Housing, Transit Improvements and More

East Palo Alto CA – The Strategic Growth Council today announced a \$20 million grant award that will transform and add more affordable units to the Light Tree Apartments at 1805 E. Bayshore Road, East Palo Alto, and expand transit services and provide for infrastructure improvements that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The \$20 million award is a result of a competitive grant submitted by the City of Palo Alto with Eden Housing, EPA CAN DO and San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) as partners. The funding consists of \$13.5 million in loans for affordable housing development and \$6.5 million in grants for transit and infrastructure improvements, including \$2.25 million for SamTrans acquisition of three electric buses for a future SamTrans express bus route linking East Palo Alto with BART at San Bruno.

“Working together, we created a unique approach where everyone brought their best to the table and developed this winning plan. We came in first for our families and our city. The project will ensure that our residents have access to permanent affordable housing, and everyone in the city will benefit from the transit and infrastructure improvements. The electric buses will reduce direct pollution exposure to our residents and connect everyone to job centers and transit hubs along the Peninsula,” said Mayor Lisa Gauthier.

The collaborative team’s proposal scored the highest among 25 projects from 18 jurisdictions statewide and will receive the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) funding. Funded by Cap-and-Trade revenue, the AHSC program makes it easier for Californians to drive less by engaging in active transportation, such as walking, biking, and using transit.

The AHSC award will fund the construction of 128 new units at Light Tree Apartments resulting in a net increase of 91 new affordable housing units for East Palo Alto. The new units will also include 14 critically needed units set aside for formerly homeless, disabled and/or transitional age youth.

“We are very excited about the ways this grant will benefit residents of the City of East Palo Alto,” said SamTrans General Manager/CEO Jim Hartnett. “It is critical that we continue to look for ways to link high quality transportation and affordable housing for our residents in San Mateo County.”

“The Light Tree Apartments, originally built in 1966, has been home to many generational cycles past and present. It is due a transformation and with these funds it will be one of the more modern housing facilities in the city,” said Vice Mayor Regina Wallace-Jones.

Eden Housing, which acquired the Light Tree Apartments property in 2001 will leverage the affordable housing loan for redevelopment. “More than 200 names are on Eden Housing’s waiting list for a unit in Light Tree Apartments. The grant is an opportunity for us to take 91 families off of that list and into a high-quality home,” said Linda Mandolini, President of Eden Housing. “Eden is thrilled to work with the City of East Palo Alto and SamTrans and keep families in the community in which they live, and work.”

“This funding will support SamTrans’ acquisition of zero emissions buses for use on a future express bus route linking East Palo Alto with Redwood City, Redwood Shores, SFO, and BART at San Bruno. This future SamTrans route, a recommendation of the agency’s US-101 Express Bus Feasibility Study, will be a limited-stop service operating in part in the new express lanes on US-101. This future express bus route will provide key local and regional connections around the Peninsula with modern services for our customers, while responding to public health concerns of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions,” said Christy Wegener, Director of Planning for SamTrans.

In addition to the modernized and clean transit services, \$500,000 of the funds will provide residents of the Light Tree Apartments community with up to 650 SamTrans transit passes per year for up to three years. The remaining \$3.75 million will enable the City to create the first “Complete Green Street” on Addison Street, including 3,200 feet of safe and accessible sidewalks on Addison Street and Clarke Avenue, in addition to up to 8.6 miles of bikeways per the City’s Bicycle Transportation Master Plan and other improvements around the bus stops.

“At EPACANDO we are excited to be awarded funding relating to control of greenhouse gas emissions. We are proud to address housing needs in coordination with transportation efforts by creating a development that models the link between them,” said Duane Bay, Executive Director of EPACANDO.

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For more information about the Strategic Growth Council projects visit:

<http://sgc.ca.gov/meetings/council/2019/06-21.html>

About Eden Housing

The mission of Eden Housing is building and maintaining high-quality, well-managed, service-enhanced affordable housing communities that meet the needs of lower-income families, seniors, and persons with disabilities. In its 50 years of service in California, non-profit Eden Housing has provided a home for more than 100,000 people. Eden Housing is the long-term owner-operator of its developments and is committed to preserving and maintaining its buildings as community assets and supporting residents with a range of services. For more information, please visit edenhousing.org

On following pages – rendering of new look for Light Tree Apartments



Above: Rendering of new look for Light Tree Apartments

Source: Eden Housing



Above: Second Floor – Podium Landscape

Source: Eden Housing



Above: Street View from East Bayshore Road

Source: Eden Housing