



June 15th, 2005

Mayor Joan Lundström and Members of the City Council
City of Larkspur
400 Magnolia Avenue
Larkspur, CA 94939

RE: 2000 Larkspur Landing Circle-- **SUPPORT**

Dear Mayor Lundstrom and Members of the City Council:

Greenbelt Alliance, the Bay Area's leading land conservation and urban planning organization, gives our endorsement to the proposed development at 2000 Larkspur Landing Circle, to be developed by Campus St. James Larkspur LLC. Our careful review determined that the project meets or exceeds our criteria, which are designed to promote compact development patterns and livable, transit-friendly communities that are affordable to residents at a range of income levels.

As currently proposed, the development will provide 126 for-sale residential units and an 80-room hotel. Twenty percent of the housing units will be affordable to low- and moderate- income households, expanding housing options for those priced out of the market. With demand for housing in the Bay Area far exceeding supply, these 126 units would help narrow the gap.

The location of the proposed development is one of its primary strengths. Its proximity to the Larkspur ferry and easy access to shopping centers with retail, restaurants, and a cinema make this site ideal for higher density development. The location of this new housing will facilitate transit use and help reduce automobile dependency.

Other characteristics of the project that are worth noting include:

- Mitigation and re-use of land previously utilized for wastewater treatment
- Improved access to Miwok Park and a 1.12-acre addition to Miwok Park
- Open space within the development, including a central village green
- In addition to the ferry terminal, close proximity to Golden Gate Transit lines that connect to San Rafael and other locations in Marin
- The project would provide a significant percentage of the housing called for in the city's Housing Element.


In addition to expressing our strong support for the project, we also wish to note our concern about the parking requirements of the Larkspur zoning code. The code allows no parking reductions for projects at transit nodes, making good transit-oriented development difficult. The need for parking is often decreased in a project located so close to transit and other amenities. Each parking space is costly, driving up the price of the housing units. The requirements also limit the ability of the developer to use land efficiently, resulting in a significant portion of the acreage devoted to automobiles.

We commend the developer for making changes to the plan to accommodate the community's concerns. The space-saving, below-grade parking, re-configuration of the units, and additional open space make the project more pedestrian-friendly and livable.

It is our hope that the City will offer this development its support and approval. Further, we strongly encourage the City to consider possible reduced parking requirements for developments close to transit.

Thank you for your attention and for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Julie Cummins
Education Program Coordinator

Cc: Nancy Kaufman, Planning Director
Members of the Planning Commission
Robert Upton, Campus St. James Larkspur LLC