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9 December 2024

Cotati City Council
201 W. Sierra Avenue
Cotati, CA 94931

Re: Item 11A — Establishment of Development Impact Fee On Behalf Of The Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District

CC: Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District Board, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Dear Mayor Sparks, Councilmembers, and Staff,

Generation Housing respectfully submits this letter to help inform your deliberations regarding the proposed impact fees to support the Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District. We want to acknowledge and commend our local fire districts for working earnestly in service to our community. We acknowledge the need and importance of capital improvements for which funding is sought through the use of this proposed impact fee schedule. We support the efforts of the Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District to identify ways to improve our local fire safety response.

At the same time, we are compelled to ask that the Cotati City Council consider the full implications of levying additional impact fees on the already costly process of building new homes in Cotati. The cost of housing production has increased significantly over recent years. An affordable housing project today can average \$700,000 per unit, and in some cases, well above that.¹

Both the City of Cotati and the County of Sonoma currently have discrete impact fees ranging in the dozens that are added to a project. These fees may seem inconsequential viewed individually, but in aggregate, impact fees are contributing to an average of 11% of total projects costs.²

We encourage the City to consider exempting affordable housing developments from the proposed impact fee program. Because affordable housing developments rely in part on local, State, or Federal funding, exacting additional impact fees on subsidized affordable housing projects amounts to taxing taxpayer money.

We believe in being proactive in our fire safety strategy and the need to build robust capacity in anticipation for an effective emergency response. But we cannot do that on

¹ "Building a single unit of affordable housing in Sonoma County can now cost over \$700,000", June 29, 2022, *Press Democrat*

² Based on a sample of local projects sourced by Generation Housing, 2021



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the backs of our most vulnerable, and we should not do that by increasing a housing scarcity and affordability crisis that has only deepened and widened through the pandemic. Accordingly, **we ask that you consider this compromise approach, and exempt affordable housing from any new fees.**

We thank you for your service and appreciate your thoughtful consideration of these comments.

In partnership,

Jen Klose

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jen Klose", written over the printed name.

Executive Director, Generation Housing