

1 April 2024

Via Email

RE: Support for “The Canopy” Project

Dear Mayor Rich, Councilmembers, and staff:

We write today to express our **enthusiastic support** for the Generation Housing endorsed project proposed at 1009-1011 Gravenstein Highway North (“The Canopy”). This letter outlines our rationale, grounded in recent Sebastopol-specific research, for urging your approval of this project.

The Canopy at a Glance: Why this Project Earns Our Support

The Canopy proposes 80 for-sale townhomes, with 12 units dedicated to those earning a moderate area median income. Many of these units, three times more than what is required, will be engineered with a universal design in order to accommodate members of the community with a disability.

The development boasts a variety of amenities, such as communal gardens, playgrounds for children, and a tranquil meditation hammock garden, all set amongst an abundance of native trees. Additionally, a proposed new pedestrian pathway aims to enhance connectivity with the Joe Rodota Trail and Gravenstein Highway. A prime location adds to its appeal, situated directly across from Lucky’s grocery store and just over a mile from Downtown Sebastopol’s vibrant heart.

Committed to environmental stewardship, the applicant plans to implement strategies to minimize the development carbon footprint, including the use of recycled steel, low-carbon concrete, and optimized structural designs. Embracing innovation, the project will also feature fog collectors to reduce reliance on potable water for irrigation, aligning with its dedication to sustainable living.

The Canopy offers a sustainable solution — an opportunity to further course correct and breathe new life into the community. Below we offer some Sebastopol specific insights that pull back the curtain on the housing landscape while also spotlighting how this project can **move Sebastopol forward** in a sustainable manner:

- **Embracing Opportunities For Thoughtful Growth:** With a gentle 5% increase in housing from 2000 to 2019, Sebastopol is uniquely positioned to carefully

expand its housing, inspired by, yet distinct from, the growth in neighboring cities like Sonoma, Cloverdale, and Santa Rosa.

- **Reinvigorating the Community with Families:** The reduction in households with school-aged children by an estimated 30% presents a unique chance for Sebastopol. The Canopy stands as a beacon to attract and retain families, breathing new life into our community dynamics.
- **Bridging the Affordability Gap:** With a current imbalance of more than five low-wage jobs for every affordable home, Sebastopol is at a pivotal moment. This project provides greater diversity to the housing inventory and holds strong potential for relieving pressure on naturally more affordable housing options as higher income earners transition from renting to homeownership.

It's time for **action on housing**. We need to realize a more sustainable future and build a community that is vibrant and accessible to everyone.

We urge the City Council to say YES to **more housing**, YES to **supporting families**, YES to a **more sustainable community**, and YES to The Canopy.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of our comments.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Calum Weeks".

Calum Weeks
Policy Director | Generation Housing