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**SUPERVISOR RELEASES HOUSING AFFORDABILITY REPORT, ANNOUNCES
NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGIES FOR DISTRICT 8
NEIGHBORHOODS**

Supervisor Rafael Mandelman released a Housing Opportunities Report that identifies housing affordability challenges facing District 8 neighborhoods and identifies strategies for preserving and producing more affordable housing in those neighborhoods

SAN FRANCISCO — District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman today released a report outlining strategies to produce new affordable housing and preserve existing rent-controlled and affordable units in District 8 neighborhoods including the Castro, Noe Valley, Glen Park, Diamond Heights, Duboce Triangle, and Mission Dolores. Mandelman commissioned and secured funding for the District 8 Housing Opportunities Report in 2019. The report was prepared by local affordable housing consulting firm Street Level Advisors in consultation with the Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development and San Francisco Planning Department.

“The Harvey Milk generation, the folks who moved here the seventies and eighties to live freely, the people who shaped today’s San Francisco and literally changed the world, have been getting pushed out of their homes and out of San Francisco at an alarming rate. New arrivals who come here still chasing the San Francisco dream all too often end up living on our streets,” said Mandelman, who is the lone LGBTQ member of the Board of Supervisors. “This report highlights the unique housing challenges faced by the neighborhoods and communities I represent and proposes fresh approaches to preserving and adding new housing opportunities.”

The report found that District 8 neighborhoods had the second highest rate of no-fault evictions of any supervisorial district in the City, with 600 such evictions documented since 2009, second only to the 650 documented evictions in District 9, which includes much of the Mission. This ongoing displacement pressure has been amplified by a relative lack of new affordable housing, with District 8 seeing new affordable units come online at just half the rate of the city as a whole. The report highlights the importance of protecting existing households from displacement in District 8, where more than half of all rental units are covered by rent control, compared with 40% of all units citywide.

“We have been happy to work in partnership with Supervisor Mandelman’s office to ensure our housing investments reach all areas of the City,” said Eric Shaw, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development. “The District 8 Housing Opportunities Report provides helpful grounding and understanding for how MOHCD can invest in projects that meet the unique needs of residents in the district.”

Mandelman has championed several of the strategies recommended in the report. In May, MOHCD announced that LGBTQ service provider Openhouse would partner with non-profit housing developer Mercy Housing to build upwards of 100 new units for low-income seniors and formerly homeless residents at 1939 Market Street. The City acquired the site at the corner of Market and Duboce Streets in early 2020 in response to Mandelman's call for new affordable housing opportunities in the Castro area geared toward the unique needs of LGBTQ seniors. When combined with the existing Openhouse buildings across Market Street at Laguna and Hermann, the announcement paves the way for a more than 250-unit campus of affordable LGBTQ-welcoming senior housing. The report highlights the needs and opportunities for such high-density affordable housing at sites across District 8.

“Openhouse is grateful for Supervisor Mandelman's successful efforts to create affordable housing in District 8 that welcomes our LGBTQ elders,” said Maritza Penagos, Interim Executive Director of Openhouse. “This report confirms that new projects like our LGBTQ-welcoming housing partnership with Mercy Housing at 1939 Market, similar to our current efforts at 55 & 95 Laguna, will continue to ensure that the fierce fighters who led a civil rights revolution from this neighborhood will remain centered in the heart of the City they transformed.”

The report also calls for new efforts to bring affordable homeownership opportunities to District 8 neighborhoods, like the eight-unit townhome development that broke ground at 36 Amber Drive in Diamond Heights in May. The Habitat for Humanity project is the first 100% affordable homeownership development to receive City funding, after Mandelman urged MOHCD to explore financing for such neighborhood-scale affordable ownership projects. Such projects can provide affordable units on neighborhood infill sites that are much smaller than the high-density affordable developments that typically receive public subsidies, and at a lower per-unit cost to the City.

“Building affordable homes in the heart of the city isn't always easy, but San Franciscans are incredibly committed to their community and to making sure our neighbors have a safe and decent place to live,” said Maureen Sedonaen, CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Greater San Francisco. “That's why it is always worthwhile to work closely with residents when it comes to homebuilding and to involve them closely in the process. Thoughtful policies from housing leaders make a huge difference, and we are so appreciative of Supervisor Mandelman's work to unlock funding for neighborhood-scale affordable homeownership opportunities like on Amber Drive.”

The report's recommendations seek to build on these successes with a more in-depth survey of sites for future rounds of affordable developments in District 8. A preliminary scan included in the report identified 64 sites potentially suited to housing development of at least four units under current zoning on parking lots and low-rise commercial sites that would not require the redevelopment of existing residential buildings. Of these, 14 were large enough to accommodate medium or large-scale developments that can be financed using low-income housing tax credits

and other existing housing subsidy programs, for a potential total of roughly 2,000 new affordable units.

The study also delves into the vexing issue of how to keep long-time residents housed in the face of ongoing displacement pressure. Ellis Act evictions represented over 40% of District 8 no-fault evictions over the past decade, and District 8 saw more Ellis evictions than any other supervisorial district in the city. The report noted that in the absence of much-needed reform at the State level, one of the few available local responses is the purchase of existing apartment buildings at risk of eviction and conversion of those units into permanently affordable housing owned and operated by nonprofits. Unfortunately, relatively higher land costs and a lack of non-profit developers focused on District 8 neighborhoods have led to the underuse of this response in District 8.

“This new survey of affordable housing opportunities for District 8 comes at a perfect time!” said Peter Cohen, of the Council of Community Housing Organizations. “With the current budget surplus funds from ERAF and the new transfer tax increase, the City can begin to unlock innovative affordable housing solutions, from acquisition of at-risk small apartments to development of mid-size lots, that address the unique characteristics of the neighborhoods throughout D8.”

To that end, the report envisions a targeted small sites acquisition partnership with local nonprofits that would focus on acquiring District 8 apartment buildings to protect rent-controlled units and tenants from Ellis Act and other no-fault eviction attempts. The report also focuses on securing housing opportunities for especially vulnerable groups including queer seniors and youth, formerly homeless residents, and longtime residents facing immediate threats of displacement.

"Larkin Street launched the Castro Youth Housing Initiative in 2004 because LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness wanted to live in and with their community," said Larkin Street Youth Services Executive Director Sherilyn Adams. "Creating an array of affordable housing options in District 8 is long overdue, and critical to ensuring that the Castro is a place of hope and home for everyone in our community, especially for queer youth experiencing homelessness. We are grateful for Supervisor Mandelman's leadership and commitment to the preservation and development of affordable housing in his District needed for all of us to flourish."

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