



Date: June 7, 2020

Subject: In opposition to Item 5.1, the Charcot Ave. Extension Project

Dear Mayor Liccardo, Vice Mayor Jones, and Councilmembers Jimenez, Peralez, Diep, Carrasco, Davis, Esparza, Arenas, Foley and Khamis,

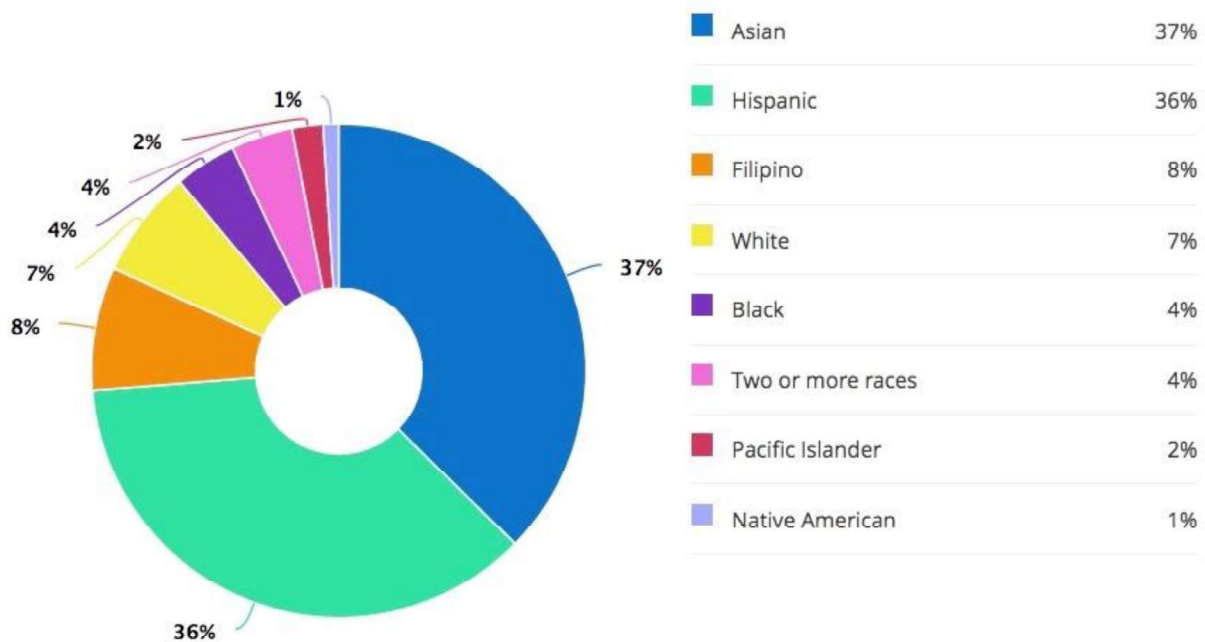
As leaders in the community representing 1800+ South Bay supporters **we are strongly opposed to the Charcot Ave. Extension Project for health, safety, equity, climate and fiscal reasons.** In particular, [the concerns raised by BAAQMD \(the Bay Area Air Quality Management District\)](#) are very troubling and alone are enough reason to discontinue this project. At a time when those of us who are Black and of color are fighting for our lives and for our health, **it's more important than ever to respect the wishes of a community of color by rejecting this project.**

Health: By increasing vehicle traffic in the neighborhood, this project will increase air pollution from CO2 and particulate matter. Vehicle exhaust contains numerous poisonous chemicals, including carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, formaldehyde, benzene and soot. This project **threatens the health of everyone living in the neighborhood, and especially the Orchard School staff and 850 children**, whose developing lungs are particularly vulnerable to the harmful effects of air pollution, putting them at increased risk for asthma, cancer, COPD and cardiovascular disease. **Children deserve clean air to breathe**; routing even more vehicles next to an established school is not treating their health as a priority.

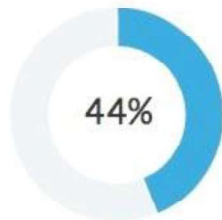
Safety: This project will significantly increase traffic in the neighborhood. Traffic projected to increase 15-fold coupled with cell phone distraction of both drivers and pedestrians of all ages is a recipe for disaster, increasing the likelihood of collisions between vehicles and pedestrians, especially children, threatening their lives. We understand that you are trying to address these concerns, but rather than bringing vehicles into closer proximity to kids, we should be **routing them away from school zones**, just as traffic-calming measures have been implemented at other schools. As Chris Johnson points out in *San José Inside*, "In the U.S., and in California, too, [traffic] is the leading cause of preventable death of people under 40 and the leading cause of death for children." This project is at **direct odds with San José's Vision Zero goals** of zero traffic fatalities.

Climate: In September of 2019, the San Jose City Council unanimously declared a **Climate Emergency**, recognizing the threat that climate destabilization poses to all of our residents. In an emergency, we cannot continue business as usual. We must examine the policies that are contributing to the climate crisis and replace them with new policies. The Charcot Avenue Extension Project **undermines the goals of Climate Smart San Jose** and is based on outdated plans and assumptions. It does not fit into the City's new vision of itself as a vibrant, active, walkable City. Cutting down over 35 mature trees – some of them redwoods 30 inches in diameter and more – near the Coyote Creek side of the project is an irreplaceable loss. These trees **draw down carbon from the atmosphere**, serving as a valuable carbon sink and air purifier. We urgently need to plant new trees not destroy the mature ones we already have. In addition, to be climate-smart, we must stop directing funds to increased highway infrastructure and **instead invest in public transit**.

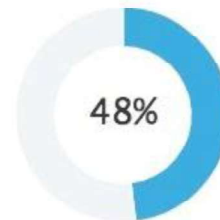
Equity: Nearly half of Orchard School students (48%) qualify as low-income, 93% are students of color, and 44% are English-language learners, as shown in the graphics below by Great Schools:



Students learning English ?



Students from low-income families ?



Siting an undesirable, air-polluting and safety-threatening project in a disadvantaged neighborhood raises **questions of environmental racism**, however unintentional. It's vital to consider how this project would divide the neighborhood, disturb residents and students with increased noise, threaten their health and safety, increase pollution, and damage the environment. Furthermore, the project would shrink the school's ballfield and necessitate the relocation of the playground structure, possibly very near the street, diminishing students' quality of life.

We urge the City to consider how polluted the air in the area already is and how the school and the recreational space serve as a refuge for the community. The environmental study done for the City does not adequately consider this reality.

Fiscally, spending more than 50 million dollars to increase neighborhood congestion is not a good use of taxpayer money, particularly in light of the severe budget deficit caused by the pandemic.

Most importantly, the harm done to the students, staff and neighbors will be irreparable. The health and safety of the students at Orchard School and the protection of our climate are more important than increasing the speed of cars.

Therefore, we respectfully request that the City **scrap this misguided and outdated project. It's time to set aside a project that was proposed nearly three decades ago (in 1994, under much different circumstances), and prioritize the health and safety of this community of color as well as our climate smart goals.** A much wiser solution would be a **bike and pedestrian bridge**, which would provide many of the benefits of a road expansion, with none of the negative impacts and at a cost savings. The savings could then be applied to bus operations.

Thank you in advance for listening to and reflecting the wishes of the community.

Sincerely,

1. Linda Hutchins-Knowles, Mothers Out Front South Bay, San José resident
2. Hoai-An Truong, Mothers Out Front South Bay, San José resident
3. Stephanie Morris, Mothers Out Front South Bay
4. Erin Salter, San José resident
5. Laura Finnigan-Heil, Mothers Out Front South Bay, San José resident
6. Clémence Tiradon, Orchard parent, San José resident
7. Robin Roemer, Orchard parent, San José resident
8. Kristel Wickham, Mothers Out Front South Bay, Sunnyvale resident
9. Cecile Desquiens, Orchard parent, San Jose resident
10. Loic Weiyuneng, Orchard Parent, San Jose resident
11. Isabelle Chappuis, District4 parent and teacher, San José resident
12. Felicia Gershberg, Together We Will - San José, Sunnyvale resident
13. Leena Joseph, parent, District 4 resident
14. Christina Medina District 4 resident
15. Jennifer Lewis, San Jose resident
16. Ed Fernandez, San Jose Resident
17. Brian Haberly, San Jose Resident
18. Carlos Velazquez, San Jose Resident
19. Molly Cox, Sunnyvale Resident
20. John Cordes, Sunnyvale Resident
21. Shannon Loucks, Santa Clara resident
22. Rebecca Habermann, Mothers Out Front South Bay, San Jose Resident
23. Thomas Habermann, San Jose Resident
24. Jennifer Black, San Jose resident
25. Irene Ramos Lerma. Orchard Elementary parent. San Jose resident.
26. Susan Butler-Graham, Mothers Out Front, San Jose resident

27. Justin Gee, Santa Clara Resident
28. Margaret Capetz, Santa Clara Resident
29. Sean McCollough, NVC PTA Council Secretary
30. Britta Bullard, San Jose Resident
31. Kris Karnos, San Jose resident
32. Annette Haines, San Jose resident
33. Rosa Maria Gordillo, San Jose resident
34. Carmen Arjona-Ariza, San Jose resident
35. Susan Lee, San Jose resident
36. Alexander Castro Perezchica, Breathe California of the Bay Area, San José resident
37. Vanessa Talaria, Breathe California of the Bay Area, San Jose resident and parent
38. Jennifer Solorio Perez, San Jose Resident & Orchard student parent
39. Julio Solorio-Sanchez, San Jose Resident & Orchard student parent
40. David Lo, San Jose Resident
41. Nagarjun Mudda
42. Diana Chenault, San Jose Resident & Orchard student parent
43. Jennifer Jobart, San Jose Homeowner
44. Charlene Ramirez - San Jose Homeowner & Current Orchard School Parent
45. Monica Mallon, Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action
46. Shiela Talaria, San Jose Resident
47. Sandra Gamez, Orchard School Parent
48. Noel Garcia, Orchard School Parent
49. Charmaine Baclig, San Jose Resident
50. Alanbonifacio Molina, San Jose Resident
51. Edna Talaria Molina, San Jose Resident
52. Alexandro Carrasco, San Jose Resident
53. Sean Talaria, San Jose Resident
54. Loc Tran, San Jose Resident, have 2 young kids attend Orchard Elem.
55. Renée M. Schell, 2nd grade teacher, Orchard Elementary, San Jose resident and voter
56. Billy Sims, San Jose Resident and Orchard School parent
57. Anna Chiang, Breathe California of the Bay Area, Milpitas Resident
58. Kristy Phan, San Jose Resident
59. Annie Belt, San Jose resident
60. Holly Cadena, San Jose resident
61. Marcelina Garcia, Orchard Student Parent
62. Jessica Chavez, Orchard School Alumni
63. Stephanie Chavez, Orchard School Alumni
64. Amanda Binz, First Grade Teacher, San Jose Resident and Voter
65. Gavin Binz, San Jose Resident
66. Linda Clark, San Jose Resident/Homeowner
67. Cynthia Ramirez, San Jose Resident
68. Mark Clark, San Jose Resident/Homeowner
69. Medha Gelli, Breathe California of the Bay Area, San José resident
70. Maggie Zhang, Breathe California of the Bay Area, East Bay resident
71. Gargi Sengupta, San Jose resident/homeowner

72. Cassiopeia Jenkins-Schell, San Jose resident
73. Beraldo Marquez, San Jose Resident and Orchard School Parent
74. Rusti Icenogle, San Jose Resident
75. Jesse Orosco, San Jose Resident
76. Fernando Chavez, Orchard Student Parent
77. Michelle Quilantang, Principal of Orchard School, San Jose Resident and Orchard student parent
78. Virginia Varela-Campos, Orchard School Parent and North San Jose Resident
79. Rose Zamaripa, San Jose Resident
80. Noor Heintzelman, Breathe California of the Bay Area
81. María Hennessy, retired bilingual teacher at SJUSD, and San Jose Resident
82. Ha Pham, Orchard School's student parent, North San Jose resident
83. Mark Pham, San Jose Resident
84. Lisa Kobayashi, San Jose Resident
85. Gregory Brisebois, San Jose Resident
86. Kim Nguyen, San Jose Resident and Orchard School Parent
87. Jeannette Forrest, Orchard School teacher and San Jose resident
88. Sucharitha Sirigireddy, parent of Orchard School student and resident of San Jose
89. Barbara Fukumoto, Sunnyvale Cool and Sunnyvale resident
90. Lillian M Guajardo, Speech/Language Pathologist and San Jose resident
91. Fey Camero, San Jose Resident
92. Mary Jane Valiao, San Jose Resident
93. Yoko Fujita, Orchard School Parent and San Jose resident
94. Jennifer Samoranos, Memberships Chairman / VP Orchard PTA, Orchard student parent and San Jose Resident
95. Alan Johnson, Orchard student parent
96. Jessica Solon, San Jose Resident
97. Marsha Dimalanta, San Jose Resident
98. Brandon Samoranos, San Jose Resident
99. Jacqui Dimalanta, San Jose Resident
100. Jennifer Dang, Orchard School Teacher
101. Son Nguyen, Rock Ave, San Jose resident
102. Oanh Tran, San Jose resident
103. Wendy Greenfield, San Jose resident
104. Mimi Tazumi, San Jose Resident and Orchard School Parent
105. Justin Tai, San Jose Resident
106. Annie Vu, San Jose Resident and Orchard Middle School Mom
107. Charles Mendoza, San Jose and Orchard Middle School Parent
108. Braxton Mendoza, Orchard Alumni
109. Luke Nguyen, Orchard School Student
110. Trang Nguyen, Orchard School Mom and San Jose homeowner
111. Duong Nguyen, Proud Orchard Dad/San Jose homeowner
112. Yvette Tran, San Jose Resident
113. Ana Lopez, San Jose Resident and Santa Clara School District Teacher

114. Vivian Duong, San Jose Resident
115. Gladwyn d'Souza, co-Chair, Loma Prieta Chapter, Sierra Club
116. Ragini Srinivasan, San Jose Resident
117. Amiya Peddada, Breathe California of the Bay Area, San Jose Resident
118. Annaloy Nickum, concerned citizen about racism of intended project
119. Thuan Pham, San Jose Resident
120. Sandrine Picot, San Jose Resident
121. Valery Kreidenko, San Jose resident, dad of 2 kids in Orchard Elementary
122. Paul U, San Jose resident, dad of 2 kids
123. Matt Wee, San Jose resident, dad of 2 kids in Orchard Elementary
124. Halina Gallagher, San Jose Resident
125. Lynn Limqueco, San Jose Resident
126. Judy Young, San Jose Resident
127. Mimi Michelle Spreadbury, San Jose Resident, Orchard City Indivisible- Campbell
128. Antonio Dimalanta, concerned citizen, raised in San Jose
129. Heidi Boverman, San Jose resident
130. Karina Knowles, San Jose resident