Burbank/Del Monte
Neighborhood Advisory Committee

August 1, 2008

Honorable Mayor and City Council
200 E. Santa Clara Street, 18th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113

Subject: Fire Station Construction – Lincoln Glen Site

Mayor and Council Members:

The Planning and Land Use and Community Services Subcommittees of the Burbank/Del Monte Neighborhood Advisory Committees (B/DM NAC) are recommending to the B/DM NAC and all affiliated neighborhood and business organizations that they recommend reversal of Council Resolution 74459 (Fire Station Construction – Lincoln Glen Site) and removal of this item from the November 4, 2008 ballot pending further analysis and review. While we would like to support this measure, our review of the documents on the City's website does not provide substantive information showing modeling of services that includes the current and planned growth in our area.

Our community was targeted years ago as a community of concern and labeled blighted in part because of the lack of services accessible to our residents. We are the first to promote creativity and flexibility when it comes to stretching the few dollars available for providing services. We cannot, however, support a long term solution that does not address the decades of planning to make our area and the Midtown area a densely developed part of San Jose. We would request that all plans for closure of any facility be placed on hold pending our ability to review a modeling document that includes not just the existing facilities and residents, but the affect on the residents and businesses of the future.

Among our concerns:

- The Burbank/Del Monte area is statistically higher in residents who utilize emergency services (elderly, immigrant, poor) according to census data. These residents are reliant on the emergency services currently available and would be jeopardized by reduced response times.
- The Midtown Specific Plan (MSP) was created to ensure San Jose had a densely populated residential area with nearby jobs that would discourage car ownership. The units called for in the Midtown Plan, along with the residential units either in the pipeline, under construction or in the planning phase are not included in the modeling. We should also point out that outside the MSP are several larger developments (Sobrato/Race Street, Fruitdale Station, Hudson, etc.) that will add several thousand more residential units.
- Besides the larger projects, the City has repeatedly encouraged property owners to develop smaller infill development of lots that currently hold one or two homes into lots of higher density. The affect of these conversions is not included in the modeling and, since there is no proposal to cap such small developments, we must have a model that shows the maximum affect of the City's policy.

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- There are several new projects proposed or underway that are either low income, senior housing or for adult with disabilities. Knowing we are building dense housing for transit dependant populations but not taking into account their increased need for services does no service to these future residents.
- Annexation of County Pockets will continue for the next several years. The question of how to add these residents into the calls for service does not appear in the modeling.
- Because our daily lives are affected by the configuration of the Light Rail system, we have concerns with the proposal as it stands unless measures are taken that would allow relief vehicles to override the system.
- The community has had little input on these decisions and little time to become educated, much less provide input. Something of this magnitude deserves the broadest range of participants to be successful and does not appear to follow the City's policy of open government.
- While we have researched the impacts on our area, we have not had the time or opportunity to look at the bigger picture and want to make sure that all impacts of the actions proposed are clearly understood by everyone. In short, if we have problems with the proposal in our area, we are concerned that other areas have similar issues.

Our recommendations are summarized thusly:

- Remove the measure from the November ballot.
- Freeze all plans for closures or relocations.
- Conduct a system of outreach and education for all affected communities.
- Complete an analysis that includes the growth plans that have been developed and are currently being implemented.

We are confident that if these steps are taken San Jose will benefit from a thoughtful process that produces the best product. We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeff Rogers, Chair
Planning and Land Use Committee

M. LaRocca
Michael LaRocca, Chair
Community Service Committee