

June 16, 2026

City Manager Megan Hunter and
Miramonte Affordable Housing Advisory Subcommittee
City of Soledad
248 Main Street
Soledad, CA 93926

RE: Shortcomings of Miramonte Developer Agreement Negotiations

Dear Staff and Committee Members:

LandWatch has participated in meetings of the Miramonte Affordable Housing Subcommittee and studied the Miramonte subdivision documents closely. Based on this experience LandWatch is concerned that the current process is inadequate to cover all the housing requirements of the Miramonte project and may not result in development agreements that fairly represent the City's desired outcome.

First, meeting agendas have been too narrowly focused on a limited issue, which doesn't allow the committee to assess interrelated aspects of the development. During the last committee meeting, members were instructed to focus solely on the numbers of affordable units proposed in each phase of the development, and only as it related to the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. Questions concerning the potential impacts of homeowner association (HOA) and community service district (CSD) fees on affordability, the location of the units to establish integration, and guarantees/triggers to ensure concurrency, were outside the bounds of the material presented and were not discussed. This is unacceptable.

Furthermore, the committee was not presented with any plans for affordable-by-design units, or the balance of rental versus ownership units. The approval documents for Miramonte contain requirements on these issues, which LandWatch has repeatedly pointed out. The inclusionary housing ordinance (IHO) sets forth requirements for 20% of the residential units, but there are additional requirements set forth in the General Plan, the Vesting Tentative Map and the Specific Plan for affordable-by-design and rental residential units. When will the Committee address those

requirements? When will the Committee be presented with a map showing the entire project plan which shows the 20% IHO units, the additional affordable-by-design units, and the required rental units? By asking the Committee to approve limited concepts in piecemeal fashion, the end result may not be compliant with the entire project vision, and certain critical details may be overlooked.

LandWatch has previously suggested the City hire a professional real estate lawyer-negotiator with experience negotiating development agreements for public agencies. LandWatch strongly suggests that the City consider this option before further negotiations. The requirements imposed by the General Plan, the Specific Plan, the IHO, the Vesting Tentative Map and numerous other documents need to be carefully tracked and the developer's proposals carefully reviewed for compliance. The County of Monterey successfully utilized the services of Keyser Marston, a statewide real estate advisory firm, in compliance issues involving the East Garrison development. This is just one example, and one firm, presented as a local example if the City staff wish to consult with their counterparts at the County on their experience. The Miramonte project is extremely large and complex and warrants the retention of specialized professionals.

Such professionals would help the City avoid certain pitfalls that occur frequently with large developments, where promises are not fulfilled and the negotiated language turns out to have a loophole favorable to the developer.

Thank you for your work in ensuring that the largest development in Soledad's history is carefully planned and executed to fulfill the City's vision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael DeLapa". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "M" and "D".

Michael DeLapa
Executive Director