

# South SF approves 800-home development next to BART

By [Adam Brinklow](#) Updated Nov 14, 2019, 10:16am PST



*Courtesy of South San Francisco*

Update: Shortly after midnight, the South San Francisco City Council [approved the project 4-1](#).

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Today, [the South San Francisco City Council will vote](#) whether to approve plans for a new mixed-use development in the middle of its city, one that could add hundreds of homes to a community whose housing production has been moribund in recent years.

Developer L37/KASA has a sprawling plan for the city-owned site at [1051 Mission Road](#), located next to the South San Francisco BART station. As the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) reports, the project will including 800 apartments, 158 of

them priced for people making between 25 and 80 percent of the median San Mateo County income.

(According to the City Council, the San Mateo County average for 2019 is \$105,667, but for South SF the median income comes in just over \$92,000.)

The proposal includes a one-acre park, a roughly 8,000-square-foot childcare facility, 879 parking spots, and nearly 13,000 square feet of commercial and retail space, all spread across three buildings ranging up to eight stories.

L37/KASA began petitioning in earnest to build during the summer, but the process goes back at least to 2018 when the city went looking for parties to start building on this site, choosing from among four proposals.

The city tags the 5.9-acre area the “PUC site,” because South San Francisco purchased the land from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission in 2007 as part of a larger 13.2 acre exchange.

“The area, in roughly the geographic center of the city and adjacent to SSF BART and SamTrans service, has largely been vacant or developed with old, outdated commercial buildings,” a city staff report from October notes.

But South SF residents and neighbors have no shortage of opinions about the project.

Some groups support the plan; the Silicon Valley Leadership Group sent an email to the city calling the PUC site “an ideal location for high-density housing” and praising the developer’s ambitions.

The nonprofit Bay Area Housing Action Coalition backed the proposal. The pro-housing group said in a letter that its only criticism was that the project is too small, noting that it “would like to see this site’s potential maximized to include 1,000 homes.”

But many neighbors have slammed the potential new construction as intrusive, oversized, and out of character.

“Hundreds of signatures on petitions demanding limits on the size and scope of this development have been submitted to the City Clerk,” Cathy Rosaia says in an email to the City Council, but “to date not one unit of development has been reduced.”

Many of the anti-housing ilk say that they're fine with the idea of new construction at the location but want it at a smaller scale.

"The community does not support eight stories at this location," South SF resident Nancy Bregman says via email, calling the City Council "rude and disrespectful" for their alleged disregard of past complaints.

By South SF standards, the addition of 800 new homes at once would be downright shocking.

According to the U.S. Census, South City's housing stock has declined significantly in recent years, from 21,576 homes during the last full census in 2010 down to an estimated 21,117 in 2018, meaning that on average the city has a net loss of 51 homes per year.

Note that those census estimates have pretty big margins of error, so odds are housing gains are more significant than they appear.

[Between 2015 and 2017](#), the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimates that South SF permitted some 525 new homes, about 28 percent of what ABAG projects the city will need to keep up with job growth by 2023.

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "South San Francisco has far outpaced housing production in recent years," noting that since 2010, the city has "added 8,000 jobs and 750 units of housing."