



January 26, 2021

City of Pasadena Design Commission
Attn: Tess Molinar
Hale Building
175 N. Garfield Ave., 2nd Floor
Pasadena, CA 91101

Re: Amendments to the Affordable Housing Concession Menu – Support

Dear Members of the Planning Commission

Pasadena Heritage supports the proposed amendments to the Affordable Housing Concession Menu. We commend staff for developing a successful program that leads to the construction of more affordable units, sets reasonable limits on developer concessions, and expedites the project approval process. We have objected to numerous projects that utilized the State Density Bonus law because we felt they were out-of-scale and inappropriate for Pasadena. These projects were awarded extra height and density in exchange for only a minimal amount of very low income units. In the past year, we have seen Concession Menu projects build a broader spectrum of affordable units in more appropriately sized buildings, and for these reasons we believe the Menu is working just as intended.

We are pleased to see Staff attempt to incorporate the Concession Menu in City of Gardens zones. Though it can be byzantine, the City of Gardens ordinance leads to contextual, well-designed projects and is likely the closest Pasadena will get to form-based code in the near term. As Pasadena continues to build multi-family housing citywide, a large portion will have to be accommodated in RM zones. We would much rather see these projects make use of the Concession Menu than a density bonus. The proposed concessions seem reasonable, allowing some flexibility while preserving the intent of the City of Gardens standards.

We express our support for these changes and look forward to hearing the Planning Commission's feedback.

Sincerely,

Susan N. Mossman
Executive Director

Andrew Salimian
Preservation Director

Cc: Andre Sahakian, AICP – Senior Planner