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RE: Sid Commons Apartment Project

Dear Council Members:

Thank you for considering our comments on the Sid Commons project along the Petaluma River. While Marin Audubon Society does not usually comment on projects in Sonoma County, which is the Madrone Audubon Society's geographic area, but we write now because this massive development would destroy natural resources and ecological functions that are critical for wildlife and for the public. The information provided clearly shows that this site is not appropriate for this development.

The site consists of natural shoreline, seasonal wetlands, and riparian corridor that is fresh water habitat for birds, amphibians and endangered salmonids. These riparian corridor and non-tidal wetland resources are not only habitat, they provide floodplain, stabilize riverbanks, improve water and air quality and sequester carbon. All and are an important component of the Petaluma River system, and have substantial public benefit.

The project would have significant adverse impacts on the ecosystem of the Petaluma River. The project design is outdated and environmentally damaging. The design includes filling of wetlands, widening, terracing and riprapping of riverbanks. It would destroy riparian vegetation, is designed to speed water from the site, would destroy riparian vegetation and salmonid habitat, and increase sedimentation and urban runoff, which would degrade water quality.

The project would completely destroy the natural resources and the ecological functioning of the site. It would destroy the northern reach of the Petaluma River and have broader undefined impacts on downstream resources of the river and the estuary. Adverse impacts would be both short and long time.

Marin Audubon Society has great interest in the protecting the shoreline of the Petaluma River. We own and permanently protect properties in the Petaluma River. We urge that the appeal be denied and the protections on the property be retained.

Sincerely,

Barbara Salzman, Chair
Conservation Committee
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society