

THE LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS
OF PALO ALTO



3921 E. BAYSHORE RD., SUITE 209 • PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA 94303 • 650-903-0600 • www.lwvpaloalto.org

May 13, 2016

Mayor Patrick Burt
Palo Alto City Council
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301

Dear Mayor Burt and Council Members:

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto (LWVPA) supports the concept of a Fifth Scenario to be studied in the Comprehensive Plan EIR. We agree that the Fifth Scenario should encompass Points A. to G. in the "City Council Motion Restated" on page 8 of the May 16 staff report. However, we strongly urge that the City Council use the Fifth Scenario to study the impacts of both significantly increasing the supply of housing and analyzing the effects of the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP) proposals.

LWVPA has adopted housing policies that encourage housing opportunities for all economic levels, ages and ethnicities, as well as housing that is open to everyone. Our policies also promote a balance of jobs and housing and support regional planning. A Fifth Scenario that explores the jobs-housing imbalance is needed for you, as the decision makers, to understand the full impacts of increasing the housing supply.

Staff's Option C for the Fifth Scenario, which calls for 20% more housing than Scenario 4, is a step in the right direction. However, we believe that it does not go far enough to make a real difference in addressing the housing shortfalls in Palo Alto. More and more, you are hearing from residents who are asking the City to be more proactive in this area.

In order to enable fully informed decisions about the future of Palo Alto, the EIR should analyze the impacts of a scenario far greater than the staff suggestion of a 20% increase in housing units. This scenario would allow you to evaluate how such an increase will impact quality of life in Palo Alto, including parks and open space, community character and design, etc., as well as effects on greenhouse gases and benefits to the region in balancing jobs and housing. The Fifth Scenario should also incorporate the recommendations of the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan. The S/CAP goals and principles will significantly reduce greenhouse gases and other environmental impacts. An analysis of the goals and policies to meet the 80/30 goal is most desirable at this time.

Please adopt for study a Fifth Scenario which includes an increase in housing units far greater than 20%.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ellen Forbes". The signature is written in black ink.

Ellen Forbes, President