



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area
Hillview Avenue, Los Altos, CA 94022**

May 17, 2015

Mayor John McAlister and Members of the City Council
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View 94041

Re: May 19, 2015 Council Meeting – Agenda Item 7.2 – Potential Amendments to the Condominium Conversion Ordinance

Dear Mayor McAlister and Members of the City Council:

The League of Women Voters of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area would like to comment on the potential amendments to the Condominium Conversion Ordinance. The LWV supports a city's ability to refuse conversion of apartments to condominiums, when such conversion is not in the best interests of the city. We believe that incentivizing the conversion of rental units to ownership units is not in the best interests of Mountain View.

First, the City is currently losing and/or displacing many tenants due to rapidly escalating rents. Incentivizing the removal of rental units from this already tight rental market would exacerbate this problem. Secondly, the 1979 Conversion Limitation Ordinance was passed by the voters "In order to provide for the housing needs of all economic segments of the community..." The goal of providing for housing needs of all economic segments, especially lower-income residents who are unlikely to be able to purchase a home, is fully as important today as in 1979.

If the Council were to amend the Condominium Conversion Ordinance, we would recommend strengthening the ordinance. Rather than tying conversions to the exact number of apartments existing in the City in 1979, it could tie the number of apartments to the total percentage of dwelling units, so that as more ownership units are built, more rental units would be required, also, before conversions are permitted.

Or the City could consider amending the ordinance so that conversions are tied to rental vacancy rates. Typical ordinances in our area don't allow conversions unless the vacancy rate is greater than 5%, for example.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

Sincerely yours,
Donna Yobs
1157 Karen Way
Mountain View, CA 94040
Co-Chair, Housing Committee
LWV of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area

Cc: Randy Tsuda Jannie Quinn Dan Rich