



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

February 18, 2008

Mayor Tom Means and Members of the City Council
City of Mountain View
P.O. Box 7540
500 Castro Street
Mountain View 94041

Re: Council Meeting Feb.19th, Agenda Item: 7.1

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers:

The League of Women Voters of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area is pleased to see that the City is reviewing the Affordable Housing Strategies adopted in 2006. Some progress has been made on developing a rental project for very low-income families, which was the LWV's highest priority. The LWV is also pleased that an additional staff person has been hired so that more effort can be spent on affordable housing; again, we believed that this was a high priority.

The LWV has also supported the Habitat for Humanity proposal for a home ownership project for very low-income households. And we recently supported the City's contributing additional funds to the Housing Trust of Santa Clara County as this is a good vehicle for helping first-time homeowners.

We support the concept of helping a continuum of housing needs and agree that first-time homebuyers need additional help in this difficult housing market. As the staff report points out, however, a program that focuses on teachers and public safety employees may not be very successful in reaching these targets. Before moving forward on its own first-time homebuyer assistance program, we hope the Council will look carefully at whom this program can actually serve in Mountain View and what income levels should be targeted.

In addition, before the Council decides to allocate the substantial funds that staff is recommending in these amendments, in particular with regard to the first-time homebuyers program, we suggest that the Council review some of the other strategies which were highly recommended in 2006. Two strategies which had significant Council and EPC support, for example, were landbanking and an acquisition/rehab project such as Maryce Freelen Place. The latter may not be feasible in today's economic climate, but we believe these strategies are worth revisiting before the Affordable Housing Strategies are finally amended this year.

Sincerely,

Donna Yobs
1157 Karen Way
Mountain View, CA 94040
Co-Chair of Housing Committee

League of Women Voters of Los Altos-Mountain View Area

Cc: Kevin Duggan
Linda Lauzze
Elaine Costello