



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

June 5, 2016

Mayor Showalter and Members of the City Council
Mountain View City Hall, 500 Castro Street
P.O. Box 7540
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

In re: Item 6.2, June 7, 2016 Agenda: Companion Unit Ordinance Update and Other Potential Text Amendments

Honorable Mayor Showalter and Members of the City Council:

The League of Women Voters supports actions that provide affordable housing for all Californians. Based on this position, we are happy to see this proposal to update Mountain View's Companion Unit Regulations. Such units (aka ADUs) are a great way to increase the number of people able to live in Mountain View, without negative impacts on existing single-family neighborhoods.

Eliminating lot size requirements and relying on other constraints such as FAR and setback rules to regulate the size and placement of ADUs is a great idea. We also support lowering parking space requirements for ADUs to one per unit.

We must respectfully disagree with the EPC's recommendation to continue to assess park-in-lieu fees on new ADU construction, even at a reduced rate. The anticipated amount of funds generated is negligible compared to what is needed in this fund, and to what is contributed by other development. But it's still a significant amount of money for a homeowner deciding whether to build a companion unit, and therefore a potentially discouraging factor. Since only 11 ADUs have been constructed since 2003, we hope you will remove this fee, as an additional incentive for construction of more of these units. We are particularly interested in promoting the construction of these units because they are intrinsically more likely to be somewhat affordable.

We applaud, however, the EPC's recommendation that language be included that would discourage any use of new ADUs for short-term rentals. We would very much like to see Council make it a priority to tackle the problem of short-term rentals taking housing units off the general market. In the meantime, we think it would be easy to carry out the EPC's recommendation in any one of several ways. For example, the EPC's recommendation regarding owner occupancy deserves discussion, though we recognize that it might be over-simplified.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Donna Yobs
Co-Chair, Housing Committee
League of Women Voters of Los Altos/Mountain View Area
Mountain View, CA 94040

Cc: Diana Pancholi Randy Tsuda
Terry Blount Dan Rich