



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area**

October 15, 2016

Mayor Bruins and Members of the City Council  
Chair Moison and Members of the Planning and Transportation Committee  
City of Los Altos  
1 N. San Antonio Road  
Los Altos, CA 94022

Re: Joint Study Session, October 18, 2016

Agenda Item #3 - Affordable Housing Program

The LWV supports affordable housing and also inclusionary zoning. As the staff report shows, the main way that Los Altos provides housing affordable to those at lower income levels is with its below-market-rate (BMR) or inclusionary program. The table on page 2 demonstrates that the City falls far short of providing housing units for those with the lowest incomes.

Obviously, if the current 108 affordable multi-family units are not monitored to ensure that they serve those for whom they are deed-restricted, the program is ineffective, and even leads to much criticism within the community. We are disappointed that the administration apparently can no longer be revenue-neutral, as it formerly was due to developers and apartment owners paying annual fees and/or sales commissions to the administrative agency. We hope the City will agree to hire an administrator that can handle the program competently, even though this means using City funds.

With respect to administration of the affordable second units, as we stated in our letter on the Second Living Units, we have been told that very little monitoring has been done regarding rents and occupancy of these units. If the units are deed-restricted, we believe the City should contract with the administrator to monitor these second units, as well.

The staff report mentions that the nexus study which would provide a basis for Los Altos to consider affordable housing linkage fees is due shortly. We had suggested that the City consider such a policy partly because the City can no longer require BMRs in rental housing developments, due to the Palmer court decision in 2009, unless a developer is using the State Density Bonus Law.

Thank you for considering our input.

Sue Russell  
Co-Chair, Housing Committee  
LWV of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area  
Cc: Chris Jordan                      Jon Biggs  
      David Kornfield                 Jon Maginot