



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

March 5, 2017

Mayor Ken Rosenberg and Members of the City Council
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View 94041

Re: Council Study Session - March 7, Agenda Item 3.1 – Gatekeepers-Process and Long-Range Planning

Dear Mayor Rosenberg and Members of the City Council:

The LWV supports actions that provide housing affordable to all Californians. We are aware, as is the Council, that there is presently a severe shortage of housing affordable for those who are extremely low-income, very low-income, low-income and even moderate income.

For these reasons, we urge the Council to adopt new criteria or a point system to score Gatekeeper requests. All of the staff recommendations have merit. Because the focus of our committee is on housing, we encourage the Council to **require** residential projects to include a certain percentage of affordable units in order to get the go-ahead to proceed. The City's 1999 (unenforceable due to Palmer) ordinance requires that 10% of the rentals be offered as below market rent (BMRs) at 65% area median (AMI) rents. We think this percentage should be required, but the **average** rent should be set at 65% AMI. Some units could be offered at lower rents and some at higher rents in order to help the "missing middle."

In addition, to help satisfy the shortage of units for the "missing middle", we hope the Council will consider requiring 10% of ownership units to be built as BMRs, instead of allowing the developers to pay in-lieu fees.

Finally, regarding community benefit expectations, we want to point out once again that several of the recently approved residential projects have provided very few BMRs in order to satisfy the community benefits required. The City has been far more successful with BMR production when the developer is either using the State Density Bonus Law or needs approval at the Gatekeeper stage. We hope the financial analysis for the El Camino Real and San Antonio Precise Plans referenced on page 7 of the staff report will be revisited.

Thank you for considering our input.

Donna Yobs
Co-Chair, Housing Committee
LWV of the Los Altos/Mountain View Area

cc: Terry Blount Dan Rich Randy Tsuda
 Martin Alkire Wayne Chen