



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

April 3, 2017

Members of the Planning and Transportation Committee
City of Los Altos
1 N. San Antonio Road
Los Altos, CA 94022

Re: PTC Meeting - April 6th

Agenda Item #3 - Accessory Dwelling Unit Recommendations

The LWV supports affordable housing and incentives for development of affordable housing. As the excellent staff report points out, Los Altos has depended upon accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as one way to achieve affordable housing. The State is now requiring that restrictions on ADUs be eased as an important method for producing more affordable housing.

The staff report points out that certain changes to the Los Altos second living units, now called ADUs, are required by State law. Most important, parking requirements must be reduced; we have pointed out earlier that these have been a disincentive to building ADUs. We urge adoption of the staff recommendation.

We urge the City to use its general zoning requirements (lot coverage, setback requirements, etc) to protect neighborhood character and eliminate the minimum lot size requirement specific to ADUs. Mountain View, Palo Alto, and many other nearby jurisdictions have eliminated the minimum lot size completely in the last year in order to fully comply with the intent of the new State law.

Regarding removal of the affordability requirement, we believe the City has never really monitored these rent restrictions. Staff's analysis that removing these requirements is consistent with new State law and that ADUs will typically be units that are "affordable by design" makes good sense.

To further the goal of having new ADUs enter the permanent housing stock and help relieve regional housing shortages, we support a prohibition on ADU short-term rentals.

Just as the Design Review Committee suggested offering incentives for providing covered parking, similar incentives, such as a floor area bonus, could be offered to those who are willing to provide affordable units that are monitored annually to ensure they are truly affordable.

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