



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

November 11, 2018

Mayor Jean Mordo and Members of the City Council
City of Los Altos
1 N. San Antonio Road
Los Altos, CA 94022

Re: Agenda Item #5, Council Meeting Nov. 13th – Proposed 50-Unit Building at 4856 El Camino Real

Dear Mayor Mordo and Members of the City Council:

As we wrote earlier to the Planning Commission, the LWV supports affordable housing, including inclusionary zoning, so we are pleased to see the 8 below-market-rate units (BMRs) being built as part of this complex. The League believes that dispersing BMRs within a larger complex has been shown to be a socioeconomic and political success in California.

Again, as we wrote to the Planning Commission, we have a serious concern with the unit mix of the BMRs, and the Planning Commission agreed with our concern. The City's policy, like that of most jurisdictions, has always required that the affordable units reflect the size and number of bedrooms of the market-rate units. In this case, 6 of the total 9 one-bedroom units are proposed as BMRs, with just 1 three-bedroom unit and 1 two-bedroom unit as BMRs. **All the very low-income** BMRs are one-bedroom units, whereas the larger units would be moderate-income BMRs. Six of the eight BMRs are proposed as one-bedrooms, whereas the majority of the units in the total project are two and three-bedrooms. We encourage the City to require a mix of BMRs that more accurately reflects the size and number of bedrooms of the market-rate units.

The developer's offer to make one of the one-bedroom BMRs a larger one-bedroom unit does not change the fact that **all** the very low-income units are one-bedroom and that most of the total BMRs are one-bedroom. This is an insignificant change in the mix of BMRs presented to the Planning Commission. We believe that the developer is gaining significant density and incentives under the State Density Bonus Law and should be required to follow the City's policy regarding the unit mix of BMRs. The majority of the units in the total project are two and three-bedrooms. Therefore, the majority of the BMRs should be two and three-bedroom units. In addition, some of the two and three-bedroom unit BMRs should be very low-income rather than moderate income.

Sue Russell
Co-Chair, Housing Committee
LWV of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area

Cc: Chris Jordan Jon Biggs Zach Dahl