



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

March 20, 2019

Mayor Lee Eng and Members of the City Council
City of Los Altos
1 N San Antonio Road
Los Altos, CA 94022

Re: Agenda Item #7, Council Meeting March 26th – Housing Element Annual Status Report

Dear Mayor Lee Eng and Members of the City Council:

The LWV Housing Committee urges the Council to proceed with more strategies to incent affordable housing. We applaud the Council for increasing the below-market-rate percentage in both ownership and rental housing to 15% and for liberalizing the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinance.

Nonetheless, the chart on page 3 demonstrates the failure of Los Altos to provide much lower-income housing at all, including moderate-income housing. The 30 units shown as low-income include 10 ADUs that may not be lower-income housing but may be rented at very high rents. We agree that ADUs are theoretically “affordable by design”, but we know of some in Los Altos that rent at very high rates.

We also urge the Council to proceed rapidly with finalizing the commercial development linkage fee referenced under Program 4.3.7. Until the fees are actually established, this is still a work in progress.

We are pleased to see that the City has contracted with a reputable nonprofit to administer its BMR program and that Palo Alto Housing is evaluating the priority ranking process, which we have questioned in the past.

Finally, we believe that this update should persuade the Council that affordable housing should continue to be a top priority for the City. There are numerous additional programs/strategies that could be pursued.

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