



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

October 19, 2019

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

Re: City Council Meeting Oct. 22nd, Agenda Item # 11 – 5150 El Camino Real Development

Dear Mayor Lee Eng and Members of the City Council:

The League of Women Voters of the Los Altos/Mountain View Area enthusiastically supports the proposed development at 5150 El Camino Real. We are pleased to see the 28 below-market-rate units (BMRs) proposed for this site. These BMRs, along with the market-rate units, will give an enormous boost to the RHNA allocation of Los Altos with regard to all income categories. We think the BMR housing could serve local lower-wage earners as well as teachers and City employees. Almost 90% of the units are one and two-bedrooms, a housing type not typically being built in Los Altos and which are more “affordable by design” than larger units, thereby serving market-rate buyers who can’t afford many of the larger units recently approved.

We are pleased to see that the developer has provided rear and side setbacks that are greater than what is required. The developer has also accommodated the neighbors in the rear by orienting the balconies towards the interior of the project, instead of the rear as in the earlier plans, and by offering to plant trees in the back yards of the single-family homes abutting the development.

We note that the 290 parking spaces provided are far more than the 169 required under State Density Bonus Law and also far more than the 236 spaces which the parking study referenced in the Staff Report indicated should be necessary. The play areas appear to be adequate for families, including a pool, bocce ball court and children’s play area, all in safe locations and not on a roof deck.

We believe that El Camino Real is an appropriate place for five stories; the project will fit in with its El Camino neighbors. Finally, we think that higher density along El Camino is in keeping with the Los Altos General Plan and its vision for El Camino Real. Housing along this transit corridor encourages homeowners to use public transit or bike, reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

We do recommend that the BMR mix be slightly adjusted to better reflect the overall bedroom mix by providing 1 two-bedroom townhome and 2 three-bedroom townhomes instead of vice versa.

Sue Russell

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

Cc: Chris Jordan

Jon Biggs

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