

## City of Los Altos Sales Tax Update

## Los Altos In Brief

Los Altos' allocation of tax revenues from its October through December sales was 4.5\% higher than the same quarter one year ago.
Higher fuel prices and a general recovery in some categories of restaurants and general consumer goods contributed to the overall increase. The gains were partially offset by the previous closeout of an auto rental operation and by a decline in some home furnishing stores.
Adjusted for aberrations, taxable sales for all of Santa Clara County increased $5.1 \%$ over the same time period while the nine-county bay region as a whole was up 7.0\%.

## Sales Tax by Major Business Group



## Top 25 Producers

In Alphabetical Order
Armadillo Willys
BBQ \& Cafe
Chef Chus
Cover Story
Design \& Interiors
Draegers Super Markets
Earthworks
El Camino Unocal
First \& Main Sports Lounge
Footwear Etc
Grand Petroleum
Los Altos Chevron
Los Altos Grill
Los Altos Supply \& Garden Center

Lucky
Opa Authenic Greek Cuisine
Ricks
Rite Aid
Safeway
Tesoro West Coast Valero
Trader Joes
Turn 2 Solutions
Village Chevron
Vitamin Shoppe
Walgreens
Whole Foods Market

## California Overall

Retail sales in the final quarter of 2011, excluding onetime reporting aberrations, were up $7.8 \%$ compared to the same period in 2010. Strong 4th quarter sales brought statewide calendar year 2011 within $7.25 \%$ of the pre-recession peak reached in 2006. At their 2009 low point, retail sales were $18.6 \%$ below their 2006 highs.

## CA Local Sales Tax Receipts in \$Billions



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To close the remaining gap, annual retail sales need to grow by $\$ 40.5$ billion, a daunting task with high unemployment and weak housing markets still hindering growth. Retail sales have risen on strong demand for new autos, increased consumer spending, significant use tax receipts from alternative energy projects and federal stimulus funded infrastructure projects. However, rising fuel costs and continued economic uncertainties are expected to slow the rate of growth in the second half of this year.

Retailers downsizing ... creating new opportunities and challenges

A recent survey concluded that $53 \%$ of the U.S. population has made an online purchase and that $7 \%$ of all retail sales are now done over the Internet. With mobile and tablet shopping capabilities making online purchases ever easier, Internet market share is expected to hit 9\% by 2016.

The ease of online research has sharpened price competition and brick and mortar retailers are racing to accommodate the new consumer patterns by focusing on enhancing the shopping experience. This includes the development of more intimate shopping environments, use of social media to reach buyers, higher levels of customer service, specialized merchandise that cannot be purchased elsewhere and expanding the selection of goods offered with in-store kiosks supplemented with timely deliveries.

To cut overhead and compete on price, more retailers are going to the "endless aisle" concept of selling items not actually in the store. This allows the retailer to increase product variety in a smaller space.
Almost every major retailer has plans for either downsizing the footprint of new stores or subleasing space in existing stores.

On the plus side, this trend allows entrance into retail markets too
small for large format stores to be feasible. Less populous communities could find their retail bases growing with new compact stores offering the same or more merchandise as their larger counterparts. Communities with substantial existing retail could see new challenges in filling vacated space while also keeping up with the need for more inviting shopping environments.

## Sales Per Capita



## Los Altos Top 15 Business Types

| Business Type | Los Altos |  | County <br> Change | HdL State Change |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Q4 '11 | Change |  |  |
| Art/Gift/Novelty Stores | 9,605 | -14.5\% | -6.1\% | -2.1\% |
| Drug Stores | - CONF | ENTIAL - | 5.6\% | 8.0\% |
| Family Apparel | 8,491 | -2.8\% | 12.0\% | 10.6\% |
| Garden/Agricultural Supplies | - CONF | ENTIAL - | -15.7\% | 9.6\% |
| Grocery Stores Liquor | 82,713 | -1.9\% | 3.2\% | -1.2\% |
| Home Furnishings | 20,140 | -23.9\% | 2.9\% | 4.2\% |
| Jewelry Stores | 14,230 | 18.2\% | 9.8\% | 8.8\% |
| Personal Service-No Liquor | 7,394 | 8.4\% | 5.0\% | 5.6\% |
| Restaurants Beer And Wine | 48,810 | 14.9\% | 3.3\% | -0.4\% |
| Restaurants Liquor | 49,952 | 4.3\% | 9.9\% | 9.9\% |
| Restaurants No Alcohol | 26,530 | 26.1\% | 11.3\% | 7.3\% |
| Service Stations | 118,701 | 13.5\% | 15.1\% | 14.7\% |
| Specialty Stores | 29,031 | 30.1\% | 2.6\% | 2.1\% |
| Sporting Goods/Bike Stores | 9,460 | 65.3\% | 7.6\% | 7.1\% |
| Women's Apparel | 17,532 | 21.1\% | 6.9\% | 6.8\% |
| Total All Accounts | \$562,356 | 5.7\% | 7.6\% | 7.8\% |
| County \& State Pool Allocation | 77,915 | -3.7\% |  |  |
| Gross Receipts | \$640,272 | 4.5\% |  |  |

