

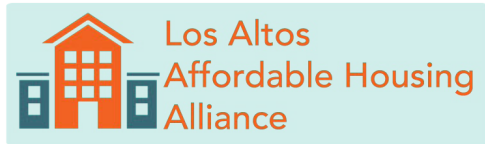
From: [patriciaevans](#) [REDACTED]
To: [Public Comment](#); CityCouncil@losaltosca.gov
Subject: Housing Element
Date: Monday, December 6, 2021 4:05:38 PM

I am a 40-year resident of Los Altos and am interested in the Housing Element, especially plans to expand extremely-low and low-income housing, for two reasons:

1. I have a developmentally disabled (autistic spectrum) son who needs ongoing support. He would like to use his Section 8 voucher to rent a 1-bedroom apartment near his family and almost no opportunities exist in Los Altos.
2. Building a community that is more diverse in income level would benefit all of us and is the morally right thing to do.

Instead of using taxpayers' dollars to appeal and fight the RHNA, or pass ordinances restricting the implementation of SB 9, why not embrace the requirement and work for a win-win solution that the majority of citizens will support.

Respectfully,
Patricia Evans



December 10, 2021

Re: Joint Study Session Agenda Item #1 - Housing Element Update

Dear Mayor Enander, Councilmembers, and Planning Commissioners,

The Los Altos Housing Element is the plan for housing in our community. The state requires us to update this plan every eight years; this cycle we face greatly increased state-mandated housing goals. This meeting is our city's first public discussion of the approaching update. We, the undersigned members of the Los Altos community, welcome the opportunity for more housing, more types of housing, and more affordable housing, in Los Altos.

We understand *affordable housing* in two ways. First, we need to add market rate housing that is more affordable because it is less expensive than the current extremely expensive single family homes on large single family lots that occupy most of Los Altos. Secondly, we need to add housing that is affordable to low income members of our community. Both of these goals are important to us.

The state has given us our RHNA (housing quota): almost 2000 new homes, including 843 market rate homes, in the next eight years. We have to plan for them. Not only that, but if we don't build our market rate RHNA, builders will be automatically approved for virtually any housing project they propose, regardless of whether it conforms to Los Altos's character. Right now, we are not building market rate homes even half as fast as required to reach our RHNA. We need to speed up the building of homes at all income levels. The Housing Element is how we do that.

The city has a vital role in the production of housing. We don't build it, but we make it possible for builders to build it. We can't create more land, so we need to use the land we have more efficiently. **To get more homes, we must allow housing in some parts of the city that don't presently allow housing, and we must allow more housing in some parts of the city that presently do allow housing.** There is no getting around this: we're not building enough housing right now, because we don't have enough places to build it. We have to change our zoning to allow more density in some parts of the city.

Because the city itself doesn't build housing, we must be realistic. Most owners who could build more housing won't build more housing. We need enough capacity so that the people who want to build will find enough sites to develop.

Moreover, to get more homes, we need to get out of the way of people who want to build them. Simply put, we need to eliminate red tape. Right now, it takes years for a multifamily project to get a building permit. **We must remove some of the constraints that slow projects down and that prevent some projects from being feasible at all.** In the Housing Element, the city should commit to the following programs:

- Make multifamily housing buildable by-right (without a Conditional Use Permit) in the downtown area, along San Antonio and on El Camino;
- Measure actual parking usage in multifamily buildings, and reduce parking minimums if it turns out we are requiring more parking than is actually needed;
- Exempt affordable units from impact fees;
- Exempt small multi-unit projects, five units or less, from Council approval;
- Hire more planning and building department staff, to expedite approval and permit issuance, and speed up the issuance of permits to approved projects.

There may be other constraints that should also be removed. **We are required to reach out to developers and to ask them about what constraints they find overly burdensome.** We should listen closely and commit to removing the additional constraints they mention, when reasonable.

We, like many Los Altos residents, want more housing in our city that is affordable to low-income residents. **The city must make at least one parcel of city-owned land available to affordable housing developers.** This could be a parking plaza, or another parcel of city-owned land like the bigger parcel at Fremont and Grant. Moreover, **we must fund affordable housing projects by requiring businesses and developers of single family housing to pay affordable housing fees;** we should not put this burden only on developers of multif-family housing.

The undersigned want to engage with this process with a constructive and encouraging voice. We want Los Altos to be a model for other affluent cities as they endeavor to meet the needs of their communities. We want our city to promote new housing, not resist it. When our city's leadership rezones to allow more housing, eliminates unnecessary constraints on building, and leverages city-owned land to build low-income housing, you will demonstrate the wisdom and vision to bring Los Altos to an inclusive and prosperous future.

Respectfully,

[Los Altos Affordable Housing Alliance](#)

[Los Altos for Racial Equity \(LARE\) Steering Committee](#) (Salim Damerджи, Tanya Maluf, Toni Moos, Renee Rashid)

[Housing Choices](#), a nonprofit supporting housing opportunities for people with disabilities
[Peninsula for Everyone](#), a social welfare nonprofit advocating for an inclusive and sustainable Peninsula

[SV@Home](#), advocates for housing and affordable housing in Silicon Valley

Susan Russell, 45-year Los Altos homeowner

Anne Paulson, Los Altos homeowner

Daphne Ross, Los Altos homeowner

Patrick Dupuis, Los Altos homeowner

Margo Horn, Los Altos homeowner

Pat Brodkey, Los Altos Homeowner of 27 years, Volunteer mentor and tutor to K-12 students

Jeanine Valadez, 32-year Los Altos homeowner, tech executive retired

Reynette Au, 29-year Los Altos homeowner, tech executive

Norma Schroder, Los Altos homeowner

William Lamping, Los Altos native

Marie Young, 45-year Los Altos resident, homeowner

John Lamping, 34-year Los Altos homeowner

Kelly Snider, Endowed Professor of Practice, Urban and Regional Planning, SJSU

Paul Baker, 41 year Los Altos resident

Diana Aston, Los Altos resident

John Auther, SJ

Annie Rogaski, 13 year Los Altos resident / home owner, tech executive

Sasha Zbrozek, attempted Los Altos resident

Natalie Elefant

Raiza Singh, Mountain View renter

Barbara Kyser

Patricia Evans, Los Altos homeowner for 42 years, retired business consultant

Lalitha Rajagopalan, Los Altos home owner

Narayanan Kaniyur, Los Altos home owner

Max Ross, Los Altos resident

Nancy Ginsburg Gill, 53 year resident of Los Altos, retired educator

Stephen Gill, retired teacher

Eva Grove

Elaine Haight, retired Foothill College Faculty, Los Altos homeowner

December 11, 2021

Re: Joint Study Session Agenda Item #1 - Housing Element Update

Dear Mayor Enander, Councilmembers, and Planning Commissioners,

It's great that we're starting the Housing Element process! As we proceed, we must be certain we have an accurate understanding of where we are now, and what we have been doing so far. Data is important.

With a public records request, I obtained all the building permits for the last ten years, and counted the new homes. **We've only built about 450 new homes in the last eight years.** We have to write a plan for 1958 new homes, including 843 market rate homes, over the next eight years. We cannot credibly claim that we can change nothing and double the rate of market rate home production, let alone the rate of building homes at other income levels.

I've heard some people say that it would be possible to submit a Housing Element without any rezoning in it. While this may be an attractive thought, the numbers just don't work. We need to allow more housing than we have been allowing, somewhere.

The data we have been reporting to the states has not been accurate. We've been reporting five homes for every two we create. From 2013 to 2020, we reported permitting 1120 homes. This, however, includes over 650 homes we were not allowed to include.

- We reported 181 homes at the Terraces, the senior residential complex on Pine Avenue. This project replaced 146 homes. As we were not permitted to count replacement homes, this was a 146 home overcount.
- We reported the apartments at the Colonnade, next to Whole Foods, and the condos behind them on Marcelli court, in 2014 and then again in 2015. We are not permitted to count projects twice. This was a 201 home overcount.
- From 2013 to 2019, we reported teardown/replacements as new homes. As I've previously brought to the council's attention, this was not permitted. This was about a 320 home overcount.

With a good understanding of where we are now, we can move forward as a community.

Sincerely,

Anne Paulson

From: [Jeanine Valadez](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT Joint Study Session AGENDA ITEM 01 - 12/14/2021
Date: Monday, December 13, 2021 1:58:46 PM

Honorable Members of the City Council and the Planning Commission, City Manager Gabe Engeland, City Attorney Jolie Houston, City Clerk Andrea Chelemengos,

I hereby submit my public comment on Agenda Item 1 of the Joint CC/Planning Commission Study Session: Housing Element Update:

I submitted a comment generally at the City's losaltoshousing.org website, but having heard no response, nor having seen any change to the website, I am compelled to expound my comment in today's meeting.

Is there a reason why the list of targeted outreach communities on the front page of losaltoshousing.org does not specifically identify people who work in Los Altos?

I am speaking of workers across the entire socioeconomic spectrum, but particularly our low-wage workers who do not have comprehensive advocacy groups to speak for them. Take, for example, CSA, a wonderful organization; even their strategic plan acknowledges that they *do not* serve workers at this time (workers are part of their future vision). Advocacy groups typically function by waiting for people to come to them. As a result, these advocacy groups represent segments of the underserved that generally fall into one of these categories:

- 1) Workers who are confident enough to seek aid directly, or,
- 2) Workers who are in dire enough straits that they gain referrals, or,
- 3) Workers who have the time to come seek consultation or aid (for example, a worker may live locally).

On the other hand, low wage workers who hold full-time, and often, multiple jobs, typically do NOT seek out the services of such agencies, primarily because they do not have the time to do so. Yet, they may still suffer from the exclusionary nature of housing in Los Altos and, therefore, often have to commute long distances to make a living. Local workers that live far away cannot come to after-work outreach meetings.

It is imperative that *direct* outreach be conducted for this segment of our community. Direct outreach can be enabled in many ways:

- 1) collaborate with local employers (including the school districts and public safety) to hold multiple outreach sessions on rotating bases during work hours,
- 2) conduct lunch-time pop-ups (offer beverages and snacks) in locations where low-wage workers are known to take breaks or gather,
- 3) reach out to the senior community who employ caregivers and get them to invite their workers to a downtown pop-up during work hours,

4) reach out to other residents who employ full-time childcare personnel, housecleaners, au pairs, house managers, etc., to invite their workers to downtown pop-ups during work hours.

In addition to direct outreach to workers, the Housing Element team needs to derive a germane and understandable outreach questionnaire for workers. The questionnaire needs to get to the core of understanding:

- 1) What factors would make Los Altos a feasible place to live for them, including levels of affordability, transportation needs, schooling, job security and mobility, etc..
- 2) What they need to feel a part of this community. What would it take to get them to actually want to live here? We need to tap into their feelings about social belonging, about programs, opportunities, safety, and local beneficent organizations that can provide support and advice, etc.

At the end of the day, Los Altos must build housing across a range of affordability strata. What good is lower-income housing if we build it in a vacuum? I hope that the City Council, City Staff, and the Planning Commission correct a great wrong here and endeavor to conduct direct outreach to the community of workers who serve our city.

Thank you for your time,

Jeanine Valadez

Disclosure: I am a PARC Commissioner, but make my comment today as a resident of Los Altos.