

Voters Guide

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto

Nonpartisan information on candidates & ballot measures

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Candidate Statements and Order of Appearance

Statements: The League of Women Voters submitted written questions to all candidates. Candidates entered responses, biographical information, and priorities to the LWV California's nonpartisan Smart Voter Web site. See Smart Voter <<http://smartvoter.org/>> for information that candidates may have added after the *Voters Guide* September 20 deadline. The League does not edit candidate's material.

Palo Alto City Council (vote for 5)

Questions for Palo Alto City Council candidates

1. In light of the economic downturn and possible reduced income for the city in future years, how do you propose to both balance the budget and meet the city's desires for quality services ?
2. An updated Comprehensive Plan is due to be approved in 2010. What changes, if any, should be made to the Plan and why?
3. The Baylands Master Plan guides land use east of Route 101. Several land-use changes are currently being proposed relating to composting, recycling, parkland, airport needs, and hotel development. What land uses do you think desirable and what uses are incompatible in the Baylands?



The League is a broadly based, nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and involved participation in government through voters service, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Dan Dykwel

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Marketing communications consultant and Realtor
- B.A. Michigan State University , Communications Arts and Sciences, with honors; 18 years technology industry management
- Board Memberships: Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce, Palo Alto Recreation Foundation, Rubicon Children's Center
- Palo Alto PTA Council President, PAUSD School Parcel Tax and Bond Measures
- Blue Ribbon Task Force for Palo Alto Public Safety Building
- PAUSD Program Review Committee-20-Year Facilities Master Plan
- Fundraising Co-Chair: Youth Community Service, Palo Alto Black and White Ball (benefitting Palo Alto Recreation Foundation and Partners in Education) ◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

- Strategic Fiscal Management - Maximize efficient use of resources and extend strategic planning to include civic partners, i.e., schools, non-profits
- Promoting a Healthy Local Economy - develop a strategic plan to attract and retain businesses that benefit our community and help retain city services
- Infrastructure Repair and Renewal - Seek sources of funding to ensure the safe condition of our streets, sidewalks, parks, bridges, public buildings ◇

Response to League Questions:

1. To eliminate our structural deficit, we must re-establish a sustainable balance between what we want our City to provide and how to fund those services. We should be prepared for reductions in staff positions and programs, longer public safety response times, reduced service hours, and pressure on employee benefits. We must work aggressively and creatively to control costs, employing best practices. Concurrently, we must pursue fair, prudent and stable increases in revenue sources by promoting a healthy business climate. We need to keep uppermost in mind what Palo Alto means to its residents. This includes an astute commitment to the environment and preserving parks, programs and similar amenities. Integrating these imperatives into our operating budget requires leadership in assuring a comprehensive approach. ◇

2. The Comprehensive Plan guides land use policies that determine our development and incorporates the values we hold as a community. The housing component update to the Comprehensive Plan that is approaching will allow us to engage in a community conversation over how we wish our neighborhoods to continue to evolve and to enhance the

character, diversity, and vitality of our city. We must create a sustainable level of development that can be supported without straining our infrastructure, services, schools and open space. ◇

3. The Baylands Master Plan reflects our community's commitment to this valuable resource. Restoring the landfill to parkland is a long-held desire of our community and should be completed. The compost operation is incompatible with the park but we must find a way to do our own composting. We should manage our own recycling and not move it to another community. The airport is valuable but should not expand into open space areas. Bicycle access to the Baylands should be enhanced through improved access across Highway 101. Stewardship of the Baylands should be a high priority. ◇

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Victor Frost

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Homeless Advocate & Panhandler
- Humboldt State University. Electronics, art,
- Political science. Constitutional Law, Film Making ◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

- Fighting for Constitutional Rights and homeless discrimination
- Redevelopment of the Oppenata Center
- Replanting of the Organic Homeless Garden ◇


Response to League Questions:

1. At this time. because of legal entanglements my hands are tied up....In time I will resolve most legal and political problems to a competent level...vf ◇

2. This is an ongoing problem that has become a cancer in our community, it will take a daily struggle by all to help the People of Palo Alto.l ◇

3. Redevelopment of our marsh lands, the marsh mouse can leave at any time.... Daylabor homeless will be hired for landscaping, bulding KOE camp grounds \$3.00 a night this will clean up our streets of campers, like me... ◇

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SMART VOTER,
<<http://smartvoter.org/>>, is online providing information about candidates and measures for the November 3 election.

Smart Voter provides a ballot look-up feature. Type in your street address and zip code and see what will be on your November ballot. You can also track your mail ballot.

Chris Gaither

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Community Volunteer
- Affordable Housing Property Manager - 10 years HUD/Tax Credit
- Secretary, La Comida Senior Lunch Program -10 year member
- Financial Analyst - Commercial Insurance
- Cruise -Tour Travel Agency Owner
- Home Health Care business Owner
- Election Poll Inspector - Palo Alto since 1992 ◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

- Community Building - enhancing police relations and supporting the PAUSD in its efforts to provide a healthy/ encouraging learning environment
- Creating city revenue resources that don't further tax businesses or residents so that services are fully fundable and supported
- Effective land use to achieve balanced mixture of buildings; parks; open space - support residents who are impacted by High Speed Rail ◇

Response to League Questions:

1. Continue the salary/benefit cost containment being implemented by the current city manager for all staff and unions; allow normal attrition and replace positions with experienced volunteers where possible - this will help to keep services operational (2) Work with the Chamber of Commerce to establish a city supported service to assist business owners in negotiating affordable office/commercial rent terms so that they can stay in business and thrive (3) Promote in other city media/journals both on-line and print the benefits of doing business in Palo Alto, to encourage much needed diverse retail and commercial business growth in order to expand our offered business services, and help to increase our tax revenue base. ◇

2. Palo Alto has been extremely proactive and successful in building and providing family housing, both affordable and market rate. The current plan calls for 2700 additional units in the next 7 to 10 years. The questions - where do we get the land? And how do we support the additional people for the housing with respect to city and retail services, schools and quality of life issues? The number should be reduced to about 1500, and the goal should be to create housing that fits in with the Palo Alto landscape, and not dense housing that simply hoards people into a community like Arbor Real (Rickey's Hyatt), and buildings that are too big for the allocated space. Additionally, we could use more affordable senior housing. ◇

3. The Baylands, golf course, and airport - all located in one of the most relaxing areas of Palo Alto! I enjoy dining at the golf course and watching the planes and fireworks from the baylands. I support the airport as it is an effective emergency resource. I support a hotel as it will be built on land already devoted to a restaurant and we need the revenue. Besides, a hotel next to both an airport and a golf course, how much better can it get for a visitor! Composting and recycling - Stanford has a great recycling program and an expansive lake area, why not collaborate in a joint program? ◇

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Tim Gray

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Business Advisor, Accountability Champion
- Business Owner, Treasury Advocates, Business Advisor to Children's Hospitals throughout the nation and tax advisor for mergers and acquisitions
- Financial Leader at the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford (1990 to 1997) Built the financial operations from the ground up.
- Director of Revenue and Reimbursement, O'Connor Hospital (Daughters of Charity)
- Licensed Certified Public Accountant (CPA) -- Arthur Young and Company ◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

- Fiscal Discipline / Responsibility. Our expenditures, as measured by inflation-adjusted cost per resident, are on a non-sustainable growth curve.
- Applying solid business principles of Accountability and Transparency to City decisions. We must openly face contentious issues without fear.
- Elevated HSR must not divide our town. Environmental Stewardship and Citizen Participation from a broad spectrum of residents, not just "insiders" ◇

Response to League Questions:

1. We must assure that our business community, especially hotels, retain the "destination of choice" to preserve our revenue stream. However, good business practices dictate that we manage our expenditures. The first step is to inventory the services provided by our city and then define mutual priorities. This is ongoing discussion for every client I advise, and there is a standard and disciplined process to achieve this fiscal responsibility. I have discussed this with City Manager Jim Keene, and he will be an excellent cooperator with the council, however the council members must "pull up their sleeves" and establish the mutual priorities. City Manager Keene is a professional, and knows how to set spending limits. When decisions are made,

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Gray continued

the Council must provide a united stand, because even the most minor decrease will result in a service reduction, and we are well aware of our history of caving in to a "vocal minority." ◇

2. We should honor the historical agreements contained within the Comprehensive Plan, however we need to tighten up on a few areas where provisions have been manipulated to allow mega-projects which have not preserved long-established neighborhood retail services, diluted our schools without coordination with the school district, and failed to respect historical uses and qualities. We can look at those projects that are widely believed to be mistakes, and close the loopholes that allowed what many in our community believe was an abuse of the process. ◇

3. We must respect the historical choices that we have made in the past. Our airport deserves the "grandfather" protections out of an honoring of long and established choice that the residents have used. I know that there are many good ideas on how the business model of the airport can even be stronger. There is a way to balance this historical resource, and keep our community local. When it comes to additional uses of the Baylands, we must primarily respect the sensitive ecology as a first priority. However, man and nature can mix, and there may be a pathway for win-win proposals. More ecological benefits can be gained with a creative approach. ◇

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John Hackmann

The candidate did not respond. Check the Smart Voter website <<http://smartvoter.org/>> for any information submitted after the *Voters Guide* deadline.

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Karen Holman

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Small business owner, consultant
- Planning & Transportation Commission, 8 years, chair 2 years
- Director, Palo Alto History Museum
- Co-chair, South of Forest Working Group
- Board, Woman's Club
- Board, University South Neighborhood Association
- BA, Graphic Arts, University of Arkansas ◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

LAND USE: Whether it's High Speed Rail, housing developments, parking problems, or questionable public benefits of PC zoning, Land Use is a top priority. I've served on the Planning Commission for the last eight years, and will dutifully apply my land use expertise to the many issues and projects facing our city.

ECONOMIC DOLLARS AND SENSE: Citizens and our City government are facing tough economic times. We can't have a business as usual approach to the City's budget, services, and aging infrastructure. I will analyze proposals with an eye to illuminate need, waste, alternatives, and creative solutions.

PUBLIC TRUST: As people who love, respect and value Palo Alto, we must recognize there is sagging satisfaction with the City according to the Level of Service survey and community comments. It's time to reconnect with the residents and businesses that are impacted by governmental decisions. We must respect the citizens of Palo Alto by restoring the public trust. ◇

Response to League Questions:

1. Short-term budgets have to match long-term goals. There is opportunity in being more creative and proactive in retaining existing and attracting new retail uses. The retail permit process needs to be overhauled to coordinate approvals, expediting occupancy. Continued encouragement of hotels will add income to the City. The City needs to demonstrate that it has identified and eliminated duplication, waste, and inefficiencies. To get public support, these need to be addressed before raising taxes or cutting services. Ongoing union negotiations must result in an understanding that both the City and the unions benefit from sustainable budgets. Possibilities also may exist with regard to additional public-private partnerships to provide services to the community. ◇

2. We need to zone for what we want, and the Comprehensive Plan is the strategic guiding document. Our current Plan is essentially a good one, but we need to better align our decisions with it. Appropriate changes would address the housing density, types of housing, appropriate location, impacts on schools, proximity to services, locations for new retail and possible location of new neighborhood center/s. ◇

3. The Baylands is a recognized treasure. As a Planning Commissioner, I was a leading advocate for prioritizing completion of the recent Plan. Any development needs to be low profile, sensitively address its setting, and be a low traffic generator to be compatible. Both Parks and Recreation and Planning Commission found that the compost operation was inconsistent with the Plan. The airport is an existing low profile use that provides benefits including to Stanford Hospital and local business and could be a vital resource in case of a disaster. A hotel could bring revenue to the City, and the City Auditor determined that the airport should be profitable. ◇

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**OCTOBER 27, 2009 IS THE LAST DAY TO
REQUEST A MAIL-IN BALLOT BY MAIL**

Larry Klein

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Attorney
- Palo Alto City Council Member, 2005 to date, Mayor, 2008; also a Council Member from 1981 to 1989 and Mayor in 1984 and 1989
- Chair, Palo Alto Centennial, 1993-94; Tall Tree Award winner, 1994 Co-founder, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (1972)◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

- Solving our \$10 million structural budget deficit.
- Preserving our Quality of Life---potential threats:: above grade High Speed Rail and ABAG housing requirements
- Climate Change . As good as we have been, we need to do more.◇

Response to League Questions:

We can meet our \$10 million dollar structural budget deficit by, in roughly equal parts: a) reducing the number of City employees, b)a reduction in employee compensation and c) an increase in revenues through the business license tax. ◇

2. The updated Comprehensive Plan should:
 --Reflect throughout the reality and challenge of Climate Change. The document's policies should all take into account how they are going to help mitigate Climate Change and/or help us accommodate ourselves to some of the seemingly inevitable problems.

--Minimize the harm to our community from the ABAG requirement that we zone for the possible construction of an additional 2700 housing units over the next seven years.

--Consider the impact of our changed economic circumstances on our ability to provide services, particularly to any significant new residential developments ◇

3. Potential Baylands issues:

--Golf course. A reconfiguration of the golf course could lead to space for badly needed playing fields.

--Airport. We own it subject to a lease to the County which will expire no later than 2018. We should retain the airport land as an airport. It provides vital emergency preparedness, medical services and economic activity to our community.

--Composting. As an environmentally aware city we need to preserve composting within our borders. A presently vacant corner of the airport appears to be the best location subject, however, to a determination that it will not adversely affect the airport's viability.

Housing would not be a compatible use in the Baylands. ◇

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Leon Leong

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Business Person
- MS CS Stanford University
- BS EE CS University of California, Berkeley
- Palo Alto High School
- Jordan Jr High
- El Carmelo Elementary◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

- Opposed to Increased Housing Density - For Quality of Life
- For Economic Health of City - Opposed to Business License Tax
- City Budget - Transparency, Efficiency, Services & Infrastructure◇

Response to League Questions:

1. The Budget needs more transparency so that the City Council can better make policy decisions on services. Once the council can understand the costs and overhead involved, policy decisions can be made on where to devote resources and where efficiencies can be found. A recent example is the cost of the city's phone bill, where the city auditor determined that the city could have been saving hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. ◇

2. The Comprehensive Plan needs to ensure we have a balance of land devoted to services (e.g. parks), school sites, community serving retail and housing. Over the past 12 years, Palo Alto has added over 2,500 housing units, with negligible additions to parks, elementary schools, and an actual decrease in retail. This has led to overcrowding at schools, traffic congestion and a taxing of our city services. We need the comprehensive plan to refocus to the balance of retail, office, parks & schools that made Palo Alto a premier choice for establishing a home. ◇

3. The current mix of use of the area east of Route 101 provides many benefits to the residents: parkland, golf, airport, and should be maintained, as the effects and trends of global climate change are monitored and analyzed. The long term effects of global climate change may be the biggest driver of what use will be made of the area east of Route 101. ◇

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REGISTER TO VOTE:

If you have moved, changed your name or wish to change your political affiliation, you must re-register to vote.

October 19, 2009 is the last day to register in order to vote in the November 3, 2009 election

Cory Levens

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Corporate Attorney; education, neighborhood activist
- Haverford College, BA 1978, Economics
- University of Chicago, MBA 1980 Finance and Accounting
- University of Illinois, JD 1984
- CPA, 1980
- Nixon, Terman, Gunn Site Councils (4 years each)
- Green Acres Improvement Assn. - Board member ◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

- Budget deficit - reducing expenses, rebuilding the business base to increase sales tax revenues.
- High Speed Rail - ensuring the preservation of our community, efficient use of land, optimal design
- Infrastructure - establishing a program for the replacement of the City's decaying infrastructure and financing these programs. ◇

Response to League Questions:

1. While the economic downturn is one cause of reduced revenues, I believe the primary cause is ill-conceived policies, such as the currently proposed business tax, that have driven businesses out of Palo Alto and made the City an unattractive choice for new businesses to locate in. Rejuvenating and reinvigorating the business environment in Palo Alto is essential. On the cost side, Palo Alto has the highest ratio of workers to population and of supervisors to staff of any city in the area. We must deliver our services more efficiently and productively as we seek to balance our budget. ◇
2. Due to legal requirements, the Comprehensive Plan is a complex document. As the primary tool for guiding development in Palo Alto, it embodies hundreds of proposed goals, programs and policies. The problem with the Plan, therefore, is not necessarily its content, but how it is implemented and enforced. The Plan is a document that can be easily manipulated and abused. It should incorporate a means to assure a more consistent and uniform application of its policies. One change I would propose is a better process for reviewing and approving projects, especially smaller projects, in a more streamlined and efficient manner. ◇
3. The Baylands is one of Palo Alto's most valuable assets. As Palo Alto regains management over this valuable property, we must determine which uses best serve the needs and desires of the community. I believe the primary use of the Baylands should be as parkland and that the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Compost Task Force calling for a composting facility should be implemented. In conjunction with the Wastewater Treatment Plant, these facilities provide

essential services to the community that must be maintained and preserved. Construction of a hotel on the Baylands is an inappropriate and incompatible use of this land. ◇

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Gail A. Price

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Executive Director
- Professional city and transportation planner
- Two terms on the Palo Alto School Board
- MA Geography University of Maryland
- MA Asian Studies UC Berkeley
- BA Social Science UC Berkeley◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

- Economic stability and budget issues
- Planning for the future
- Creating a caring community◇

Response to League Questions:

1. A balanced budget will require compromises. Additional savings will be identified with more focused discussions and establishing an on-going joint benefits committee that explores more creative and feasible solutions from both sides. It is unlikely that community members will support additional user fees at this time and we continue to operate within the constraints of Proposition 13. The proposed business license tax will be a needed source of revenue. I would like to see a hotel proposal explored. ◇
2. The Comprehensive Plan defines the vision and guiding policies for the City but it is too long and the vision is not clear. I propose: 1) Reducing the number of themes and chapters because it is too ambitious, disperses our efforts and does not identify which are the most critical or important. 2) Streamlining the Land Use and Community Design chapters by reducing the number of policies to the most critical in order to set the stage for an inspired vision 3) Relocate or separate the Governance chapter to the beginning of the document or as a separate document to provide context for City government practices. The very broad reach of the Comprehensive Plan is presented through the 2005-2010 Consolidated Plan. While the detail is useful, I believe it does not clearly note relative priorities, feasibility, and importance to achieve measurable outcomes for City government. ◇

The Baylands Master Plan is the long-range vision and plan for the appropriate and balanced land uses and functions within its boundaries. I support the conference center and hotel, adjacent to Highway 101; it will provide needed revenue to the City.

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Price continued

I support co-locating the composing functions, incorporating new technology, with the Wastewater Treatment Plant although it will delay conversion of properties to enhance parkland. Local composting will likely reduce energy and transportation costs. ◇

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Greg Scharff

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Attorney
- B. A. Economics Bowdoin College
- J.D. Columbia Law School (1986)◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

- Protect Our Community, Neighborhoods and Schools
- Ensure Strong Fiscal Management & Accountability
- Promote a Vibrant Business Community ◇

Response to League Questions:

1. We need strong fiscal management, accountability, and transparency. We will have long-term fiscal problems if unsustainable pension and health care benefits aren't reduced. City pension costs have increased 86% for SEIU and Management employees over the last five years, in large part due to an enhanced pension formula implemented in 2007. The City of Palo Alto by adopting "2.7% @ 55," has provided a benefit that, if not reduced now, will result in unsustainable long-term obligations for the City that will cause a future of sustained fiscal crisis and declining city services. The City cannot continue to pay 100% of its employee's medical costs. ◇

2. The Baylands are a significant environmental resource that must be protected. Land use policies regarding the Baylands need to be informed by several general principles. The Land-fill area must ultimately become an environmental asset and a continuation of the natural green space. We should also expand bicycle and pedestrian activities while reducing traffic. The current airport and golf course uses should be supported by the city. Harmonizing the airport use and compost operations if done correctly within the framework of the Baylands master plan would support Palo Alto's vision of itself as an innovative and sustainable community. ◇

3. The comprehensive plan should identify new areas for parks and community facilities, enhance neighborhood walkability, and improve our bike paths. It must be designed to protect the quality of life in Palo Alto and support our core community values of schools, open space, parks, bike paths, libraries and excellent community facilities.

The comprehensive Plan should strongly discourage the conversion of our commercial and retail uses to high density residential. The Comprehensive Plan must also incorporate sustainability goals with relevant policies and programs from the Cities climate protection plan and improve and strengthen the City's environmental policies. ◇

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Nancy Shepherd

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Managerial Accountant
- BA International Relations, SFSU 2008
- President, Palo Alto Council of PTAs 2000-2002
- Graduate, Leadership Mid-Peninsula 1998
- Organizer, District Wide Fundraising for PAUSD schools 1995-2002
- Sally Siegel Award 2007, Palo Alto Council of PTAs
- The Wiley W. Manuel Award for Pro Bono Legal Services 2009, The State Bar of California◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

- Stretch your tax dollars to protect valued city services
- Ensure timely, accurate and complete information on issues affecting Palo Alto
- Revitalize local business districts and neighborhood shopping centers◇

Response to League Questions:

I support the current strategy of Council to solve the deficit burden by 1) reducing city inefficiencies and potentially reducing or eliminating some services, 2) working with city staff and labor to find cost savings and potentially restructuring labor contracts and benefits package so that the city can meet its future responsibilities, and 3) collecting a business license tax. Our in-house city auditor can help Palo Alto continue staffing and services efficiencies. ◇

Some projects that have been developed in compliance with the current plan do not support the character of Palo Alto . The former Hyatt site is dense and the setback is close to the street, resulting in an urban look to the El Camino corridor. Mixed-use complexes can change the character of some neighborhoods and should be limited to areas around shopping centers and transit corridors, not where the Hyatt complex is far from services. This part of the plan needs to be revisited. These plans will help guide the next five years of development so it is important that zoning generates the type of outcome that Palo Altans expect. ◇

The Baylands faces possible significant increases to ocean levels which needs be taken into consideration with land use changes. The construction of a hotel in the commercial area directly off the 101 corridor would be convenient for travelers and generate transient tax revenues for the city. Park-

Continued on next page

Shepherd continued

land would be preserved and the airport could continue its modernization plans. A composting location is being examined by the Blue Ribbon Taskforce and all stakeholders to identify a site without taking open-space, dedicated parklands or airport property. Our partnership with Sunnyvale 's SMaRT drop-off recycling center gives residents access to disposal after our current location closes in 2010-2011. This is a good example of working with other communities to share common services. ◇

Brian Steen

Biographical Highlights

- Occupation: Land Use Consultant
- Executive Director, Sempervirens Fund
- Executive Director, Big Sur Land Trust
- Public Information Officer, US Forest Service
- BS in Forest Recreation Management◇

Top 3 Priorities if Elected

- I support underground construction of High Speed Rail
- I support a balanced, sustainable City budget
- I support sustainable resource management, locally and regionally◇

Response to League Questions:

1. Evaluate recent revenue losses and analyze which may be reinstated.
 2. Aggressively seek new business tenants for vacant business properties.
 3. Utilize retirement attrition to reduce work force.
 4. Hold wage and benefit package increases to bare minimum ◇
2. 1.Palo Alto will need to increase transit-oriented residential development will be important in meeting state-mandated regional sustainability plans.
 2. The 2010 amendment should assess impacts and costs associated with High Speed Rail and Cal Train improvements.
 3. Water efficiency standards should apply to residential as well as commercial projects. ◇
3. 1. I support reconfiguring the existing composting operation, to close when the landfill operation ends in 2011, co-locating it with the Wastewater Treatment Plant.
 2. Budget allocations should be made to reclaim and restore parkland acreage now used for composting.
 - 3.. I believe local composting is favorable to trucking materials to Sunnyvale or other more distant locations, because of additional fuel use and associated air pollution. ◇

Mark Weiss

The candidate did not respond. Check the Smart Voter website <<http://smartvoter.org/>>for any information submitted after the *Voters Guide* deadline.

City Council Candidate Forums

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto

Evening Forum
Tuesday, October 6,
7 to 9 pm

Jane Lathrop Stanford (JLS) Middle School, Cafetorium
480 E. Meadow Dr.,
Palo Alto

Afternoon Forum
Saturday, October 10,
1:30 to 3:30 pm
Palo Alto City Hall,
Council Chambers
250 Hamilton Ave.
Palo Alto

Visit <<http://www.communitymediacenter.net/>> for broadcasts and live streaming of the League Forum

Made possible through the help of our co-sponsors

- Avenidas Senior Center
- Greenmeadow Community Association,Inc
- Midpeninsula Community Media Ctr.
- PAGE (Palo Altans for Effective Government)
- PA Branch AAUW
- PA Chamber of Commerce
- PA Council of PTAs Executive Board
- Palo Alto Online
- Palo Alto Weekly
- Unitarian Universalist Church of PA
- Social Action Committee

Pros and Cons for Measure A

City of Palo Alto Business License Tax

THE QUESTION

Should the Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) be amended to establish a business license tax in order to help maintain the City's ability to fund basic City services?

A simple majority vote is required to pass this measure.

THE SITUATION

We are in the middle of an economic downturn and the City of Palo Alto is experiencing a decrease in revenues from current sources. It needs to find new revenues in order to prevent deeper cuts in services and programs now and in future years. A tax such that proposed in Measure A can provide new revenue while also serving to diversify the City's revenue stream.

THE PROPOSAL

Measure A would authorize a business license tax to be paid to the City of Palo Alto annually, and would deposit the revenues generated from the tax into the general fund. The tax applies to businesses that are located in or conducting business in Palo Alto. There are exemptions including but not limited to 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organizations, Stanford University, and Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF). The annual tax rate depends upon the business type and the number of employees of the business. There are specific guidelines to determine the number of employees per business including converting part-time hours to full-time equivalents. The measure contains a minimum and maximum tax.

FISCAL EFFECT

The City estimates that the annual approximate cost to administer the program would be \$250,000 and that the tax would net approximately \$3M annually. The tax amount will be increased annually by the CPI (consumer price index).

WHAT A YES OR A NO VOTE MEANS

A YES vote means the City would adopt a Business License Tax to be paid to the City of Palo Alto by each business located in or doing business in Palo Alto.

A NO means the City would not adopt a Business License Tax.

SUPPORTERS SAY

1. The business impact is modest and spread over many businesses
2. The business community requested an employee count as fairer than a gross receipts tax
3. The tax is fair and will reach many businesses that do not pay sales tax
4. It is comparable to business license taxes for our neighbors. Many California cities have such taxes

OPPONENTS SAY

1. This tax creates an expensive bureaucracy, and does not fund infrastructure; the revenue will fund retiree pensions
2. Measure A allows the City of Palo Alto to audit books of local businesses and conduct home-business inspections
3. It benefits big corporations over small businesses, who would be burdened by compliance/record keeping
4. A registry may be preferable and would be done by private industry to benefit the City.

SUPPORTERS INCLUDE:

Peter Drekmeier, Megan Swezey Fogarty, Larry Klein, Stephen Levy, Roger V. Smith
SavePaloAltoServices.org

OPPONENTS INCLUDE:

Rebecca L.J. Counihan, Carol Jansen, Skip Justman, Paula Sandas, Gregory Scharff,
Facebook group "Campaign against Business Tax in Palo Alto"
Skip Justman 650-325-7389

Attend Pros & Cons Presentations by League of Women Voters

October 6, 2 pm
Avenidas Senior Center
450 Bryant St., Palo Alto

October 7, 7pm
Channing House
850 Webster St., Palo Alto

Open to the public

It's easy to join the League of Women Voters—Do it now! You will be glad you did.

Joining at the local level makes you a member at all levels: National, State, Bay Area and Palo Alto

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____ e-mail _____

Annual Membership: \$68.00 Additional membership, same address: \$34
Mail check to League of Women Voters, 953 Industrial Ave., Suite 113, Palo Alto, CA 94303

Dues grants are available. For Information, call Membership Co-Chairs: Mary Alice Thornton or Virginia Pirrotta (650) 327-9148



**DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR
SPORT
VOTE NOVEMBER 3**

Visit for more information about the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto <<http://lwvpaloalto.org/>>

Address:

League of Women Voters of Palo Alto
953 Industrial Ave., Suite 113, Palo Alto, CA 94303

Phone: (650) 327-9148

