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Palo Alto Planning and Transportation Commission
250 Hamilton Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94301

August 29, 2018

Dear Chair Lauing and Commissioners,

Re: August 29, 2018 Study Session on the Framework for the 2018 Comp Plan/Housing Ordinance

On February 5 of this year, the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto (LWVPA) submitted a letter to City Council in support of the Housing Work Plan for 2018-2019 applauding the efforts by the City to increase the supply of housing for all, particularly for those with lower incomes.

For those reasons we encourage you to embrace, without delay, all of the recommendations contained in the staff memo submitting the framework for housing-related zoning changes which encourage the production of a diversity of housing types in appropriate locations.

In particular, LWVPA supports the proposals to modify the zoning code to:

- Eliminate residential density standards in commercial and PTOD districts (Item A.1)
- Establish minimum density of 8 dwelling units (du)/acre and a maximum of 20 du/acre in RM-15 districts (Item A.2)
- Allow residential development in commercial districts to use all of the existing FAR allowance (Item A.3)
- Modify open space requirements to allow the production of more dwelling units (Items B.4 and 5)
- Adjust parking requirements for senior and affordable housing, housing near transit and mixed use projects to reflect demand based on empirical data (Items C.6) and for ground floor retail in a mixed use project. (Item C.7)
- Streamline the review process for residential and residential mixed use projects (Item D.8)
- Allow "by right" height and density bonuses in PTOD combining districts for 100% affordable housing projects (Item D.9)
- Exempt 100% affordable housing projects from the retail preservation ordinance (Item E.10)
- Allow 100% residential uses along high density nodes along certain sections of El Camino Real (Item E.11)

As stated in the staff report, these recommendations are supported by the Comprehensive Plan and the Housing Element, each of which was approved after considerable community input and review.

LWVPA also supports the ideas set forth in items 12 through 16 of the staff report which, if implemented would provide greater opportunities for needed housing projects.

When the modified zoning ordinance comes before you on September 26, we urge you to move expeditiously to ensure that the City Council can act on this before the end of the year. The housing crisis in our area demands no less from you.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aisha Piracha-Zakariya".

Aisha Piracha-Zakariya

President, League of Women Voters of Palo Alto