

June, 24, 2022

Council Members:

The June Housing Element Update draft, PDF page 28 says:

“Program 3.A: Prepare a Downtown parking plan and update parking requirements. ... modifying the required parking design dimensions (e.g., parking stall and lane dimensions).” Searching the document, I couldn’t find any details on “parking stalls” or “lane dimensions” or “parking dimensions.”

The city formed (and then disbanded) a Parking Committee in 2015. There was talk of narrowing stalls from 9 feet to 8.5 feet. I’m sure you’ve noticed cars and trucks have increased in size since then. Some don’t fit in existing parking spaces. When discussing parking dimensions, please consider this info:

<https://www.way.com/blog/average-car-length/>

How long is a car?

Typically, the average length of a car is around 14.7 feet. Different manufacturers and models will have varying car sizes, and standard automobiles and trucks are typically between 10-18 feet long. A midsize sedan is around 14 feet long, while a smaller car like a Mini Cooper will be about 10 feet long. Chevrolet Spark (under 12 feet) is the shortest passenger car, and Rolls-Royce Phantom (around 20 feet long) is the longest passenger car in the country. A full-size car has a length of around 15.7 feet. Factors like cargo room and passenger space increase the length of a car.

Size class	Length (feet)
Mini cars	10.5
Small car	13.8
Small SUV	14.4
Mid-sized car	14.8
Full-sized car	15.7
Small pickup	16.3
Large SUV	16.7
Large pickup	18.4

How wide is a car?

Typically, the average car width is around 5.8 feet. The car’s width varies typically due to aerodynamic performance or the extra safety features. Chevrolet Spark (5.2 feet) is the narrowest car in the country. Outside the ultra-luxury market, Tesla Model X is the broadest vehicle, measuring 7.4 feet wide with mirrors folded. Factors like side airbags and lane departure sensors can increase a vehicle’s width more than the dimensions of typical parking spaces.

<https://www.thezebra.com/resources/driving/average-car-size/>

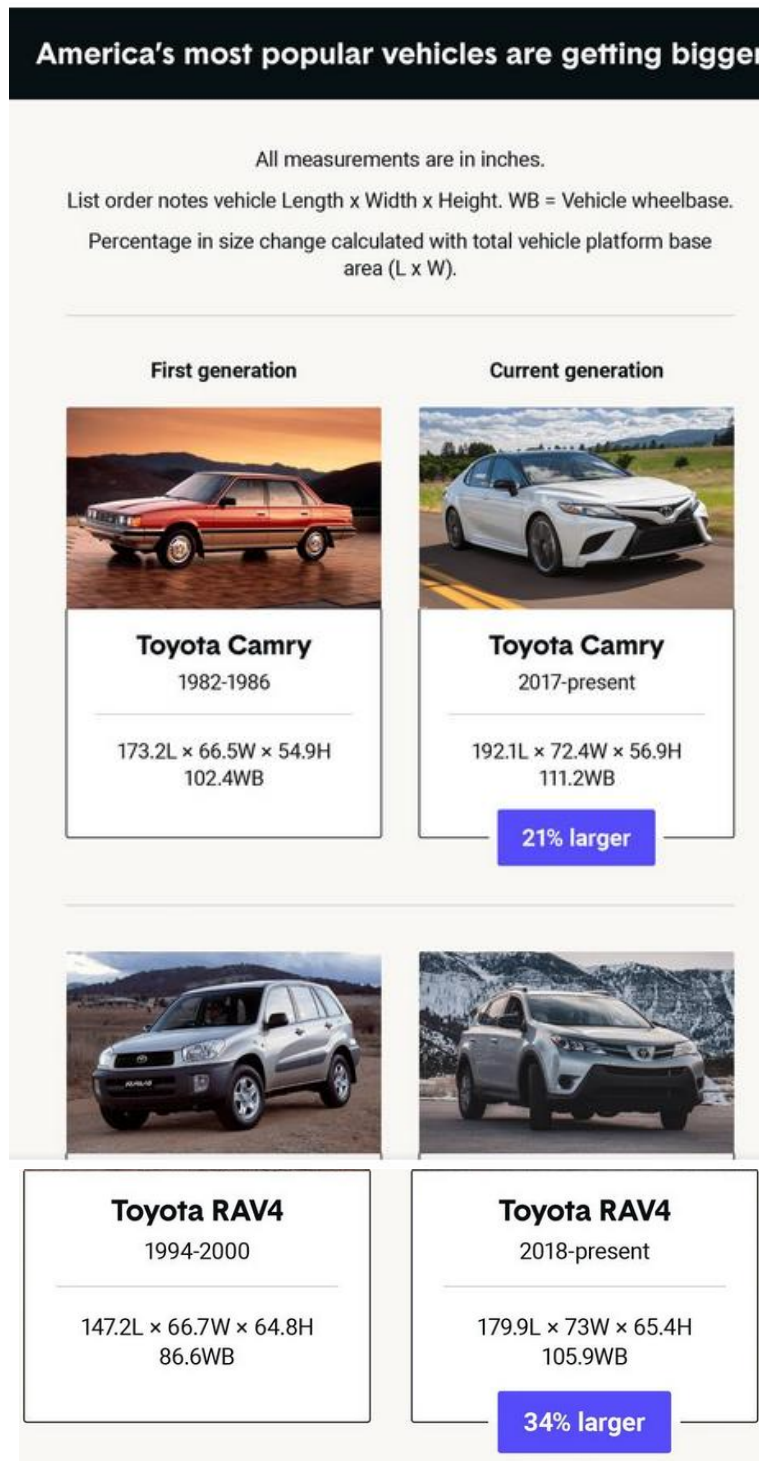
How much is the average car size increasing?

Cars are getting bigger to match Americans’ desire for more space. In 2019, the Big Three U.S. automakers collectively began to abandon the small car and sedan segments [because of decreasing](#)

[market share](#). This means that more trucks, SUVs and crossovers fill Ford, General Motors, and Fiat Chrysler showrooms as these brands forecast increased demand for larger vehicles.

However, SUVs aren't the only large vehicles on U.S. roads. Average car size across the board is increasing.

The country's most popular car (the Toyota Camry), pickup truck (Ford's F-150) and SUV/crossover (Toyota's RAV4) each have multiple design generations and more than 25 years under their belts. Notably, these vehicles see consistent size increases each time they're redesigned. As industry sales leaders, they set an example for other cars to follow: Bigger size means bigger demand.





Ford F Series

1948-1952

207L x 70.3W x 77.4H
122WB



Ford F Series

2021

227.7L x 79.9W x 75.2H
141.5WB

25% larger



Ford F Series

1948-1952

207L x 70.3W x 77.4H
122WB



Ford F Series

2021

227.7L x 79.9W x 75.2H
141.5WB

25% larger

From: [Lisa Cox](#)
To: [Los Altos Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Housing plan
Date: Saturday, July 02, 2022 9:59:04 AM

Dear Planning Commission,

If Rancho Shopping Center and Woodland Plaza both become low income housing rather than a shopping center, then the section of Los Altos between El Monte and Homestead becomes a food desert. One would have to drive to Draegers downtown, Nob Hill down at Grant and El Camino, or one of the Safeways. The Trader Joe's at Homestead and Foothill is not a full service grocery store. Plus, the parking during the weekends and traffic situation at that corner at school commute times is horrific as it is.

For seniors, having a grocery store closer means less driving, which is safer for everyone and if you are putting in housing in these locations, PLEASE add parking or the surrounding neighborhoods will be full of cars, a result which would completely change the atmosphere which most people paid precious money for. I don't think I'd see as many children playing out front as I do now.

Please don't eliminate the grocery stores when putting in more housing.

Sincerely,,
Lisa Cox

From: [Dorothy Metcalf](#)
To: [Los Altos Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Draft Housing Element
Date: Saturday, July 02, 2022 10:25:29 AM

I strongly disagree with taking any parking lots away from Los Alto downtown in order to build housing on them or for any other use than downtown parking. I also strongly disagree with classing mobile homes the same as single family homes (or to allowing them to permanently park on city streets.)
Any new housing should require adequate parking for the number of residents it accommodates as well as the addition of adequate trees as part of any and all landscaping plans .

DorothyMetcalf
Long time Los Altos resident
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Gabriel Engeland](#)
To: [Yvonne Dupont](#)
Cc: [Nick Zornes](#)
Subject: Fw: Draft Housing Element
Date: Monday, July 04, 2022 7:25:46 PM

Yvonne,

This is public comment for the Planning Commission.

Thanks,

Gabe

Gabriel Engeland
City Manager
City of Los Altos
(650) 947-2740 | www.losaltosca.gov

From: Paul Baker <pbaker1a@mac.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 3, 2022 6:10 PM
To: Public Comment <publiccomment@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Draft Housing Element

Dear Chair Doran and Members of the Planning Commission,

The release of the Draft Housing Element is a big step forward for the City of Los Altos. The document is comprehensive and will serve as an excellent plan to improve the quality of life in Los Altos.

The rezoning plans for the downtown core, including permitting mixed use (housing above the shops), allowing housing on the other side of San Antonio and planned use of parking plazas for housing will permit the construction of a more lively and walkable downtown. If the City can commit to building the 100+ housing units on the parking plazas in the Housing Element we can be more certain that it will actually happen. Dealing with parking requirements for these units (either by reducing the requirements per unit or permitting parking spots that are not directly connected to the units) will be important for actually allowing these units to be built. One of the great things about living downtown would be that a car might not be needed most of the time - if this could be achieved, it would reduce congestion and pollution, so would be a big win for the City.

Rezoning Altos Oaks, Rancho and adjusting the Loyola Corners plans to permit more and better integrated housing is a great idea, I'm glad to see it in the plan. I am also very supportive of including housing on church properties in the City. Although some church owned parcels are noted on the parcel list, the zoning proposals don't include zoning these parcels for multi-family housing. This would make these parcels much easier to use for housing. Tiny houses or ADUs on church properties would also be a way to add housing on these sites.

The Housing Element includes planned City decisions that will make building more housing in Los Altos possible. Once the zoning changes are complete, it should be possible to make the planning commission the group that ensures that development conforms to the plan, reducing the City Council's work load and speeding the approval process. Other process changes suggested in the

Housing Element are also positive steps towards reducing time and cost for development.

The Housing Element Draft is excellent work, once it is approved I look forward to advocating for more inclusive housing in Los Altos.

Thank you,

Paul Baker
Los Altos resident since 1981

From: [Pat Marriot](#)
To: [City Council](#); [Housing Element](#); [Los Altos Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Comment: Housing Element Update Draft
Date: Saturday, July 02, 2022 2:03:32 PM

All,

I know Council's hands are tied by state mandates. However, I'm hoping there is some means of ensuring residents will not lose local shopping districts.

Currently, we have a variety of places to shop for basic needs, e.g., Downtown Safeway & Walgreen's, Andronico's at Rancho, Lucky's, Trader Joe's, Whole Foods – plus a variety of stores at Loyola Corners and Village Court. Lots of options, many within walking or biking distance for residents.

Some of these locations are being rezoned for housing. I realize rezoning doesn't necessarily mean homes will replace shops, but then I never imagined I'd see towering condos on First Street.

Please find a way to keep local shopping available in the future.

Thanks,

Pat Marriott

From: [Gabriel Engeland](#)
To: [Yvonne Dupont](#)
Cc: [Nick Zornes](#)
Subject: Fw: Draft Housing Element
Date: Monday, July 04, 2022 7:36:44 PM

PC Public Comment.

Thanks,

Gabe

Gabriel Engeland
City Manager
City of Los Altos
(650) 947-2740 | www.losaltosca.gov

From: Dorothy Metcalf <dodiemetcalf@mac.com>
Sent: Saturday, July 2, 2022 10:33 AM
To: City Council <council@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Draft Housing Element

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Dorothy Metcalf <dodiemetcalf@mac.com>
Date: July 2, 2022

City Council

Subject: Draft Housing Element

I strongly disagree with taking any parking lots away from Los Altos downtown in order to build housing on them or for any other use than downtown parking. I also strongly disagree with classing mobile homes the same as single family homes (or to allowing them to permanently park on city streets.) Any new housing should require adequate parking for the number of residents it accommodates as well as the addition of adequate trees as part of any and all landscaping plans .

DorothyMetcalf
Long time Los Altos resident
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Gabriel Engeland](#)
To: [Yvonne Dupont](#)
Cc: [Nick Zornes](#)
Subject: Fw: PublicComment-Agnea07-07-12-2022
Date: Monday, July 04, 2022 7:34:49 PM

PC Public Comment.

Thanks,

Gabe

Gabriel Engeland
City Manager
City of Los Altos
(650) 947-2740 | www.losaltosca.gov

From: Jim Wing <jameswing@msn.com>
Sent: Saturday, July 2, 2022 7:07 PM
To: Public Comment <publiccomment@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: PublicComment-Agnea07-07-12-2022

Los Altos Mayor Enander and Distinguished Council Members,

Council 07/12/2022 Meeting Agenda Item 07 Sixth Cycle Housing Element 2022-2031 Draft

Remove or revise Program 5.8 [Page 37] to allow Los Altos staff to work with any consultant who can do best job / best cost. Alta Design should not be the only consultant Los Altos is allowed to work with.

Please request staff to revise underreported Draft Housing Element Vacant Residential Parcels Maps / Summary to include the many acres of land that have not or could be subdivided. Algorithm and limited site visits caused consultant to underreport vacant lots [at least 9.54 acres] since they used only parcel numbers with improvements and Santa Clara County only assigns parcel numbers after subdivision. Following are examples of underreporting that should be added to Figures B-1, B-2, B-3 starting on page 134.

- Draft Housing Element Vacant Residential Parcels Map Figure B-3 [page 136] does not include vacant lot [3.5 acres] at end of Dover Court and Phase 2 of Manresa PUD lots [1.5 acre]. These lots were granted for possible future development when Jesuit Retreat and Event Center [50 acres] was annexed to Los Altos in 1986. Santa Clara County Assessor Map 175-30 does not show subdivision noted in annexation documents because property owner has not applied for subdivision.
- 479 Los Altos Ave [2.3 acres]
- 531 Rosita Ave [1.4 acres]
- El Monte / Fremont [Los Altos owned Lot, approximately 0.19 acre]
- Woodstock [Two Los Altos owned Lots; one 0.34 acre other 0.31 acre]

In addition to vacant lots, Los Altos Gardens [6.338 acres, Parcel Map 167-16-51] is an existing low density / low income housing complex that could be increased to high density /

low income housing. Almost 20 years ago, Planning Commission discussed increasing density by making units two story to save the trees.

In my opinion, potential housing can be added to following vacant sites:

- Jesuit Retreat / Event Center and Manresa Phase 2 – Planned Unit Development [PUD] with style and density of Creekside Oaks that includes 10% affordable units.
- 479 Los Altos Ave. – PUD with style and density of Creekside Oaks that includes 10% affordable units
- 531 Rosita Ave. – Subdivide to 10,000 ft² lots and split lots.
- El Monte / Fremont – one affordable unit.
- Woodstock – If fire damaged trees on north lot do not survive, split lot for two affordable units. In past years homeless have used these lots.

Thank you for your consideration! Jim Wing, Milverton Road, Los Altos



July 5, 2022

To Chair Doran, Vice Chair Mensinger, and Planning Commissioners,

The Los Altos Affordable Housing Alliance congratulates the City's planning staff in working with our consultants on the huge task of completing our draft Housing Element. In reading the draft Housing Element this week, we were very excited to see many of the proposed programs. We appreciate the City showing that we're serious about our commitment to diversifying our housing stock, removing barriers to development, and creating an environment in which we can feasibly reach our RHNA targets. We would particularly like to commend the inclusion of the following:

- Programs 1A, 1B, and 1C, specifically that the OA zone will be rezoned to allow multi-family housing. The area of San Antonio Road east of downtown is a transit-friendly and logistically practical area to develop housing.
- Program 1E, which updates the Loyola Corners specific plan. This is necessary to create a thriving neighborhood hub.
- Program 2B, creating an in-lieu fee and a commercial linkage fee so that we can bring our City in line with other cities and also so that we have funding for affordable housing in the future.
- Program 2D regarding streamlining of ADUs. We applaud the decision to hire additional staff for this purpose.

Further considerations:

1. We advocated for and enthusiastically support *Program 1.B: To continue to facilitate housing in the CT District, the City will remove the density maximum and increase the height allowed in the CT District.* Because the housing plan is relying heavily on the CT District, for almost 500 new units in addition to the pipeline, **we urge the City to clarify the height increase, by stating clearly that the City will increase the height allowance to permit at least one more story than is currently allowed.** That would allow five story buildings before a Density Bonus, and six story buildings after a density bonus. As the Draft Housing Element states, this change would align Los

Altos' development with the buildings being built in neighboring cities along the El Camino corridor.

2. All of the arguments about increasing allowable height in the CT District also apply to the Sherwood Triangle area - the CN District bound by Sherwood Avenue, El Camino Real and San Antonio Road. It is along the El Camino corridor; the City is proposing to allow more height in neighboring CT parcels; and the new mixed use district just across El Camino in Mountain View allows six story buildings and even higher ones. The city has long wanted to see development in the Sherwood Triangle, evidenced by the fact that 19 parcels in Sherwood Triangle were included in 5th Cycle Housing Element Site Inventory, all of them holdovers from the 4th Cycle Site Inventory. Currently, base zoning in the Sherwood Triangle allows two stories with the first being commercial, or a very tight three stories squeezed into 30 feet of height. These constraints, out of step with the surrounding area, are development constraints. Only one project was approved in Sherwood Triangle during this cycle.

To facilitate development in the Sherwood Triangle, **we urge the City to increase the allowable height in Sherwood Triangle to allow three stories (four stories with a density bonus).**

Moreover, for parcels not fronting El Camino or San Antonio, the City should allow all-residential buildings, as the interior parcels are not ideal for commercial use. Relaxing the zoning in this way could induce owners to build, as we've heard from at least one developer.¹ The city should also consider lot consolidation in this area as there is fragmented ownership and some small lots.

3. We are delighted to see one of our favorite proposals, housing on city-owned parking plazas, in Program 1H. **The Housing Element Site Inventory projects 138 units of housing on the parking plazas, and we urge the city to make a firm commitment to developing all 138 units.** We do not advocate developing all of the parking plazas for housing, and we do not believe it is necessary to choose which or how many parking plazas will be developed before the City adopts the Housing Element. However, regarding economies of scale, it perhaps makes sense to locate these 138 units on two parcels, instead of dividing the units over, say, six parcels.
4. We also believe that the Housing Element should commit to specific action steps regarding parking analysis. *Program 3.A: Prepare a Downtown parking plan and update parking requirements* is vague, and we know that HCD favors specificity and time limits. **The Housing Element should commit to a parking restriping program and an in-lieu parking option by the end of 2023. It should also commit to creating lower parking requirements for smaller units by the end of 2024, as well as assessing the parking usage at existing multi-family buildings and amending the requirements based on those findings.**

¹ Mircea Voskerician

Overall, the draft Housing Element for the 6th cycle is very promising, and we are excited about how the proposed programs will affect the direction of housing and development in our city.

Respectfully,

The Los Altos Housing Alliance Steering Committee

Los Altos Affordable Housing Alliance

Committed to educating and inspiring the Los Altos community to build housing that is affordable for those who live and work in Los Altos

<https://losaltosaffordablehousing.org/>



July 5, 2022

Chair Doran and Members of the Planning Commission
City of Los Altos
1 N. San Antonio Road
Los Altos, CA 94022

Re: Agenda Item Draft Housing Element, Planning Commission meeting July 7th

Dear Chair Doran and Members of the Planning Commission:

The League continues to support a comprehensive plan to address housing that follows State law, and we thank the Staff and LWC for a Draft Housing Element that provides bold steps towards a compliant Housing Element. That said, we have some major concerns.

First, regarding the Site Inventory, we would like to see street addresses along with APN#s as these are easier for the public to understand; likewise, we would like the downtown parking plazas to be identified with their Lot numbers as they are in the Downtown Vision. Second, we are pleased to see that a large buffer has been proposed. However, we think this buffer could rapidly disappear if the recommended rezonings and programs are not put in place.

In addition, many sites listed are unlikely to be developed. For example, all the downtown parking plazas are listed. It is unrealistic to think that all will be developed with housing as the City will want to retain some surface parking and one parcel has already been designated for a potential theater. Therefore, the projected number of units on each lot is unrealistic. However, perhaps the total projected number for all the lots (138) could be a goal for one or two of the lots, better explained as part of Program 1.H. Also, for any of these sites to be attractive to affordable housing developers, as is discussed in Programs, the density/height must be increased, and the City will need to provide financial resources.

Other sites such as Draegers have been recently remodeled, making it unlikely they will be developed with housing during the next Housing Element cycle. Spokespeople for the two churches designated have stated they have no interest in building housing. Foothill Crossing, projected for 80 units, recently signed a long-term lease with a major new tenant and has expressed no interest. We suggest that these sites and others be more vigorously vetted before they are included in the site inventory.

We applaud many of the programs. We especially like Program 1.H with its specific timeline for developing affordable housing on at least one downtown parking plaza. But without some City financing and upzoning, this program is unrealistic.

Another program the City should include is an Affordable Housing Overlay Zone for the downtown parking lots as well as other areas of the City. The City should meet with developers to see what needs to be included in order to encourage housing, i.e., height, density, fees, setbacks, etc.)

We also commend the following programs: 1.B re the CT District, 1.C re the OA District, 1.E re Loyola Corners and 1.F re Village Court. However, we would like to see specifics, such as allow an additional story, rather than “increase building heights” (1.B), and, again, specific proposed modifications for density and height (1.E).

Program 1.I to incentivize Downtown lot consolidation is also commendable, and we recommend that lot consolidation be encouraged for other areas such as Sherwood Triangle, but there is a lack of commitment to measurable success criteria. This program and others should have metrics-based objectives.

We have long advocated that the City adopt a commercial linkage fee as envisioned by an enabling ordinance adopted four years ago (Muni Code 3.49.070, Ord. No. 2018-444), but don’t understand why this should take till the end of 2025. Re ADUs, we strongly support providing permit ready standard ADU plans (2.D), but don’t like the verbiage “consider permit fee waivers...”as once again this reflects a lack of commitment.

All the programs listed under Goal 3 to Remove constraints to the development of housing should be included, but we especially recommend updating the parking requirements (3.A) and Amending design review process (3.H). Some specific changes to parking requirements could be promised in the Housing Element based upon the draft parking ordinance approved by the Planning Commission in 2018, such as reducing the width of parking spaces, and lane dimensions, creating a program with in-lieu parking fees, along with reducing parking for senior and deed-restricted units, and specific requirements for buildings with mechanical lifts. A parking in-lieu fee program would allow development on smaller lots downtown where the owners cannot provide the required parking on site and would generate funds to expand and enhance the parking supply. The Design Review process will be improved by eliminating the DRC as a separate body and by eliminating story poles and ensuring that all design standards are objective. Programs 3.B and 3.C are necessary for some of the sites listed in the inventory to be developed.

Program 5.B re the City’s contract with Alta Housing should be updated to reflect the recent Council discussion with Alta and the possibility that another administrative agency might be retained at the end of Alta’s contract next year.

Finally, we would urge the City to commit to providing some safe parking for vehicle-dwellers, whether on City-owned property or by working with faith-based institutions. As the Housing Element notes, several of the churches have large parking lots; similar lots are being used for safe parking in other nearby communities.

In summary, we hope all the programs proposed in the Draft Housing Element will be adopted with some additions and changes to make the programs and timelines more specific.

(Please send any questions about this email to housing@lwvlamv.org)

Karin Bricker, President LWV of Los Altos/Mountain View Area
Cc: Gabe Engeland. Nick Zornes Angel Rodriguez

July 7 2022

The Housing Element plan calls for rezoning of the current Rancho Shopping Center and the Lucky center for high density housing with the assumption that that doing so would allow these properties to be likely sites for low income housing. This means that we push low income housing into just a few areas of the city. I believe that we need to consider rezoning all properties that fit that HCD perimeters so that all types of housing can be spread across the entire city. This is consistent with HCD recommendations that low income housing NOT be concentrated in just one area of the city.

Sincerely

Don Phillips

Nancy G Phillips

1171 Volti Ln

Los Altos CA 94024

From: [Elaine Haight](#)
To: [Public Comment - PC](#)
Subject: Housing Element
Date: Thursday, July 07, 2022 9:54:37 AM

Dear Chair Doran and Members of the Planning Commission,

Thank you very much for your draft housing element. It shows that you are taking this legal process seriously, and that you truly intend to add to the very limited housing stock here in Los Altos. I am writing to address your intention to emphasize alternative transportation in your Housing Element.

It would be great if you state have **concrete changes** that would make the use of alternative transportation more desirable and convenient in Los Altos. As you probably know, people around here ride expensive bikes and bike thieves are rampant. Here are some measures that would encourage cyclists to use their bikes for everyday transportation:

1) Every time there is a “happening” in downtown, there should be a bike valet where the bikes could be parked and watched. Greentown provided this service for a Los Altos fair last year, and the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition does it regularly for other venues. Note that it is not helpful to offer a bike valet if you don’t advertise it prominently on any and all promotional materials. People will not ride their bikes to a venue if you don’t tell them upfront that there will be a safe place to park them.

2) Any new multi-family housing development must have a highly secure bike room designed into it from the start. Bike rooms are difficult to find convenient space for, and tricky to secure after the building has been built. These rooms are obviously huge targets for bike thieves. A bike room where residents can secure their bikes must be constructed at the time that the building is constructed.

3) Charge for parking spaces in multi-family housing developments. The family decision to use a second car vs. a bicycle must have an economic price to it. If neighbors are afraid that too many cars will park overnight on city streets for free, then a neighborhood parking permit plan can be put in place.

I’m sure you understand that the more cars Los Altos accomodates (or requires parking for), the fewer housing units the city can provide. Los Altos is a wonderful place for bicycles, and with a little planning we can take advantage of this fact to allow more people to live here.

Sincerely,
-Elaine Haight, Lisa Court, Los Altos

From: [Roberta Phillips](#)
To: [Public Comment - PC](#); [Los Altos Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [City Council](#)
Subject: Planning meeting July 7,2022 Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, July 6, 2022 2:36:48 PM

Dear Planning Commissioners

In regard to the Housing Element I would like to recommend that for the OA District that you follow the zoning codes for the R3 districts that already exist.

If the City is going to add housing as a conditional use to the OA district there are already existing zoning codes .For example at 140 Lyell which is zoned R3-1.8 and Marshall Court which is zoned R3-4.5 There is no need to reinvent the wheel. This will allow additional housing to satisfy HCD as well as mitigate the fact that this district abuts single family R1 zones. The lot sizes are not deep and are too small for high density housing according to the draft Housing Element which are located and identified elsewhere on the proposed map.

If you have any questions please feel free to call me at 650-941-6940

Sincerely

Roberta Phillips