



January 13, 2025

Re: January 14, 2025, Meeting, Agenda Item #7 (4896 El Camino Real)

Dear Mayor Dailey and Members of the City Council:

The League of Women Voters (LWV) supports policies that encourage the development of housing, particularly affordable housing.

The League commends the project proposed for 4896 El Camino Real, which includes office space and 33 multi-family residences, including below-market rate (BMR) units. We suggest that the square footage of the BMRs be revised given that the BMR units are dramatically smaller than the market-rate units. These discrepancies are inconsistent with section 14.28.030(C) of the Municipal Code and the League asks the Council to refrain from making an exception here.

More specifically, the square footage of the three-bedroom BMR unit is 1,656 square feet but the three-bedroom market rate units are planned to be 2,020 to 2,582 square feet. The range of the square footage of the two-bedroom BMR units is 1,062 to 1,163 square feet while the two-bedroom market rate units are planned to have 1,839 square feet.

Please send any questions about this email to Sue Russell, Co-Chair of the Housing Committee, at [housing@lwvlamv.org](mailto:housing@lwvlamv.org). Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Katie Zoglin".

Katie Zoglin, President  
Los Altos-Mountain View Area LWV

C: Gabe Engeland, City Manager  
Nick Zornes, Assistant City Manager  
Jon Maginot, Assistant City Manager  
Melissa Thurman, City Clerk  
Stephanie Williams, Deputy Director  
Jia Liu, Associate Planner  
[PublicComment@losaltosca.gov](mailto:PublicComment@losaltosca.gov)

## Melissa Thurman

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**From:** Tamara Fagin <tamara.fagin@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2025 4:10 PM  
**To:** Public Comment; City Council  
**Subject:** Support for Restricted Parking Around Los Altos High School & Thank You

Dear Mayor Dailey and Los Altos City Council Members,

I am writing to express my support for the restricted parking signs around Los Altos High School.

My family and I have lived on Alicia Way adjacent to Los Altos High School for over 20 years. When our kids were in elementary school, we walked, biked or scooted to school every day. Our street is in fact designated a "Safe Route to School," with many children - with and without their parents - biking to Almond School, Bullis Charter School and Egan Junior High School.

Restricting parking around heavily used streets, such as Alicia Way, near the high school is important for visibility and the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

Thank you for the new restricted parking signs that were recently installed on the Jardin Street side of the high school. It feels much safer and less chaotic with less cars parked in the block closest to the tennis courts.

Thanks,

Tamara Fagin  
Los Altos Resident

## Melissa Thurman

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**From:** Bin Hu <hubenjamin@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2025 11:02 PM  
**To:** City Council; Public Comment  
**Subject:** Parking in Casita Way / Distel Dr / Los Ninos Way / Panchita Way

Hello City Council,

We neighborhood residents had discussions on recent parking situation in Casita Way / Distel Dr / Los Ninos Way / Panchita Way, because it significantly and negatively impacted our residents daily living in the neighborhood.

We sincerely request that:

- (1) Please dismiss all parking tickets issued to our neighborhood residents
- (2) Please implement resident permit system and issue parking permit to our residents.

Thank you  
Bin

**Melissa Thurman**

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**From:** Michelle Edgecumbe <mfedgecumbe@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 9:33 AM  
**To:** Public Comment  
**Cc:** Tanya Maluf; Chuck Fimbres; Yolanda Navas  
**Subject:** Public ticketing on Casita Way

Hello,

My name is Michelle Edgecumbe. I was at my 100 year old mother's home last **Tuesday, January 7th for an 11:00 AM** Hospice appointment. I was joined by my brother, Chuck Fimbres, Healthcare worker Yolanda Navas and Hospice nurse Lida. Each one of us received a \$54 ticket due to the new signage.

While I do support the ticketing of High School students, unfortunately I think that the current ticketing situation is flawed. I understand that this is a trial period. It is my hope that after the trial period there will be an implementation of a residential parking permit process.

I have already disputed tickets for myself, brother and Healthcare worker. I will dispute the ticket for our Hospice nurse today.

Thank you,  
Michelle Edgecumbe  
1895 Capistrano Way  
Los Altos, CA 94024

## Melissa Thurman

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**From:** Ginny Lear <vklear9@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 9:41 AM  
**To:** Public Comment  
**Subject:** Support for Consent agenda item 6, café

Dear Mayor and Council,

I write to support item 6. I have worked directly with the owner and staff of Ada's Cafe at Mitchell Park for 10+ years on an annual fundraiser for a non-profit to which I belong.

They are people of the highest quality and integrity.

Having our city contract our community center café with them is a great match.

Thank you,

Ginny Lear

vklear9@gmail.com

Sent from my iPad

## Melissa Thurman

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**From:** Corinne Finegan Machatzke <corinne@machatzke.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 10:45 AM  
**To:** Public Comment; City Council; Gabriel Engeland  
**Cc:** <nadim@maluf.org>; camilla mcrea; Anke Delingat  
**Subject:** Request to establish a residential parking permit around LAHS

Hello,

I plan to attend tonight's city council requesting the city rapidly establish a residential parking permit for the streets around LAHS that recently had No Parking signs added.

This requires no infrastructure and immediate relief is required.

Vendors and residents are getting parking tickets (\$54) for parking in front of our house (or the house where they are working) which is creating hardship, including contractors working on a city permitted project at our house (some come in their personal vehicles). I have appealed each parking ticket we have received and am waiting to hear back.

Thank you,  
Corinne

## Melissa Thurman

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**From:** Steve Chessin <steve.chessin@gmail.com> on behalf of Steve Chessin <steve.chessin@cfer.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 12:50 PM  
**To:** Public Comment  
**Subject:** [External Sender]Item 13 (Consideration of a charter), January 14, 2025, City Council meeting

Dear Mayor Dailey, Vice Mayor Fligor, and Councilmembers Weinberg, Meadows, and Lang.

My name is Steve Chessin. I'm President of Californians for Electoral Reform. I am pleased to see that Los Altos is considering becoming a charter city. I want to make three points related to this issue.

First, it is my understanding that you are considering becoming a charter city for one or both of the following reasons: so you can adopt a property transfer tax, or so you can adopt some form of ranked choice voting, or both. My advice to you is that your initial charter should contain only one substantive item. The more items you put into your initial charter, the more reasons you give people to vote against it.

People who support ranked choice voting but are opposed to a property transfer tax will vote against it. People who support a property transfer tax but oppose ranked choice voting will vote against it.

The City of Davis serves as an object lesson. When they were considering becoming a charter city in 2008, they drafted a charter with several items in it, an "all but the kitchen sink" charter, and the people voted it down. They are still a general law city. Your initial charter should have only one substantive item in it, either a property transfer tax or ranked choice voting or some other item, but not more than one.

Second, that one substantive item should not be the one that Council thinks is most important. It should not be the one that staff thinks is most important. (I know that staff does not make policy, but they can and do subtly influence it by what they put into their reports.) It should be the one that gives the proposed charter the best chance of being adopted. And the only way to determine that is by polling. If you are going to spend five or six figures to put a proposed charter on the November 2026 ballot, you should spend four or five figures to determine what initial charter would have the highest likelihood of success.

For example, the coalition working on getting Santa Clara County to adopt ranked choice voting hired EMC Research to poll voters to gauge their support for changing County elections to RCV. (I have no financial connection to EMC Research.) We were very impressed by their methodology. I am sure there are other well-qualified professional pollsters and it is important that you engage one of them.

Once an initial charter is adopted, other items can be put before the voters as amendments in subsequent statewide primary and general elections. (While an initial city charter can only be adopted at a statewide general election, with some exceptions it can be amended at a statewide primary election.)

Finally, as one of those Santa Clara County RCV coalition members, I must take issue with the last paragraph of the staff's report, as it mischaracterizes the state of the County's progress towards RCV. It is not "struggling". It is engaged in a slow deliberative process as behooves the consideration of changing the electoral system.

In 1997, the County did not have equipment that could implement RCV, so the charter amendment the Board of Supervisors placed on the November 1998 ballot (and that the voters approved) specified that the County could change to RCV once it had the technology to implement it. The County acquired that equipment in 2019, including negotiating a price for the RCV software that the

County does not have to pay until it actually starts using RCV. The RCV advocates did not want any problems with the new equipment blamed on RCV, so waited until 2021, after the new equipment proved itself in the 2020 elections, to begin advocating for RCV.

When in 2022 the County's lawyers pointed out that charter counties do not have the same plenary authority over their elections that charter cities do, out of an abundance of caution they advised that the State Legislature should be asked to approve a district bill that would give the County explicit authority to use RCV. Then-Assembly member Evan Low introduced AB1227 in 2023 for the County, and it was adopted and signed into law that year, assuaging the concerns of the County's lawyers.

Since the passage of AB1227, the County has asked staff to prepare a detailed implementation plan for RCV. That report is expected to be presented to the Board of Supervisor's Finance and Government Operations Committee this April. Should they approve the report, it would then go to the full Board of Supervisors. Should they also approve, the step after that would be for them to ask staff to draft the appropriate ordinance, which would then come back to them for adoption. Given the timing and other considerations, the first use of RCV by the County would be in 2028.

As for the Assessor, his opposition to RCV is well-known; he is not the best authority to render an opinion as to the County's ability to conduct an RCV election. For that one should ask the Registrar of Voter's office. Both the former Registrar Shannon Bushey and the current Acting Registrar Matt Morales have expressed confidence in the Registrar of Voter's office to conduct a successful RCV election.

I do plan to give a version of this testimony orally at this evening's City Council meeting.

Sincerely,

--Steve Chessin

President, Californians for Electoral Reform



## Melissa Thurman

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**From:** Eric Chiu <emchiu@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 2:53 PM  
**To:** City Council; Jonathan Weinberg; Pete Dailey; Neysa Fligor; Lynette Lee Eng; Sally Meadows; Public Comment  
**Subject:** Thank you!

Hi,

I am emailing a quick thank you for installing the No Parking signs on Los Ninos Way and neighboring streets. The streets are 10x better than before. Here are the benefits that we have experience already in the few weeks that they have been installed.

- The streets are dramatically safer as a pedestrian and cyclist since you don't have to walk/ride around so many cars into the heavy high school drop-off/pick-up traffic
- There is no garbage on the sides of the streets whereas before we would find lots of garbage from high schooler leaving trash on the ground near their cars
- There is less speeding down our street, although there are still parents that make illegal U-turns on Jardin when dropping off near the tennis courts
- We haven't had any students blocking our driveway
- And we haven't missed any garbage pickups from students moving our garbage cans to park their cars

I am sure you don't get enough residents that email to say thank you. The No Parking signs have been a blessing and we really appreciate your help getting them installed.

Best,

-Eric Chiu  
462 Los Ninos Way  
650-291-8394



Jan 14, 2025

City of Los Altos  
1 North San Antonio Road  
Los Altos, CA 94022

**Re: Proposed Housing Development Project at 4896 El Camino Real**

**By email: [jweinberg@losaltosca.gov](mailto:jweinberg@losaltosca.gov); [pdailey@losaltosca.gov](mailto:pdailey@losaltosca.gov);  
[nfligor@losaltosca.gov](mailto:nfligor@losaltosca.gov); [llang@losaltosca.gov](mailto:llang@losaltosca.gov); [smeadows@losaltosca.gov](mailto:smeadows@losaltosca.gov)**

**Cc: [administration@losaltosca.gov](mailto:administration@losaltosca.gov); [planning@losaltosca.gov](mailto:planning@losaltosca.gov);  
[jolie.houston@berliner.com](mailto:jolie.houston@berliner.com)**

Dear Los Altos City Council,

The California Housing Defense Fund (“CalHDF”) submits this letter to remind the City of its obligation to abide by all relevant state laws when evaluating the proposed 33-unit housing development project at 4896 El Camino Real, which includes five affordable units. These laws include the Housing Accountability Act (“HAA”), the Density Bonus Law (“DBL”), and California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) Guidelines.

The HAA provides the project legal protections. It requires approval of zoning and general plan compliant housing development projects unless findings can be made regarding specific, objective, written health and safety hazards. (Gov. Code, § 65589.5, subd. (j).) The HAA also bars cities from imposing conditions on the approval of such projects that would render the project infeasible unless, again, such written findings are made. (*Ibid.*) As a development with at least two-thirds of its area devoted to residential uses, the project falls within the HAA’s ambit, and it complies with local zoning code and the City’s general plan. Increased density, concessions, and waivers that a project is entitled to under the DBL (Gov. Code, § 65915) do not render the project noncompliant with the zoning code or general plan, for purposes of the HAA. (Gov. Code, § 65589.5, subd. (j)(3).) The City must therefore approve the project unless it makes written findings regarding health and safety as mentioned above – which it cannot do since the preponderance of the evidence in the record does not support such findings. (*Id.* at subd. (j).)

The DBL offers the proposed development certain protections. (See Gov. Code, § 65915.) The City must respect these protections. In addition to granting the increase in residential units

allowed by the DBL, the City must not deny the project the proposed waivers and concessions with respect to building height, front setback, rear setback, and floor area ratio, unless it makes written findings as required by Government Code section 65915, subdivision (e)(1) that the waivers would have a specific, adverse impact upon health or safety, and for which there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific adverse impact. Of note, the DBL specifically allows for a reduction in required accessory parking in addition to the allowable waivers and concessions. (*Id.* at subd. (p).) Furthermore, the California Court of Appeal has ruled that when an applicant has requested one or more waivers and/or concessions pursuant to the DBL, the City “may not apply any development standard that would physically preclude construction of that project as designed, even if the building includes ‘amenities’ beyond the bare minimum of building components.” (*Bankers Hill 150 v. City of San Diego* (2022) 74 Cal.App.5th 755, 775.)

Additionally, the project is exempt from state environmental review under the Class 32 CEQA categorical exemption (In-Fill Development Projects) pursuant to § 15332 of the CEQA Guidelines, as the project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as the applicable zoning designation and regulations; the proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses; the project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species; approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and the site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. Recent caselaw from the California Court of Appeal affirms that local governments err, and may be sued, when they improperly refuse to grant a project a CEQA exemption or streamlined CEQA review to which it is entitled. (*Hilltop Group, Inc. v. County of San Diego* (2024) 99 Cal.App.5th 890, 911.)

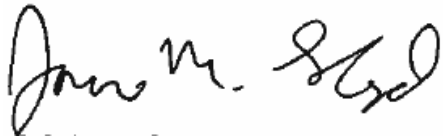
As you are well aware, California remains in the throes of a statewide crisis-level housing shortage. New housing such as this is a public benefit: by providing affordable housing, it will mitigate the state’s homelessness crisis; it will bring new customers to local businesses; it will grow the City’s tax base; and it will reduce displacement of existing residents by reducing competition for existing housing. It will also help cut down on transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions by providing housing in denser, more urban areas, as opposed to farther-flung regions in the state (and out of state). While no one project will solve the statewide housing crisis, the proposed development is a step in the right direction. CalHDF urges the Council to approve it, consistent with its obligations under state law.

CalHDF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation whose mission includes advocating for increased access to housing for Californians at all income levels, including low-income households. You may learn more about CalHDF at [www.calhdf.org](http://www.calhdf.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dylan Casey', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dylan Casey  
CalHDF Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James M. Lloyd', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James M. Lloyd  
CalHDF Director of Planning and Investigations

## Melissa Thurman

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**From:** Diwata <dijardin@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 3:51 PM  
**To:** Public Comment  
**Subject:** School Parking Around Los Altos High School

Dear Los Altos City Council,

I am writing to express my support for the restricted parking signs around Los Altos High School particularly around street corners. As a resident of this neighborhood, I have observed firsthand the negative impact of student parking on the streets. The unplanned impact of restricting parking on the streets near the tennis courts, pushed student parking further back onto other streets and small courts. The parking issues were not addressed, just moved. Enforcement is the other key to success. Students and parents continue to park under no parking signs, double park on the streets, speed through the new stop signs, and basically ignore the signage.

Many students, in a rush to get to class, engage in unsafe driving behaviors, such as racing to secure parking spots. This often leads to blocking driveways, and obstructing mailboxes and increased garbage (school papers, cups, food wrappers, etc). The chaos surrounding student drop-off and pick-up times has become a concern for the residents of the neighborhood.

While the new loop in front of the school has alleviated some congestion, I believe more needs to be done. The situation continues to disrupt the quality of life for the surrounding community and residents.

It is requested the school and the city work together to find a plausible solution. More parking on school property for students; parking at nearby lots with buses/vans bringing students/teachers to school. If the school was an expanding business, it would be responsible for providing ample parking.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I appreciate your efforts to monitor the situation and raise awareness about the dangers posed by student parking.

Sincerely,  
D Iwata  
Los Altos Resident

Thank you for your continued support in keeping our community safe and livable!