

Public Comments (Digital Commenter) - Land Use Community Design

Topic/Policy Number	Public Comments
El Camino Real	All through vehicular traffic in a tunnel under ground . Connect to surface at El Camino, University, and San Antonio
El Camino Real	Some form of frequent electric streetcar or bus service. Safe bike lanes. Additional vegetation. Room for street-side kiosks and/or food trucks to
El Camino Real	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More services so residents do not need to drive. For example no grocery store in segment of Palo Alto near Baron Park. 2. Automated tram running down center and eliminate buses. 3. Buffered with hard curb safe lane for bicycles on el camino.
Employment Districts	Housing (with parking!) near employment makes sense. Walkability is important; it is magical thinking to expect most workers to arrive on transit or bike. This isn't NYC with a great subway/bus system!
Growth Management	<p>William F. Buckley said, "A conservative is someone who stands athwart history, yelling Stop". I am sympathetic to conservatism -- it is right to worry about change, but I think it's impossible to prevent it. Instead we need to think about how to adapt to it and deal with the impact.</p> <p>So, my answer to this question is: Deal with the impact. Don't limit but instead manage growth. If the problem is traffic and parking, encourage more office space along caltrain at university and cal ave (instead of fighting that office space there, which has been happening for the last year!). Require businesses to pay for transit passes for their workers. Perhaps monitor that the businesses are complying. Replace free parking with for-fee parking</p>
Growth Management	<p>I'd love to see the see the city try to work with both large and growing companies to solve the two biggest issues for residents -- car traffic and car parking -- in innovative ways. I'd love to see the city work constructively with the many brilliant people at these companies, rather than vilifying them.</p> <p>A few specific policies that would help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - charge a lot more for parking; get rid of all free parking - encourage building without parking, in places with good transit options - give companies economic incentives to get employees to walk/bike/take public transit to work - work with companies on new transit options (e.g., shuttles from various
Growth Management	Monitor the carbon footprint of non-residential growth and require offsetting.
Growth Management	please put a moratorium on further large office buildings downtown.
Growth Management	<p>I disagree completely. Palo Alto has historically been a vital place of dynamism and new businesses in the bay area and in the entire world.</p> <p>When you put a moratorium on building you drive businesses out of palo alto. Personally, this reduces my employment prospects and increases the chance I have to move or commute a long distance. In terms of our economy, it also makes it harder for new businesses to be successful in literally the place where the greatest engine of economic growth has been for the last 20 years.</p>
Growth Management	Focus on the problems (traffic, pollution, etc.) not the perceived symptoms like development. Greater density coupled with transportation innovations

Height Limits	55-60 feet is nowhere near high enough. Palo Alto has some of the most expensive property costs in the world, because of artificial constraints on development. Let's allow buildings 2-3x the current limits across the city: 3-5 stories in existing residential neighborhoods, and 100+ feet downtown and
Height Limits	<p>We already have tall buildings in palo alto. 101 alma is 141 feet. 525 university is 180 feet. There are 7 other buildings > 95 feet. Since most of these buildings were constructed we've added a height limit.</p> <p>The height of none of these buildings bother me because they are downtown and near transit, which is where we should want tall buildings. So yes, in general we should allow higher buildings near university ave and caltrain ave train stations. Since Palo Alto has a terrible housing crunch, I'd be in favor of addressing it through raising building height limits. (Actually, I'd get rid of</p>
Height Limits	+1. bring on tall buildings downtown, along alma, and on california ave and
Height Limits	I think that creating a taller / more dense downtown area (Cal Ave, University Ave, Mid-town) could create livelier live/work/shop zones. Those buildings could be required to be carbon-neutral and have roof-top green spaces as part
Height Limits	Taller buildings should be away from the downtown or residential neighborhoods. I do not know if such areas exist!
Height Limits	<p>I disagree strongly. Downtown is highly attractive as a location for taller buildings. And while I agree we generally should avoid mixing neighborhoods of single-family housing and multi-unit development, the residential corridor along Alma Street is the ideal location for more intensive multi-unit residential development, including taller developments. Where virtually all of the Alma corridor is 1- and 2-story development, we should encourage easing the house pressure by encouraging development of 3-, 4- and even 5-story apartments and condominiums.</p> <p>The right approach could even allow Palo Alto to address (and help pay for) long-term solutions to some of our most persistent and intractable problems. The entire Alma corridor is a major issue that Palo Alto and Menlo Park created for themselves in the 1950s and '60s, by opting out of a regional approach toward the Central Expressway. We're now reaping the harvest with</p>
Height Limits	Height limits are a draconian solution to an unspecified problem. If there are concerns about shadows or the "canyon effect" on wind speed, let's address that specifically. A limit on number of floors would make far more sense. El

<p>High Quality Design</p>	<p>I hinted at this kind of design in my post above about new housing types. One example is best embodied in the phrase "gracious, high-end, multi-unit homes." Older longtime Palo Alto residents, many of them "house rich," look forward to a comfortable, luxurious life in retirement. They also look forward to decades in an active, highly social community filled with friends and in-home entertaining without the hassle of upkeep, maintenance and repairs demanded by a single-family home. But the available options for condos and apartments in Palo Alto are almost entirely student-style or young-professional housing -- cheaply built apartments, both high-rise and low-rise, at best glossed over with a few grand in high-end appliances, fixtures and finishes with postage-stamp bedrooms, paper-thin walls, 100-s.f. kitchenettes and no cross-ventilation, views or access to the outdoors. All for \$2 million.</p> <p>Surely, Palo Alto can come up with design guidelines and policies to ensure that at least some new multi-family development is of a quality that isn't purely superficial add-ons like chrome-plated fixtures and Subzero refrigerators, but also includes spacious floor plans, balconies, world-class sound-proofing, cross-ventilation, elevators and room for entertaining without cramming it all into 800 s.f.</p> <p>With land prices driving the costs, the obvious approach is to think intelligently about offering opportunities to build up as well as out. Building height limitations have been one of Palo Alto's many political "third rails" over the past 40 years, ever since the disastrous mistakes that resulted in the scattered high-rises that mostly populate the downtown area. But allowances for building 4- and even 5-story buildings could encourage the quality many of us desire without destroying Palo Alto's ongoing appreciation for beauty and</p>
<p>Neighborhood Character</p>	<p>The major issue Palo Alto faces is the cost of housing: it increases stress, decreases quality of life, and means that our neighborhoods become places that only the super wealthy can afford (key stat: Palo Alto was 2.5x average US housing prices in 1980 and is 10x today).</p> <p>To deal with housing costs, we need to get rid of the insanely restrictive zoning laws that have made it virtually impossible to build housing over the past 40 years. Done right, we'd change the laws in ways that encouraged the construction of tens of thousands of new units, which would push housing</p>
<p>Neighborhood Character</p>	<p>Apps like Google maps and Waze are increasingly routing traffic through our neighborhoods, and that will only get worse the longer we keep sticking our heads in the sand and refuse to invest in adequate infrastructure to handle the increased traffic or in much better mass transit options to take cars off the road.</p> <p>The focus should be on upgrading infrastructure and mass transit options. Simultaneously, we should be optimizing the traffic network so as to make the existing high-traffic corridors exponentially more efficient with "smarter" signals and traffic control devices that don't bog down traffic unnecessarily on</p>

Neighborhood Character	Check out Lilypad.com for some ideas about carving out low income housing from a typical Palo Alto house. By making it easy for a homeowner to carve out a rental unit from current bedrooms, senior citizens could stay in their homes instead of selling and moving to a senior residence, perhaps with a live in caretaker, if needed, or by generating needed income the senior requires. These carved out units do not change the visible character of the neighborhood and may enhance the quality of life for the homeowner. They
New Housing Types	<p>Micro-units are currently not economically feasible because of maximum units/acreage zoning + parking requirements. We should absolutely relax that zoning to allow micro-units in transit-accessible areas. (The people who would live in a micro-unit are also likely to want a car-free transit-oriented lifestyle.)</p> <p>Elsewhere in town in SFH areas, we should absolutely allow "granny units". Half of the homes on my SFH street are occupied by elderly people living alone. Many people can not downsize because of the lack of options in palo alto. Because of prop 13, people don't want to realize a capital gain, pay taxes, and then have to pay huge property taxes on their new smaller unit (which would usually be worth well more than the assessed rate on their older and larger home). As was done experimentally in santa cruz, ADUs will allow people to age in place and also make substantial income on their (formerly</p>
New Housing Types	I like the idea of making it very easy for homeowners to create granny units or Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADU). These will provide low income housing for renters without the city having to convert current areas zoned for business into low income housing. These dwellings are a win - win for Palo Alto. I think the city should do a survey to see how many homeowners and
New Housing Types	One unacknowledged problem with Palo Alto housing is the near-total absence of gracious, higher-end, multi-unit homes. With the exception of a handful of beautiful old pre-war buildings in the downtown, Palo Alto's apartment stock is virtually all a legacy of the architectural blight of the '50s, '60s and '70s: scores of shoddily built apartments, both high-rise and low-rise, a residential wasteland that blights the downtown, the north side, Professorville, the Alma corridor, California Avenue and other parts of the city. Many upper-middle class, empty-nesters, now edging into their 60s and 70s and hoping to downsize, find themselves with a cruel choice: either move out of Palo Alto or condemn oneself to a retirement lifestyle in a cramped,
New Housing Types	I agree that new housing types need to be consider. What if Palo Alto committed to some early experimentation of new forms of housing so we could learn what works best for our city and what might be some of the
New Housing Types	I agree - the more different housing types, the better. Near transit is good, but it is limiting and we should open up as many locations as possible. Parking requirements should be reconsidered, rules for attached vs detached units should be reconsidered, sizes of lots for second units should be reconsidered.

New Housing Types	<p>Yes, I agree with whole heart. Close to transit friendly location should be fine. However, I found that the parking space requirement from the current code is the major barrier. We need to remove the parking requirement, since these residents are tend to us public transportations. Or, we need to be creative about the garage, such as under ground garage with mechanical shaft in the driveway without set backs is a new trend to consider. Where can we find space in downtown areas to build big garage for seniors or single professionals who lives in new housing types. Even if we find the space, who can afford it?</p> <p>Also, for some reason, I am marked as belong to " Outside Palo Alto". In fact, I</p>
Policy L-3	Yes! I would strongly support no height limit, to support the density that the population desires. Downtown is needlessly height-restricted.
Policy L-6	Density is an immensely positive word to me. I envision a downtown that supports the many people that want to live there, and provides the services that those people want within walking distance.
Policy L-8	A limit to non-residential growth does not make sense to me. I would much prefer accommodating growth by supporting it with appropriate housing growth.
Policy L-13	This is fine, but I don't think it should be an emphasis. I think the emphasis should be on building altogether new housing. The more that is on the
Policy L-16	<p>Yes! I want a store in my neighborhood that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is welcoming and bright design, instead of a dull gas station 2) Sells healthy food and daily products (such as hygiene things) <p>This would be wonderful in Ventura!</p>
Program L-22	Around El Camino and Page Mill could use more planning. Right now it's a key part of the city that feels very neglected.
Policy L-23	<p>I love the emphasis on high-quality design, e.g. The Epiphany. The food options are diverse and very high-quality! University Ave feels very welcoming given its bright lighting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) I don't like that it is not very dense. 2) I would love to see more and taller residential buildings. 3) I would like to see more support for the homeless population (not criminalizing homelessness!) 4) Finally, I'd like to see more late-night food/drink options beyond alcohol
Policy L-26	I would like to see more shopping areas and increasing parking density (e.g. through larger/taller parking garages). The Stanford Shopping Center is
Policy L-35	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Maintain high quality of the road itself 2) Good for both pedestrian and car usage 3) Improve the design and quality of shops along El Camino. It currently looks pretty rundown south of Page Mill, and higher standards could go a long ways