

From: [Palo Alto Forward](#)
To: [Council, City](#)
Cc: [PAHousingElement](#)
Subject: HIP/AHIP - Make it a Force for Housing!
Date: Sunday, March 2, 2025 6:11:39 PM
Attachments: [HIP & AHIP Better Zoning \(03.02.25\).pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Honorable Mayor Lauing and City Council,

We support you in making HIP/AHIP strong and successful (Agenda Item #9 on March 3rd). **Please see the attached petition with over 140 signatures in support of better zoning for more housing!**

You have the opportunity to make HIP/AHIP robust to more equitably distribute housing in our city, lessen climate emissions, increase customers within walking distance to local businesses, and provide more students at schools with declining enrollment.

Ensure HIP/AHIP is strong and incentivises financially feasible projects - and Palo Alto Forward members will be right behind you supporting the housing we so desperately need.

Thank you, as always, for everything you do for this city.

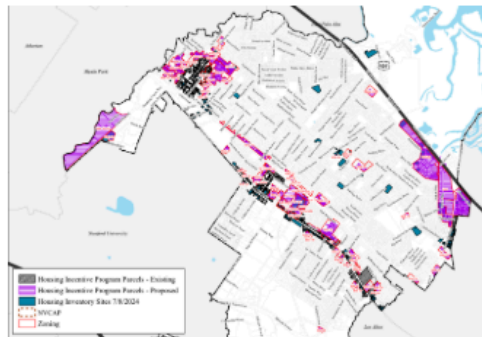
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Amie Ashton
Executive Director
[Palo Alto Forward](#)
650-793-1585

Support Robust Zoning for Housing!

Please sign our petition by Friday, February 28!

Urge the City Council to support robust changes to and expansion of the city's Housing Incentive program. **Half-measures will not bring us the housing we desperately need.**



WHO'S SIGNING

Honorable Mayor Lauing and City Council,

We urge you to expand incentives in the Housing Incentive Program (HIP) for affordable (AHIP) and market-rate projects. HIP and AHIP Zoning standards must be ambitious or else they will not meet their intended goal of facilitating new housing units.

We urge you to go taller on heights, lessen parking requirements to exceed what is offered by State Density Bonus law, go much taller on heights (especially in transit-oriented, mixed-use areas around University and California Avenues).

Inadequate zoning stands in the way of financially feasible projects. We need more density, more housing affordability, successful transit, new customers for local businesses, and new students to battle school enrollment declines. We can do better and robust HIP/AHIP standards are key in this effort.

We support you in your efforts to create conditions that will foster more housing in Palo Alto!

Dave Ashton	Rev. Amy Zucker Morgenstern
Amie Ashton	Owen Byrd
Michael Szeto	Christopher Baum
Michael Regula	Courtney Chang
Liz Gardner	Claire Bailey
Betty Howell	Gina Dalma
Janet Fenwick	Joanne Ha
Steve Pierce	Tin Nguyen
Rika Yamamoto	anita Lusebrink
Bryan Baker	Jennifer DiBrienza
Jason Holleb	Joyce Beattie
Rachel Miller	Ryan Van Soelen
Yuri Chang	Michael Quinn
Hayden Kantor	Justin Yamamoto
Avroh Shah	Patty W Irish
Joseph Luk	Selin Jessa
Jackie Wheeler	Lori Linberg
Brody Huval	Johnson Solomon
Barak Berkowitz	Caleb Jones
Zachary Anglemeyer	Chris Colohan
Nanda Garber	David Sloan
Ron Hall	Maria Rimmel
Robert Neff	Edward Hillard
Mason Hayes	Sandy Songy
Mac Malone	Baq Haidri
Benjamin Moran	Tom Harris
Ken Hayes	Cara Silver
Lois Fowkes	Tim Clark
Annette Isaacson	Samara Meir-Levi
Terry Murphey	Dennis Smith
Ginny Madsen	Francis Viggiano
Sally Ahnger	Kenneth Novak
Momo Yanagihara	Cindy Carroll
Patricia Kinney	Judith Wasserman

Adam Schwartz	Rob Nielsen
Alison Cingolani	Steven Lee
Hitoshi Yamamoto	Paul Otto
Joslyn Leve	Rebecca Eisenberg
Kenneth Ligda	Nicholas Zamboldi
Zachary Anglemeyer	Joseph Chuang
MohammadAbu Talha	Meredith Slaughter
Linda Henigin	Joby Bernstein
Leslie Fong	Divya Dhar
Eileen Menteer	Jacob Schwartz
Kelsey Rogowski	Kristi Iverson
Sheila Fehring	Stephen Levy
Barb Voss	Alice Schaffer Smith
Rodney Leggett	Bonnie Packer
bill fitch	Elaine Uang
David Golden	Jean Pressey
Kate Conley	Darel Chapman
Auros Harman	Tim Persyn
Katherine Dumont	Lizzie DeKraai
Maggie Trinh	Phyllis Brown
Ellen Smith	Gail Price
Heather Williams	Margit David
Karen Morrison	Elizabeth Weal
Alex Strange	Natalia Koulinka
John Havlik	Susan Chamberlain
Courtney Hodrick	Joy Sleizer
Hershel Macaulay	Jeffrey Salzman
Shosh Vasserman	Mary Nemerov
Marcia Pugsley	Sarah Bell
Sheryl Klein	Mimi Wolf
Wilma Vaughn	Alexia Olaizola
Sunita Sastry	Mary Beth Train
Matthew Pauly	Hillary Thagard
Sophia Abramson	Alex Konings
Rachel Golden	Linnea Wickstrom

From: [Palo Alto Forward](#)
To: [Council, City](#)
Cc: [PAHousingElement](#)
Subject: Agenda Item #9 - HIP/AHIP Changes
Date: Sunday, March 2, 2025 9:00:40 AM
Attachments: [HIP Support Ltr \(03.02.25\).pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Honorable Mayor Lauing and City Council,

Please see our attached letter in support of HIP/AHIP zoning changes. To make the program even more effective, we urge you to incorporate the following into the program:

- Expand HIP/AHIP citywide, not just to Housing Element inventory sites. More broadly upzoning, something originally proposed by staff, would facilitate additional units.
- Use higher FAR limits and heights for all commercial zones (i.e. at least 3.5 FAR and 60 feet for CN, CD, and all CS zones) or match the innovative El Camino Real Focus Area development standards for these areas - we know this Council-driven formula works for housing.
- HIP must be better than State Density Bonus Law on parking or it isn't an incentive and we won't get the projects we envision. A parking minimum of 0.5 space per unit is an incentive, or eliminate parking mandates for housing as Mountain View has done.
- Exempt parking from FAR. We are "cannibalizing" housing units for parking spaces when FAR and height are already so limited under HIP.
- Meet with home builders between first and second reading and get their feedback. We know direct engagement works.
- Consistent with Program 3.4 of the Housing Element, require an annual report on HIP proposals and use data to inform modifications if we are not on track.

We look forward to supporting future applications and projects across our city.

Thank you!

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Amie Ashton
Executive Director
[Palo Alto Forward](#)
650-793-1585



March 2, 2025

SUBJECT: Agenda Item #9 - Zoning Code Amendments for Housing

Honorable Mayor Ed Lauing and City Council,

We appreciate Council's consideration of changes to the Housing Incentive Program (HIP) and Affordable Housing Incentive Program (AHIP). These changes are timely given that we are over 1,000 units behind where we should be in terms of housing approvals.

Per our Housing Element, HIP/AHIP will produce 550 housing units across our city. **To do this, it must be robust enough to be an “incentive” to facilitate financially feasible projects in an environment of rising costs.** Thus, we are focusing comments on two aspects of HIP/AHIP: height/Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and parking requirements. Current requirements have an outsized impact on financial feasibility, and thus stymie project applications.

The following items could be incorporated into HIP/AHIP to make it more successful:

- Expand HIP/AHIP citywide, not just to Housing Element inventory sites. More broadly upzoning, something originally proposed by staff, would facilitate additional units.
- Use higher FAR limits and heights for all commercial zones (i.e. at least 3.5 FAR and 60 feet for CN, CD, and all CS zones) or match the El Camino Real Focus Area development standards for these areas.¹
- HIP must be better than State Density Bonus Law on parking or it isn't an incentive and we won't get the projects we envision. A parking minimum of 0.5 space per unit is an incentive, or eliminate parking mandates for housing as Mountain View has done.
- Exempt parking from FAR. We are “cannibalizing” housing units for parking spaces when FAR and height are already so limited under HIP.
- Meet with home builders between first and second reading and get their feedback. We know direct engagement works.
- Consistent with Program 3.4 of the Housing Element, require an annual report on HIP proposals and use data to inform modifications if we are not on track.

¹ The El Camino Real Focus Area allows 4.0 FAR, an 85-foot height limit, with one parking space per unit. We know this Council-driven formula works for housing production. Changing FAR and height limits is the easiest way to make housing economically feasible so land, infrastructure, and development costs can be spread across units to drive down the cost per unit.

We hope that HIP/AHIP will be a great success in bringing units to locations across the city. We look forward to supporting housing projects that are submitted under this program.

Thank you for your service to our community.

Amie Ashton

Executive Director

And on behalf of the Board and Membership of Palo Alto Forward

From: [Lizzie DeKraai](#)
To: [Council, City](#)
Subject: Please support robust zoning for housing
Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 2:26:19 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Dear Honorable Mayor Lauing and City Council,

My name is Lizzie DeKraai and I am an English teacher at Paly. This is my 9th year in Palo Alto and my 8th year teaching at Paly.

I am disappointed at the slow rate we are zoning for, approving, and building new housing in our city. I moved to Palo Alto nine years ago after grad school because my now-husband got an internship in Menlo Park. We knew nothing of the Bay Area, but found an apartment we could barely afford in Palo Alto (2750\$ for a 1 bedroom) that allowed pets. This was not an easy find! We lived paycheck to paycheck, maxing out credit cards in order to live, for years. In 2021, the landlord passed away, and the new ones raised the rent so much we had to move. Finding a comparable place to live took months and we now pay 3600 a month for a two bedroom built in 1941. It is falling apart, and is *more than half* of my monthly paycheck, but I hope to be able to live here for a very long time. Last year, the owners of our building - who live in Hong Kong - decided to put the whole lot on the market, so we were subject to tours and constant stress that it would be sold, forcing us to move. Thankfully they took it off the market but the threat that we will lose our home looms over us every single day. I just checked Zillow and there are literally no rentals in Palo Alto right now for a 2 bedroom apartment or home under \$4000 that allows dogs.

It is a precarious market for renters. There are not enough places to live! There just aren't. I *want* to live here, to be able to walk to work, to be close to my students' musical performances, football games, and plays. I am one of three English teachers at Paly who live in the city. I will not qualify for the teacher housing, although I am happy it's being built. It's still not enough. You must not give in to pressure from people afraid of diversity and inclusion. What better way to stand up to Trump and attacks on people of color and the poor than to make our city a place where more can live and thrive? Instead of symbolic gestures, commit to material change. Please expand incentives in the Housing Incentive Program for affordable and market-rate projects. Be ambitious with the zoning standards so more people can live here. Lessen the parking requirements and go much taller on heights especially in areas that already have tall buildings. I want more students in my school, younger neighbors who I can relate to, colleagues who I can socialize with on weekends, and bustling neighborhood businesses and restaurants. Please be brave and make decisions so that Palo Alto becomes a city where more and different kinds of people can live and thrive.

Thank you,
Lizzie DeKraai

From: [Jean Pressey](#)
To: [Council, City](#)
Subject: Housing Zoning
Date: Monday, February 24, 2025 8:31:10 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Dear Mayor and Councilmentbers,

We desperately need more affordable housing in Palo Alto. I bought my first house here for less than \$100,000, obviously many years ago.

But housing costs have gone up at a faster rate than most salaries. It diminishes our community to have only rich people able to afford homes. Please meet the housing element requirements.

Sincerely,
Jean Pressey