

**From:** [Palo Alto Forward](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Item #9 - Housing on Parking Lots  
**Date:** Monday, January 20, 2025 6:28:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [Item 9 - Housing Dntn Pkng Lots \(01.20.25\).pdf](#)

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Honorable City Council,

Please find our attached letter in support of Item #9 on the January 21st Council agenda.

Thank you,

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



January 20, 2025

**SUBJECT: Item #9 - Affordable Housing on City-Owned Parking Lots**

Dear Mayor Lauing and Council Members,

We are excited to see affordable housing on city parking lots moving forward into reality. Ensuring this was a pivotal and accountable part of the Housing Element was a key goal of our advocacy work. The city's commitment to approve at least 290 affordable and/or workforce housing units over the next (less than) six years in our downtown is noteworthy and admirable.

Our housing shortage is acute, as we all know. **We urge you to move forward more quickly with affordable housing on more than one city parking lot.** There is a benefit to moving forward with more than one site. There are significant economies of scale to be obtained in terms of staff effort, expertise, and time; shared parking garage efficiencies; and housing amenities and services that can also be shared. Further, there are important cost savings to be realized if a more holistic approach can be taken involving more than one site.

**Achieving a consensus vision in our two- to three-year Downtown Housing Master Plan need not delay smaller below market rate projects on city parking lots.** Both are needed to reach our Housing Element commitments. And as we know, more housing downtown would provide much-needed workers for retail, hotels, and restaurants; as well as new customers who can walk to shop locally.

**Reaching our housing goals (especially with regard to below market rate housing) to create a more vibrant downtown will take strong action, courage, and creativity.** We know Palo Alto can accomplish great things with bold leadership. Our residents, businesses, workers, and our environment will benefit as we strengthen our urban core with more housing.

As always, thank you for your service to our community.

Amie Ashton  
Executive Director, and on behalf of the Board of Palo Alto Forward

**From:** [Steve Levy](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Lait, Jonathan](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda item 9  
**Date:** Sunday, January 19, 2025 8:25:21 AM

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Dear Mayor Lauing and council members.

Thank you for proceeding on housing at the Kipling/Lytton parking lot and thank you for the collegial tenor of the Jan 6 council meeting.

I leave the recommendations on item 9 to your judgment BUT do urge you to move forward on discussing a second site with the non-profit developer not selected for this first site.

These sites provide walkable options to shop, eat and have access to public transit and the Stanford shuttles and bring multiple benefits to residents, businesses and the environment besides the housing for low income residents.

We have a tight timeline to meet the Housing Element goal for 100% affordable housing on city owned parking lots. My reading of HCD correspondence is that they are treating this as a critical commitment from the city so I hope we can begin to plan for the other identified sites.

Stephen Levy  
Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Adam Schwartz](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** New Downtown Homes on City-Owned Parking Lots  
**Date:** Friday, January 17, 2025 10:37:12 AM

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To the Palo Alto City Council:

I write to urge you to support the development of new affordable homes on city-owned parking lots in downtown Palo Alto. This is agenda item #9 at the upcoming meeting on January 21.

The local policy issues that matters the very most to me is building new homes at all price points. A very good step in the right direction is to transform city-owned downtown parking lots into new multi-family homes at affordable prices for lower-income families. This is a great location: near transit, amenities, and jobs. It will be good for our downtown businesses, who will get new customers.

Please approve a plan to move this forward!!

Sincerely,

Adam Schwartz  
523 Channing Ave