

Palo Alto Matters Vote Tracker 2017-18: City Council Housing Votes

Contrary to popular rhetoric, there was “across the aisle” agreement among the incumbent city council members seeking re-election in 2018 on nearly every housing action over the past two years. Here’s how Tom DuBois, Eric Filseth, and Cory Wolbach voted on housing policies adopted by City Council. Visit www.paloaltomatters.org for more voter resources and all our 2017-18 coverage of local issues!

DATE	POLICY (mover/second)	Tom DuBois	Eric Filseth	Cory Wolbach
1/30/17	Expand locations for new housing: Explore multi-family housing at Stanford Shopping Center, Stanford Research Park and near Stanford Medical Center. (Fine/DuBois)	✓	✓	✓
1/30/17	Greater residential densities: Increase residential densities in Downtown and Cal Ave in place of housing sites along San Antonio Road. (DuBois/Scharff)	✓	✗	✓
1/30/17*	Soften neighborhood transitions: Avoid abrupt changes in scale and density between residential and non-residential areas and between residential areas of different densities. To promote compatibility and gradual transitions between land uses, place zoning district boundaries at mid-block locations rather than along streets wherever possible. (Holman/Filseth)	✓	✓	✗
1/30/17*	Preserve existing housing: Preserve existing housing that is affordable, such as small cottage clusters. (DuBois/Kou)	✓	✓	abstain
1/30/17*	More natural affordability: Encourage mix of housing types and sizes designed for greater affordability, including a mix of smaller housing types. (Wolbach/Fine)	abstain	✓	✓
1/30/17*	Minimize displacement: Explore ways to minimize displacement of existing residents. (Holman/Fine)	✓	✓	✓
1/30/17*	Convert office to housing: Pursue conversion of non-retail commercial Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to residential use. (Kniss/Holman)	✓	✓	✓
3/7/17	ADU Expansion: Approve surprise motion to exceed state requirements and staff recommendations to encourage more Accessory Dwelling Units. (Wolbach/Fine)	✗	✓	✓
	Follow-up 4/17/17: Adopt ADU expansion ordinance after a full public hearing and DuBois amendments to add quarterly reports, Planning Commission review of impacts within 6 mos, special consideration of ADUs in Eichler design guidelines, and minimum 5,000 sf lot size. (Scharff/Kniss)	✓	✓	✓

* Taken up as “rapid fire” votes with abstention indicating interest in discussion. There was confusion on the dais about whether these were straw polls or actual votes, but they were ultimately recorded in the council minutes as actual votes.

DATE	POLICY (mover/second)	Tom DuBois	Eric Filseth	Cory Wolbach
3/20/17	Comp Plan housing targets: Set Comprehensive Plan housing target of 3,545 to 4,420 new units. (Scharff/Filseth)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3/27/17	Reduce developer contributions to affordable housing: Reduce required contributions from commercial developers to below-market-rate housing. [Fees approved in December 2016 would have charged office/R&D projects \$60/square foot. This change set the fee at \$35/sf and reduced hotel impact fees from \$30/sf to \$20.37/sf.] (Fine/Wolbach)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5/1/17	Consider reduced parking requirements: Add Comprehensive Plan program to “consider reducing parking requirements for multi-family uses as a way to encourage new multi-family housing and the use of alternative modes where reduction in parking would not impact the neighborhood.” (Wolbach/Fine)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10/16/17	Study renter protections: DuBois/Holman/Kou Colleagues’ Memo seeking exploration of a wide range of potential new renter protection policies. Memo failed to advance on 3-6 vote before a full council chambers.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Follow-up 9/10/18: Advance new DuBois/Holman/Kou/Wolbach Colleagues’ Memo, to explore modest renter protection policies such as mediation, relocation assistance, and enforcement of existing one-year lease requirement. Passed 7-1.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10/30/17	Housing on public land: Identify development opportunities for “below market rate (BMR) and more affordable market-rate housing” on publicly owned properties. (Fine/Wolbach)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11/6/17	Housing work plan: Advance Fine/Kniss/Wolbach Colleagues’ Memo directing staff to develop a Housing Work Plan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Follow-up 2/12/18: Approve Housing Work Plan. (Fine/Scharff) with amendments by Holman/DuBois to add a community meeting on draft zoning ordinance and consider a Below Market Rate inclusionary requirement of up to 25% (as opposed to 20%).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4/2/18	Voluntary Eichler design guidelines: Approve voluntary Eichler design guidelines, while allowing neighborhood supermajority to petition for 2-story combining district. (Scharff/Wolbach)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4/9/18	Zoning for affordable housing: Adopt Affordable Housing Combining District. (Fine/Scharff)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6/4/18	Zoning for workforce housing: Adopt Workforce Housing Combining District and approve Car-light, small unit pilot project at VTA lot at Page Mill and El Camino Real. (Fine/Scharff)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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6/25/18	Teacher housing: Set aside \$3 million for County teacher housing project in Cal Ave area.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8/27/18	<p>Emergency renter relocation assistance with income test: Require relocation assistance for no-fault evictions from multi-family housing developments with 50 or more rental units. Eligibility limited to households earning at or below 100 percent of the Area Median Income. (Scharff/Kniss)</p> <p>[Editor’s Note: Because this was an “urgency ordinance” it required yea votes from seven out of the eight council members present. A 5 to 3 majority (Kniss, Scharff, Tanaka dissenting) opposed the income limits, but could not overcome insistence from Kniss and Scharff.]</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9/17/18	Permanent ordinance for renter relocation assistance without income test: Adopt permanent ordinance aligned with 8/27/18 “emergency” ordinance but remove income eligibility clause. (Fine/Wolbach)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>