

## City Council June 11 Meeting — Agenda Item 12

Dear Mayor Kniss and Council Members,

At its June 7 meeting, PAN (Palo Alto Neighborhoods) voted to request Council to:

1. Accept the City Clerk's Certificate of Sufficiency of the Initiative Petition to Reduce the Office/R&D Development Cap ("Initiative Measure"); and
2. Approve an ordinance (on first reading) amending the Comprehensive Plan and Title 18 (Zoning) of the Palo Alto Municipal Code, as proposed by the Initiative Measure, reduce the cumulative cap on office/R&D development to 850,000 square feet, and direct staff to place the ordinance on a future Council agenda for final adoption (second reading) by August 10, 2018; or
3. Direct staff to return at a later meeting in June 2018 with a resolution calling for an election to submit the Initiative Measure to the voters at the next General Municipal Election to be held on November 6, 2018.

We also voted to request Council NOT to prepare a City-sponsored ballot measure to compete with the citizens' Initiative Petition measure.

The Staff Report indicates the potential that future office/R&D conversions would mean that the Initiative Measure will not have a significant impact to the City. Under that scenario, the City Council should either place the Initiative Measure on the November 6, 2018 ballot or approve an ordinance putting into effect the Initiative Measure.

However, the Staff Report contemplates the scenario in which there are fewer office/R&D conversions or the Stanford Research Park sees increased development, in which case the 850,000 square foot limit would be reached prior to 2030. It is this scenario the Council chose as the preferred growth scenario. On March 20, 2017, in the Council's consideration of the Comprehensive Plan growth scenarios for the Final Environmental Impact Report, the Council chose a non-residential square footage increase of 1.7 million square feet (not counting 1.3 million square feet already approved at the Stanford University Medical Center) and estimated employment growth of 9,850 and 11,500 jobs, all to occur by 2030.

The proposed 2018 Stanford General Use Permit (GUP) includes "Construction of up to 2.275 million net new square feet of academic and academic support space." The cumulative impacts of Stanford's proposed growth with the City's Comprehensive Plan Preferred Growth Scenario represents an intolerable increase in intensity in Palo Alto's sphere of influence.

We note that as traffic approaches saturation, delay increases exponentially. Under any scenario, more jobs adds more traffic, as not all of the new employees will take transit, bicycle or carpool. Indeed, the current drive-alone rate for Palo Alto workers is over 2/3. We further note that Palo Alto housing prices and rents have increased dramatically in the last decade. Excessive growth in jobs will exacerbate both these trends.

These are but a few of the reasons we request that the City Council either allow an up or down vote by the voters of Palo Alto on the Initiative Measure without any competing measure also on the ballot, or that the City Council approve an ordinance as proposed by the citizens' Initiative Measure.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Sanders, Co-Chair PAN  
Sheri Furman, Co-Chair PAN