

City Council July 30 Meeting — Agenda Item 3

Dear Mayor Kniss and Council Members,

At its July 12 meeting, PAN (Palo Alto Neighborhoods) voted to request that Council support the citizen's Office Cap ballot initiative as it stands, either by passing it right away or letting the voters decide.

By reducing office growth, adopting the initiative will provide many benefits to Palo Alto, including

- Making more land available for new housing, and especially for true affordable housing
- Lowering the enormous costs the public must pay for traffic mitigation
- Shrinking the deficit in affordable housing funding created by office development, whose impact fees pays only a fraction of the true costs
- Reducing the effective tax on travel time paid by existing residents and commuters due to traffic congestion
- Allowing overburdened transit solutions such as CalTrain to catch up with existing demand

The consultant's report discusses reductions in one-time development impact fee payments from slower development. Since the impact fees charged cover only a part of the full mitigation costs, the community avoids the much larger subsidy to implement the mitigations. Reducing the need to mitigate by reducing the impacts saves the community money and avoids further worsening of the quality of life for Palo Alto's residents, employees, and visitors.

Please do not subvert democracy in action. Volunteers gathered all the signatures for the Office Cap initiative, not professional signature gatherers. The organizers have paid all the legal fees out of their own pockets, thanks to grassroots donations. The all-volunteer effort identified well over three thousand residents who signed in only a three-week period, demonstrating that Palo Alto voters are greatly concerned about office growth and surely justifies adopting the initiative Monday night.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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