



2018 City Council Candidate Questions

STATE VS LOCAL CONTROL

What is your philosophy when it comes to local versus state control over growth and development mandates?

PAT BOONE

I do like the Governor's new law signed in 2016 on ADU's and Junior ADU's, I just think we need to apply these rules in our own way to Palo Alto, simply every city is different.

ALISON CORMACK

Traditionally local control has been the mantra for cities, but there will be times we need to strike a balance between state and local rules. For example, given the significant demand for housing throughout our region, it's understandable that the state is interested in addressing the situation comprehensively.

TOM DUBOIS

I am a strong supporter of local control. We should trust our local elected officials to make the best decision for our local situation. As a small city on a long, narrow peninsula surrounded by water and protected foothills, one size fits all solutions from Sacramento often aren't the best solution for Palo Alto.

ERIC FILSETH

The State should not try to micromanage local zoning. It makes no sense for Sacramento to dictate building heights on different streetcorners in Atherton. Sacramento's proper focus should be raising money for regional transportation, BMR housing, and social services.

That said: cities which continue to generate large numbers of new jobs but very little housing ought to carry a larger share of that money.

Furthermore, Sacramento's narrow focus on RHNA is wrong. The fact that over 95% of California cities don't meet their RHNA targets says more about RHNA than it does about cities. Sacramento should recognize that Demand is a key factor, and focus on jobs-housing ratios, not just housing in isolation.

CORY WOLBACH

At a very high level, it is important to maintain the tug of war between different levels of government, as a means of checking and balancing. Good governance is best achieved when no single body has unlimited power. So the struggle between state and local authority is a net-positive. Absolute state preemption would be a negative, as would be absolute local control.

Palo Alto and the region, like other popular regions of the country, are struggling to coordinate and balance jobs, housing, and transportation. We erred for decades by encouraging job growth without planning for housing or transportation. Our community will benefit if we and our neighboring cities pursue greater balance. The state has a legitimate role in supporting that and encouraging that. The state should not, however, dictate to cities the specifics of HOW we pursue balance. They should set the goal and provide resources. We should be able to figure out the path to get there.