PALO ALTO NEIGHBORHOODS
an independent umbrella group to enhance communications
and mutual support for the Palo Alto Neighborhoods

2018 City Council Candidate Questions

TRANSPORTATION

According to the latest US Census Bureau data, 88% of Palo Alto renter households have at least one car. Do you support reduced parking requirements to promote building housing? Will renters in these developments park in the surrounding neighborhood? If not, explain why not.

PAT BOONE

Yes, especially if it means building more ADU's and Junior ADU's.

I believe most younger renters don't have cars nor do they drive. Now of course some do have a vehicle, but we may need to consider enforcing parking permits for neighborhoods to deter a higher number of vehicles in the communities.

ALISON CORMACK

In the spirit of innovation, I support trying this type of housing, as we are at Page Mill and El Camino. This approach has worked elsewhere, but we should evaluate the parking situation before and after the building so that we can assess the results and then decide whether or not to allow similar developments in the future.

TOM DUBOIS

I support unbiased analysis of parking requirements. Certain types of housing, such as disabled or senior housing could very well require less parking. We need to be very certain with hard data before assuming people will not have cars.

Wishful thinking by councils from 2000 – 2014 hurt us when many buildings downtown were approved with inadequate parking, generating 2000 unparked cars that began parking in the neighborhoods. We do not want to create more of these unintended consequences. We are still working on repairing the impacts of those previous decisions.

You should be able to park in front of your own home.

ERIC FILSETH

As an _economic aid_ to building housing, no. If we want something for the Community, then the Community should pay the cost, not the local neighborhood. That means using money instead of zoning. Dumping cars on the local neighborhoods to help pay for housing is inappropriate.

As a means to <u>limit car ownership</u>, theoretically yes. But we should be very cautious; in my view, far too many people in government have unrealistic Utopian expectations about "car lite" development, and confuse this with economic relief -- inappropriately -- as above.

CORY WOLBACH

My own household has two people, one car, one motorcycle, and one bicycle. Essentially, we only use one parking space on a regular basis (two when family or friends come to visit from out of town). But we have four parking spaces on our property, with two in the garage and two on the driveway. That means we have four times the parking we need for most of the year. Of course, every household is different, and, over time, one household's needs can change. For instance, in the past, our own household had more cars and more people.

Should we reduced parking requirements for rentals? Yes. Granted, for many people, it is difficult or even impossible to get back and forth to work or errands without a car. Households commonly include multiple working adults. However, in a multi-family project, the needs of different households average out. Not everybody has family visiting at the same time. Not every family has two kids in high school each driving at the same time. Anecdotal experiences, reports from affordable and senior housing providers, and studies commissioned by the City and others point the same direction. The evidence is increasingly clear: when it comes to housing zoning, we generally require more parking than needed.

To limit impacts on the neighborhood from new housing, we should (1) focus new housing in areas where parking is least needed and (2) limit new properties' residents' ability to park on the street. For example, we recently approved an apartment building at the corner of Page Mill and El Camino. It is near transit and jobs and shopping, and we made sure it was excluded from the adjacent Residential Parking Program (RPP) area. This means residents of the new apartments will not be allowed to compete for street parking in that neighborhood. This should be our model going forward: housing near transit, in RPP protected areas, but not eligible for the RPPs themselves. If developers think they can get away with reduced parking, I don't just want to trust them, but I am happy to give them a chance to prove it. This is how they can prove it.