



2026 City Council Candidate Questions

Raymond Lee Goins Responses

Experience / Vision / Goals

In the last four years what issues in Palo did you take a leadership role in that you are most proud of and what was the result?

Yes I have, I have spearheaded the campaign to Remove a racial Mural that sat between two courtrooms in the Palo Alto court house. It depicted the native population here in Palo Alto in a subservient position. The result was that the mural was covered up as it still sits, and we are looking for a way that the community can paint over it to be more reflective of a community we live in. I also spearheaded a campaign to get our current council to call out the racial graffiti that has been scrawled all across the city in neighborhood parks. This resulted in the school district acknowledging that they needed to teach ethnic studies, and the histories that we all faced.

Do you have any interests, such as ties to Stanford, developers, or other entities that would cause you to recuse yourself on issues that are before the council? If so, what are they?

No I. Don't.

What do you hope to accomplish in the next four years on Palo Alto City Council?

I hope that I can accomplish in the next 4 years the right to housing, and the affordability for all our residents that work here to live here.

What two things would you prioritize to make Palo Alto and its neighborhoods more livable?

The two things that I would prioritize would be making Housing as a right/Rent stabilization. I believe if we don't price families out then we will have community to build on that last for generations to come.

Housing, State Mandates, Local Control, Growth & Infrastructure

State government has increasingly limited cities' discretion over housing policy through laws including SB 79, the Housing Accountability Act, Density Bonus Law and other legislation. Palo Alto must simultaneously meet state housing requirements, accommodate substantial new housing and preserve the qualities residents value about their neighborhoods.

Where do you think the City should accommodate significantly greater housing density, and where—if anywhere—should it resist or seek to mitigate state requirements?

I think that Palo Alto should be a leader in how we build a scale with our access to enormous wealth.

How should Palo Alto ensure that housing growth is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure, transportation, parks and other public services?

I think that by planning for the cause and effect from the building of the housing will allow us to mitigate any risk or problems that stem from building without thinking about what comes with building. For instance when we are building these affordable housings in Palo Alto, we are not thinking about the additional vehicles that will come with those individuals that will occupy those homes.

Palo Alto has a significant number of truly affordable deed restricted housing units that were built over decades for households making between 30-60% AMI. Currently, most projects are at such high AMIs that most families in lower income brackets need the subsidy to reside in Palo Alto. As a councilmember, what solution would you put forward to create truly meaningful affordable housing in Palo Alto.

First I would create a rent stabilization so that the property owner can't continue to raise your rent over the years, I believe that your rent should stay what you initially rent the property for without worrying about the landlord increasing it over a time period. I also would have a progressive tax on business that make over a certain amount to off set these cost for families that can't afford the rent. I think that we have a moral obligation to give families an opportunity to live and thrive in our city, so they can change their generational outcome.

Palo Alto's Fiscal Solvency & the Future of Retail

Palo Alto entered FY 2026–27 facing a substantial General Fund deficit and adopted reductions affecting staffing and services, including library operations.

What do you believe are the underlying causes of Palo Alto's structural budget challenges? Describe your approach to balancing the City's budget over the next five years. Which services should be protected from cuts? Where would you reduce spending, increase revenue, change employee costs, defer capital projects or find efficiencies? Please be specific.

No answer.

The loss of community serving retail is a source of frustration to many residents. What if anything would you do to retain and encourage retail in Palo Alto, particularly in Midtown, the burned-out Philz and Bill's lot, Edgewood Plaza, Charleston Plaza, Town and Country, San Antonio Road, and along El Camino?

No answer.

Transportation

Growing numbers of people, including teens and children, ride personal electric mobility devices such as e-bikes and e-scooters on the city's streets, sidewalks, and trails in ways and at speeds considered dangerous.

At an April 2026 City/PAUSD discussion, Palo Alto police reported six collisions involving e-bikes and e-motos at PAUSD campuses in March 2026 alone, one involving major injuries. Police also reported increasing violations by student e-bike riders.

If you concerned about this issue, as a councilmember, what measures would you propose to make Palo Alto's streets, sidewalks and trails safe while not discouraging encouraging alternative transportation modalities?

No answer.

Palo Alto has spent years studying how to separate streets from the Caltrain tracks at its rail crossings. The projects involve enormous costs, difficult engineering choices and potentially major impacts on nearby neighborhoods.

No answer.

What outcome do you support for Palo Alto's rail crossings, and what tradeoffs are you willing—and unwilling—to accept regarding cost, neighborhood impacts, road closures, eminent domain, construction disruption and urban design? At what point should the City decide that a particular grade-separation alternative is simply too expensive?

No answer.

Homelessness and Vehicle Dwellers

Palo Alto faces competing concerns surrounding people living in RVs and oversized vehicles on public streets, including the welfare of unhoused residents, neighborhood and business impacts, sanitation, public safety and the private use of public space.

What should Palo Alto's policy toward vehicle dwellers be? Describe the combination of enforcement, parking regulation, safe-parking programs, shelter, services and housing that you believe would be both humane and workable?

My policy around vehicle dwellers would be one that sees the person in the vehicle, and not the circumstances that the person finds themselves in. I don't believe in one blanket approach because everyone's situation is different, and if we treat people as if they are an individual and not a class of people. For those workers who are living in their vehicles because the commute is too much, I think we need to emphasize creating affordable housing for them, so they can live in the community they work in, and not be subjected to having to live in their vehicle. I think we should develop a safe parking site for those who can only afford to live in their vehicle. Affordable housing is a different term for those who come from different economic brackets.

Climate Goals and the Municipal Utilities

Palo Alto has ambitious climate goals and a municipally owned utility, giving the City unusual ability to influence electrification and energy use.

How aggressively should Palo Alto pursue building and vehicle electrification? How should the City balance climate goals against affordability, reliability, consumer choice and the financial consequences?

I would follow the Mayor's lead on this one as the city is a leader in environmental concerns. I do agree that Palo Alto should continue to lead on with going green. Any new building and parking structure should have the focus of being electrified, so we can transition out of the use of the environmental harm production. I think the city can balance the climate goals against affordability, and the financial consequences, by making our ultra-wealthy businesses feel like they are part of our community, and they have an obligation to help the city thrive, so they can thrive. As opposed to just taking in our wealth, and not spreading it to help those around.

As City policies encourage people to turn off the gas, an unintended consequence is that gas prices rise for those who retain gas. Some of the residents can't afford the steep cost of transitioning away from gas. How should the city address this conundrum?

Progressive Tax on the wealthy. Removing the cap from measure K for those who make a significant amount of money.

To date, 28 years have passed since the 1998 flood event of record and little to nothing has been done at the Pope-Chaucer bridge to prevent creek overflows into the Crescent Park and Duveneck/St Francis neighborhoods. How would you determine what the hold-up has been at SFCJPA, what would you do to expedite implementing a solution, and how would you assure CPNA and DSFNA residents that help is on the way?

I would have to see what the truth is about why it hasn't been done. I then would bring this truth back to the community, and ask them what they would like to do with the options that are available.

Public Safety, Technology and Civil Liberties

Palo Alto's use of automated license plate readers has generated debate over the value of technology in solving crimes versus privacy, data sharing and government surveillance.

What principles should govern Palo Alto's use of surveillance technology? Discuss where you would draw the line between legitimate public-safety tools and unacceptable government surveillance, and what oversight, transparency, warrant, retention and data-sharing rules do you believe should apply?

I oppose any form of mass surveillance. It gives our community a false sense of security, and our civil liberties should not be violated. We should not treat our city like it's a business, with security cameras everywhere.