



2026 City Council Candidate Questions

Growth & Infrastructure

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

BRYNA CHANG

Growth without infrastructure is displacement in slow motion — and our experience with the Fry's/North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan teaches us that we cannot wait until after development begins to plan for community needs.

I will insist that development review include honest assessment of cumulative infrastructure impacts. Specifically: I will negotiate aggressively with developers for developer-funded amenities including parks, retail, bike infrastructure, and school transit improvements. I will push for rapid completion of our area plans, since projects are already being approved that impact our ability to plan for San Antonio. I will advocate for VTA collaboration to plan transit service for new neighborhoods now, so that transit is available when residents arrive rather than years later. And I will push to bring back the city shuttle or collaborate with Stanford to extend the Marguerite shuttle to better serve key corridors.

YUDY DENG

As a Parks and Recreation Commissioner and a member of the Palo Alto Police Foundation board, I see these issues from a very practical perspective. Growth isn't just about how many homes we build. It's about whether our parks, streets, utilities, public safety, and other services can grow with them.

I don't believe infrastructure should be used as an excuse to stop housing. But we also shouldn't build first and figure everything else out later. When we add housing, we should be planning at the same time for safer streets, parks and playgrounds, transit, utilities, childcare, and emergency response.

I'm especially passionate about our parks and public spaces. Families need places to play, exercise, gather, and simply enjoy their neighborhood.

My Green Lights approach is about making good housing easier to build while planning responsibly for what comes with it. Growth should make our neighborhoods stronger, not simply put more pressure on what's already there.

HENRY ETZKOWITZ

Did not answer.

GARY GECHLIK

Developers play, developers pay.

RAYMOND LEE GOINS

I think that by planning for the cause and effect from the building of the housing will allows 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.

BRIAN HAMACHEK

I would coordinate housing and infrastructure planning through a public delivery schedule for each major growth area. It would identify expected development, available utility capacity, required improvements, funding, and completion dates.

The schedule would cover water, sewer, electricity, drainage, transportation, parks, and emergency services. It would account for the combined demand from multiple projects and the ongoing costs of staffing, maintenance, and operations.

Developers should pay their legally supportable share through properly justified fees and improvements.

ED LAUING

It should be required by policy and financed in part by developers. The requirement for new infrastructure is a given with this massive development.

VICKI VEENKER

We need to both plan for it and secure the resources to pay for it.

With respect to planning for infrastructure, transportation, parks and other public services, we should use area plans when growth is concentrated in a particular part of the city. The San Antonio Road Area Plan and the Downtown Housing Plan are key examples. This way we can look holistically at neighborhoods both as they are and as we would like them to be when they are supporting additional housing.

The plans should include infrastructure like bikeways, safe pedestrian routes, delivery access, bike parking, sufficient utilities, access to transit, parks, schools, emergency services, and shopping.

With respect to resources, the City currently has a half dozen development impact fees, including library, parks, and public impact fees. We need to keep them and possibly re-assess their sufficiency. We also have in-lieu fees that can be paid in some instances instead of creating affordable units. Because of the difficulty of creating affordable housing units, we should limit these to the extent possible.