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Focusing on Priorities: Housing



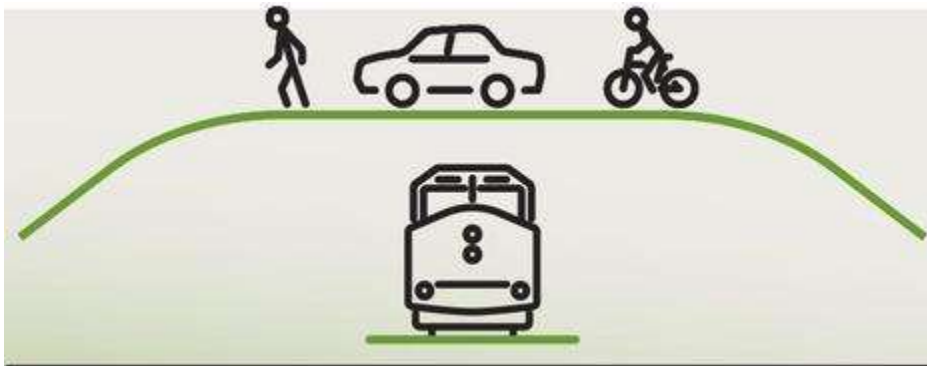
The City Council has gotten right to work on the priorities we set for the year including Housing. On Feb. 12, the Council approved the Housing Work Plan that aims to increase the City's housing supply by about 300 units per year. This will be a challenging goal to reach, and the plan includes more than a dozen policies aimed at helping us accomplish it. Everything from encouraging residential construction through incentives to relaxing density requirements for downtown and California Avenue housing projects are outlined in the plan. One specific proposal is to explore increasing the percentage of below-market-rate unit requirements in market rate developments from 15% to 20%. We need more housing and these zoning changes will come to Council during the year for adoption. You can read the full staff report on the Housing Work Plan [here](#).

Ventura Plan Moves Ahead



Housing is also one of the key features of the Ventura “concept area plan” that Council voted to move ahead with on March 5. The idea is for residents, business owners and other stakeholders to be part of a working group that will have a say in shaping a 39-acre portion of the Ventura neighborhood, part of which includes the Fry’s Electronics store that is south of Page Mill Road. The group will look at how to develop a mixed-use neighborhood around transit, pedestrians and bicycle facilities, with connections to the California Business District. Interested in applying to be on the working group? Get the application form [here](#). You can also find the full staff report [here](#).

Focusing on Priorities: Grade Separation



Next stop, Grade Separation. It's another one of the Priorities for 2018, with the goal of selecting a preferred solution for the four at grade rail crossings by the end of the year. To keep us on track, almost 200 people attended the Connecting Palo Alto community roundtable on trenching and tunneling options earlier this month. The group heard a presentation about a white paper on the trench/tunnel option and shared their ideas.

Time is of the essence for the Connecting Palo Alto rail program because Caltrain electrification will be complete by 2021, which means by 2025 there could be 20 trains per hour during peak times. This would mean that gates at rail intersections would be down 25% of the time during daily peak periods with traffic congestion doubling by 2030. The \$700 million in Measure B funding is also being split between other communities and projects that are further along than Palo Alto, adding to the time constraints. Stay engaged on this issue by signing up for the latest updates at: cityofpaloalto.org/connectingpaloalto.

Welcome New Sister City, Yangpu District, Shanghai



Yangpu District Vice Mayor Li Yaping and Palo Alto Mayor Liz Kniss

I was happy to officially welcome Chinese dignitaries from the Yangpu District in Shanghai as Palo Alto's eighth Sister City during a signing ceremony on Monday, March 5 in City Hall. Palo Alto and Yangpu share a number of characteristics which make us natural partners. We both are part of larger, thriving metropolitan regions that are considered centers of innovation, sharing key interests in the concept of Smart Cities. Palo Alto and Yangpu are also homes to great universities, share a strong interest in education, and are leaders in civic sustainability efforts.



The City's partnership with Neighbors Abroad has led to sister city relations with Palo, Philippines; Oaxaca, Mexico, Enschede, the Netherlands; Linkoping, Sweden; Albi, France, Tsuchiura, Japan and Heidelberg, Germany. To learn more information about our other Sister Cities, click [here](#).

Cubberley Community Day: Something for Everyone



Bring the whole family to Cubberley Community Day on Saturday, March 24 and get familiar with all that the Cubberley Community Center has to offer. Canopy will be organizing tree planting and mulching projects from 9 a.m.- 1 p.m. Music, dance, karate and Taekwondo performances will take place in the auditorium from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. The fun-filled day also serves as an opportunity to see the work of the [CASP Artists](#), and learn more about [MakeX](#) makerspace for teenagers

and [Avenidas](#) for seniors. Add a bounce house, games and face painting in the mix and it will be a fun, full day for the little ones. For more information, click [here](#).



Save the Date:

State of the City Address



Finally, please mark your calendar for Wednesday, April 18 as you are invited to my State of the City speech and community event at the Oshman Family Jewish Community Center in the Freidenrich Conference Center. Here I will lay out my vision and ongoing goals for the year. Plan to attend the reception that begins at 6 p.m., ahead of my 7 p.m. speech and stay for the cake and celebration that will follow. City Manager Jim Keene will also briefly address the group, so it looks to be an informative and fun evening. Hope to see you there.



Liz Kniss
Mayor



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