# Why I am running for re-election to City Council

Over twenty- two years ago my husband and I moved to Palo Alto to raise our children. I love belonging to a "village" where neighbors care, truly care, helping and sharing with each other. Many proudly said "*Palo Alto is the greatest place to live and bring up our children.*" Over time, I have been disheartened to see our community being diminished.

Palo Alto has been a battleground between developers and their allies, and those focused on livability for the residents. This battle goes back at least into the late 1960s. If it weren't for the Residentialist movement of those days, Palo Alto wouldn't have many of its parks, Baylands and other amenities – the developers want to build more and more tracts of housing.

The current battle is with those who say Palo Alto **must** become more dense. For some, this results from them personally valuing restaurants, bars, and nightlife over schools, parks and the like. For others, it is the urban design theory, or the current urban design theory from academics who predominantly live in dense urban areas. Still others support it because increased density would make their properties more valuable. Add to this are the regional bureaucrats tasked by the State to plan for substantial population growth. Lacking detailed knowledge of the city’s differences, these unelected officials have imposed unrealistic planning goals and housing targets.

There is a vocal faction demanding Palo Alto be a "world-class" city. But what does this term mean? Does it mean having more headquarters of famous corporations, even though their biggest "contribution" is their out-of-town employees clogging Page Mill, Oregon Expressway, Charleston, Arastradero, Embarcadero, and El Camino.

I am frustrated by the city repeatedly incentivizing developers to build office space when the city has a substantial housing shortage. And who pays for those incentives?

The result of this development was to increase property values, driving out many small community businesses, no longer able to afford Palo Alto. Downtown became a regional destination for technology companies, restaurants, and higher end consumer products.

An ever-increasing number of employees commuted into Palo Alto, adding to existing parking shortages, traffic congestion, noise, and pollution. Unprecedented economic growth in the Bay Area increased housing costs, forcing out many lower-income families.

As Palo Alto’s financial problems were influenced by rapid commercial development without adequate infrastructure impact fees, lack of a business tax, and inadequate onsite parking. the City Council approved numerous projects whose cost was not shared by business but borne by property, sales and hotel taxes.

Which brings us to today.

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, hotel and sales taxes revenues have plummeted. Capital improvement projects that were approved and funded on these tax streams are now “unfunded”.

Palo Alto City currently has a roughly 40 million -dollar budget deficit. The City Council majority is slashing city services, but not the “unfunded” capital improvement projects or generous salaries for city staff, to meet this deficit.

**I am running to:**

1. return trust, transparency and honesty to our City government,
2. balance Palo Alto’s unrestrained growth,
3. address inadequate parking; decrease congestion and pollution,
4. return fiscal responsibility to our City, including decreasing our unfunded pension obligations,
5. fight Sacramento’s attempt to take away local control over zoning and other basic City decisions,
6. encourage a health mix of population by increasing housing for a wide range of income levels, and
7. retain Palo Alto’s character and livability.

**I will work to accomplish the following:**

1. Rebuild confidence and trust in our City government and staff by returning transparency to all levels of government.
2. Limit changes in our zoning laws which favor individual developments at the community’s expense.
3. Require the true cost of all capital improvement projects be discussed, including project funding, interest and other costs.
4. Maintain local legislative control by limiting State and Regional Government Organizational interference in Palo Alto’s Land Use and Zoning Codes.
5. Limit exemptions to developers, businesses and employers in order to reduce parking, traffic, pollution and noise.
6. Ensure businesses and employers pay their fair share of all City expenses, including infrastructure costs.
7. Enlist residents in an open, honest discussions regarding the changes and challenges inherent in Palo Alto’s future.

I ask for your endorsement and vote.

 I believe Palo Alto is at a crossroads. Do we retain our single- family residential areas, expand our community serving businesses and retain our unique character? Our village?

Or, do we change our zoning and lands use regulations to allow for severe densification and morph into a large urban center?

The choice is yours.

Please consider all the candidate’s voting records, previous statements, including social media postings, and endorsements; not just their campaign jargon. Look deep and decided. Thank you.

