

# John Fredrich Replies to 2016 City Council Candidate Questions

1. **Reason for running:** What are the top three goals you want to achieve in the next four years on the city council?

My top goals are representing all citizens, protecting the environment and quality of life here in Palo Alto, and responsibly enabling the creation of more affordable housing. I believe that in order to do this we need a new City Manager and a new Director of Planning.

2. **Experience:**

*Non-incumbents:* Describe your personal experience with Palo Alto City government and recent issues that have come before public hearings at the city council or other board and commissions. What was your role? (For example, did you send an email, speak to the Council, lead a group of citizens, etc.?) How extensively were you involved?

Member, October 17<sup>th</sup> Mobilization to End the War, 1967.  
Political Science Bachelor of Arts with Distinction, Stanford, 1968.  
Candidate for United States Congress House of Representatives, 1974.  
Candidate for Palo Alto City Council, 1975, 1977, 1981, 2003, 2014.  
Board of Directors, Urban Ministry, 1985.  
Board of Directors, South Bay Sanctuary, 1986.  
Organizer, Substitute Teachers' section of the Palo Alto Educators Association & long time member of the PAEA Representative Council.  
Usher, Sunday School teacher, committee member, and deacon at First Lutheran Church, Palo Alto, 1975-2005.  
Lifetime California State Teacher Credential, Secondary, Social Studies.

3. **Affordable Housing:** Regarding building affordable housing, we are faced with several problems: lack of land, lack of interest on developers' part and the cost (one unit costs \$400-600,000). Please address:

- How do we get such housing built?
- Can we even build enough housing to satisfy demand?
- Should the City increase development fees to fund more affordable housing?

Housing can be greatly facilitated by prioritizing the creation of new and smaller and affordable units. We cannot meet demand but we can simplify accessory unit permitting and identify those parts of town where they can be encouraged and fit in. Increasing development fees may be part of the answer, but more importantly we need to eliminate exemptions and buyouts.

4. **High-density housing:** What are your thoughts on "high-density housing" in Palo Alto? How much should be built and for whom?

Higher densities can be made to fit with good planning, especially in areas such as Buena Vista, Fry's, and at the margins of the industrial zone that are near transportation. We should work with Stanford to up the density of Escondido Village to an appropriate level.

5. **Jobs/Housing Imbalance:** Office creation is outpacing housing development. Please address:
- How much, where *and what kind of* office space can Palo Alto sustain?
  - Do you support extending the annual office space development cap?
  - Should the City consider placing a moratorium on new office development?

I support the office cap and lean toward Scenario's 5 & 6 in the Comprehensive Plan. I support moratoriums.

6. **Growth:** There has been a lot of discussion about the demand for housing as well as potential impacts, and how fast it should increase in Palo Alto. How does this compromise the quality of life of local residents, including school enrollment, and what mitigations do you support?

We need to work on the housing issue and not create more commercial footage until we make some progress on housing. We need another elementary school and some PAUSD facilities at Cubberley.

7. **Cumulative Impacts:** Commercial projects are evaluated on an individual basis, without looking at the cumulative impact on intersections, traffic and spillover parking in neighborhoods. Many traffic studies seem to have a finding of "no impact," yet traffic continues to get worse. What changes in the way we evaluate projects would you favor?

I support honesty and good data in regard to traffic studies. I am not a fan of 'counter-intuitive' approaches. I thought Joe Kott, Gail Likens, and Jaime Rodriguez did not know what they were doing or were dishonest in how they did it.

8. **Local Review:** What is your opinion of the Budget Trailer Bill 707's (or similar bills) by-right exemption from environmental review?

I did not favor Gov. Brown's approach to this any more than his take on HSR or the two tunnels. The conflict with CEQA that by-right created did not need to be there. The \$400 million should have been funded without impairing local review.

9. **Retail:** How would you support local retail? Specifically, how would you protect, support and possibly even extend ground-floor retail in our commercial and neighborhood commercial areas? How would you enforce existing laws?

I expect the City Manager and City Attorney to enforce existing laws with the able assistance of the County District Attorney and state and federal authorities if needed. I would like to know how much retail space is being leased by Palantir.

10. **Accessory Dwelling Units (aka "Granny Units"):** Do you support zoning changes to enable the creation of additional second units, such as reduced minimum lot size, removal of parking requirements? If so, which ones? How do ensure these units don't simply become short-term (Airbnb-type) rentals?

I support Accessory Dwelling Units and 'junior' ADU's. You keep them from being temporary by mandating one year minimum leases with no subletting clauses. (I pushed for granny units in 2014.)

- 11. Parks:** The current Comprehensive Plan calls for the city to maintain 4 acres of in-town park space for every 1,000 residents. The actual ratio is now below this ratio as our population has grown. What should we do?

For park space make sure the frontage of Stanford on El Camino is not built up. Save the trees and connect those woods with trails that go to Foothill Park and on to the Pacific Ocean. Reconfigure Cubberley.

- 12. Dewatering:** What policies should the City set regarding the discharge and loss of water (as well as land settlement problems in neighboring properties) when basements are being built?

We need comprehensive water assessment and management. No more basements until we do that; water use profiles for all new construction.

- 13. Single Family Individual Review (includes SSO, Eichler preservation):** Please address:

- What type of design guidelines should be developed to preserve neighborhood character?
- Is the current process working?
- If so, give examples. If not, what should be changed?

Let the neighborhoods decide how many stories they want but be vigilant in protecting the daylight plain rules.

- 14. Traffic/Commuters:** With so much traffic spreading into many neighborhoods, and with a lack of regional transportation plans, what do you propose Palo Alto should do to address employee traffic into town? How do you propose to ease the congestion on our arterial streets — especially during the rush hours — so fewer commuters will try to take unsafe short cuts through our residential neighborhood streets?

Enforce all traffic laws.

- 15. Parking (RPP):** Do you support an expanded Residential Parking Permit Program? Please address:

- How should it be structured to protect neighborhoods?
- Should neighborhoods get to determine which type of program is appropriate for them?
- What alternatives or additional mitigations do you support?
- Will you keep in place the commitment to phase out non-resident parking in the Downtown RPP district in 10 years?

Develop rapid transit; maintain current El Camino Real. No route cuts.

- 16. Caltrain/HSR:** What is your view on Caltrain's electrification plans, High Speed Rail and grade separations?

I'm against HSR and any new revenues for VTA until this is sorted out.

- 17. VTA:** What will be your strategy in dealing with the VTA to stop their proposed severe reduction of VTA bus service within Palo Alto, and to persuade them instead to improve their service in Palo Alto so more commuters working in Palo Alto will take VTA buses to their jobs in Palo Alto.

See above answer.

- 18. Budget:** How do you plan to fund the city's long-term pension and health benefits liability, which currently stands at \$500 million? How serious is the impact of this liability to the City's ability to provide services and amenities to residents?

As for the pension problem, this is one of the big reasons for getting a new City Manager. The size of the City staff and the unfunded liabilities that we continue to create are eroding the future viability of local and state governments all over the country. To begin with we reduce over-all staffing, eliminate all pension credit for overtime (the pay itself does not impact your retirement), and put all medical costs into a national, universal, single-payer system.

- 19. Stanford:** What is the most important aspect of the City's upcoming negotiation with Stanford regarding its General Use Permit?

The most important issue with Stanford is getting them to stop their build-out, as we must stop ours, and to preserve the Dish, Coyote Hill and Deer Creek as they are. I favor retention of the status quo until the Searsville Dam controversy is solved as that will effect drainage and land subsidence at the very time that rising sea levels will be impacting San Francisco Bay. Stanford always maintains that they have no bigger plans right up until they announce their Next Big Plan.