



# California Apartment Association

## LOCAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is being sent to candidates for public office as a key component of the endorsement process by the California Apartment Association's Tri-County Division. The information you provide on the questionnaire will remain on file at the California Apartment Association and candidate profiles and responses to questions may be featured in our regular publications.

*In addition to responding to the questions below, please include a brief biography which lists civic/community activities in which you have participated in the past few years noting the nature of your participation and any offices you have held.*

**Please e-mail your completed questionnaire to Anil Babbar, [REDACTED], no later than 5:00pm Friday, September 9, 2016**

### Candidate & Campaign Information

Name Lucas Ramirez  
Home Address [REDACTED] Zip 94040  
Rent Yes Own No  
Do you own Rental Housing? No If yes, # of units \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation Digital Product Manager  
Business Address 153 Second Street, Suite 102, Los Altos Zip 94022  
Day Phone [REDACTED] Evening Phone Same as daytime phone  
E-mail address Lucas@RamirezforCouncil.com  
Ballot Designation Digital Product Manager  
Name of Campaign Committee Ramirez for Council 2016  
Campaign Treasurer Emily Ramos  
Campaign FPPC ID# 1384620  
Campaign Budget \$24,000 Funds Raised to Date: \$25,127.53  
Campaign Manager Emily Ramos  
Campaign Consultant N/A  
Headquarters Address P.O. Box 390211, Mountain View, CA Zip 94039  
Headquarters Phone N/A HQ Fax N/A  
Campaign Website: <https://www.ramirezforcouncil.com/>

Maximum contribution to your campaign allowed by law in your jurisdiction: N/A - There are no contribution limits in this race.

Maximum contribution you will accept from our Political Action Committee, CAAPAC: N/A I have reached my fundraising goal.

Are you seeking the endorsement of CAA's PAC? Yes

***Please answer each of the following questions limiting your response to each to approximately 100-200 words.***

1. Why are you running for City Council?  
The biggest challenges facing Mountain View are the housing crisis and severe traffic congestion. I am running to promote smart growth policies and jobs/housing balance, which are both long-term solutions to these challenges. I also want to work to increase the confidence and trust of the public in government by ensuring that residents have timely access to information and ample opportunity to provide input on crucial issues.



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## LOCAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

2. What are your top three priorities and how will you address them?

**1. Housing affordability - implement multi-pronged solutions that address the problems comprehensively:**

- a. The long-term solution is to address this problem through land use planning that prioritizes housing over office development. The root of the problem is the regional jobs/housing imbalance. Job growth increases the demand for housing, and when supply is limited, housing costs skyrocket.
- b. The medium-term solution is to promote policies that increase affordable (below market rate) housing. I support inclusionary zoning and impact fees on new development, especially office space, to increase funding for affordable housing.
- c. The short-term solution is to support anti-displacement policies that help families stay in their homes. I support relocation assistance for displaced tenants and rapid rehousing policies to prevent homelessness.

**2. Traffic congestion relief and safety:**

- a. Implement and enforce strong transportation demand management policies with aggressive "mode shift" goals (reducing the number of people who drive alone and increasing use of alternative modes of transportation).
- b. Invest in bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure, especially safe routes to schools and trails used by commuters.
- c. Support reasonable impact fees on new development to fund improvements to transportation infrastructure.

**3. Civic engagement and resident participation - expand opportunities for residents to stay informed and provide meaningful input in critical decision-making:**

- a. Release council agendas earlier and encourage publication of agendas in the local newspaper (the Mountain View Voice).
- b. Enhance noticing requirements to ensure that residents know about critical issues that will directly affect them.
- c. Create an Open Data policy and portal, and make publicly available in machine-readable formats government data that would be valuable to the community.

3. Do you support or oppose rent control?

Support X Oppose \_\_\_\_\_

Please discuss, in depth, your position on government regulation of rental prices (aka rent control)?

The jobs/housing imbalance is the root cause of the housing crisis. The long-term solution is to increase housing supply to meet demand. However, given the severity of the housing shortage and the externalized costs of the affordability crisis (homelessness, employee recruitment and retention difficulties), I think a short-term policy is appropriate. Any rent control policy must have provisions to ensure that it is fair and reasonable, including vacancy decontrol, cost pass-throughs for capital improvements, and allowance for rent increases that ensure that the property owner can maintain their property. Rent control must not discourage residential development, so new housing must be exempt. I also support exemptions for single-family homes, duplexes, companion units, and triplexes in which the property owner lived in one of the units.

4. Do you believe the state law (the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act) which limits a city's ability to impose rent control only to those units built before February 1, 1995 needs to be changed?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO X \_\_\_\_\_

California has a severe housing shortage, and incentivizing the construction of new housing is an integral part of the solution to the affordability crisis. There exist numerous regulations and procedural hurdles that already discourage new housing from being built, and subjecting new rental housing to rent control



# California Apartment Association

## LOCAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

would be a major economic disincentive to building new housing. Therefore, I strongly support exempting new residential development from rent control.

5. What do you believe is the proper role and policies for local government in each of the following areas:
- Regulating the timing & circumstances by which a landlord can change a tenancy
  - Promoting quality housing, including renovations of older properties
  - Increasing property owners/managers' participation in the Section 8 program
  - Encouraging production of market rate rental and for sale housing

I think requiring notice prior to a change in tenancy (the 30 or 60 days depending on length of tenancy in the case of no cause eviction required under state law) is fair given the impact to the tenant if asked to leave a unit. I also think Mountain View's right to lease ordinance is reasonable. A building inspection/code enforcement program to ensure housing is properly maintained and habitable is appropriate. I would support programs to assist owners of older properties to renovate buildings when necessary - for example, potentially any seismic improvements required after Mountain View conducts its soft story building study. I would support prohibiting discrimination based on source of income. However, given the extraordinary cost of housing, I suspect that very few Section 8 voucher holders will be able to use their voucher to secure a unit in a market-rate development.

I strongly support infill and transit-oriented development. The city must encourage production of market rate rental and ownership housing to the greatest extent possible. I support "by-right" housing and expedited review generally. I support reduced parking minimums and appropriate variances and exceptions. I support maximizing unit count and density. Decisions made by a city council should not be arbitrary and capricious - major discretionary changes imposed at the last minute during review are unreasonable and unfair.

6. How do you reconcile public or local neighborhood opposition to a development proposal with the housing and economic needs of the community and the region?

The need for housing is considerable, and the city must eliminate obstacles that discourage or unnecessarily slow down residential development and construction. When there is neighborhood opposition to a development proposal, I would support appropriate mitigations to negative impacts while minimizing any reduction in unit count.

Parking and traffic impacts can be addressed through a residential parking permit program, reduced parking minimums, strong transportation demand management policy, transit passes for tenants, and bicycle/pedestrian improvements. Aesthetic impacts can be mitigated with reasonable setbacks and building articulation.

7. Do you believe that current state and local laws provide adequate protections to both landlords and tenants? YES ☐ NO ☒ X  
If no, what changes do you think need to be made?

I think stronger protections to prevent discrimination and retaliation against tenants are desirable. I would support an ordinance prohibiting discrimination against tenants based on sources of income. The Costa-Hawkins Act and the Ellis Act provide reasonable protections for landlords. If a "just cause" eviction ordinance is enforced, then strong protections to ensure that tenants cannot profit by subletting a unit are necessary. I support tenant relocation assistance, but the assistance provided must be fair and reasonable.



# California Apartment Association

## LOCAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

8. Do you support or oppose a split-roll property tax which would tax commercial and residential property at different rates? SUPPORT\_X\_OPPOSE\_\_

My preference would be for reform of Prop 13 to ensure a stable, fair, and equitable tax base. I have reservations about a split-roll property tax, which I am concerned may only further encourage cities to favor commercial development over residential development, exacerbating the jobs/housing imbalance and the housing shortage. However, California is overly reliant on unstable revenue sources (sales and capital gains taxes), and a stable and fair property tax base will help mitigate budgetary impacts caused by cyclical economic recessions.

9. What solutions do you support to create, promote, and finance affordable housing? What do you oppose?

I support inclusionary zoning and commercial linkage fees to help create and finance affordable housing. I will also support Measure A. I would support a parcel tax to create a stable source of funding for affordable housing. I also support market-based solutions, including relaxing restrictions on companion units and incentivizing housing that is affordable by design (reducing or eliminating parking minimums, small units, unbundled parking, etc.). I would oppose a sales tax to finance affordable housing.

10. How should new or increased fees and taxes be used to address city needs? What type of funding mechanisms would you find most favorable? Least favorable?

There must be a clear and justifiable nexus between new fees and taxes and the use of the revenue generated from those fees and taxes. For example, new development increases the demand for transportation infrastructure, so it would be appropriate to levy a reasonable fee (or accept improvements in lieu of a fee) to help mitigate the impact of that increased demand. I favor impact fees, since a nexus study is required, and transient occupancy taxes (including extending the TOT to short-term rentals provided through services like Airbnb). I generally do not favor sales taxes.

11. Is there an imbalance between jobs and housing in your city? How would you address this issue as a councilmember taking into account traffic, parks, housing needs and types, and the city's economic vitality?

Yes, there is an imbalance between jobs and housing in Mountain View. I support addressing the jobs/housing imbalance by adding housing in the designated Change Areas in our General Plan, especially North Bayshore and East Whisman, which currently are predominantly commercial/industrial areas. Converting North Bayshore and East Whisman to mixed-use communities will help the city meet its housing needs and reduce traffic congestion, as it will provide opportunities for employees to live close to where they work. I strongly support infill and transit-oriented development - it is appropriate and desirable to allow for greater density near Caltrain and well-served VTA bus stops. The city has strong parkland dedication or in-lieu fee requirements and a robust precise planning process to ensure that necessary amenities and services will be in close proximity to residents.