Steven Scharf
for
Cupertino City Council 2016

Issues White Paper

What has prepared you for this office?

Why Should You Vote for Me?

Myths & Lies In this Election?

Policy Papers

"What has prepared you for this office?"

For 17 years I've been politically active, fighting the forces that seek to exploit our city for their own monetary gain. I've been speaking out at council meetings, and asking city council members to adopt long term, coherent, policies.

I started the petitions for Measures D and E, and we won by huge margins, sending developers a clear message that Cupertino is not for sale, and that we won't allow our city and schools to be exploited. Now the dark side is trying again, spending more and lying more than ever before. The number of lies being promulgated by developers is enormous, rivaling Donald Trump!

I am a proponent of, and the only candidate supporting, Measure C, the Sensible Growth Initiative, which will help revitalize Vallco as retail, rather than mostly offices and rental apartments. And by the way Measure C DOES NOT raise building heights in neighborhoods, don't believe the big lie that developers, and some former mayors, are spreading. Measure C WILL stop Vallco from building 144 foot tall office towers, as long as Measure D does not pass.

It's time that someone that is committed to looking out for the best interests of Cupertino, its residents, and its schools sat up on the dais instead of in the audience. I am the only candidate who will do this.

We need to elect council members with critical thinking skills that are able to evaluate complex issues and look at the long term impact of decisions, rather than just the short term benefit for those that are rich and politically connected.

I am a policy wonk. I have attached a collection of my policy papers. Some people may find them boring or too detailed but that's fine, not everyone has an intense interest in all of these issues. The important thing in this election is to vote for a candidate that is not owned or controlled by developers. I am one of the only two candidates running that can honestly make that statement.

Stand Up for Cupertino and Its Schools, NOT for Developers

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

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"Why Should You Vote for Me?"

Voters need to decide who they can trust to look out for the best long-term interests of Cupertino, its residents, and its schools. It's not the developers, it's not the Chamber of Commerce, it's not the political action committees, and it's not former mayors now on the payroll of developers. It's not candidates that refuse to take a principled stand on the most important issues facing our city, and simply run around touting the endorsements that they've received.

John Muir said "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe." This is equally true at the local level. Development, housing, schools, traffic, transit, and the environment are all intensely inter-related, but those entities that seek to profit at the expense of others desperately don't want citizens to think about these inter-dependencies.

 I will try to change that paradigm if I am elected, and convince fellow council members to take a long term, systems view. Growth needs to be sensible and controlled, with great attention paid to creating the infrastructure to support it.

I would like to leverage the enormous brain-trust of our residents in improving Cupertino. Our residents have been treated by the city council as an annoyance that stands in the way of their political ambitions rather than a valuable resource. This must change.

Look at the Long-Term Challenges Facing Cupertino.
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Myths & Lies In this Election

Vallco must become offices & housing. See **Revitalizing Vallco as Shopping, Dining, & Entertainment.**

2,000,000 square feet of office space at Vallco Hills won't cause traffic congestion or more school overcrowding. See **Impact of 2 Million Sq. Ft. of Offices at Vallco.**

Sales tax increases are the way to fix traffic congestion. See **VTA Sales Tax Increase.**

Measure A will help solve the housing affordability crisis. See: **Measure A (Housing)**

The City Council can't mitigate school overcrowding. See **School Overcrowding.**

BMR rentals are the solution to housing affordability. See **Housing Affordability.**

All City Council decisions should be about increasing city revenue. See **City Revenue.**

We have high unemployment; developers should sell visas. See **EB-5 Visa Abuse.**

Our youth just need to study more, don't worry about them. See **Youth.**

Jobs with developers are a perk of being on city council. See **Revolving Door Politics.**

Our residents are deeply divided on the issue of over-development so we must work very hard to "bring them together." See **Bringing Residents Together.**

As a city, we can't do anything to influence policy at the county, regional, state, or national level. See **County, Regional, State, & Federal Issues.**

We can't coordinate housing and transportation policy. See **MTA/ABAG Merger.**

Being screamed at by the mayor at council meetings is something residents must accept, there's nothing that can be done about it. See **City Council Meeting Changes.**

Cupertino is Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendly. See **Cyclist and Pedestrian Safety**

You're against Vallco Hills but you have no idea of what should be done at Vallco instead. See: **What Would YOU Like to See at Vallco?**

Land must be rezoned for the most profitable use. See **The Wisdom of Zoning.**

Measure C increases Neighborhood heights to 45'. See **The Facts about Measure C.**

Direct democracy is bad. See **Facts About Direct Democracy (Ballot Measures).**

Cupertino needs "Smart Growth." See: **"Sensible Growth" versus "Smart Growth"**

Cupertino is perfect. See **Greatest Challenges in Cupertino.**

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Policy Papers

The following represent my views on important issues facing Cupertino in particular, and California and the U.S. in General.

Revitalizing Vallco as Shopping, Dining, & Entertainment
(or Are Malls in America Dead?)

The narrative that "malls are dead" has been repeated by the shills for Vallco so many times that it's just possible that some residents may actually believe this lie!

No one shops at brick and mortar stores anymore, right? Everyone does all their shopping online, right?

Wrong and wrong. One city council member endlessly recites the line that no new malls have been built in the U.S. in 16 years so this proves that Vallco is hopeless. He doesn't mention the fact that lots of existing malls have been successfully revitalized, and that lots of shopping centers have been built. When you're owned by developers, the facts don't matter!

If you look around the Bay Area you see that mall after mall has been revitalized as retail, dining, and entertainment, not as housing and offices. Tanforan in San Bruno was dying, but it was revitalized with dining, entertainment and new stores, and it retained Sears and Penney's. Ditto for Serramonte where Target replaced Montgomery Ward, Penney's replaced Mervyn's and where a Dick's Sporting Goods was added, and 200,000 more square feet of retail is planned, despite its proximity to three other malls.

Mountain View converted both of its malls to mainly housing, but they added lots more retail elsewhere, including a Costco, REI, Best Buy, Walmart, OSH, and Ross.

Hillsdale, Stonestown, Westgate, El Paseo, Hillsdale, New Park, Great Mall and now Eastridge are more proof of the demand for retail. Vallco is now empty not because all the retailers wanted to leave, many explicitly said that they wanted to stay. It's empty because a developer believes that he can build something much more profitable than retail if only they can convince the city and the residents to let them. When Vallco was for sale, there were several developers that wanted to purchase it and keep it as retail.

Vallco is dead because it was killed, it did not die of natural causes. The developer is like the kid who kills his parents and then begs for mercy because he's an orphan. He should not be rewarded for what he did! Hopefully residents will see through the deception and vote No on Measure D and Yes on Measure C, AND elect a candidate that's not controlled by developers.

Revitalize Vallco as Shopping, Dining, and Entertainment!
Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016
YES on C, No on D

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Impact of 2 Million Sq. Ft. of Offices at Vallco

What would be the impact on Cupertino and Cupertino Schools if Vallco Hills is built with 2 million square feet of office space and 800 housing units?

Short-Term

1. Massive traffic congestion from the 15,000-20,000 workers that will occupy the office space, and the 2000 or so residents of the rental apartments.

2. Additional school overcrowding from the 1000 or so new schoolchildren, in the 800 rental unit housing project.

Where do these scary numbers come from?

Number of workers: CoreNet Global states that by 2017 the average space per worker will be 151 square feet, but for some firms it's much less. "The rule of thumb for creative open space that startup and small technology companies seek has been decreasing from 200 to 250 square feet to as low as 100 to 150 square feet of "usable" office space per person."

Schoolchildren: In Cupertino, rental apartments have a higher average number of schoolchildren than owner-occupied residences. This is because demographers look at the time-averaged number of students. Renters tend to leave Cupertino, because rents are so high, as soon as their children are done with the public schools, and are replaced with new renters with school-age children. Homeowners tend to stay put even when their children are done with the public schools because of the property tax advantages of Proposition 13. For rental properties, figure an average of 1.2 public school students per unit.

Long-Term

The long-term impact will come from ABAG (Association of Bay Area Government) mandates which require 1 new housing unit for every 1.4 to 1.5 new jobs created. This means mandates for 10,000-15,000 more housing units. This additional housing would generate about 12,000-17,000 more public school students.

Financial Impact on Schools

The financial impact on schools would be catastrophic. Development fees are far too low to pay for land acquisition and new construction so existing schools would have to add more portables, or even move to double-sessions.

For rental housing, school parcel taxes aren't paid per unit, they're paid per parcel, so a project with 1000 apartments pays ONE school parcel tax. Also, the property taxes on commercial apartment complexes are far less on a per unit basis than for for-sale housing.

How Can We Stop this Disaster?

Developers desperately hope that residents are too naive to understand what's really going on. Vallco must be revitalized as a shopping, dining, and entertainment venue, and not as a massive office and housing complex with only token retail. Vote Yes on C, No on D.

Save Our Schools. Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

Measure B, VTA Sales Tax Increase
(Measure B)

What is your position on Measure B, the VTA sales tax increase?

I favor more transportation funding but I oppose the sales tax increase for eight reasons.

First, VTA has been grossly incompetent at managing public transit in Santa Clara County. They cannot be entrusted with more public funds until the agency is overhauled or replaced.

Second, VTA has abandoned their plan to put light rail in the CA 85 corridor essentially forgetting about the west valley. Getting professionals to use public transit requires rail transit or corporate bus systems. Instead they are planning toll lanes for 85 which will not address traffic congestion.

Third, VTA has the lowest fare recovery percentage of any metropolitan transit system in the country, just 12%, due to policies that intentionally discourage the use of public transit.

Fourth, 59% of Measure B money goes to roads and freeways and the only money for CA-85 is for a study (as if we needed more studies!).

Fifth, only 8% of Measure B money goes to public transit.

Sixth, only 4% of Measure B money goes to bicycle & pedestrian improvements.

Seventh, our sales taxes are too high. High sales taxes hurt local businesses and drive sales to online retailers without a California presence, who aren't required to collect sales taxes.

Eighth, and most important, sales taxes are the most regressive taxes, putting a burden on low-income families that spend a greater percentage of their income on taxable goods.

Large businesses that don't have their own transit system, and large developers need to begin paying their fair share for transportation. Funding should come from fuel taxes, higher vehicle license fees, development fees, progressive taxes, and business taxes, with credits for responsible businesses like Apple that have developed their own transit systems.

Cupertino Mayor Barry Chang proposed a city "head tax" on employees to pay for transportation infrastructure. This would put Cupertino at a disadvantage when competing with other cities. Such tax would have to be imposed at a county or regional level and it would almost certainly be vigorously opposed by corporate lobbying organizations like the Silicon Valley Leadership Group and the Chamber of Commerces of the affected cities.

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Measure A, Housing Bonds Tax

What is your position on Measure A, the housing bond tax?

Measure A is a bond measure that will assess a tax ($12.66 per $100,000 of assessed value) to fund housing programs. Measure A's goals are laudable. But Measure A has several major flaws, and warrants a NO vote.

1. Measure A will do almost nothing to solve the housing crisis.
Giving subsidies to renters and home buyers will drive up the cost of the limited housing stock even higher. Measure A will result in almost no new housing being built.

2. Measure A is the wrong approach to solving the housing affordability crisis.
We need to do two things to solve the housing affordability crisis:

First, we need to create a mass transit system that can move workers from areas with affordable housing to the job centers. This was the impetus behind the ACE train (as well as BART and Caltrain many decades ago).

Second, we need to move jobs closer to affordable housing, and stop uncontrolled growth in areas with limited resources of land, and that are already at capacity in terms of roads and schools. Limiting commercial office space in cities with no space for more housing is something Palo Alto is doing, and other cities should follow.

3. Measure A's funding is intentionally coming from the wrong source.
Housing assistance should be funded by business taxes, not bonds funded by parcel taxes. Lobbying organizations for businesses, like the Chamber of Commerce and the Silicon Valley Leadership Group have, for decades, successfully avoided funding infrastructure, including housing and transportation, by promoting parcel taxes and sales taxes.

Conclusion
If Measure A were ONLY about homelessness then it would be more palatable. Most people recognize the need to address the homelessness problem and are willing to contribute via higher taxes.

It's hard to oppose a ballot measure that has such worthy goals. But this is where critical thinking skills, an understanding of the root causes of the housing affordability crisis, and who should fund the solutions, are vitally important.

School Overcrowding

What can the City of Cupertino do to solve the school overcrowding problem at CUSD and FUHSD?

Every year we see more and more portable classrooms on our school's campuses. School impact fees paid by developers are way too low to pay for permanent buildings or to acquire land for, and build, new schools. Real estate developers enjoy massive, legal, tax breaks, that enable them to avoid contributing their fair share to infrastructure, including schools, roads, and transit—they have invested wisely not only in land, but in local, state, and federal politicians.

Millenials are now having children and many millenials may want to eventually settle in Cupertino, and we need to prepare for the next wave of school children.

The City Council has tremendous influence on schools. When retail is rezoned to housing or commercial it guarantees more school over-crowding; it takes years for the effects of their decisions to filter through and they'll be out of office and working for a developer by the time the effects of their irresponsible actions are realized.

We residents can also do things. We can elect more responsible and knowledgeable school board members who don't spend all their time pronouncing that all is wonderful with our schools just because we have high standardized test scores. These school board members can also refuse to collude with developers. We can insist that we re-open the remaining leased out elementary schools, build another middle school, re-open Sunnyvale High School, and replace Blaney High School.

We can elect city council members that take into account the long-term impact on schools when they make development and rezoning decisions. I think that we want council members that look far into the future when they are making decisions, and that don't just look at the short term impacts. We're not a corporation looking to maximize our quarterly results and we need to look out twenty and even fifty years. We got into this mess by selling off school sites for a one-time windfall.

Address School Overcrowding

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

Housing Affordability

How would you increase access to housing for lower income residents?

Two things we can do is to encourage for-sale housing rather than rental housing to be built, and to require developers to sell a percentage of those units as below market rate.

Rental apartment complexes are a huge burden on our schools because of California's convoluted property tax and parcel tax system where parcel taxes are assessed per parcel, not per housing unit (1000 units rented as apartments pay ONE parcel tax, 1000 units sold as condos pay 1000 parcel taxes). Owners of individual houses or condos, that rent them out, while paying very low, Proposition 13 protected, property tax rates, also hurt our schools but are at least they are paying the school parcel taxes.

We have to decide how to allocate BMR housing units. Is it based on income? Do we give priority to teachers, police, fire-fighters, nurses, millenials, etc.? Do we have a lottery? Is it fair that middle income families can't qualify for BMR housing, but also can't afford market-rate housing?

I would hope that we can ally with an organization like Habitat for Humanity to provide zero interest loans, and that provides a long-term path to unrestricted ownership, and not fall into the trap of creating for-sale housing that has deed restrictions that make it a very bad investment (as some organizations are now doing).

Do we really expect our children, as new college graduates, to be able to purchase their first home in a high-cost city like Cupertino? In my opinion that is an unreasonable expectation. As they advance in their careers, earn higher salaries, and perhaps get married and have a two income household, they can purchase homes in Cupertino or whereever they can afford and desire.

We can never build enough housing so that everyone that wants to live in Cupertino, regardless of income, can do so, but requiring 15% of new housing units be BMR is not unreasonable.

Promote Economic Diversity and Housing Affordability.

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

City Revenue

I recall hearing a resident, who was being coached by a developer, speak at a city council meeting about city revenue. It was her (or the developer's) contention that every decision the City Council made should be measured solely by how much revenue that decision generated, or how much expense that decision caused.

I don't think that even the resident that spoke these ridiculous words actually believed them; she was just reciting what she was told to say by the developer. What a terrible idea to base every decision solely on money without any consideration to school impact, traffic, the environment, quality of life, aesthetics, the list goes on and on.

The City of Cupertino wastes huge amounts of money paying consultants to produce reports that either simply restate what everyone in the city already knows, or that intentionally lie in order to promote the agenda of well-connected commercial property owners.

Did we need to pay a consultant to tell us that the reason many students don't walk or bicycle to school is the lack of safe sidewalks and roads, lack of crossing guards, lack of traffic-law enforcement, and tremendous traffic congestion? Our public works director and sheriff's captain could certainly have reached the same conclusion for no extra expenditure of city funds. Should the city produce 9212 reports on ballot measures, at a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars, when the contents of the reports are pre-determined and no one takes them seriously?

It's time that City Council members became more frugal with the city's money. Legitimate expenditures are fine. Throwing money away, just because a developer is trying to legitimize a project that everyone knows will have tremendous negative effects, is not fine.

Spend Cupertino's Money Wisely!

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

EB-5 Visa Abuse

How would you address the abuse of the Federal EB-5 Visa program which is one of the root causes of developer's attempts to build poorly planned mega-projects in Cupertino?

This is a federal issue, but the City of Cupertino should actively seek assistance from our two senators and our representative to solve this problem. The EB-5 program is wrought with abuse and fraud, and it directly affects Cupertino because the money from the selling of visas is helping to fund extremely bad development projects.

Dianne Feinstein is already working on this problem. She wrote: "At its most basic, the EB-5 program allows a foreigner to invest $500,000 in a U.S. business, in return receive a visa that puts them and their direct family on a special path toward citizenship. At the same time, individuals unable to buy their way into the country remain trapped in seemingly endless visa backlogs that often last more than 20 years. I believe the program is deeply unfair, sends the wrong message about this country's values and is prone to fraud and abuse."

In Cupertino, a developer was able to have our area declared a high-unemployment area, which lowered the investment amount to buy a visa from $1,000,000 to $500,000.

Furthermore, the requirement that the investor create at least 10 jobs, is being violated because the jobs are supposed to be permanent, and come from new businesses that the investors start. The jobs are not supposed to be temporary construction jobs, or companies that move from one location to another.

Work to stop EB-5 Abuse!

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Youth

What would you do for youth?

I'm a baby boomer father of two millennials. My kids were raised in Cupertino. I volunteered extensively with the schools, including the wonderful experience of chaperoning the 8th grade Yosemite trip. I also was an adult volunteer for Challenge Day at CHS, and it was heart-breaking to learn about what so many of our teenagers are going through. Test scores are not the only metric we should be using to measure how our youth are doing. Our children are under tremendous stress and they need to decompress.

I'd love to see our youth spend less time at the library, less time playing Pokemon Go or at bubble tea places and more time in other activities like scouting, volunteering for human or environmental causes, etc.. Both my kids were in boy scouts, even my daughter, and I was an assistant scoutmaster and they learn valuable skills in scouting. Both my kids were also in Best Buddies, which helped students with autism or other issues fit in.

The city can help facilitate this sort of thing. We should build a new teen center that has activities that are more compelling. We should rebuild our public swimming pool. We should re-open the water play area in front of this building, which in reality uses very little water so it's recirculated.

Make Our Youth Happy, There's More to Life than a 5.0 GPA!

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

Revolving Door Politics

What is your position on the revolving door of local politicians going to work, paid and unpaid, for entities that seek to profit at the expense of the city, its residents, and its schools?

I'd love to see a law that prevents this sort of thing, but I'm not sure if such a law would be constitutional.

We are seeing this problem, big time, right now in Cupertino with two former mayors being paid by a developer, and two more former mayors lobbying for a developer without being paid. We also have city employees being hired by lobbying organizations like the Chamber of Commerce.

This sort of thing may be unethical, but it's not illegal. We just need to educate voters on the issues and try to help good triumph over evil, and truth win out over lies.

For developers, this sort of revolving door is very enticing. For a relatively low cost they can purchase a lot of influence, so they do. I suppose that if I were a developer, I would do the same thing. It's all about money.

Stop Revolving Door Politics

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

Bringing Residents Together

How would you bring Residents Together?

Let's not fall into the trap of believing that we have two large groups of residents in Cupertino that are very angry at each other.

What we really have is a tiny, but vocal, minority that is allied with the forces of evil that advocate policies that will be extremely harmful to Cupertino. The vast majority of Cupertino residents are good people that want what is best for the city.

When I walk through neighborhoods I see mass quantities of Yes on C, No on D signs but almost no residents will put up one of the developer's signs. Our residents are not so easily fooled.

On Social Media only a very tiny minority are in favor of poorly planned projects that bypass the EIR process, but they are very busy, posting non-stop lies, and flagging anyone that points out their inaccuracies.

The amusing thing I've found while talking to people is that everyone seems to be extremely worried that someone else actually believes the mass quantity of propaganda being sent out by developers but no one actually believes it themselves. I tell them: don't worry, your neighbors really are as smart as you and they don't believe those mailers, with the pretty roof, from the developer either.

If I could do one thing to bring residents together it would be to somehow require that people tell the truth, but a small number of residents are heavily invested in lying and nothing can change that.

Bring Residents Together

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

County, Regional, State, & Federal Issues

What law and policy changes should Cupertino advocate for at the county, regional, or state level?

1. Fix the BMR mess in California to once again allow cities to require BMR housing on both rentals and for-sale developments.

2, Fix the parcel tax inequity where a development with 800 rental units pays one parcel tax but the same developement with 800 for-sale units pays 800 parcel taxes. Lobbying groups for apartment owners vigorously oppose such a change, but it is only fair.

3. Fix Prop 13 to apply only to owner-occupied residential property, not to income property or commercial property. And this would hurt my family personally, but it's only fair.

4. Close the loophole where developers can bypass the CEQA requirement for Environmental Impact Reports by doing ballot initiatives. The developer's ballot initiative for Vallco is a prime example of how harmful this loophole is to California cities.

5. Work with other cities to force the cement plant's compliance with environmental laws.

6. Encourage our U.S. Senators and Representative to fix the EB-5 Visa fraud.

7. Don't fall for the lobbying efforts of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group or the Cupertino Chamber of Commerce.

Don't Ignore the County, Regional, State, and Federal Issues that We Can Have an Influence On.

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MTA/ABAG Merger

There is a proposal that the Metropolitan Transportation Agency (MTA) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) should merge. What is your opinion?

The responsibilities of MTA and ABAG are so inextricably linked that they need to work together much more closely. It makes no sense for ABAG to create unachievable mandates for more housing in areas with no mass transit, while the MTC doesn't advocate for transit in the areas where ABAG wants more housing.

Putting housing near existing and planned mass transit is good public policy. Mandating housing in areas that will never get mass transit results in more dependence on automobiles for commuting, more pollution, and more climate change. John Muir said "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe."

Most important is for City Governments to take a systems approach to development and look at the long term implications of uncontrolled growth of office space. Palo Alto has finally begun doing this, but Cupertino has not, and in fact residents are being encouraged to ignore the implications of uncontrolled growth on traffic, housing and schools.

Coordinate Housing and Transportation.

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

City Council Meeting Changes

"What changes would you like to see in the way City Council Meetings are Run?"

I was at the infamous 5 a.m. City Council meeting. Obviously that sort of thing is bad, but democracy is not always fun.

I would like to change the order of discussion on critical issues. The way it is now is backwards. Residents comments should come AFTER the City Council members offer their views, not before. The way it is now, there is no opportunity for residents to present information that council members don't have or understand while they are discussing the issue. You see residents fuming in the audience while council members talk and argue among themselves without having all the facts.

I would like to see detailed and complete minutes of city council meeting published. Now we have the video recordings, but to search those for important information is very time consuming.

I would like to see residents respected, rather than screamed at, when a council member doesn't like what they say.

Respect our Residents.

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

Cyclist and Pedestrian Safety

How would you make Cupertino Safer for Cyclists and Pedestrians?

For as long as I've lived here, I've been a cyclist, for both commuting and recreation. In the early 2000's I was dismayed when a car-centric council and public works director began dismantling traffic calming.

In the past year things seem to be improving. I give myself, and our public works director some credit. On multiple occasions I've contacted Timm Borden to request that unsafe bicycle infrastructure be fixed and he always comes through.

The latest problem is an endless stream of delivery trucks to Main Street parking in the bicycle lane, causing cyclists, including a lot of Cupertino High School students, being forced out into the traffic lanes to get around them. Is the City of Cupertino a wholly owned-subsidiary of the developer that owns Main Street? Why is this allowed to occur?

We need to move beyond the "whack-a-mole" model of only addressing problems when a resident complains, or when a tragedy occurs, and start being more pro-active. Bicycle lanes are not for deliveries, construction vehicles, real-estate agent open house signs, parents waiting to pick up school-children, taking cell phone calls, or even for giving out traffic tickets. These lanes need to be kept clear. Rather than "No Parking" signs, bike lanes need to have "No Stopping" signs, and the police need to enforce this.

We need to create an environment where parents feel safe allowing their children to bicycle or walk to school. This means more crossing guards, traffic enforcement, and traffic calming. It also means stopping extremely poorly planned mega-projects that will create massive traffic congestion and school over-crowding, like the Vallco Hills and The Oaks. It's all inter-related. The worse the traffic congestion, the less willing people are to cycle or walk because of safety concerns.

We need to empower our Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission to address the issues which I have worked on on my own.

Make Our City Safer for Cyclists and Pedestrians.
Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

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What Would <u>YOU</u> Like to See at Vallco?

Anytime someone says that they are against Sand Hill Property's "The Hills at Vallco" project, a developer shill quickly challenges them with "well what do you want at Vallco? You just can't leave it the way it is now."

First of all, I would not have destroyed Vallco without first having had approval to build something else. But of course that was part of the developer's plan. Destroy the mall then come to the city and the residents pleading that the mall is dead and so they must get approval to build whatever they desire.

I would like Vallco revitalized as shopping, dining and entertainment. It was on its way to this type of revitalization until the current owner purchased it. The department stores wanted to stay. The Bay Club opened. AMC and Bowlmor were popular as were the restaurants including Alexander's and Dynasty. Other big restaurants wanted to open. There were plans for more shops along Wolfe Road and Stevens Creek Boulevard.

Personally, I think that the mall should be sold to a developer that has an interest in retail, rather than office space and housing. We have seen what Main Street has become, with all the broken promises. No supermarket. No health club. No senior housing. Almost no real retail. It's all restaurants and office space. A mini-Target will open soon, but these Target stores are more like a Walgreen's or CVS than a department store. This developer has no interest in retail because the land is more valuable as office space and housing.

Some housing would be okay too, as long as it's for-sale housing, which is much better financially for schools, city coffers, and the residents that live there. Part of the land should be set aside for at least one more school.

We also have to accept the fact that Cupertino is unlikely to ever have mass transit, since VTA has essentially abandoned west valley cities. We need to control our growth so we can mitigate traffic congestion.

Revitalize Vallco as Shopping, Dining, and Entertainment

YES ON C, the <u>C</u>ITIZEN'S INITIATIVE!

NO ON D, the <u>D</u>EVELOPER'S <u>D</u>ECEPTIVE INITIATIVE!

Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

The Wisdom of Zoning in Cupertino

When Cupertino transitioned from an agricultural community to a suburban town, the founders wisely zoned different parts of the city for different purposes. There are areas for single-family housing, areas for multi-family housing, areas for retail, areas for parks and open space, areas for schools, areas for churches, areas for government buildings, and areas for commercial office space. They knew that the value of a parcel depended on the parcel's zoning, and that some zoning designations were more valuable than others.

This all worked pretty well for many decades. But then some crafty developers realized that they could make a huge amount of money if they could buy a parcel with less valuable zoning, and convince the city to change the zoning to something much more valuable. They could instantly increase the value of their land by a tremendous amount.

We've all witnessed the enormous amount of money that one developer is spending in an effort to convince residents that they should allow their land to be converted from retail to mainly office and housing. They are spending millions of dollars on their campaign because there are hundreds of millions of dollars at stake. They have taken over the Chamber of Commerce. They have hired some former mayors to lobby for them, and gotten other former mayors to play fast and loose with the facts on the two ballot measures.

Zoning protects us in other ways too. We can only build houses that are 28 feet or 18 feet tall in Cupertino because of zoning ordinances. The big lie of developers, that Measure C increases residential building heights to 45 feet is a lie on several levels. Not only does Measure C not increase building heights to 45 feet, residential zoning already sets building heights to below 30 feet, let alone 45 feet. Even the city attorney pointed out this fact.

This election is probably the most important one in the history of Cupertino. We will allow developers to destroy our city and our schools in their pursuit of enormous profits. Or will we stand up and do what is right?

YES ON C, the <u>CITIZEN'S INITIATIVE</u>!

NO ON D, the <u>DEVELOPER'S INITIATIVE</u>!

Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

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How Can You Support Apple Campus 2 But Oppose The Hills at Vallco?

Apple followed proper procedure, including the preparation of an Environment Impact Report (EIR). The Hills at Vallco is trying to bypass the CEQA requirement for an EIR by doing a ballot measure.

The Apple Campus 2 (AC2) parcel was already zoned for commercial office space because it is replacing the old HP campus.

Most of the employees that will work in the AC2 complex are coming from other Apple buildings (AC1 or leased buildings).

AC2 did not remove a huge amount of sales-tax generating retail.

AC2 will not have a big impact on school overcrowding.

Apple has created an extensive and expensive transportation system to reduce the number of employees that commute alone by private vehicle. The Hills at Vallco merely offers to "spearhead" the creation of a shuttle, which is meaningless.

AC2 will have sufficient parking for its employees that do drive. The Hills at Vallco is not planning to have enough parking.

Apple provides a large amount of tax revenue to Cupertino.

We need to see the effect on traffic from AC2 prior to approving anything at Vallco.

Support Apple!

YES ON C, the <u>C</u>ITIZEN'S INITIATIVE!

NO ON D, the <u>D</u>EVELOPER'S INITIATIVE!

Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

The Facts About Measure C

For Cupertino residents, Measure C is a FOLLOW-THE-LAW initiative. For developers, Measure C is a I-MIGHT-NOT-GET-EVERYTHING-I WANT initiative.

The "Endless Elections" Lie

An extremely limited number of General Plan Amendents (GPAs) would go to voters for approval under Measure C. Projects like The Hills at Vallco, and The Oaks, whose developers want to greatly exceed the height, density, and setback limits of the General Plan, and that want the zoning changed, would go to voters.

Measure C would encourage developers to propose projects that do not require GPAs. In the cases where they still want a GPA, there would be tremendous pressure on them to propose projects that were not excessive, in order to obtain voter approval.

Before a project went to voters it would be be vetted by the Planning Commission, approved by the City Council, and an Environmental Impact Report would be prepared. The voter approval is necessary because so many council members have taken campaign money from the developers that they are regulating, or that may have been promised other inducements in order to vote for a specific project.

The "45 Feet" Lie

Nothing in Measure C increases building heights in neighborhoods or anywhere else in Cupertino. The "45 foot houses" fabrication originated with developers in their desperate effort to defeat Measure C.

Measure C is based on the October 2015 General Plan Amendment (GPA) which was adopted by the City Council. Neigborhoods are designated as "Special Areas" with a height limit of 30 feet. Outside of "Special Areas" Measure C specifies a 45 foot height limit. The 2014 General Plan did not have specific height limits for Neighborhoods and Neighborhoods were not "Special Areas," that was not added until the 2015 GPA was passed. So the developers cleverly ignored the 2015 GPA and based their position on the 2014 General Plan without the 2015 GPA.

This case is still working its way through the courts, and the court case in no way affects the election. The City of Cupertino is pressuring Measure C proponents to not appeal the Superior Court's ruling because the city knows that their case is very weak and that they would likely lose in any appeal.

"Inefficiency, extravagance and corruption characterise <sic> the management of city affairs by and for interested cliques while the mass of the citizens are helpless till the next election." Dr. John Randolph Haynes, father of the initiative process.

YES ON C, the <u>C</u>ITIZEN'S INITIATIVE! NO ON D, the <u>D</u>EVELOPER'S INITIATIVE!

Facts About Direct Democracy (Ballot Measures)

Dr. John Randolph Haynes formed the Direct Legislation League of Los Angeles in 1900.

Haynes wrote: "Inefficiency, extravagance and corruption characterise <sic> the management of city affairs by and for interested cliques while the mass of the citizens are helpless till the next election."

This is the essence of Measure C. While it would be wonderful to elect City Council Members that are free from corruption, it's often not possible to know how corrupt they will be until they are actually in office. Every candidate claims to be honest and upright, but once in office we've seen that this is not the case. One city council member has taken hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from developers and construction companies, and he still votes on projects from the companies that have given him money. This is not illegal! (though it should be).

Do elections cost money? Absolutely! But the number of elections that would be caused by Measure C are extremely few. And Measure C encourages developers to submit projects that comply with the General Plan and that do not require General Plan Amendments.

Is the ballot measure system in California being abused? Definitely! But not by grassroots citizens groups like the one that put Measure C on the ballot. The abuse is coming from well-funded corporations that try to mislead the public into voting yes on measures that will lead to massive profits for the corporations, but that will cause enormous harm to the people (like Measure D).

Support Democracy!
YES ON C, the <u>C</u>ITIZEN'S INITIATIVE!
NO ON D, the <u>D</u>EVELOPER'S INITIATIVE!

"Sensible Growth" versus "Smart Growth"

The Sensible Growth movement is a grassroots movement. Its proponents are residents of the community. The Sensible Growth movement is not anti-growth. The Sensible Growth movement believes that the impact on the environment, traffic, and schools need to be evaluated before approving new development projects and that these issues need to all be addressed together because they are so inter-related. The Sensible Growth movement looks at these issues with a comprehensive, systems, long-term approach.

The "Smart Growth" movement is a coalition of real estate developers and property investors. They coined the phrase "Smart Growth" because who could possibly be against something that is "smart?" In "The Myth of Smart Growth[1]," the author writes: "The "smart growth" formula has been used to discount and transform legitimate public concerns about the amount and pace of growth into a discussion about how we should best continue growing."

There are five main components of the "Smart Growth" movement[1]. If all five components were always present then in some cases there might be some legitimacy to "Smart Growth" projects. The five components are:

1. Growth contained in compact parcels.
2. Environmental protection.
3. Mass transit
4. Mixed Use
5. Collaboration between developers, citizens, and government.

If you look at the project proposed for the Vallco parcel, it doesn't meet four out of five of the "Smart Growth" criteria. There is no environmental protection, only a promise to try to build a "green roof" and irrigate it with reclaimed water. There is no mass transit, only a promise to help "spearhead" a shuttle. It is not really mixed use because it is mostly office space with some housing, but very little, if any, real retail. There was very little collaboration between the developer, citizens, and government (unless you count the developer's efforts to have the government help force out existing retailers as "collaboration").

Source: http://www.fodorandassociates.com/Reports/Myth_of_Smart_Growth.pdf

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Greatest Challenges in Cupertino

What are the greatest challenges facing Cupertino?

Over-development, traffic, and school-overcrowding. These need to all be addressed together because they are so inter-related.

The Sensible Growth movement looks at these issues with a comprehensive, systems, long-term approach, while the horribly mis-named "Smart Growth" mantra was created by developers to push their agenda with a phrase that sounds wonderful but is anything but.

We are now seeing developers desperately trying to get their extremely poorly planned projects approved by residents, bypassing the requirement for an Environmental Impact Report because they know that such a report would cause their projects to never be approved through normal channels. That's why it's so critical for residents to become informed and vote No on Measure D, and not listen to the former mayors that the developer has recruited to push their project through.

Address Cupertino's Greatest Challenges

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

Budget

Last week I went to the city's website to look at the 2016-17 budget. It wasn't there. I called the city and asked them to send me the budget and explained that the link on the website didn't work. They put the budget online.

The budget is 897 pages long. I didn't read the whole thing.

I some items that are funded by the General Fund that I'd like to look into. A million dollar transfer to the Sports Center, which should be self-funding though that's only for 2016-17 then the amount falls. $330K a year to the golf course, which should be self-funding.

I would like to find a way to increase funding for the sheriff's office, so we can add several deputies to increase traffic enforcement, and a detective to address property crime. We are far below the national average for the ratio of population to police. I'd like to direct more money to bicycle and pedestrian safety and parks. By the same token, there are a few things that save piddly amounts of money but annoy residents.We should turn on the water play area in front of this building. That system recirculates water and the water lost through evaporation is insignificant; turning it off sends the wrong message about the seriousness of the drought.

I'd love it if Apple agreed to end the agreement where Cupertino pays them 35% of the sales tax that the city is entitled to. They are one of the world's wealthiest company and we should not be giving our sales tax revenue to them. It's insignificant to Apple, but not to Cupertino.

Where can we cut unnecessary spending? The City wastes a lot of money paying consultants to produce reports that either simply restate what everyone already knows, or that intentionally lie to promote the agenda of well-connected property owners. The EC-9212 reports on Measures C and D are prime examples of how the city wastes tax dollars. Should the city produce 9212 reports on ballot measures, when the contents of the reports are pre-determined, biased, and inaccurate, and no one takes the contents seriously?

Did we need to pay a consultant to tell us that the reason students don't walk or bicycle to school is the lack of safe sidewalks and roads, lack of crossing guards, lack of traffic-law enforcement, and traffic congestion? Our public works director and sheriff's captain are very capable, and could have reached the same conclusion with no extra expenditures.

I do not favor an employee "head tax" that would put Cupertino at a disadvantage. We do need to figure out how to get corporations to pay their fair share of the cost of infrastructure.

We do not need to base every decision that is made on the amount of revenue that it brings in. We need to consider the environment, school impact, and traffic impact.

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Community and Collaboration

Let's not fall into the trap of believing that we have two large groups of residents in Cupertino that are very angry at each other.

What we actually have is a tiny, but vocal, minority that is funded by, and allied with, the forces of evil that advocate policies that will be harmful to Cupertino. The vast majority of Cupertino residents are good people that want what is best for the city.

When did the community begin losing trust in the City Council? It began in 2005 when the City adopted the "minority" General Plan, the developers General Plan, ignoring the views of residents and adopting the views of developers.

When I walk through neighborhoods I see mass quantities of Yes on C, No on D signs but almost no residents will put up one of the developer's signs. Our residents are not so easily fooled.

On Social Media only a very tiny minority are in favor of poorly planned projects that bypass the EIR process, but they are very busy, posting non-stop lies, and flagging anyone that points out their inaccuracies.

The amusing thing I've found while talking to people is that everyone seems to be extremely worried that someone else actually believes the mass quantity of propaganda being sent out by developers but no one actually believes it themselves. I tell them: don't worry, your neighbors really are as smart as you and they don't believe those mailers, with the pretty roof, from the developer either.

Collaboration is a nice buzz word. But the City and Developer's idea of collaboration is "tell us what you want and we'll do whatever the heck we decide. Or we'll promise one thing, and do something completely different, like what happened at Main Street.

If I could do one thing to bring residents together it would be to somehow require that people tell the truth, but a small number of residents are heavily invested in lying and nothing can change that.

Bring the Community Together!

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

Technology

In my day job, I work with embedded systems and sensors. We use sensors for video, motion, humidity, temperature, gases, particulates, power systems, and stuff that I can't disclose. Data analysis is performed on the data and appropriate actions are taken.

Cupertino could benefit by adopting sensor technology. Monitoring pollutants from the cement plant. Monitoring carbon monoxide levels at intersections. Intelligent traffic control. Protecting against threats. Reducing crime. Reducing water use. None of these are future technologies, they are all available now, and they are coming down in price.

Deploying technology properly has budgetary benefits as well since it can help keep headcounts from growing faster than revenue and population.

There are areas of technology where we can increase safety. Many residents have dropped landlines which means that 911 access is delayed and their location isn't transmitted. Some residents pay high prices to Comcast or third parties for VOIP service. The reality is that VOIP landline service is free, with only a $1.25 monthly cost for E911 service. That's what I have at my house and I kept my home number.

We can help residents make wise choices when it comes to solar power, an industry rife with fraud and where ripoffs are common if you're not an expert. Before I was kicked off of Nextdoor by developers, I helped people navigate the solar power maze.

Then there are cell phone towers. Several years ago the city decided that cell phone towers could be placed in parks. This was a bad idea. The city routinely approves badly located towers because the carriers don't want to negotiate agreements with property owners for well-placed towers. It's a lot cheaper to get the city to allow a tower on city land, even when it is aesthetically awful, than for a carrier to pay the owner of a tall building for rooftop space. But the carriers are smart. They recruit law-enforcement and others to come to meetings to insist that the placement of the tower is a public safety issue, even though the placement of the tower on top of a commercial building would result in the same coverage. Then the City Council pontificates and claims that the tower must be approved because it's an issue of public safety, when they should be sending the carrier back to negotiate with building owners. This must change. We need to teach critical thinking skills to our politicians.

Values and Vision

Values and vision is what I see as the key difference between candidates in this election.

Many of the candidates are looking only at an extreme short-term vision. This is extremely unwise. We have seen the negative results of this kind of thinking with excessive traffic congestion, over-crowded schools, and loss of economic diversity. We must change course.

It's popular for developers to label anyone that has the temerity to oppose their ill-advised projects as NIMBYs or worse. One former mayor labeled the Better Cupertino group as "Bitter Cupertino." Two other former mayors sued residents that wrote an accurate description of a ballot measure, and these cases are still being appealed.

Voters need to decide who they can trust to look out for the best long-term interests of Cupertino, its residents, and its schools. It's not the developers, it's not the Chamber of Commerce, it's not the political action committees, and it's not former mayors now on the payroll of developers. It's not candidates that refuse to take a principled stand on the most important issues facing our city, and simply run around touting the endorsements that they've received, or insisting that a lack of basic knowledge of the critical issues facing our city is unimportant.

John Muir said "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe." This is equally true at the local level. Development, housing, schools, traffic, transit, and the environment are all intensely inter-related, but those entities that seek to profit at the expense of others desperately don't want citizens to think about these inter-dependencies.

 I will try to change that paradigm if I am elected, and convince fellow council members to take a long term, systems view, and work toward the vision that residents have for Cupertino. We want to remain a suburban town with growth that is sensible and controlled, with great attention paid to creating the infrastructure to support it.

I would like to leverage the enormous brain-trust of our residents in improving Cupertino. Our residents have been treated by the city council as an annoyance that stands in the way of their political ambitions rather than a valuable resource. This must change.

Economy

The big issue with economy in Cupertino is the lack of retail. We have lost so much retail that we are far too dependent on business taxes and business to business sales taxes. Since I've lived here we've had shopping area after shopping area decimated when new owners come in and raise lease rates or evict tenants that wanted to stay.

This has occurred at Vallco Village/Cupertino Village, The Oaks, and at Vallco, but has also occurred at smaller locations like Vivi's near the post office. We lost a car dealership which provided a lot of sales tax revenue and got a supermarket that yields limited sales taxes since food isn't taxable. We lost three department stores and lots of smaller stores when the Vallco owner decided that if he emptied out the mall he'd have a better chance of being allowed to convert it to office space and housing.

Decimating retail also causes more traffic congestion as residents leave town to shop. We've seen the dismal failure of mixed use. Of course everyone knew that mixed use doesn't work in suburban cities with little foot traffic, but "mixed use" is a developer-invented phrase like "smart-growth," it sounds good on paper but it's just a justification to build more office space and high-rent housing.

Palo Alto had the right idea in limiting commercial office space because of the problems it ends up causing. Cupertino should follow their example before it's too late.

Other things we need to do is to end the EB-5 visa abuse, and enforce development agreements so we don't end up with more Main Street fiascos.

The most important thing is to take a long term approach. It's become popular to enact policy without taking into account the side effects. Massive amounts of office space cause unrealistic ABAG mandates for housing, and if those mandates are met they cause unsustainable pressure on traffic, infrastructure, and schools.

The economy consists of more than just collecting as much tax money as possible, it also requires looking at the long-term impact of what is built, and having a balance. We have lost that balance in Cupertino. Getting it back requires that council members look out for the best interests of residents, schools, corporations, and retailers.

Improve the Cupertino Economy!

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

Traffic

There is something wrong in the way the traffic studies are conducted. How many council members, or candidates, can explain what a traffic study's baseline, background, cumulative, background plus plan, and cumulative plus plan levels of service mean? Every study likes to massage the numbers so they can claim "no significant impact" to residents and politicians,

Vallco, for instance, came up with about 59,000 daily trips from the proposed project, a huge number, but about right, then they reduced that number by 21% saying that internal trips, transit, bicycling, and walking would knock 12,000 trips off that number. Then they subtracted 30,000 trips because they claimed that the existing mall would have had that many trips if they hadn't gotten rid of all the retailers, ignoring the fact that trips to retail stores are usually not made right around peak commute times.

The actual number for Vallco is not difficult to estimate. 2 million square feet of office space would house 15,000-20,000 workers, and most of them would drive to and from work alone, so that's 30,000 to 40,000 daily trips. 800 housing units would be almost 100% occupied by dual-income families because of the high rent, so figure another 2000 or so daily trips. The retail will be a very small part of The Hills at Vallco so figure only another 2000 or so daily trips. So the 59,000 original number probably isn't too far off.

Our stretch of 280 jumped 17 spots to #3 in one year, and this is without AC2.

Background conditions represent the baseline conditions to which project conditions are compared for the purpose of determining project impacts.

Background Plus Project Conditions. The forecasted traffic volumes consist of the traffic estimated to be generated by the proposed project development along with adjustments to existing traffic volumes due to changes in traffic patterns. The net forecasted traffic growth was applied to background traffic volumes to produce background plus project conditions volumes.

Cumulative Conditions (Existing Conditions Plus Other Approved and Pending Projects Without Proposed Project)

Cumulative Conditions Plus Proposed Project (Existing Conditions Plus Other Approved and Pending Projects Plus Proposed Project)

The level of service (LOS) for traffic flow is as follows:

A: free flow.
B: reasonably free flow.
C: stable flow
D: approaching unstable flow.
E: unstable flow
F: forced or breakdown flow.

We are moving to our intersections being all rated as E. We can't go on this way. We need to take the long-term view when approving new projects.

Prevent Traffic Gridlock!

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 2016

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Senior Housing

Of all the candidates, I believe that I have done the most work on this issue.

Following Measure's D & E, ten years ago, our grassroots citizens group met with developers to help them create projects that would be profitable for the developer and good for residents. Senior housing was a key element. Senior housing does not contribute to school-overcrowding and the traffic impact is much lower.

We worked extensively with the developer of Main Street on their plans and they agreed to put in senior housing. They stabbed us in the back. As we've seen with that developer, in Cupertino, Sunnyvale, Palo Alto, and Newark, what they promise, and what they deliver are different. They fabricated a story about how "they've never done senior housing before and they don't know how to do it." The council believed their story, thanks to generous campaign contributions, and nixed the senior housing and approved market rate housing, though that hasn't been built either.

There are many areas in Cupertino that are suitable for senior housing, and more will be available as older commercial buildings are emptied when Apple Campus 2 opens. The key thing is to find an honest and responsible developer to build the housing.

When my mother and stepfather were alive they looked at coming to Cupertino to be near their grandchildren. Even though they were fairly well off, it was just not feasible. A $200,000 home in Florida would have cost a million dollars in Cupertino. If affordable senior housing had been available then they would have moved.

My mother-in-law is 95 years old and lives in San Francisco. She never drove and took public transit until a few years ago. Now she gets picked up on weekdays and taken to a senior center where she socializes and plays Mahjong for six hours a day. On the weekend I play Mahjong with her, but she cheats. One thing Cupertino should look into is a shuttle that takes residents that don't drive, and that live in places without available transit, to places like the senior center and shopping centers.

Senior housing should not just be "housing that is suitable for seniors," it needs to be age-restricted because that will make it lower cost when seniors aren't forced to compete for it.

As John Muir wrote, "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe." At the local level this is also true If we want to have a diverse, sustainable, town, we need to balance housing, retail, parks, and commercial office space.

That's why I've worked so hard on defeating the developer's hyper-growth initiative, Measure D, to prevent Vallco from turning into a massive office park, with no senior housing by the way. I'm sure that all of you have received 20-30 mailers, including offers of free food, free movies, free bowling, free wine, and free beer, to entice you to vote for this fiasco. It's bad for everyone in Cupertino, but it's especially bad for seniors.

Support Seniors!

Vote for Steven Scharf for Cupertino City Council 20