

June 7, 2020

Dear City Council and Neighbors:

At this historic time, civic leaders across America are being challenged to reassess the policies and systems we've ensconced in law to find more equitable ways to achieve our communities' goals and values. Palo Alto's 50-year-old ban on non-residents at Foothills Park is one such outdated policy that requires action.

Since the 1960s, Palo Alto has made it a crime *punishable by jail time* for non-residents to enter Foothills Park. This policy sends a terrible message to our neighboring communities—particularly those which do not enjoy the same socioeconomic advantages that Palo Alto does—and leaves a bad taste in the mouths of thousands of would-be visitors who are prohibited by uniformed City staff from entering a public park. It is also expensive, costing nearly \$90,000 per year to enforce.

Last year, the Parks & Recreation Commission (PRC) undertook an extensive analysis of visitor and resource data and heard lengthy public input, which led to their recommendation that the Council reform this policy. We applaud the Council and Staff for taking this issue up this month. The urgency of reforming this ordinance is more apparent now than ever.

As concerned faith and community leaders, we call on Palo Alto to:

- (1) Repeal this ordinance (P.A.M.C. 22.04.150(a)), and**
- (2) Direct staff and the PRC to craft, within the next 60 days, a 21st Century policy that demonstrates our City's commitment to equality, openness and resource protection.**

In the past several months, we have seen the admirable speed with which our local governments can respond to big problems. This Foothills Park ordinance is only a small piece of the much larger policy choices that we need to consciously reconsider at this time, but it is a long-simmering issue that we can and should address now. Please meet this moment.

Sincerely,

Congresswoman Anna G. Eshoo

Judge LaDoris Cordell, retired Superior Court Judge and former Councilmember

Assemblymember Marc Berman

NAACP of San Jose/Silicon Valley

Rev. Kaloma Smith, Pastor, University AME Zion Church

Rabbi David Booth, Congregation Kol Emeth

Rabbi Sarah Graff, Congregation Kol Emeth

Rabbi Jonathan Prosnit, Congregation Beth Am

Rev. Terry Gleeson, Rector, All Saints Episcopal Church

David Smernoff, Board Chair, Grassroots Ecology

Elliot Wright, Executive Director, Environmental Volunteers

Leland Levy, former Mayor

Pat Burt, former Mayor

Gail Woolley, former Mayor

Dena Mossar, former Mayor
Betsy Bechtel, former Mayor
Vic Ojakian, former Mayor
Peter Drekmeier, former Mayor
Nancy Shepherd, former Mayor
Cory Wolbach, former Councilmember
Gail Price, former Councilmember
Jennifer DiBrienza, PAUSD School Board Trustee
Shounak Dharap, PAUSD School Board Trustee
Don McDougall, former Parks & Rec Commission Chair
Anne Warner Cribbs OLY, Parks & Rec Commission Vice Chair
David Moss, Parks & Rec Commission member
Ryan McCauley, Parks & Rec Commission member
Valerie Stinger, Vice Chair and Past Chair, Human Relations Commission
Steven Lee, Human Relations Commission member
Patti Regehr Human Relations Commission member
AAUW (American Association of University Women) Palo Alto
Larry Magid, CEO, Connect Safely
Dr. Kelsey Banes, Ph.D, Executive Director, Peninsula for Everyone
Sarah Fields, President, on behalf of Peninsula Young Democrats
Dr. Luke Terra, Director of Community Engaged Learning and Research, and Associate
Director, Haas Center for Public Service, Stanford
Dr. Carol McKibben, Lecturer in Urban Studies, Stanford
Dr. Blakey Vermeule, Ph.D.
Munira Almire, President, Associated Students of Stanford University
Vianna Vo, Vice President, Associated Students of Stanford University
Steve Levy, Director of the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy
Rod Sinks, Cupertino Councilmember and former Mayor
Uriel Hernandez, Vice Chair, East Palo Alto Planning Commission
Paul Lazarow, civil rights lawyer
Charlie Krenz, open space and trails advocate
Peter Fortenbaugh
Will Davis
Sandy Couser, Nursing Instructor, Retired Public Health Nurse Practitioner
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Lee family members, all descendants of Foothills Park grantors Dorothy and Russell Lee:

Geoffrey Lee Paulsen, former Foothills Park and National Park Service ranger
Martha Lee, retired executive, National Park Service
Amy Paulsen
Joanie Paulsen
Eric Paulsen
Janine Paulsen
James Chadwick, esq
Patricia Chadwick
Dr. Rich Lee, M.D., Founder and Medical Director, Hometown Healthcare, Palo Alto
Barbie Paulsen
Dr. Catherine Lee, Ph.D.
Margaret Lee
Alison Margo Smaalders
Dr. Phyllis Lee, Ph.D.
Sally Paulsen
Virginia Lee Adi
Graham Lee
Sophie Lee
Amy Pinneo

*Additional signatories welcomed.
Titles are for identification purposes only.*