

Candidate Name: Rick Hunter \_\_\_\_\_

Q1: Redwood City's General Plan directs future growth to a revitalized downtown and along existing transit corridors, while conserving open space and protecting our quality of life. It also sets limits on the intensity of development within various land-use categories.

a) **Do you agree with our community's current vision for building in the urbanized core of our City and not in areas that the General Plan designates as open space, such as the Redwood City salt ponds? Please explain your answer.**

A: I agree with our General Plan that building should be focused on urbanized, transit-oriented areas and not in areas designated as open space.

b) **Do you agree with the land-use mix and development intensity within the current General Plan? Please identify changes you would like to see, if any.**

A: I agree with the vision in the General Plan.

Q2: In considering the current Harbor View proposal, a council member argued that the City has an obligation to grant the developer "due process" by studying the project – eg. allowing the project to move forward with required environmental studies and initiation of a General Plan Amendment. California law, however, allows a city to deny outright, without further studies, any development proposal that is not in conformance with its General Plan.

**In your opinion, what obligation does the City have to process an application and conduct environmental studies for a development project that is not consistent with its General Plan and current zoning?**

A: The City does not have an obligation to process an application and conduct environmental studies for such a development project. The City should give any applicant a fair hearing and due process to determine the merits of their application. But after a hearing by the Planning Commission or City Council, the City may then determine that the project does not warrant opening up the General Plan.

That is exactly what I did as a Planning Commissioner. I listened carefully to all the public testimony and discussion by the Commissioners, and determined, with the majority, that that Planning Commission meeting provided due process to the applicant, and that the proposed project did not warrant beginning the process of amending the General Plan.

Q3: In 2009, the City Council voted to accept the initial Saltworks development application and begin a lengthy (and divisive) environmental review process to fill in restorable wetlands on the Cargill salt ponds, which have long been designated as "Open Space" in the General Plan and are zoned "Tidal Plain".

**If elected and a future development proposal for any portion of the salt ponds comes before you:**

- a) **would you be inclined to accept the application and vote to initiate environmental studies and a General Plan Amendment process? Please explain why or why not.**

A: As stated above regarding the Harbor View proposal, the proposal should first be reviewed by the Planning Commission at a public meeting. After hearing all the testimony, the Commissioners should decide if the application has enough benefits to the community to initiate a General Plan amendment process. The Planning Commission (or City Council) has no obligation to initiate a General Plan amendment simply because a development is proposed, however.

- b) **are there any circumstances that you believe would justify a Council decision to approve a development on the salt ponds? Please explain your answer.**

A: I do not support intense residential or commercial development of the salt ponds. The General Plan says that tidal marshland and wetland ecosystems are among the most biologically productive natural ecosystems in the world. These lands should be preserved for tidal marsh restoration, flood protection, recreation, and as a buffer against sea level rise. I cannot say there are no circumstances that would justify any development, for example a park and related recreational uses, but this would have to be consistent with its primary designation as open space and wetlands.

Q4: Redwood City's 2013 Climate Action Plan states that "*while the City has taken significant action on climate change in the past 7 years, it becomes increasingly important to begin climate adaptation planning as well*", and suggests developing recommendations for adaptation measures based on the 2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy, which includes measures for increasing, protecting and restoring wetlands as well as avoiding or limiting development in areas subject to sea level rise.

- a) **If elected, would you encourage Council/City staff to work with other agencies to increase areas of tidal marsh for flood protection in Redwood City?**

A: Yes

- b) **If elected, would you be in favor of the City including adaptive measures for restoring and increasing tidal marsh in its Climate Action Plan?**

A: Yes

- c) **If elected, would you consider approving future development in areas subject to sea level rise beyond what is currently allowed by the General Plan? Please explain your answer.**

A: I would generally not favor such development not allowed in the General Plan in areas subject to sea level rise. I will work to minimize encroachment into sensitive habitat and to ensure that our wetlands can be used to protect against sea level rise.

Q5: The July 2016 Redwood City Climate Action Plan and Environmental Initiatives Update states that *“if the current trend continues unchanged, the City’s 2020 [greenhouse gas] reduction goal will not be met”*. This conclusion was based on GHG inventories that ended in 2013, before the recent boom in office development and corresponding traffic increases.

a) **Do you believe that it is important for Redwood City to strive to meet its community-wide goal of a 15% decrease in GHG over 2005 levels by 2020, and/or to meet California’s goal of a 40% reduction in GHG over 1990 levels by 2030?**

A: Yes

b) **If elected, would you support adoption of local codes, ordinances and/or programs, as some other cities have enacted, that would help achieve those goals?**

A: Yes. I look forward to learning more about such programs and about best practices that other cities have adopted.

Q6: The current Highway 101/Woodside Road interchange improvement plan did not incorporate any increased traffic from potential development east of Hwy 101 beyond what is accounted for in the General Plan. If substantial new development there is allowed, the expected traffic relief for current commuters and Seaport industries from these improvements could be short-lived, or traffic through the interchange could end up worse than current conditions.

**If elected, would you approve a development project east of Highway 101 if it would significantly increase traffic impacts on current Redwood City commuters and nearby industries? Please explain your answer.**

- a. While I cannot say in advance how I would vote on any project, I would have the following concerns that must be addressed:
  - o Changing the General Plan. The General Plan which was adopted in 2010 had substantial public input and reflects the community’s preferences. Although it is a living document that can be amended, there should be significant benefit to the community to justify making major changes.
  - o Traffic. Situated next to the worst intersection in the city, and not near transit, we need to know how the traffic consequences will be mitigated.
  - o Loss of light industrial business. This is a key contributor to our economy, which we are gradually losing as areas are re-zoned.
  - o Jobs-housing imbalance. Adding thousands of new jobs without providing commensurate housing will make the affordable housing crisis even worse.

Q7: Despite significant housing construction in the last several years, the worsening jobs/housing imbalance in Redwood City contributes to our housing affordability crisis, adds to commute times and greenhouse gas emissions, and creates increased pressure to develop on open space lands.

**a) Do you believe the City's Downtown Precise Plan should be reopened to allow for additional office space development? Why or why not?**

A: Since the commercial and residential caps in the DTPP have now been met, the City should begin the community engagement process to determine what the residents would like to see next. I believe that we should slow the rate of office growth until jobs and housing are more in balance, but I do not want to stop office growth or harm our economic vitality. Since building near transit is the most responsible place to put new offices and residences, I will be open-minded about allowing new office space downtown.

**b) Do you agree with the recent 4-2 City Council decision to proceed with the study of the Harbor View project proposal to amend the General Plan to allow for construction of more than 1 million square feet of office space and thousands of additional workers east of Highway 101? Why or why not?**

No. As a Planning Commissioner, I voted with the majority not to change Redwood City's General Plan to allow development of the Harbor View office project just east of 101. The general plan, for environmental and other reasons, did not allow large office buildings at that site, but instead zoned for light industrial, biotech, or Port-related businesses.

Q8: In addition to publishing this questionnaire, RCNU will be informing voters about candidates' past Council and Planning Commission votes as well as public comments that candidates have made at City Council/Planning Commission meetings or to the media that are related to the topics covered in this questionnaire. If you have any comments you would like to make regarding your past actions or public statements, please take this opportunity to discuss them below.

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