

24
March fifteenth

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Dear Neighbor:

The Los Altos Taxpayers League, a non-partisan group of more than 300 of your friends and neighbors pledged to the careful scrutiny of our city's fiscal and tax operations, brings this information to you as a public service.

League membership includes engineers, builders, financial men, tax experts, statisticians, accountants, senior executives of a number of well known business firms, professional people, local merchants, many others in a wide variety of occupations, as well as homeowners, housewives and retired persons.

We have drawn heavily on the talents of this qualified group to bring you this bulletin and the three that have preceeded it.

The many problems that beset a young city with the explosive growth of Los Altos are exceedingly costly to solve. Simply to do the things that are essential involves staggering sums that run into millions. Our city's present income is insignificant in relation to the size of the job ahead.

The needed improvements and services required of the city must be paid for primarily with the taxes and assessments with which we are willing to burden ourselves. Since Los Altos lacks industry and its important tax base, our situation is more grave than that of most communities.

On Tuesday next, you will be asked to make the first of a series of decisions pledging portions of your income for 20-25 years in the future. The cost of a single mistaken decision can be heavy and must be lived with for a long time. Emotional appeals and oratory are a poor basis for such decisions. Weigh the facts carefully and vote for the decision that any prudent man or woman would make.

We hope the information that follows will prove helpful.

Executive Committee

Los Altos Taxpayers League

TUESDAY'S DECISION

Will be to approve or disapprove a \$575,000.00 bond issue to build a City Hall, a separate Council Chamber, a Library, and Police Headquarters. Over the objections of many, the ballot is a "package" proposal. You may not vote for the buildings of your choice, it is an "all or nothing" decision.

WHAT WILL IT COST?

Approximately \$40,000.00 in principal and interest payments for each of 20 years.....a total of \$800,000.00. plus annual maintenance costs of \$7,500 - 10,000.00. Rent, utilities and maintenance of our present City Hall and Police Station are less than \$ 5,000.00 yearly.

IS THE ENTIRE CIVIC CENTER OUR MOST URGENT NEED?

No! Sanitary sewers, storm drains, street improvements, Police Headquarters are vital to the health and safety of our citizens. The first three are also the key to the city's future development.

WHAT DOES THE CITY PROPOSE?

On February 26, 1957 the council's Finance Committee proposed a six year program that would provide only:

14% of all needed street improvements
33% of full storm drainage needs
Stage I only of the sanitary sewers
All 4 of the Civic Center buildings.....with No. 1 priority

At that rate it would require 30 to 40 years to fulfill all present street needs.....15 to 20 years to complete full storm drainage. Can we wait that long for these vital and basic improvements?

CAN THE CIVIC CENTER BE PAID FOR SOLELY FROM SALES TAXES?

Yes! But only if we wish to deprive ourselves for some years of the more urgently needed improvements. This is not a "free ride". It might be termed more aptly a "last things first" policy.

A Police Headquarters and a City Hall are definitely part of our long range needs. Both may be had on a pay-as-you-go basis without depriving ourselves of the more vital needs, and without burdening ourselves with excessive taxes to pay interest on bonded debt.

WHAT NEW TAXES WILL BE NEEDED?

In addition to the sales tax already being collected, we will need:

For sanitary sewers, approximately \$1,500,000.00 in assessment and revenue bonds plus the usual interest charges of well over \$500,000.00 in 20 years. You must also pay a connection charge and a monthly service fee for use of the facilities.

For storm drainage, approximately \$1,300,000.00 in assessment and/or general obligation bonds plus interest charges of approximately \$500,000.00, offset by roughly \$100,000.00 of storm drainage deposits on hand.

For streets, an undetermined multi-million dollar bonded debt unless we are willing to limit street improvements to an annual \$30-40,000.00 level for the next few years.

ALTERNATIVES

Give proper priority to our sanitary sewer, storm drain and most urgent street needs. Bond ourselves for the amounts needed, in accordance with our willingness to be taxed or assessed to amortise the bonds.

Wait one year, apply the full year's sales tax revenues to the building of a Police Headquarters on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Negotiate immediately with the county for a larger and more equitable share of the total library taxes now being collected in Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Barron Park and other fringe areas surrounding Los Altos. Insist on a North County regional branch library..... county officials admit it is possible. Investigate the possibility of the county buying or leasing the Los Altos Union Church parish house as library quarters. The church wants to dispose of the property. It is ample in size, almost as large as the proposed library. It is centrally located, convenient to the new parking plaza, and would cost only a fraction of the cost of the proposed new library building that would have to be paid for solely by Los Altos.

Revise present City Hall plans to a more modest scale in keeping with immediate needs and finances, making certain that it can be expanded practically for future needs. Continue to rent quarters until the more urgently needed Police Headquarters is built as outlined above. Then apply the same procedure to building the more modest City Hall. The second and third year's full sales tax revenue should be ample for the job.

Eliminate the proposed Council Chamber and surrounding pool as a luxury. Conference rooms in proposed plan could be combined and provide ample space for most council meetings. Covington School will continue to be available for occasional larger ones.

LOCAL

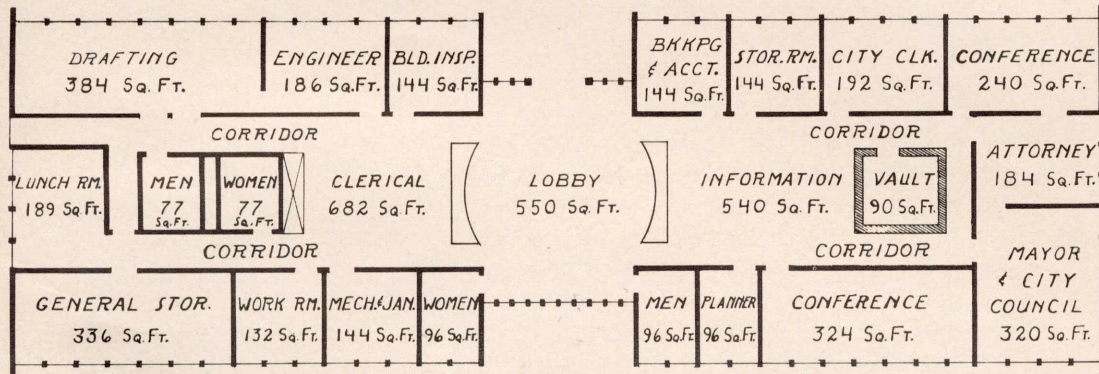
P.O. BOX 1313

POSTAL PATRON

**IMPORTANT
ELECTION INFORMATION**

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Los Altos, Calif.
Permit No. 57

YOUR TAX DOLLARS SHOULD ALWAYS BUY 100 CENTS IN VALUE



CITY HALL FLOOR PLAN

EXPERIENCED ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION ADVISERS SAY—

"Specifications call for costly, luxury building"....."Definitely a luxury design"....."Loaded"....."Can be reduced 20% or more in cost without destroying the aesthetic design value".

THEY CALL ATTENTION TO THESE ITEMS

21% of total floor space is in corridors and lobby

14% of total floor space assigned to part time city officials and conference rooms. This space will be used only a small part of the time.

Building lacks adequate dead storage space for records etc., an important requirement for a government building that could be inexpensively supplied if basement space were provided.

Proposed floor plan has questionable flexibility for future expansion without costly rearrangement at time of expansion.



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