

AN URGENT MESSAGE TO ALL
FOOTHILL PROPERTY OWNERS

A movement is underway to incorporate the Los Altos foothills and adjacent foothill areas into a rural town. The objective is preservation of the rural atmosphere of the foothills.

This leaflet explains in detail the incorporation movement. It has been prepared by the Foothills Incorporation Committee acting to the four property owners associations of the foothills area. The plan outlined here is the work of your neighbors--worked out carefully during recent months.

The Committee earnestly requests your careful study of the foothill incorporation plan and your participation in the incorporation movement. After you have studied this leaflet, will you complete and mail your straw ballot. Thank you.

WHY INCORPORATION IS NECESSARY

The reasons behind the proposed incorporation of the Los Altos Foothills are simple ones. Most of us want our area to remain residential, quiet, and reasonably rural. Most of us do not want to witness a piecemeal breakdown of our country residence zoning. Most of us do not want to be absorbed into any of the nearby cities, where we would be outvoted and overwhelmed by their denser populations.

Actually, most of us would also prefer to go on just as we are, in the County, without any more responsibilities, government, or taxes. But that, unfortunately, does not seem possible. The many of us who have followed recent successful attempts to break our zoning, and who have noted how far the planning surveys of nearby cities extend into our foothills, are convinced that incorporation is our only choice if we are to preserve our uniquely beautiful locality and our rural pursuits. The Los Altos hills comprise one of the most beautiful residential sections in all of California, and one of the most desirable, and one of the most threatened.

A thoughtful look at what has been happening recently will show why prompt action is necessary. Since the war, our region has undergone a vast economic growth. Quiet rural spots in many parts of the Peninsula have disappeared entirely. In five years, twenty percent of the County orchard lands have been taken over by housing and industrial tracts, and the rate is accelerating. Our neighboring cities, the County itself, chambers of commerce, and even Stanford University, are bending every effort to bring in still more industry, commerce institutions and population. The pressures for exploitation of our foothills are enormous.

Our only defense against these pressures is the County Zoning Ordinances, but this gives us "land use protection" in name only. Loopholes exist by which the Planning Commission and also the Board of Supervisors may grant, at their own discretion, variances, use permits, and outright rezoning, to permit a multitude of things we do not want. We have the right to protest, of course, but changes can be made and have been made, over the united protests of virtually the entire foothills population.

In four years our protesting strength has increased from one property owners association in the Country Club district to five united associations encompassing almost our entire area, but even this united front has failed to match the increasing pressures. Many changes, involving quarrying, a resort, institutions, reduced lot sizes, have been made over our strongest protests. Our few successes have been due to constant vigilance and continued opposition at repeated hearings.

One recent case is a prime example of the growing tendency to favor commercial

interests, and ignore the property rights of established residents. A ten acre tract east of Miranda was rezoned, for subdividers, from acre to quarter acre lots over the combined protests of all of the 32 surrounding property owners and all of the five foothill property owners groups. At some hearings our spokesmen have even been called down for presuming to bother the Planning Commission with our protests.

Recent zoning history shows a trend which could result in a complete breakdown of our zoning at any time. Another kind of future we do not want is forecast by planning surveys recently made for Palo Alto and Los Altos. These surveys study and measure all our foothills for extension of urban facilities and controls, - the very things so many of us came here to avoid. The Palo Alto survey, in addition, actually excludes rural pursuits, - the very things so many of us came here to gain. Obviously, such surveys reveal a desire, if not an intention, to annex, to control.

Our country residence zoning, our rural pursuits, our quiet atmosphere, are important only to us, - the actual residents of the foothills. It does not seem wise to allow the power of life and death over such things to remain outside our area, in other hands. Though most of us sincerely wish it could be otherwise, it is evident that incorporation is the only safe course to follow.

WHAT KIND OF COMMUNITY DO WE WANT ?

Discussions throughout the Los Altos foothills indicate that we are in general agreement as to the kind of community we want:-

As little change as possible, - in our hills, our groves and fringes of trees, our fields, our orchards, our roads, - as will be consistent with orderly, natural, unhurried, residential growth.

A wide and not over-populated community of homes in the country, organized only enough to protect it from what would destroy it. Only such planning, controls, ordinances and services as are absolutely essential.

We want the sun and air and quiet of a community which has given itself enough space to breathe in; the relaxed pace of country life and rural pursuits, and the space and right to keep animals, - rabbits, chickens, dogs, sheep, cattle, and horses.

We want roads that are content to remain country lanes as long as they are suitable for the residence traffic of our area, - we do not want to be forced to rebuild them into highspeed highways to suit non-residential traffic of resorts and quarries.

Most of us in the foothills want at least one acre of land, - regardless of what real estate experts and national surveys tell us about weed patches, costs, taxes, and work. We want room to walk around our houses without knocking our heads on our neighbors' eaves. We want to listen to the radio when we turn it on, not when our neighbors do. We would rather look over our neighbors' paddocks, and even over their weed patches, than into their windows.

We do not want high speed roads, still more traffic, still more quarrying and trucks, more or bigger resorts, dense subdivisions with standardized house plans and expensive sewer requirements. We do not want more industry and commerce to "broaden the tax base" and all the city controls and facilities required to cope with them. We do not want a full scale police force, a full time council, a city manager. If, someday, some of us think we need markets, gas stations, public buildings, a community center, the rest of us want the right to approve or reject them by actual vote of the majority. We do not want such things imposed upon us by anyone, - not by the County Government nor by a city next door.

In short, we like our rural atmosphere, and most of us are perfectly willing to get along without city conveniences in order to keep it.

The only way to be sure of our future is to take hold of it and plan it ourselves. The costs are modest enough - less than if we were annexed to a city, and probably less than if we remain in the County. The responsibility of running our own government would be a welcome substitute for the continuous zoning worries and hazards so many of us have been facing, - something gratifying and constructive rather than frustrating and destructive.

We can build-in our agricultural businesses and hobbies permanently, - our horse ranches, riding schools, nurseries, orchards, chickens, cattle. We can go on keeping a horse. We can even build-in a little space for the meadow larks and the quail. We can build a friendly town meeting kind of community, with a neighbor from road on the council and control in our own hands, where it belongs.

HOW CAN WE BE SURE THAT "POLITICIANS" IN OUR OWN AREA WILL NOT GAIN CONTROL, AND BRING ABOUT THE VERY THINGS WE SEEK TO AVOID?

A number of residents have raised this question. Part of the answer is given above, - we can presume that councilmen living here and personally well known to many of us would naturally be more concerned with our local affairs than officials in other parts of the county. There is another answer, however, which stems not from a presumption, but from actual study of the results of incorporation elsewhere.

Experience in other Bay Area communities shows dramatically that, when incorporation is achieved early enough, before divergent interests make themselves felt, a community retains the atmosphere it's incorporators planned for it. On the other hand, when incorporation takes place after commercial interests have become established, the "parade towards progress" becomes inexorable, - the incorporation itself actually seems to become a vehicle for the divergent interests. Compare on the one hand such purely residential communities as Hillsborough, Atherton, Piedmont, Ross, with any number of cities which started out with the idea of preserving rural atmosphere, but too late. Those we elect to our council will all be fellow residents with rural pursuits of their own, who share our desire to preserve our unique atmosphere. Furthermore, they will be responsible only to the voters of the area, - not to any divergent interests.

GOVERNMENT, TAXES, CHANGES

Taxes. An incorporated community of our own, with all of its essential benefits, is possible for an increase of about 4% in our total property taxes. On the other hand, if we do not incorporate, our County taxes could be increased under the new State law permitting special taxing of unincorporated areas supposedly getting more than their share of county expenditures.

Government, can be minimum and still provide all the services we need or want. Under California law we can incorporate only as a "sixth class city", no other form is provided. We can, however, call our community a "town". A five man council is mandatory, elected from among our neighbors, but honorary service without pay is customary in towns like ours. One paid employee can handle all routine matters. Professional and secretarial services can be engaged as needed. Most government services remain under the County, either automatically, with no change whatsoever, or by contract with the County. Basic terms have been established by the County Executive, the County Council, and the Sheriff, in conferences with the Incorporation Legal Committee.

No Change At All. School Districts, Fire District, the Purissima Water District, Health Department, Lighting Districts, Flood Control Mosquito Abatement, water supply, sewage disposal, refuse collection, and any taxes or costs due to them, will be completely unaffected by incorporation. Likewise, the County Tax Rate and the County Assessed Valuations, will be completely unaffected by incorporation.

Little Change. Building Inspection and Tax Assessment and Collection will be continued by the County, under contract.

Important Changes. County zoning classifications, lot sizes, uses, and as much of the County Zoning Law as is applicable, will remain in effect. Some large property owners have indicated a wish to have their properties zoned for two acres or more. Areas currently in lots of less than one acre will not be rezoned unless their owners specifically request it. Our own council will be in a position to give much closer and more sympathetic attention to zoning problems than can now be hoped for.

Policing can be by the Sheriff, under contract with the County. General protection will be about the same as now, (answering emergency calls and patrolling) but we can have additional traffic patrol to control our heavy weekend resort traffic and quarry trucking if we wish. Our own traffic ordinances can be designed to suit and to protect our "country lane" type of roads, to stop over-loading and reduce accidents. Fines will go to the County. Only if actual cost of service improvements exceed fines, will there be a charge to our town.

Road Construction and maintenance (of County roads only) must be assumed by our new town, but this will not cause an increase in taxes. All costs can be met with the State refunds of Gas Taxes and Motor Vehicle License Fees and all work can be contracted for with private firms or with the County. If we keep our roads as they are now, adopt protective ordinances, and concentrate re-construction to eliminate points of heaviest repair, we can continue to keep our road costs down. State refunds are on a per capita basis, hence road

improvement can be stepped up as our population increases. The costs of new roads for land development will be borne by developers.

THE TOWN BUDGET

Several residents have suggested that the proposed government structure may be inadequate, and the Town Budget too low. We must remember, however, that the new town will have to administer only a few of our services; most of them remain with the County. Also, our town services will be, by our own choice, absolutely minimum because we want to keep our community as free as possible from ordinances, controls and other governmental problems we believe are unnecessary and inappropriate to country living.

The Incorporation Committee has consulted many informed people, - experts in government, consulting engineers, business men, officials in County and city departments. Their opinion is that we can have frugality in our government as long as we insist upon it. It is simply up to us.

Revenue

State Refunds:
 Gasoline Taxes, _____ \$10,290
 License Fees, ----- 16,110
 Utility Franchises, ----- 1,250
 Building Permits, ----- 750
 New Town Property Taxes 14,500
 Total Revenue, - \$42,900

Expenditures

Roads, _____ \$26,400
 Paid Employee, ----- 5,000
 Professional assistance, 4,500
 Rent, Insurance, miscel, -3,500
 Reserve, ----- 3,500
 Total Expenditures, - \$42,900

Statistics: Area, - 9.5 miles
 Population, - about 2,500

County roads, - 21 miles
 Registered voters, - 1,167

For State Refund Purposes, the "gas tax" population is three times the number of registered voters, or 3,501.

Gas Tax Refund, - 1954 rate, - \$2.94 per capita, - total about \$10,290.
 License Fee Refund, - 1954 rate, - \$ 4.61, - total about \$ 16, 110.

Total Assessed Valuation of our area, - 1953, -	\$3,939, 890
1954, -	4,814,680
estimated, - 1955, -	5,700,000

The new Town Taxes of \$14,500 required, work out to a rate of about 25 cents per hundred dollars of assessed valuation, - an increase of about 4% over our present total tax rate of about \$6.00 per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation. The Town Tax Rate should decrease as our population increases.

INCORPORATION PROCEDURE

Step 1. Technical approval of boundaries by the County. This has been done.

Step 2. Petition requesting the County to hold an election. This will be circulated very soon. The signatures of at least 25% of all the property owners representing at least 25% of the total assessed land valuation (not including buildings) of the area, are required. For properties jointly held, all of the owners must sign.

Step 3. Boundaries hearings by the Board of Supervisors. Property owners on the boundaries may ask to be left out of the new Town. Hearings will be during the next several months.

Step 4. Election. The County will set the date, which should be before the end of this year. A majority vote of the registered voters is required. Our first Council would be elected at the same time.

HOW CAN WE ALL PARTICIPATE?

The initial work of the incorporation movement, covering more than two years, has been done; - fact finding and planning by the original Incorporation Committee; discussion and checking and advice by the larger General Committee. A lot of mileage will be put in by those who will carry the Petition.

It remains, however, for all foothill property owners and residents to carefully study incorporation; - to discuss it with neighbors, to suggest and to select the final name for our community, and to nominate and later to elect our first Council.

Name. We must have a name on the Petition. For expediency the name most frequently mentioned will be used, - "Lost Altos Hills". Many other names have been proposed, however, and to assure the best choice, appropriate names will be investigated, discussed, and voted on during the interval between Petition and Election. Other names already suggest: Purissima Hills (historic), Los Altos Chicos (little heights), Los Altos del Oestos (western hills), San Antonio Hills (historic). One friend has proposed, half seriously that the name should really be Los Statos Quos! Make your own suggestion on your Straw Ballot.

Council. We are very fortunate in having in our foothills, more than enough capable responsible people to assure a steady succession of excellent Councils. We should begin nominations now so that a final list of nominees will be ready for the Election. If you would be willing to serve on the Council, please don't let modesty forbid.

Incorporation Fund. Those who wish may contribute to the fund required to defray the cost of this booklet, the Petition, publication of notices which must precede the Election and other expense items. The total is expected to be about \$1,000. A record of all contributions will be kept and any surplus prorated and refunded. Make checks payable to "Foothills Incorporation Committee" and mail in your Straw Ballot envelope.

Straw Ballot. Please fill in and mail as soon as possible.

PLATFORM

Here is your personal copy of the Platform for Incorporation of our rural Town, to which the Candidates for our Council are pledged. Please be sure to keep it for future reference at our Town Meetings.

A great many persons have participated in the incorporation movement. Included are representatives from every road and lane in our Los Altos Hills, - owners of all sizes of properties, people from walks of life, united in the common desire to defend our rural ways and to see that the inevitable development of our area will be orderly.

The incorporation movement will end with the Election, January 10th. Only after a successful election can the actual work of establishing our rural Town really begin, - within the general framework of the Platform in open Town Meeting, and with care and caution and friendly cooperation.

Those who have already participated can be counted on absolutely, - Council Candidates, Committee members, and the many other representative property owners. It will be essential, however, that every other interested citizen also contribute his share, sure in the knowledge that his opinions and wishes will be honored at our Town Meetings, as nowhere else in this changing world.

Everyone is urged to vote on January 10th. The Committee hopes, of course, that your vote will be one of confidence in the Platform, the Candidates, the Committee itself. But let us decide the question with a thumping majority, whether pro or con, and leave no doubt.

Meetings for questions and discussion will be held at the Purissima School on Wednesday evening from 8 to 10, January 4, and on Saturday morning from 10 to 12, January 7th.

Candidates and Committee members will be present for informal talks. Your questions will be welcomed, either at the meetings or by phone call to your nearest Committee members.

PLATFORM FOR THE INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

Protective Zoning

Residential-agricultural use only. One acre minimum parcel size. No commercial zones. No new zones of less-than acre parcels.

No further expansion of non-conforming uses such as quarries, resorts.

Variations and use permits will be possible, but only when approved by neighboring property owners and by the voters of the Town.

Agriculture and Rural Pursuits.

Retain our present country type roads as they are, wherever possible.

Adopt traffic laws to protect and suit our roads; control trucking, speed, noise, and discourage unnecessary traffic from outside.

Assist the owners of larger properties to retain them or subdivide gradually, rather than selling to speculators. Many owners favor larger-than-acre parcels for their land, and may ask for rezoning if they wish.

Replace the "city type" County subdivision regulations with standards of our own better suited to our modest, hilly, rural conditions: -

- A. 2 lane roads of approved construction, acceptable for Town maintenance.
- B. Private lanes permissible, but not acceptable for Town maintenance. Parcels may front on private lane which has access to public road.
- C. All other details will be developed in Town Meeting, and may be varied, if desirable, to suit the needs of our various districts.

Minimum of Change

No changes will be made except those which are mandatory under California law; or are deemed desirable by the voters and the property owners. County regulations can remain in effect until changed.

All public services will remain exactly as they are except as follows:

Road work must be taken over by our Town, but all work will be contracted to the County or to private firms. We will not have a road department or own any road equipment.

Policing by the Sheriff will be continued, but under contract with the County. General protection as at present, but with a special traffic patrol to enforce our Town ordinances, when and as needed.

Zoning will be guarded by our own Council—all actual residents.

Building Inspection, Tax Collection, by the County, but under contract and under Town supervision. County will continue to do the assessing.

Minimum of Government

We propose to have the minimum number of Town Officers permitted under California law, with the Town Clerk the only paid officer. Extra help may be required for special legal work, engineering, stenography and will be engaged as needed, on a part time or fee basis.

Minimum of New Taxes

We propose to make the refunds from State Gas and Motor Vehicle Taxes suffice for all road costs, hence road work will have no effect on our new taxes. Refunds will increase as our population increases.

The contract for police services proposed by County officials provides that the Town must pay for such services only if the actual cost of special improvements and traffic patrol exceeds fines paid to the County.

All other Town expenses, including a reserve of \$3,500, are included in the Town Budget of \$16,500. A new Town Property Tax of 25 cents per \$100 of assessed value will meet this total, - an increase of about 4% over our present total of taxes. We propose not to exceed that increase.

Your Town Council cannot promise, of course, that taxes outside of Town control, such as those of the County, School and Fire District, will not be increased. It will however, place Town influence against any unnecessary or unwarranted tax increase of any kind.

We propose to have no Town investment in public buildings, no public debt. Town income from property taxes will increase without any rise in tax rate, as our area develops and new homes are built.

Town Name

The name "Town of Los Altos Hills" was settled upon to expedite the Incorporation procedure but some residents have expressed a preference for other names. We cannot change before the election, but as soon as possible thereafter the Council will appoint a special committee, from all districts, to study names and propose several for final selection by vote of all residents.

SOME RUMORS YOU NEEDS NOT WORRY ABOUT

- We cannot be excluded from the School Districts or Fire District.
- We will not have a full time seven man police force.
- We will not put the Town into a water district or a sewer district.
- We will not install public utilities, garbage collection, etc.
- We will not outlaw horses, farm animals, or country smells and noises.

We will not prevent sub-division of land by unjustified restrictions.
We will not indulge in petty ordinances.

Candidates and Voting Photographs and short biographies of all Council Candidates will appear in the Los Altos News and the Palo Alto Times during the week of January 2nd. Please watch for them.

Voting by district, though not obligatory, is desirable so that all areas will be assured of representation on the Council. In the future this can be a ballot requirement, but in our first election it cannot. Hence we ask your cooperation in choosing only one candidate from each of the areas noted, unless you have a special preference:-

West Fremont-Purissima, -	Arthur Fowle	
Robleda-Burke-Sunset, -	Sidney Treat	
Page Mill-Altamont-Elena, -	Howard Frame	Easton Rothwell
Summerhill-Magdalena, -	Theodore Dungan	James Wilson
El Monte-Moody, -	Leighton Bledsoe	Rex Gardiner

The Candidates were nominated by means of the 230 Straw Ballots returned, - representing one third of all resident properties. The top four in the balloting in each district were select; all others withdrew in favor of those names above. We have a wealth of equally capable residents available for service on future Councils.

The Platform was developed in several successive meetings in which more than 100 individuals participated, - Council Candidates, Committee members, representative property owners. It was developed directly from the original data mailed to all property owners last summers before the Incorporation Petition was circulated. 75% of all resident owners signed the Petition.