

AJIT VARMA:

Product management director, parent

A Palo Alto resident since 1999, Varma has lived through the tech boom and worked for prominent companies like Square, Google and Facebook. One of Varma's top priorities is to reduce the spread of COVID-19 through rapid testing, improved contact tracing, rules for social distancing and protective equipment, and vaccine distribution. Other main focuses for Varma include helping small businesses recover from the pandemic and maintaining job and business opportunities in Palo Alto. Varma hopes to achieve this without bureaucratic barriers like office space caps, slow approval processes like zoning changes, as well as head taxes and annual fees.



CARI TEMPLETON:

Planning & Transportation Commission Chair

Templeton, a former program manager at Google, has set her sights on three main priorities as a candidate: community wellness through the pandemic, climate action with housing and transportation plans, and modernizing Palo Alto's infrastructure and public safety programs. She hopes to increase free COVID-19 testing and protective equipment, provide housing stability for residents and financial support for businesses, as well as expand programs for mental health during the pandemic. Templeton is advocating for fare-free public transportation for students and seniors, as well as reduction of urban sprawling by building housing near transit.



ED LAUING:

Planning & Transportation Commission Chair

In his 33 years of living in Palo Alto, Lauing served on city commissions for 10 of those years. Lauing's priorities include increasing the number of homes being built and providing low- and middle-income citizens a place to live by evaluating the funding for below-market rate homes. In addition, he hopes to revise and reform safety services, especially the Palo Alto Police Department, in light of the nation's racial crisis. He also emphasizes a budget that prioritizes public safety, essential services and amenities, including implementing parking programs in neighborhoods and affordable pricing for parking lots and garages.



GREER STONE:

Chair of SCC Justice Review Committee

As a former attorney and a member of various human rights commissions, Stone is a longtime advocate for social justice. One of Stone's main priorities as a candidate is to bolster economic recovery in response to the pandemic. He hopes to increase affordable housing by rebalancing the jobs to housing ratio and targeting zoning incentives for projects that create more than the minimum mandated affordable units. The current Paly student activities director is also focused on reducing traffic in Palo Alto to create a more environmentally sustainable city and promotes telecommuting — working from home — beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

