

CDI



Institute Report 84-2

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION  
IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT:  
A MAYORAL VIEW**

Barbara A. Mouton  
Mayor, City of East Palo Alto  
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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT: A MAYORAL VIEW is a study which provides an overview of various models of citizen participation in local government affairs to help those so desiring the assistance to shape a model that will best serve their needs. It discusses the topic from the viewpoint of a Black mayor who presides over a small, newly-incorporated, multi-ethnic city.

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- 83-1 "LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE COORDINATION AND DELIVERY OF HUMAN SERVICES IN EAST PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA: NEEDS ASSESSMENT, SERVICE INVENTORY, AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS" BY JACQUELINE D. SKILLERN JACKSON, PH.D. AND FRANK J. OMOWALE SATTERWHITE, PH.D.  
MARCH, 1983-----\$10.00

This is a study of three human service areas in East Palo Alto -- senior citizen, community health, and youth services. The report is divided into three sections. Each section contains a needs assessment, inventory of existing programs, and policy recommendations for improving service delivery and coordination.

- 83-1A "LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE COORDINATION AND DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO SENIOR CITIZENS IN EAST PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA: NEEDS ASSESSMENT, SERVICE INVENTORY, AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS" BY JACQUELINE D. SKILLERN JACKSON, PH.D. AND FRANK J. OMOWALE SATTERWHITE, PH.D.  
MARCH, 1983-----\$5.00

This is a study of senior services in East Palo Alto. It includes a needs assessment, inventory of existing programs, and policy recommendations for improving service delivery and coordination. The report is a revised version of Part I of Institute Report 83-1.

- 83-1B "LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE COORDINATION AND DELIVERY OF COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES IN EAST PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA: NEEDS ASSESSMENT, SERVICE INVENTORY, AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS" BY JACQUELINE D. SKILLERN JACKSON, PH.D. AND FRANK J. OMOWALE SATTERWHITE, PH.D.  
MARCH, 1983-----\$5.00

This is a study of community health services in East Palo Alto. It includes a needs assessment, inventory of existing programs, and policy recommendations for improving service delivery and coordination. The report is a revised version of Part II of Institute Report 83-1.



83-1C "LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE COORDINATION AND DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO YOUTH IN EAST PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA: NEEDS ASSESSMENT, SERVICE INVENTORY, AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS" BY JACQUELINE D. SKILLERN JACKSON, PH.D. AND FRANK J. OMOWALE SATTERWHITE, PH.D. MARCH, 1983-----\$5.00

This is a study of youth services in East Palo Alto. It includes a needs assessment, inventory of existing programs, and policy recommendations for improving service coordination and delivery. The report is a revised version of Part III of Institute Report 83-1.

83-2 "TOWARD A COMMUNITY-ORIENTED HOUSING POLICY IN EAST PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA" BY DUANE BAY, RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, AND FRANK J. OMOWALE SATTERWHITE, PH.D. APRIL, 1983-----\$10.00

This is a study of the housing market in East Palo Alto. It includes a socio-economic description of the community; a statistical profile of its housing demography; a critique of existing public policy; an overview of regional and local housing issues; alternative tactics for addressing local housing problems; and, finally, proposes a set of community-oriented housing goals and recommends a strategy for pursuing these goals.

84-1 "TOWARD AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR EAST PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA" BY VICTOR JAMES, PH.D., CHIEF CONSULTANT, FRANK J. OMOWALE SATTERWHITE, PH.D., CONTRIBUTOR, AND MASHARIKI KURUDISHA, B.A., CONTRIBUTOR FALL QUARTER, 1984-----\$14.00

This is a study of the socio-economic demography of East Palo Alto. It includes a demographic profile of the community; a statistical description of the consumer economy (gross expenditure, consumption expenditure, expenditure pattern, and economic leakage); an annotated summary of neighborhood revitalization programs in various regions of the country; and summarizes key development issues with policy implications for the city.

84-2 "CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT: A MAYORAL VIEW" BY BARBARA A. MOUTON, MAYOR, EAST PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA, AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR, CDI FALL QUARTER, 1984-----\$10.00

This study examines recent history, key issues and alternative approaches to citizen participation. It presents several citizen participation models based upon a study of eight municipalities in the San Francisco Bay Area. It also provides a glossary of terms and bibliography of literature.

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## PREFACE

East Palo Alto incorporated on July 1, 1983. This was accomplished through the struggles of a dedicated group of community residents who gave up, over a very long, protracted four-year period, their precious time, their desperately needed monies, and some even their priceless health, both physical and mental. When the dust settled and emotions stabilized on election night, a new city had come into being and four members from the citizens incorporation group had been elected to the first City Council of East Palo Alto.

A major consideration of these four new Council people was how to continue and expand the participation of citizens in the local government marketplace. They understood that participation of citizens in every strand of the City's fabric was not just a whim but a must.

According to Dieter T. Hessel,<sup>1</sup> "A healthy society depends on people learning the art of associating together for purposes of social transformation." Citizen participation having as its end the developing and shaping of the local government marketplace is the synthesis of this healthy society evolving in East Palo Alto.

This paper on citizen participation discusses the topic from the viewpoint of a Black mayor who presides over a small, newly-incorporated, multi-ethnic city. It examines recent history, key issues, and alternative approaches to citizen participation; it provides a "Glossary of Citizen Participation Bodies in Nearby Municipalities" and bibliography of literature currently available on citizen participation in governmental affairs; and it presents several models of citizen participation so that change agents, especially in the City of East Palo Alto, will be able to devise a model that will best serve the needs of the community.

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<sup>1</sup>Hessel, Dieter T., A Social Action Primer, Philadelphia, PA, Westminster Press, p. 11.

## PROFILE OF EAST PALO ALTO

East Palo Alto is a newly incorporated city located in San Mateo County, approximately 35 miles south of the City of St. Francis and 20 miles north of the City of St. Joseph. It is bounded by Menlo Park to the north and west, Palo Alto to the south, and the San Francisco Bay to the east (see Figures 1 and 2).

### Population Characteristics

According to the 1980 census report, East Palo Alto has 18,191 residents. It is an urban community with one of the largest Black populations on the San Francisco Peninsula. Currently, there are 11,107 Black residents who make up 61% of the population. The number and percentage of Black residents has not changed during the past decade.

The migration of Blacks to East Palo Alto began in the 1950's. The 1960 census reported 3,300 Black residents who represented 22% of the population. By 1970, the Black population more than tripled to its present level. Thus, during the 1960-70 decade, East Palo Alto became a predominantly Black community.

Still, there are a number of other ethnic groups in East Palo Alto. The population is 25.5% White (4,634 persons), 5.5% Asian (992 persons), 0.4% American Indian (78 persons), and 7.6% other races. About 14% of the population is Spanish surnamed; they are included by ethnicity in the above categories in the 1980 census.

In comparison with other communities in San Mateo County, East Palo Alto has a young population which is aging at a slower rate. Today, the median age is 26.4 years compared with 36 years for the county. In 1970, the median ages were 24.5 years and 29.5 years respectively. Overall, there has been a decrease in the pre-school and school-age populations and a corresponding increase in the number of older adults and seniors.

### Housing Characteristics

East Palo Alto is divided by U.S. Highway 101, which is commonly known as the Bayshore Freeway. Currently, there is a predominance of single-family and minority households in East Bayshore, and a predominance of multi-family and White households in West Bayshore. The 1980 census indicated that 95% of the single-family housing units and 93% of the Black residents are east of the freeway, while 76% of the multi-family units and 57% of the White residents are west of the freeway.

East Palo Alto has a balanced mix of renter and owner-occupied housing units. In 1980, 53% (3,564) of the units were renter-occupied, 43% (2,912) were owner-occupied, and 4% (307) were vacant. The average household size was 2.80 persons with an estimated 6.5% of the households classified as being "overcrowded."



## Economic Characteristics\*

East Palo Alto is an economically depressed urban area. It has many households with very modest incomes; a large number of single-parent families headed by women; very high unemployment; and a small commercial sector. (The economic development picture has brightened somewhat in the past several months: an Economic Development Advisory Committee is in place; a recently completed Economic Leakage Study is now available to assist in plugging the leakage of thousands of dollars from the community; and several economic development projects are in the hopper.)

### Median Family Income\*\*

In 1970, the median family income in East Palo Alto was \$9,401 as compared with \$13,922 in San Mateo County. In 1980, the median family incomes were \$16,129 and \$26,400 respectively. The census data indicates that 14% of the families in 1970 and 1980 had incomes below the poverty level.

### Unemployment\*

Recently published statistics indicate that the national and state unemployment rates are about 8%. The Peninsula Times Tribune on November 5, 1982 reported that the national unemployment among Blacks in urban areas is usually more than double the national average; it is likely that East Palo Alto has at least 25% adult unemployment and 50% teenage unemployment.

### The Labor Force and Job Market\*

In 1980, there were approximately 8,599 individuals in the civilian work force. About 43% of the employed work force had jobs in white collar firms, 35% had blue collar jobs, and 22% had jobs in the service industry. There are approximately 1,200 jobs in the community; the vast majority of these jobs are held by people residing outside the community.

## Industrial and Commercial Development

East Palo Alto is a residential community with very limited industrial and commercial development. A recent survey by the Community Development Institute (CDI) indicates that there are about 166 business establishments in East Palo Alto: 36 retail, 98 service, 14 manufacturing, 4 financial, and 14 in research, wholesale, or warehouse operations. The study concluded that the small commercial sector does not meet the community's needs for basic goods and services and that there is about 60 million dollars in economic leakage each year to neighboring cities.

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\*U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1980.

\*\*U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1970 and 1980.

## Facilities and Community Services

East Palo Alto's community resources include public and private schools, churches, parks and recreational facilities, open space areas, baylands, county-owned buildings, and utility company lands. Municipal and human services are provided by a variety of public, non-profit, religious, and civic organizations.

The formation of a single-purpose government with sole responsibility for providing municipal services (planning, public works, public safety, community development, recreation) is bringing about cooperative planning, improved coordination, and better services for the community.

### Summary

East Palo Alto is an economically depressed urban area with 18,191 residents. It has a multi-ethnic population which is predominantly Black; a large number of single-parent families and minority households. There is continual high unemployment, fragmented community services, and a small industrial and commercial sector. However, it is a community on the rise that is destined to fulfill its potential through local control of the governmental marketplace.

## THOUGHTS ON CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### INTRODUCTION

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation...

The foregoing words are engraved in the fabric of this nation's history. Our country was founded upon the principle that citizens have a fundamental right to participate in governmental affairs and that government has a constitutional obligation to be accountable to the citizens.

Citizens have participated in the conceptualization and implementation of the American dream since the inception of these United States. However, for many groups, especially Black folk and women, participation in government affairs was initially barred by the very constitution that supposedly was the channel through which the unrepresented and/or impoverished were to find solace. It is noteworthy that the disenfranchised have always had to take the leadership in challenging the discriminatory practices of government. There is a rich national history of citizen protest aimed at making government more responsive to the oppressed groups of the nation.

In recent times, one of the most memorable examples was the Montgomery Bus Boycott. It started with the refusal of a tired Black seamstress to relinquish her seat to a White man as required by the public transit policy of the City. The Montgomery Bus Boycott is the story of Black citizens who struggled to change the racist policies of the Montgomery City Council, who successfully organized a boycott of public transportation, and who ultimately brought the City Council and the transit company to their knees. It is also the story of a little known Baptist minister who was catapulted into a Nobel Peace Prize and legendary fame through his leadership of the boycott. Today, people recognize that this citizen effort was a revitalizing force for this nation; it not only changed government policies in the local Montgomery marketplace but was also instrumental in changing public policy throughout the nation.

During the years following this memorable boycott, there was a substantial escalation of citizen protest aimed at reversing the discriminatory policies of local, state, and federal governments. Such protest was significantly exemplified by the student sit-ins focusing on the desegregation of public facilities (e.g., lunch counters, classrooms, and inter-state buses); the effort to integrate the United States armed services; the struggles to eliminate discriminatory employment practices in the public and private sectors; and the emergence of conservation, peace, and other groups seeking



to limit the destruction of the environment, including both human and natural resources. People throughout the country began articulating a belief that the American fabric had to be mended to benefit the rainbow of racial groups with a historical stake in building this nation. Self-determination, participatory democracy, and community action were the 'buzz' words of this era.

One of the major problems was that most of the people calling the shots in communities of color were non-resident White males. The demands for local control resulted in the enactment of federal and state statutes which mandated various forms of citizen participation at the local level. The Model Cities Program and its successor programs dictated that citizen involvement had to be based upon the concepts of 'community of interest' and 'local accountability'.

In retrospect, citizen participation during the past two decades took on a macabre twist at the national level. As indicated, various groups believing in the American dream peaceably petitioned the government for redress of a variety of grievances. Many of these citizens had enlisted in the armed services, and served their nation honorably and heroically, and had come back home expecting to participate in the benefits that were accorded other loyal citizens. They expected to be able to participate in the workplace, the marketplace, and the state house; when they were denied access solely because of their skin color, they understood that all the rhetoric about the 'war to end all wars' and the 'American melting pot' was just that, rhetoric!

According to Judith V. May, "The language of political resources creates the assumption that political objectives are attainable if the political actors meet the price in political resources."<sup>2</sup> However, John Strange in a political address stated, "Office-holders are capable of varying the price according to the customer."<sup>3</sup> When the various office-holders were confronted by these determined, frustrated, and disillusioned citizens, they did indeed vary the price. Consequently, the price this nation paid in loss of lives and destroyed property was immeasurable.

In East Palo Alto, citizens were able to help diffuse this anger and disillusionment and direct it into productive channels. Not one blade of grass was torched nor one person injured in our community. This was a tribute to the men and women of the community who were able, sometimes by example, other times through convincing argument, to demonstrate that there were better ways to resolve their problems than burning down the town in which they lived.

Citizens in East Palo Alto have a long history of participation in community affairs. Most of their participation, however, has been primarily

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<sup>2</sup>Judith V. May, Citizen Participation: A Review of Literature, Council of Planning Librarians Exchange Bibliography, August, 1971, p. 210-211.

<sup>3</sup>John Strange, The Politics of Protest: The Case of Durham, delivered at Southern Political Science Association meeting, Gallenburg, Tennessee, November 7-9, 1968.

limited to building and operating churches and various social and recreational programs. It is very easy to understand what heretofore has been a general reluctance of East Palo Altans to participate in local government affairs. First, their disinclination can be directly attributed to historic problems associated with discrimination. In the not too distant past, and in some cases right up to the present day, Blacks have had to demand very basic human rights such as attending neighborhood schools, using public accomodations such as drinking fountains and toilet facilities, and eating at the local lunch counter. Second, it can be attributed to the absence of a local government structure. For years, East Palo Altans petitioned the County without success for resources and services to address basic local problems. Citizens naturally became alienated and discouraged from getting involved in affairs of government. Third, it can be attributed to the general ineffectiveness of the East Palo Alto Municipal Advisory Council. The Municipal Council was comprised of five elected officials who served as a buffer between the County and the community -- a buffer without the legal authority or resources to responsibly respond to community needs. Despite the periodic appointment of local citizens to various "blue ribbon" study committees, the bottom line was that there was no means for effective citizen participation and, thus, very limited community involvement in the affairs of government.

In recent times, the first organized structure for citizen participation in East Palo Alto was the Alta Park Council which was formed in 1960. The Alta Park Council was composed of a group of citizens who were elected to represent the community in a variety of areas, including advising the County on community affairs.

In the mid-1960's, the leadership of the Alta Park Council was challenged by a group of residents who had come to the community in the mid-fifties through the early sixties. These were minorities, mostly Black, who had escaped from the repressive environs of the South, and subsequently from the shipyards of Richmond and Hunters Point, the steaming, smelly canneries of the area, and the kitchens of 'Miz Ann'. These were individuals who simply were seeking a better life for themselves and their families. When the minority citizens participating in the Alta Park Council activities advanced a slate of officers who seemed to be more in tune with the aspirations of the changing community, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors orchestrated a series of moves that dissolved that body and instituted the East Palo Alto Municipal Council in its place. Thus, the formation of the Municipal Council was the direct result of the challenge by citizens seeking to effectively participate in local government affairs.

From the beginning, the majority of Municipal Council members saw their role as one which channeled citizen participation in a way that was least destructive and confrontative to the powers that were making the actual decisions -- the Board of Supervisors and county staff. It became the line of demarcation between the haves and the have-nots.

In December, 1979, the Municipal Council was pressured to set in motion a citizens committee to investigate the pros and cons of incorporation, and subsequently file an incorporation application with the County. By mutual agreement, the citizens committee, the East Palo Alto Citizens Committee on Incorporation (EPACCI), spearheaded the drive to incorporate East Palo Alto. Nearly four years and hundreds of meetings later, EPACCI brought incorporation to successful fruition on 7 June 1983 by a narrow margin of 15 votes. These

male and female warriors, without financial remuneration or personal gain, were willing to participate in a common struggle of mutual interest. It is believed that seldom before in the annals of the State of California, and certainly never before in the County of San Mateo, has a community group been charged with a higher standard or a heavier burden of proof.

The City of East Palo Alto officially came into being on 1 July 1983. On this historic day, the City Council adopted, by ordinance and resolution, the necessary laws and actions essential to the proper functioning of the City.

Because of the spurious lawsuit brought against the City by opponents of incorporation, the transition from county jurisdiction to city jurisdiction was not as smooth as it was in Dublin or San Ramon, two other newly incorporated cities in the Bay Area.

The participation of citizens has been an integral part of the City's operations since its inception. On the first day of the City's life, 1 July 1983, citizens organized and carried out the beautiful and moving inaugural ceremony and reception followed by the swearing in of the first City Council. Many citizens who, previous to this time, had never attended a public meeting turned out in force, overflowing the Council chambers to help celebrate the beginning of their city.

Through God's Grace, citizens will always be the very pulse of the City; for without citizens, the City would not exist.



## THE WHY, WHAT, AND HOW OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

For more than two decades, I have studied the issues of citizen participation -- first as a community activist, next as a member of an elected advisory body, and finally as Mayor of the City of East Palo Alto. Getting people involved is sometimes difficult, often frustrating, but invariably very, very rewarding. The key tasks are to be clear on why citizens should participate, to form structures that give them the opportunity to participate in a meaningful way, and to listen and respond to what they have to say.

### Why Citizen Participation Structures Came Into Being

In cities like East Palo Alto - low-income municipalities of color - citizens have had to organize and participate in a variety of political struggles to gain basic human rights. This participation does not evolve just from a wish to do some civic good, rather it evolves from the basic necessity of trying to survive.

Based upon my study of citizen participation spanning from the beginning of this nation to the present day, I have identified the following key reasons why citizen participation structures came into existence:

- to establish public goals (e.g., the Community Development Act of 1974 required citizen participation in program development.)
- to fulfill specific objectives (e.g., the East Palo Alto Rent Stabilization Board was created by city ordinance to regulate rental housing.)
- to perform specific tasks (e.g., the Bay Conservation and Development Commission evolved from an effort to clean up, maintain, and protect the waters of the San Francisco Bay.)
- to advise official public entities (e.g., the East Palo Alto Municipal Council made recommendations to the San Mateo Board of Supervisors on community matters.)
- to monitor the implementation of public programs (e.g., many federal programs mandate citizen participation.)
- to evaluate performance of public agencies (e.g., the County Grand Jury performs this task.)
- to establish a mechanism for increased minority participation (e.g., the Ravenswood City School District formed a Latino Advisory Committee to provide input regarding bilingual educational programs.)

Thus, performing or fulfilling specific civic tasks, advising, monitoring, and evaluating public agencies, and broadening the base of people involvement

are the main reasons for forming citizen participation structures. These vehicles seem to function much better when the selection process is open, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, staff support is provided, and the appointing authority is responsive to and appreciative of the effort.

Few citizens have the audacity to run for public office on their own initiative; some, however, do take the leap when pushed into action by frustration or outrage. Yet, running for county, state, or federal office today has almost become a function of income. A person needs to be independently wealthy to serve in those political roles. This situation is deplorable because it means many talented and capable citizens are denied the opportunity to serve as public officials -- individuals who would invariably be more responsive and accountable to the oppressed groups of the nation.

So let us not repeat the mistakes of the past. Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it. And let us not perpetuate the evils of the present. Those who see a problem and fail to correct it become the problem. In our municipalities, let us provide multiple opportunities for citizen participation through boards, task forces, commissions, and committees -- opportunities that give oppressed groups parity in the decision-making process.

#### In Favor of Citizen Participation

There are many reasons why the participation of citizens is beneficial to a municipality. The following are among the more important ones.

- o Involvement of citizens in the decision-making process produces a larger cadre of people who are better informed about the workings of government.
- o Participation of citizens in local government evolves into a process which translates into more responsiveness from the municipal decision-makers; policies and procedures are more likely to be based upon the needs of the community's citizens.
- o Participation of citizens from diverse constituencies provides immense benefits to the decision-makers by infusing a broader spectrum of concerns and information on which judgments can be based.
- o Participation induces citizens to accept greater changes than they would if they had not participated in the process.
- o Citizens develop problem-solving techniques, by cooperatively solving a common problem, which enable them to successfully deal with subsequent ones.
- o Participating citizens become vital instruments of cooperation between public and private interests.

- o Participation of citizens generally results in increased public access to the decision-making process.
- o Citizen participation means more information conduits available to the city.
- o Involvement of citizens usually means a more patient, accepting attitude toward the decision-makers in the management of the city.

These are all very good reasons why citizens should want to get involved and why public officials should promote such involvement. However, rhetoric is just rhetoric until concrete opportunities are created and meaningful activity occurs. In other words, let's be about the business of getting people involved by letting our actions speak louder than our words.

### In Opposition To Citizen Participation

I have concluded that much of the opposition to citizen participation stems from people who are basically anti-democratic -- those who are rather inflexible in their thinking and who are for democracy if they control the action. Some of the reasons advanced for opposing participation of citizens include:

- o A fear among some decision-makers about the sharing of power with individual citizens and groups of citizens.
- o A reluctance to involve citizens because it is felt the process becomes bulky, unwieldy, and is slowed down through these activities.
- o A feeling on the part of some professionals that citizens - particularly in communities of color or lower income - do not have the skills to make informed decisions in their own behalf.
- o A perception that the process of developing policy is remote - not really involved with day-to-day activities - and should be left to the professional.

This type of thinking has no place in our city. When it surfaces, it will not only be rejected but also criticized for what it represents -- an arrogant disregard for the legitimate right of all of our citizens to help plan the future of our new city.

### Decision-Making Models

There are many different ways of organizing citizen committees. These will be as varied as the municipalities in which they exist. Although it is not possible to specify in great detail all the various elements making up these advisory bodies, there are common elements of form and structure.

Table A is a summary of citizen committee characteristics by type, purpose, and organizational structure. The table lists seven different categories of committees (administrative, advisory, minority participation, preparative, review, special purpose, and task performance) and, within these categories, thirteen specific types of committees (administrative programs and services, general or policy advisory, advisory technical, screening, steering, minority participation, council, goals, planning, review and watchdog, special purpose association, task force, and work group). For each type of committee, the table describes the typical characteristics -- namely, purpose, size, composition, creating authority, duration of service, membership selection, constituencies, and resources.

I have found the table to be useful for purposes of making accurate judgments about forming citizen committees -- especially with regard to role definition, composition, and resource requirements. It can be a useful tool for those with the will and authority to create mechanisms for involving citizens in the affairs of government.

### Ways To Involve Citizens

A municipality is doing what it should, what it must, when in the process of conducting the community's business, it provides opportunities for citizens to be meaningfully involved in the decision-making process; additionally, it should encourage citizens to accept responsibility for being involved in the process. We have the will and skill to lead, govern, and educate ourselves.

There are myriad means through which citizen participation can be built into the administrative process of a municipality -- both formally and informally. Included are some of the following:

- Service On Official Bodies
  - o Advisory bodies (boards, commissions, and committees), both legally mandated and optional ones
  - o Task force, to address a unique problem on a time-specific basis
  - o Community delegate or representative, especially on area-wide public bodies
  - o Civic volunteer, working in community-based organizations
- Democratic Participation
  - o Voting on a regular basis
  - o Running for public office (local, state, or federal)
  - o Lobbying to bring about a desired result



TABLE A

## SUMMARY OF CITIZEN COMMITTEE CHARACTERISTICS BY TYPE, PURPOSE, AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

COMMITTEE CHARACTERISTICS	ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES	ADVISORY COMMITTEES				MINORITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEES	PREPARATIVE COMMITTEES			REVIEW COMMITTEES
	ADMINISTRATIVE - PROGRAMS AND SERVICES	ADVISORY - GENERAL OR POLICY	ADVISORY - TECHNICAL	SCREENING	STEERING	MINORITY PARTICIPATION	COMMUNITY OR CITIZENS COUNCIL	GOALS COMMITTEE	PLANNING COMMITTEE	REVIEW AND WATCHDOG
Purpose	Conducts public programs and services, often for disadvantaged constituencies. A vehicle for minority participation in administering programs to minority groups. Frequently used in combination with a professional staff.	Advise governmental agencies and boards on public issues. Broadens citizen involvement in policy making. May be useful in resolving controversy among groups holding divergent views.	To supply advice on technical matters to public officials, agency staff and legislative bodies. A method for eliciting the support of specialists and for acquiring guidance on specialized public issues, but not a substitute for professional staff.	Used to make a careful analysis of personnel for an upper level administrative position or proposed alternative courses of action. Makes recommendations to parent agency. Effective in providing concentrated study by small knowledgeable group.	Used to give guidance and direction to public policies and programs, including bond issues and other proposals requiring a referendum.	Created to increase minority involvement in planning, implementing and operating programs for disadvantaged minorities. May be at the neighborhood or community level to give increased voice to special groups and coalitions of different interest groups. Also performs advisory, administrative and other functions.	For study, preparation of proposals, programs and recommendations on a wide variety of community issues. Involves large numbers of citizens in public issues. Often initiates programs and policies.	May have responsibility for preparation of community goals - social, economic and physical; or may be advisory to a public planning agency or city council engaged in goal formulation.	Responsible for planning public programs and projects. May be a substitute for a local government planning agency. May be effective in resolving differences among factions and extending citizen involvement in public programs.	Created to review the actions of public officials or the expenditures of public funds. May also be used to study and report on situations of discrimination and other areas of social or economic injustices.
Size	5 - 30	9 - 30	5 - 16	3 - 9	10 - 150	9 - 24	40 - 300	15 - 50	7 - 24	3 - 15
Composition	Special knowledge of areas to be administered and of constituencies to be served. Some professionals needed.	Special knowledge and interest in the issues involved. Community and special interest groups should be represented.	Those who have technical knowledge of the subject and willingness to provide advice.	Representatives from various interest groups concerned with issue. Should be knowledgeable of issues.	Broad representation from community leadership, power structure and major interest groups.	All or a significant portion from minority groups and from those with interests in the issues involved.	Represents a broad range of ages, interest groups, employment sectors and ethnic groups.	Members should be leaders and have general and technical knowledge of different social, economic and environmental segments of the community.	Leaders of interest groups or knowledge of issues and planning expertise.	Special knowledge of issues.
Created by	Public agency responsible for general policies governing the area of administration.	The city council or public agency with whom the committee advises.	The agency or legislative body in need of technical advice.	The agency to which the committee reports.	Mayor or public agency	Public agency or citizens groups, often in response to federal program requirements.	May be initiated by either Mayor-council or by citizens interest groups.	Mayor-council	May be initiated by the Mayor, a parent agency or by private citizens' groups.	Mayor-council or citizens initiated, frequently at the instigation of dissident groups.
Duration of Service	Standing	ad hoc, occasionally standing	ad hoc	ad hoc	ad hoc	Standing	Standing	ad hoc, occasionally standing	Standing or ad hoc	ad hoc, occasionally standing
Method of Membership Selection	May be appointed or elected from constituency groups. Some ex-officio membership may occur.	Appointment by mayor or other public official. Members may be nominated from constituent groups.	Appointed by mayor or chief administrator.	Appointed by mayor or legislative body or agency head.	Appointed by creating agency.	Election from minority interest groups or by appointment by public official from nominations from interest groups.	Appointed by mayor from many organizations, or selected by different citizen groups. May have some ex-officio members.	Appointed by Mayor with advice of Council and other community groups.	Appointed by the creating agency or selected or appointed from citizens' groups.	Appointment by the mayor or from citizen groups creating the committee.
Constituencies	The recipients of services administered by the committee.	Community-wide and many special interest groups.	The agency to whom the committee reports and the members professional peer groups.	Agency to whom the committee reports, the groups from whom membership is drawn, and the general public.	The community and those special interest groups affected by the work of the committee.	The minority groups having an interest in the issues, including other special interest groups.	The community and the many different interest groups represented on the council.	The community and all interest groups.	Those directly affected by the programs being planned and the community as a whole.	The community and the special interest groups which initiated the formation of the committee.
Resources Needed	Program funding, professional staff and appropriate facilities. Will need the full range of support required to conduct a major public enterprise.	Professional staff from parent agency and secretarial services. Some will need travel and publication funds.	Limited to travel expenses and secretarial services. Review of professional staff work may be conducted in offices of the parent agency.	A public conference room and professional staff assistance to provide information on issues at the request of the committee.	Professional staff of the parent agency may need to advise the committee. Expenses may be required for stenographic services and report preparation.	Staff for operation and training and limited to extensive facilities and funding for travel, stipends, and other expenses.	Assistance from public agency staff and professional groups. Public meeting place. Publication costs. May use public or private resources.	Staff support from public planning agencies, and expenses for secretarial services, publications and travel.	The assistance of professional staff and facilities financed by public agency funds or by private donations.	Very limited staff and secretarial assistance and publication expenses.

Source

- o Supporting and actively working on behalf of a candidate; also working for or against a proposed public measure or statute

-- Other

- o forming neighborhood associations
- o conducting citizen surveys
- o engaging in clean-up campaigns
- o hosting city officials
- o sponsoring community forums

These are but a few of the ways that citizens can get involved in the affairs of government. What is needed are multiple structures to provide for the broadest possible base of participation.

## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION STRUCTURES IN NEARBY MUNICIPALITIES

Every community differs from its neighbors whether the difference is as simple as size of population or as diverse as the race or national origins of the residents. Each municipality must develop a plan which includes (1) what it hopes to accomplish over a specified period of time (e.g., short term goals are usually for the next fiscal year; long term goals are for longer periods); (2) how the goals and objectives are to be accomplished; and (3) in the majority of cases, how citizens will be involved in the process.

Nearby municipalities were contacted as part of this study including Menlo Park, Palo Alto, Mountain View, Redwood City, Atherton, Berkeley, and Oakland. Each city graciously remitted the requested material. A summary chart listing each of the municipalities and its basic organizational structure is shown in Table B. A summary of racial characteristics and income data in these municipalities is shown in Table C. The table lists the racial percentages, along with the median family income, and the percentage of families falling below the poverty level. Information on the percentage of families falling below the poverty level was not available for the Town of Atherton. An organizational chart for each municipality is depicted in figures 3 through 10. Following are data on each of the entities.

Atherton, a primarily residential community, was incorporated as a town in 1923. Based upon a median family income of \$57,846, it is the most affluent of the group. 34.1% of its families earn over \$75,000 annually, while 8.7% earn under \$25,000. Its land area of 5 square miles is occupied by 7,797 people, of whom approximately 7,347 are White, 41 Black, 106 Hispanic, and 303 Asian and other races. Of the group, it has the highest percentage of White residents.

Berkeley is a suburban and education center; it was founded in 1858 and incorporated in 1878. Most of its poorer residents live on the flatlands and the more affluent live in its hills; industry and manufacturing uses are also located in the flatlands. Over the past two decades, the emphasis of many of the City's programs seems to be a redistribution of city resources from the wealthy to the poorer members of the community. It covers a land area of 18.07 square miles, of which 10.16 are developed. Approximately 68,198 Whites, 20,770 Blacks, 5,219 Hispanics, and 9,141 Asians and other races add up to a total population of 103,328. It has a median family income of \$20,360; of its families, 11.7% are below the poverty level.

East Palo Alto, having incorporated on July 1, 1983, is the youngest city in the group; it is the city with the largest percentage of Black citizens; additionally, at 74.6%, it has the largest percentage of minority residents in the group. Its 2.5 square miles accommodates a population of 18,191 persons, with Blacks numbering approximately 11,107, Whites 4,634, Hispanics 1,380, and Asians and other races 1,070. Of the eight municipalities, it has the lowest median family income at \$16,129; approximately 14.0% of its families are below the poverty level. Nevertheless, East Palo Alto has tremendous potential enhanced by its location, its excellent climate, and its having one of the few remaining large, industrially zoned, undeveloped contiguous land parcels on the peninsula.

TABLE B: CHARACTERISTICS OF ADVISORY BODIES IN NEARBY MUNICIPALITIES

CITY	COUNCIL MEMBERS	CITY MANAGER	WHO APPOINTS	PLANNING COMMISSION TERM & #	PARK/REC COMMISSION TERM & #	OTHER BOARDS/ COMMISSIONS, ETC.
ATHERTON	5	Ross Hubbard 91 Ashfield Road Atherton 94025 (415) 325-4457	Council	5 Members 4 Year Terms	5 Members 4 Year Terms	See Page 33
BERKELEY	9	Daniel Boggan 2134 Grove Berkeley 94704 (415) 644-6580	Individual Council appts.	9 Members 4 Year Terms expires with elected sponsor	9 Members 4 Year Terms expires with elected sponsor	See Page 34
EAST PALO ALTO	5	Frederic L. Howell 2415 University Ave East Palo Alto 94303 (415) 324-1308	Council	7 Members 3 Year Terms staggered on first go round	7 Members 3 Year Terms staggered on first go round	See Page 35
MENLO PARK	5	Michael Bedwell Laurel & Mielke Menlo Park 94025 (415) 858-3360	Council	7 Members 4 Year Terms	7 Members 4 Year Terms	See Page 36
MOUNTAIN VIEW	7	Bruce W. Liedstrand 540 Castro Mountain View 94041 (415) 966-6301	Council	7 Members 4 Year Terms	7 Members 4 Year Terms	See Page 37
OAKLAND	9	Henry L. Gardner 1421 Washington Oakland 94612 (415) 273-3302	Council	7 Members 3 Year Terms	7 Members 4 Year Terms	See Page 38
PALO ALTO	9	William Zaner 250 Hamilton Palo Alto 94301 (415) 329-2392	Council	7 Members 4 Year Terms		See Page 40
REDWOOD CITY	7	James M. Smith 1017 Middlefield Redwood City 94064 (415) 369-6251	Council	7 Members 3 Year Terms	7 Members 4 Year Terms	See Page 41

TABLE C  
 RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS and INCOME DATA IN NEARBY MUNICIPALITIES

RACE	ATHERTON	BERKELEY	EAST PALO ALTO	MENLO PARK	MOUNTAIN VIEW	OAKLAND	PALO ALTO	REDWOOD CITY
Black	.53	20.0	61.0	14.27	3.76	46.17	2.77	2.67
White	94.22	66.0	25.4	78.6	79.0	37.5	88.9	85.37
Hispanic	1.35	5.05	7.58**	3.67	11.44	9.41	3.78	9.21
Asian	3.88	9.10	5.45	3.43	5.71	5.18	4.50	2.73
Other Races			.43			1.62		
MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME	57,846	20,360	16,129	29,009	20,324	17,651	31,796	24,794
% OF FAMILIES BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	*N/A	11.7	14.0	5.1	4.6	16.0	2.5	5.2

\* Not available

\*\* The remaining 6.42 percent Latinos (approximately 14% of the East Palo Alto population) is included in the 25.4% White population by the 1980 U.S. Census.



FIGURE 3

Organization of Atherton Town Government

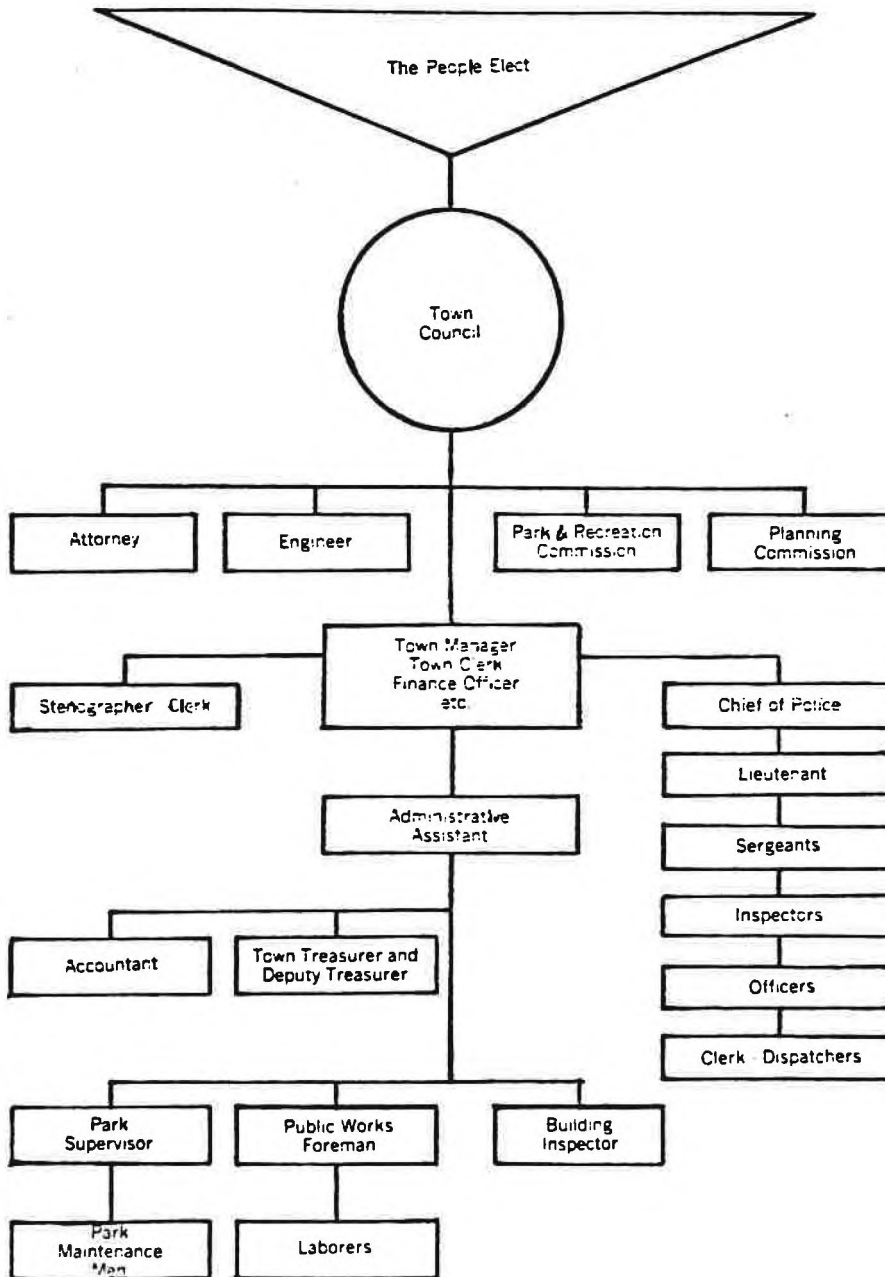


FIGURE 4

# THE CITY OF BERKELEY ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

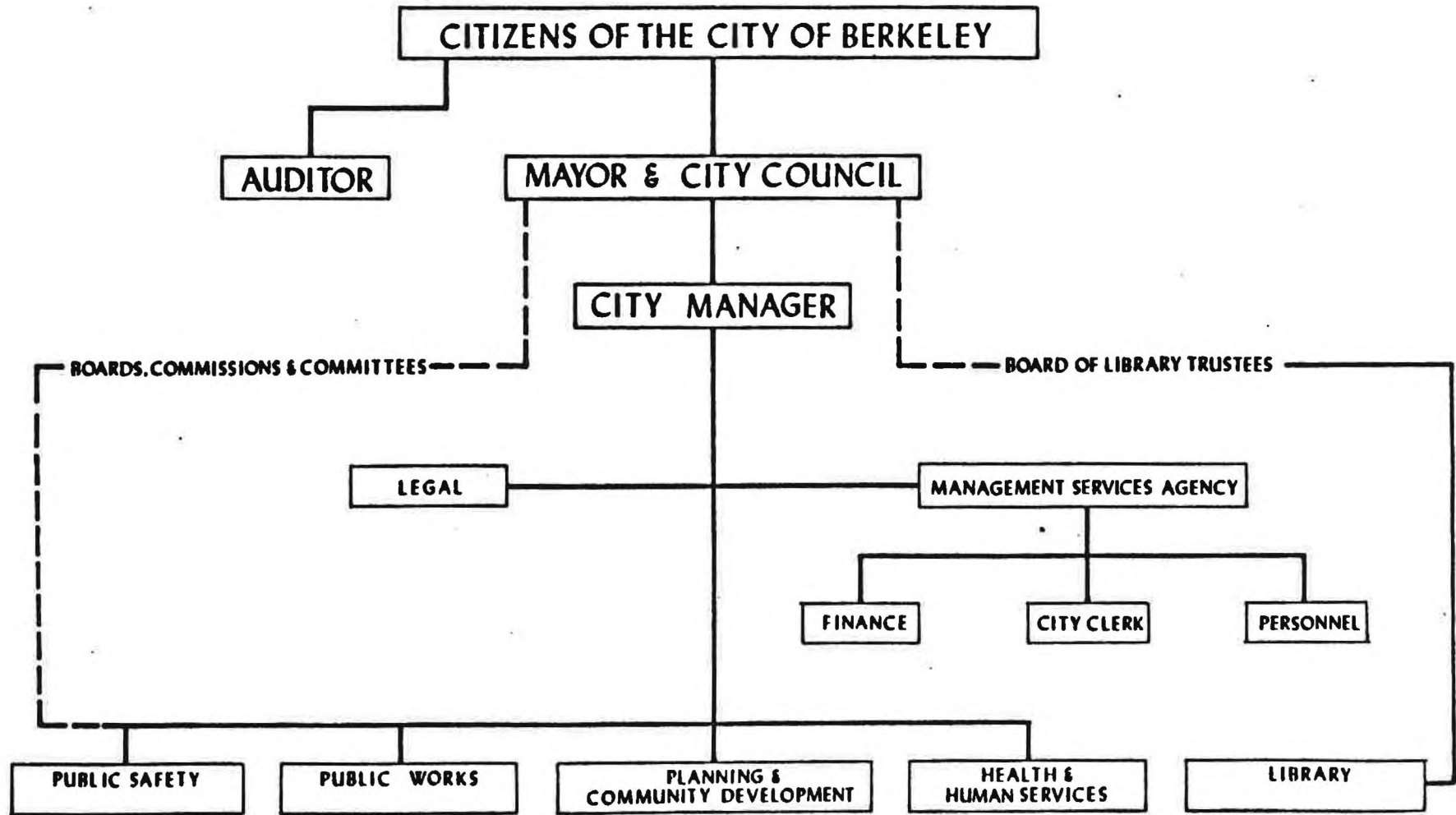
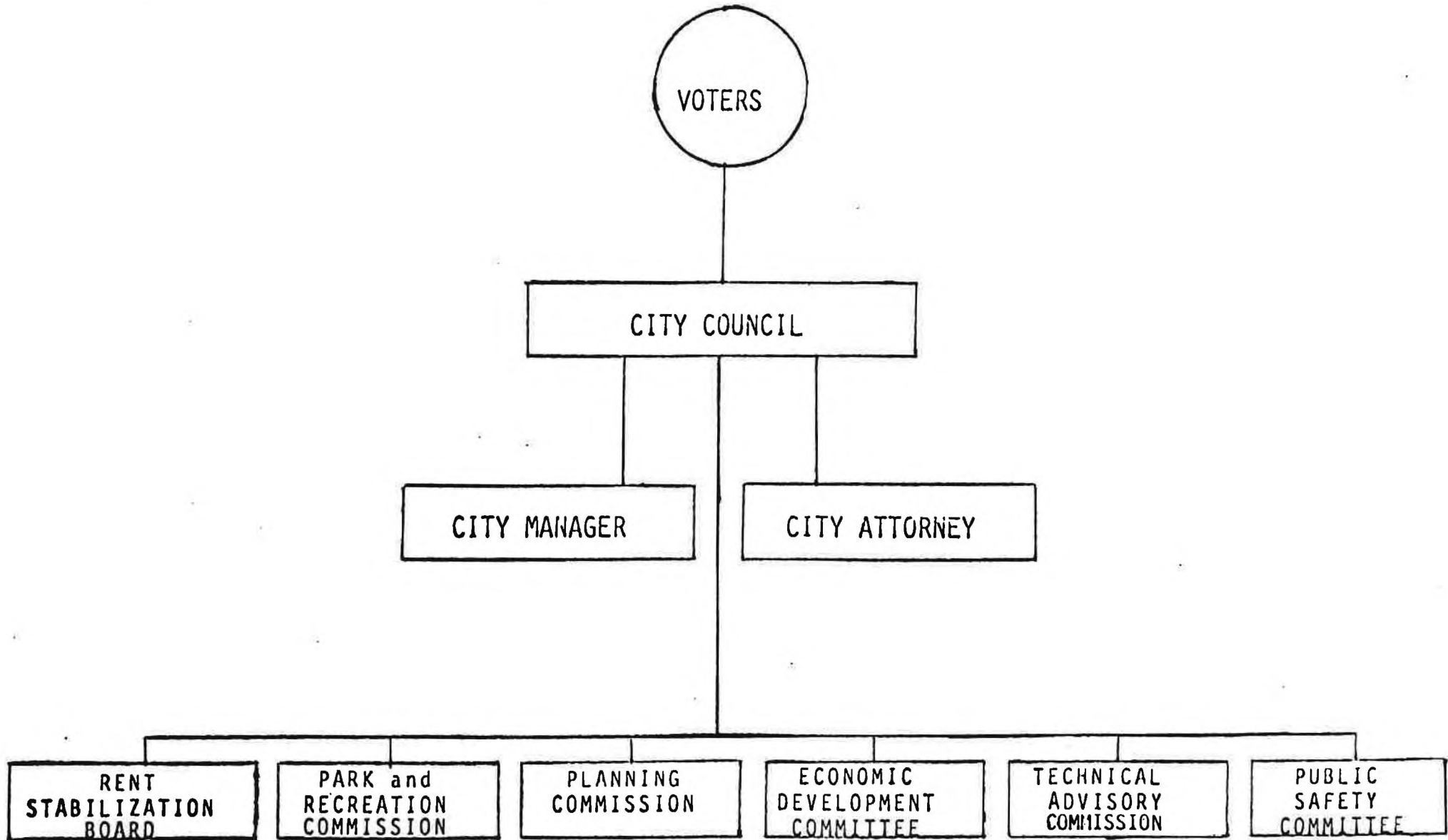
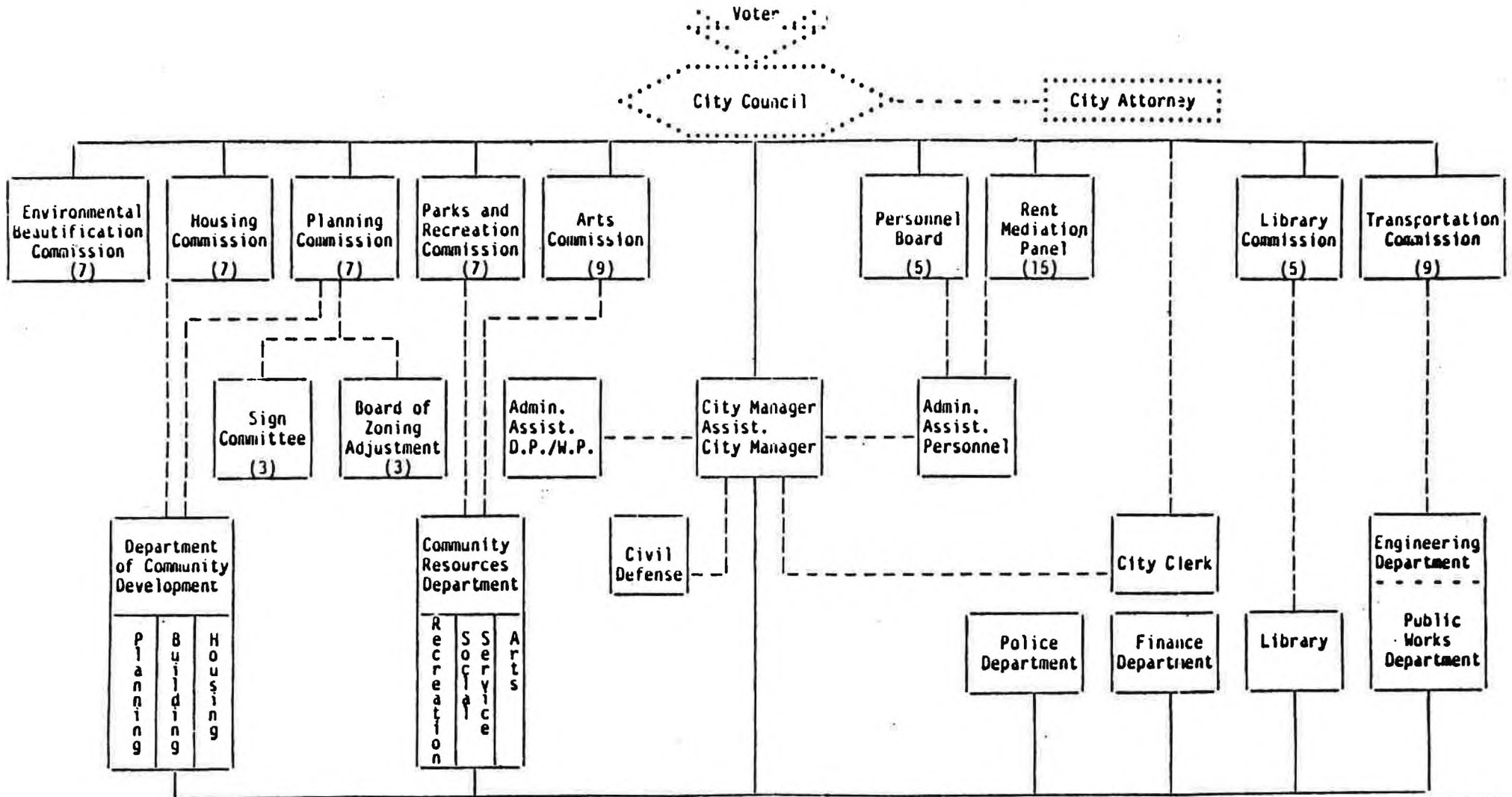


FIGURE 5



CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO

FIGURE 6



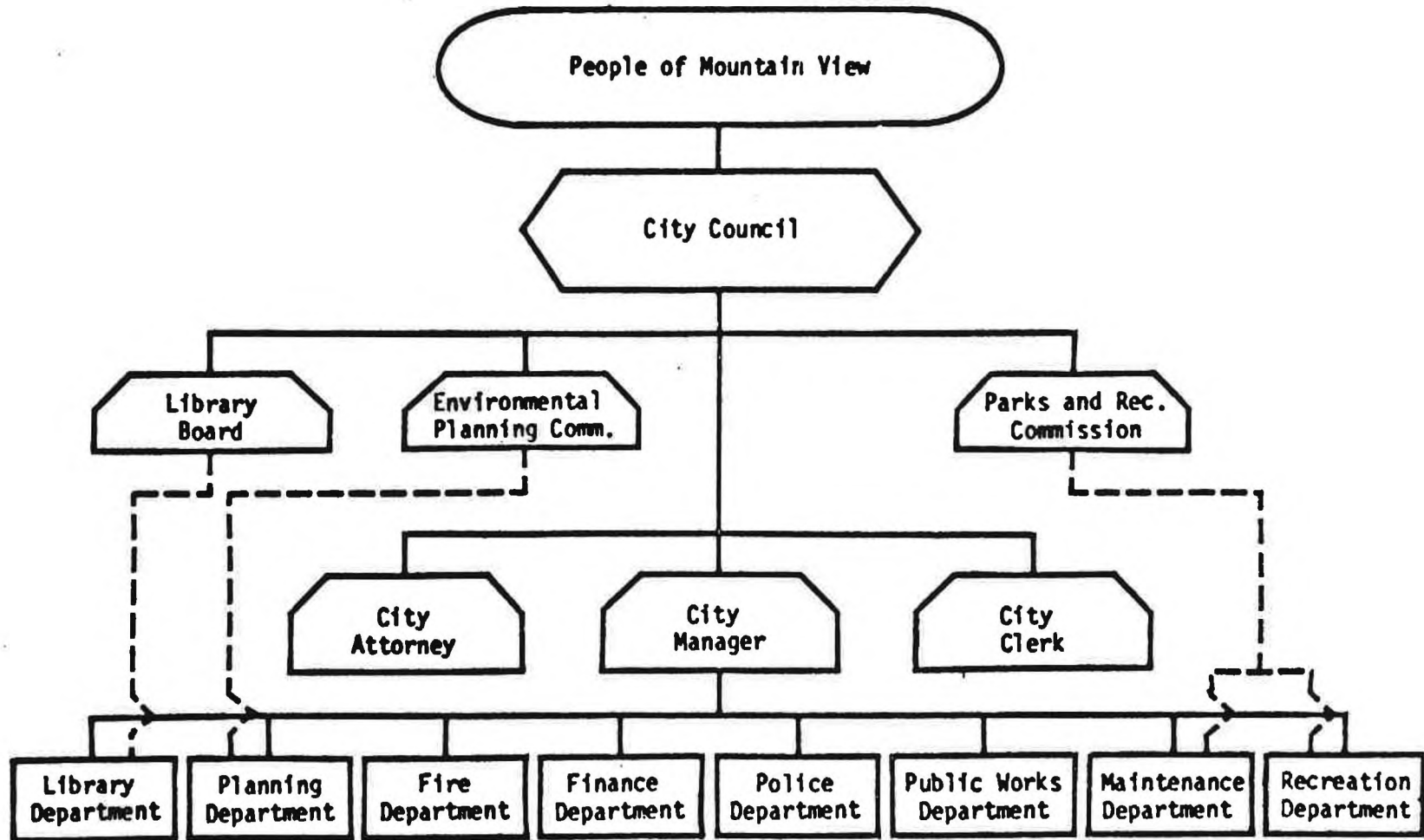
City of Menlo Park

Revised 3/81



FIGURE 7

# GENERAL ORGANIZATION



**Totals:** 7 Council Members  
17 Commission and Board Members  
410 Full-time positions  
7.65 Permanent part-time positions  
plus contract, hourly, and volunteer positions






Key:  Elected  
 Appt. by Council  
 Appt. by City Manager  
 Line of Command  
 Staff Services

FIGURE 8  
 ORGANIZATION CHART  
 CITY OF OAKLAND

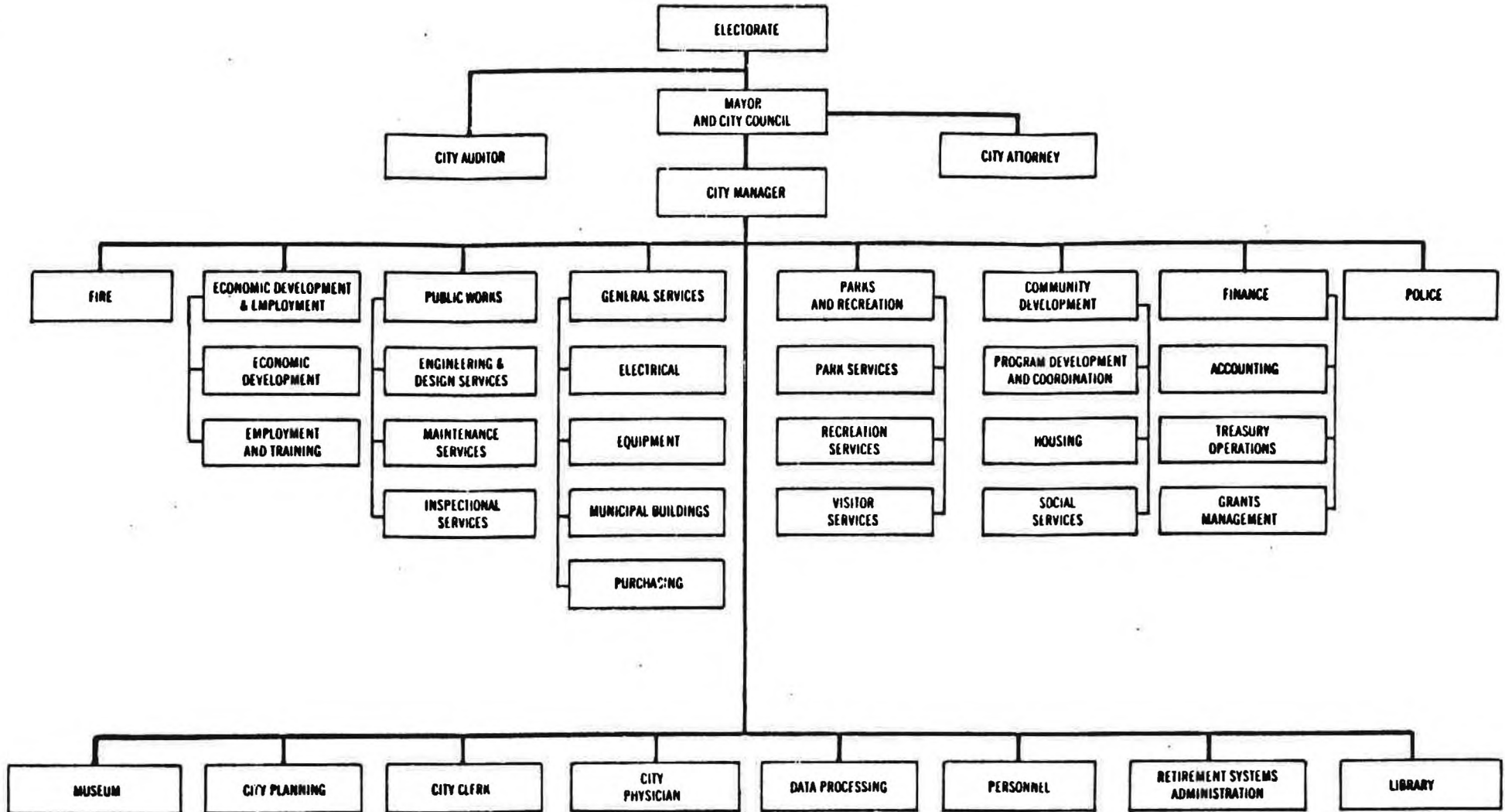


FIGURE 9

City of Palo Alto

ORGANIZATION CHART

November 1981

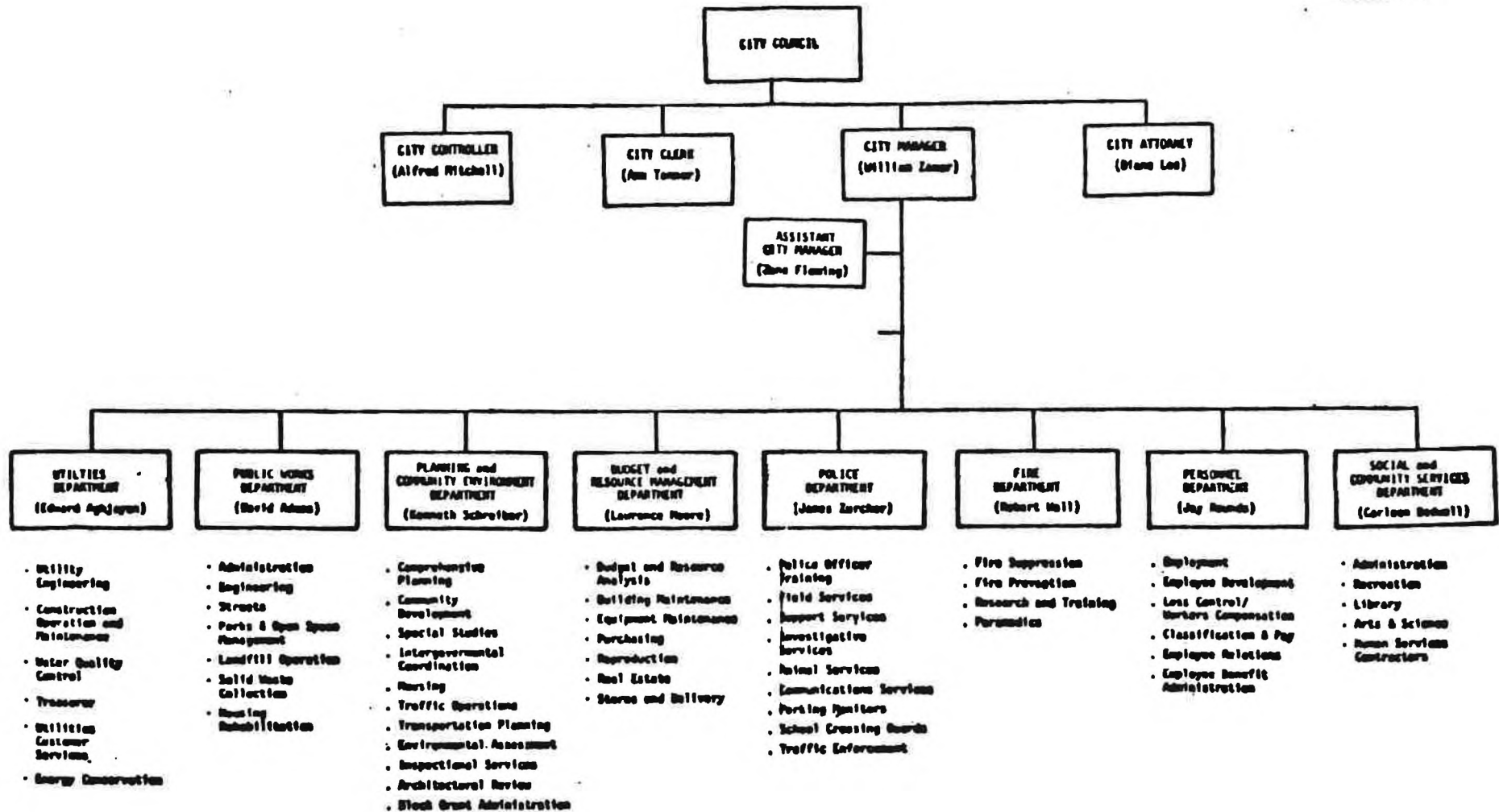


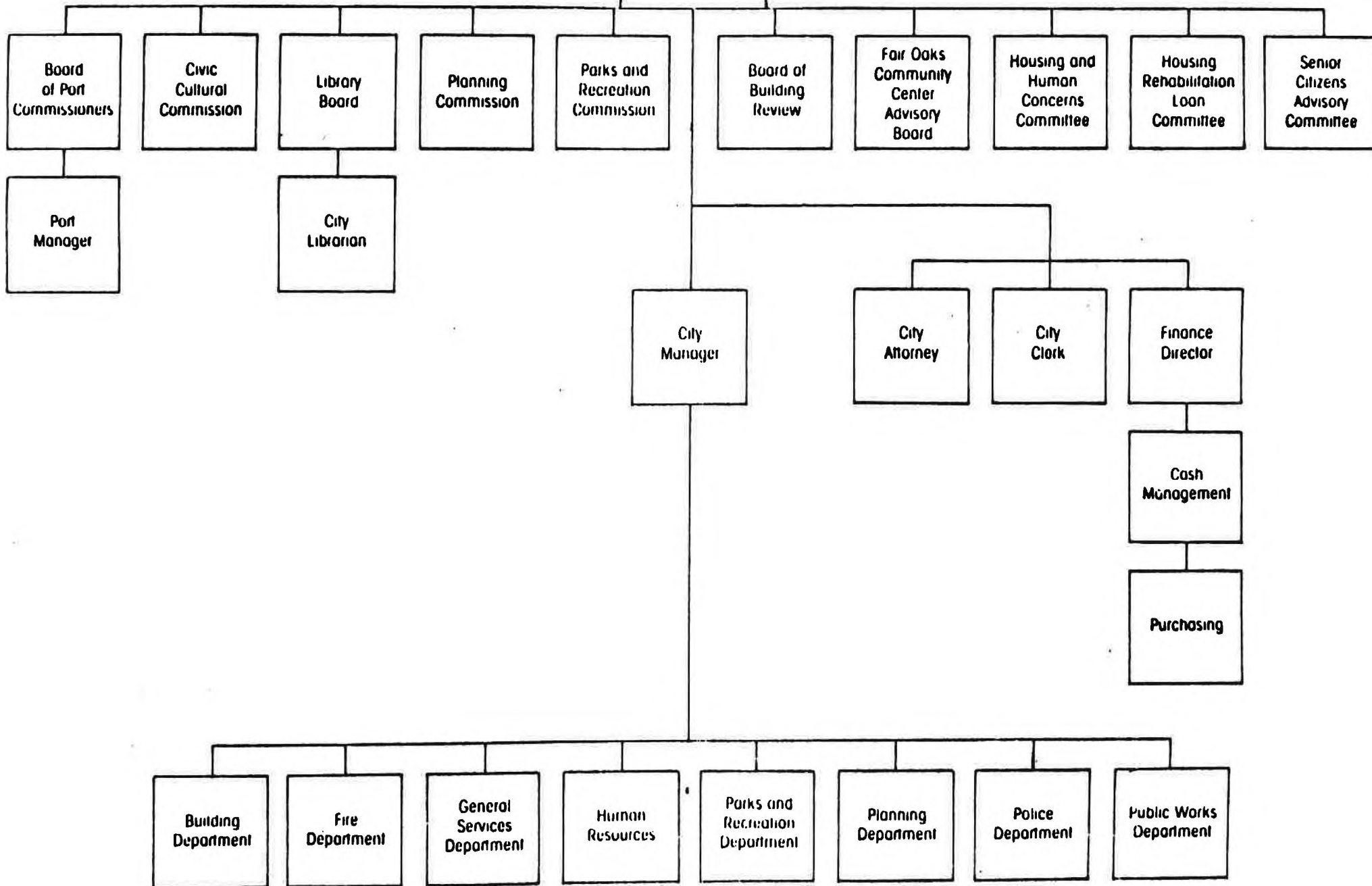


FIGURE 10

# CITIZENS

1983

## CITY COUNCIL





Menlo Park first incorporated in 1874 to raise money for street repairs. Somehow this incorporation was allowed to lapse; final incorporation came in 1927. Its 19 square miles is home to 26,369 citizens, of whom approximately 20,730 are White, 3,763 Black, 969 Hispanic, and 907 Asian and other races. It has a median family income of \$29,009. 5.1% of its families are below the poverty level. Menlo Park has a constantly expanding business sector; it is a residential community with publishing, research and development, and manufacturing components.

Mountain View incorporated in 1902 and became a charter city in 1952. It is a working-class residential community with an economy based mainly on the electronics and defense industries; Moffett Field Naval Air Station and NASA's Ames Research Center are located within its city limits. Its median family income is \$20,324; 4.6% of its families fall below the poverty level. Its total land area is 11.465 square miles. Among its population of 58,656 are approximately 46,382 Whites, 2,209 Blacks, 6,713 Hispanics, and 3,352 Asians and other races.

Incorporating in May 1852 and covering an area of 53.9 square miles, Oakland is the oldest and largest city in the group. It is a major industrial center and port. It has a population of 344,936, of which 159,281 are Black, 129,692 White, 32,492 Hispanic, 17,872 Asian, and 5,599 other races; it has a greater concentration of Hispanics and Asians than the other cities in the group. 16.0 percent of its families fall below the poverty level. Its median family income is \$17,651.

Palo Alto was incorporated in 1894 and chartered in 1909. Its population of 55,225 is composed of approximately 49,111 Whites, 1,534 Blacks, 2,091 Hispanics, and 2,489 Asians and others. There is a sizeable senior population. Its land area is 24.6 square miles. It is the regional center for medical care and research, retail trade, financial and professional services, research and development, electronic manufacturing, printing and publishing. Its median family income is \$31,796 and a very small percentage of its families, 2.5%, is below the poverty level.

Redwood City, named county seat in 1858, incorporated in 1867. Among the varied interests contributing to its economy are manufacturing, electronic equipment development and repair, and shipping of oil and salt. Many perceive it to be a blue-collar community. Located on its 40 square miles are 55,795 people, 46,636 of whom are White, 1,493 Black, 5,140 Hispanic, and 1,527 Asian and other races. Its median family income is \$24,794; only 5.2% of its families are below the poverty level.

In summary, the eight municipalities differ from each other in a variety of ways and yet have many similarities. East Palo Alto has the highest percentage of minorities including the highest percentage of Black citizens. Oakland is the second municipality with the largest percentage of minorities. The six other municipalities have predominately White populations with percentages ranging from Berkeley's 66% to Atherton's 94%. All have adopted a city manager-council form of government. Voters in all eight jurisdictions elect their city councils. Berkeley and Oakland voters also elect their mayors and city auditors. Oakland is unique in that it is the only city in the study in which voters elect the city manager.

What each city is or does depends, to a large extent, on what the citizens of that municipality want it to be or do. The eight municipalities have all developed citizen participation vehicles to systematically plan and implement policies and procedures which provide for safety of citizens, high levels of services, and a continuously evolving environment in which citizens, to the extent possible, can enjoy the good life. The citizen participation structure of each city is shown in Tables D through K.

The role and purposes of citizen advisory bodies are shaped by the resolutions and ordinances adopted by their city councils. I have compiled a glossary of these bodies listing the purpose of each in Appendix A.

5 member council

TABLE D  
Town of Atherton

NAME	MEMBERS	OFFICE TERM	HOW CHOSEN
<u>COMMISSIONS</u>			
Park and Recreation Commission	5	4 years	Council
Planning Commission	5	4 years	Council
<u>FOUNDATION</u>			
Holbrook Palmer Park Foundation			

9 member council; Mayor elected

TABLE E  
City of Berkeley

NAME	MEMBERS	OFFICE TERM	HOW CHOSEN
<u>COMMISSIONS</u>			
Citizens Humane Commission	9		Mayor/Council(M/C)
Civic Arts Commission	18		M/C
Commission on Aging	18		M/C
Commission on Employment and Training	9		M/C
Commission on Status of Women	9		M/C
Energy Commission	9		M/C
Human Relations and Welfare	9		M/C
Landmarks Preservation Commission	9		M/C
Parks and Recreation Commission	9		M/C
Planning Commission	9		M/C
Police Review Commission	9		M/C
Solid Waste Management Commission	9		M/C
Transportation Commission	9		M/C
Youth Commission	18		M/C(9) Sch.Bd(9)
<u>BOARDS</u>			
Board of Adjustments	9		M/C
Board of Education	5*	4 years	voters
Board of Library Trustees	5		M/C
Community Action Board	18		voters,M/C
Housing Advisory and Appeals Board	9		M/C
Maternal Child & Adolescent Health Board	9		M/C
Mental Health Advisory Board	17		M/C
Personnel Board	9		M/C
Relocation Appeals Board	5		Mayor appoints
Rent Stabilization Board	9		M/C
Safety Members Pension Board	7**		
Waterfront Advisory Board	9		M/C
<u>AUTHORITY</u>			
Housing Authority	11***	4 years	
<u>AGENCY</u>			
Redevelopment Agency	9	4 years	Council sits as A.
<u>COMMITTEES</u>			
Citizens Budget Review Committee	9		M/C
Citizens Com. on Responsible Investments	9		M/C
Citizens Com. on Undergrounding Utilities	9		M/C
Community Health Advisory Committee	9		M/C
Project Area Committee	9		M/C

\* A non-voting student sits as a member of the board also.

\*\* The Mayor, a council member, city manager, Police and Fire Chiefs, the treasurer of the City, and a member of police staff serve on the board

\*\*\* The city council sits as Housing Authority with 2 members representing tenants.

TABLE F  
City of East Palo Alto

NAME	MEMBERS	OFFICE TERM	HOW CHOSEN
<u>COMMISSIONS</u>			
Park and Recreation Commission	7	3 years*	Council
Planning Commission	7	3 years*	Council
Public Safety Commission	11	3 years**	Council
Arts and Culture Commission	11	3 years**	Council
Human Services Commission	11	3 years**	Council
<u>BOARDS</u>			
Rent Stabilization Board	7***	2 years	Council
<u>COMMITTEES</u>			
Economic Dev. Tech. Advisory Committee	7	1 year	Council
<u>TASK FORCE</u>			
Economic Dev. Task Force	11	1 year	Council
<u>REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY</u>			
Redevelopment Agency <sup>1</sup>	5	staggered	

\* Because this is the first year for these commissions, terms were staggered; 2 commissioners will serve 1 year terms, 3 will serve 2 year terms, and 2 will serve 3 year terms.

\*\* Commissioners on these 2 commissions will be seated in the near future.

\*\*\* There are 2 alternates on this board; if a board member leaves, the vacancy will be filled by the alternate; that person will continue to serve for the duration of the term.

<sup>1</sup> The City Council members sit as members of the Redevelopment Agency; their office term would be concurrent with their council term.



5 member council

TABLE G  
City of Menlo Park

NAME	MEMBERS	OFFICE TERM	HOW CHOSEN
<u>COMMISSIONS</u>			
Arts Commission	9	4 years	Council
Environmental Beautification Commission	7	4 years	Council
Housing Commission	7	4 years	Council
Library Commission	5	4 years	Council
Parks and Recreation Commission	7	4 years	Council
Planning Commission	7	4 years	Council
<u>BOARDS</u>			
Personnel Board	5	4 years	Council
<u>PANELS</u>			
Rent Mediation Panel	15	2 years	Council

7 member council

TABLE H  
City of Mountain View

NAME	MEMBERS	OFFICE TERM	HOW CHOSEN
<u>COMMISSIONS</u>			
Environmental Planning Commission	7	4 years	Council
Parks and Recreation Commission	5	4 years	Council
<u>BOARDS</u>			
Board of Appeals	inactive		
Library Board	5	4 years	Council
<u>COMMITTEES*</u>			
Architectural Committee	3		
Finance Committee	3		
Council Appointment Review Committee	3		
Neighborhoods Committee	3		
Public Safety Committee	3		
Transportation Committee	3		

---

\* members of these committees are all members of city council

9 member council; Mayor elected

TABLE I  
City of Oakland

NAME	MEMBERS	OFFICE TERM	HOW CHOSEN
<u>COMMISSIONS</u>			
City Planning Commission	7	3 years	Mayor/Council(M/C)
Claims Commission	3*		
Commission of Public Charities	7	3 years	M/C
Commission on Aging	7	staggered	M/C
Commission on Disabled Persons	15	staggered	M/C
Community Development Adv. Commission	7	staggered	M/C
Economic Development Adv. Commission	7	staggered	M/C
Employment and Training Adv. Commission	17	4 years	M/C
Library Advisory Commission	7	4 years	M/C
Museum Advisory Commission	7	4 years	M/C
Off-Street Parking Commission	7	3 years	M/C
Parking Place Commissions, #1 and #2	3 each**	3 years	M/C
Parks and Recreation Adv. Commission	7	4 years	M/C
<u>BOARDS</u>			
Board of Condemnation	3***	indefinite	
Board of Education	7	4 years	Voters
Board of Examiners and Appeals	5	indefinite	City Mgr appoints
Board of Port Commissioners	7	4 years	M/C
Board of Review/Business License Tax	5****		
Citizens' Complaint Board	7	18 months	
Civil Service Board	7	4 years	M/C
Community Action Agency Administering Bd	15*****	staggered	
Housing Advisory and Appeals Board	7	4 years	M/C
Landmarks Preservation Adv. Board	7	3 years	M/C
Municipal Employees Retirement S. Bd	7*****		
Plumbing and Mechanical Bd of Appeals	5	indefinite	City Mgr appoints
Police and Fire Retirement Board	7	varied	
Relocation Appeals Board	5	3 years	M/C
Residential Rent Arbitration Board	7	2 years	M/C
<u>COUNCILS</u>			
Disaster Council	varies	indefinite	Voters & City Mgr
Oakland Arts Council	15	2 years	M/appoints, C conf.
Private Industry Council	15	staggered	M/C
<u>AUTHORITY</u>			
Housing Authority	7	4 years	M/C
Industrial Development Authority	9		M/C sit as I.D.A.
Parking Authority	5	varied	

\* City Manager, City Attorney, Council member appointed by Mayor  
 \*\* District 1, Lakeshore; District 2 Montclair  
 \*\*\* City Manager, Chief Building Inspector, Chief of Fire Department  
 \*\*\*\* City Manager, City Attorney, City Auditor, 2 public appointed by M/C  
 \*\*\*\*\* Voters elect 7, M/C appoint 5, 3 com. appointees  
 \*\*\*\*\* City Auditor, Dir. of Finance, 2 M/C appointees, 3 elected by voters

TABLE I (Continued)

NAME	MEMBERS	OFFICE TERM	HOW CHOSEN
<b>AGENCY</b>			
Redevelopment Agency	9		M/C sit as Agency
<b><u>COMMITTEES</u></b>			
Citizens Crime Prevention Committee	35	staggered	M/C
Oakland Planning Code Committee	7		M/C
Charter Review Committee	16		Mayor
<b><u>MISCELLANEOUS</u></b>			
Paramount Theater of the Arts	7	4 years	Mayor/C confirms
<b><u>MUNICIPAL JUDGES</u></b>			
Municipal Judges	14	6 years	voters
Traffic Commissioner	1	6 years	voters

9 member council

TABLE J .  
City of Palo Alto

NAME	MEMBERS	OFFICE TERM	HOW CHOSEN
<u>COMMISSIONS</u>			
Human Relations Commission	7	3 years	Council
Planning Commission	7	4 years	Council
<u>BOARDS</u>			
Architectural Review Board	5	3 years	Council
Board of Education	5	4 years	voters
Historic Resources Board	5*	4 years	
<u>COUNCILS</u>			
P.A.City/School Youth Council			
Standby Emergency Council	9**	indefinite	Council
<u>COMMITTEES</u>			
Historic Resources Committee	5	4 years	Council
<u>TASK FORCES</u>			
Disabled Awareness Task Force	12		Council
Rental Housing Mediation Task Force	14		
<u>OTHER</u>			
Visual Arts Jury	7	3 years	Council

\* Composed of 2 council appointees, 2 P.A. Historical Association appointees, and 1 occupant of Professorville District

\*\* Composed of former council members who have indicated a willingness to serve in an emergency situation



7 member council

TABLE K  
City of Redwood City

NAME	MEMBERS	OFFICE TERM	HOW CHOSEN
<u>COMMISSIONS</u>			
Civic Cultural Commission	7	4 years	Council
Park and Recreation Commission	7	4 years	Council
Planning Commission	7	3 years	Council
<u>BOARDS</u>			
Building Review Board	5	4 years	Council
Fair Oaks Com.Ctr/Advisory Board			Bd of Supervisors
Library Board	5	3 years	Council
Board of Port Commissioners	5	5 years	Council
<u>COMMITTEES</u>			
Housing and Human Concerns Committee	11		
Housing Rehabilitation Loan Committee	5		
Senior Citizen Advisory Committee	7	4 years	Council

## CITYHOOD SEMINARS

The basic thoughts running throughout this study are that a city exists because of its citizens, and that an aware and knowledgeable citizenry participating in local government affairs assures, to the extent possible, that the decision-making process is really reflective of the community.

For many years prior to 1980, and certainly on a continuous, protracted basis over the past four years, a major theme emanating from discussions and meetings of community residents was the need to increase citizen awareness of the workings of government; to bring about a change where decisions would be made locally rather than from a point miles down the pike; and to involve more citizens in the effort.

As a result, a series of seminars was convened in January, 1982 and September, 1983 with those objectives in mind. The first series was designed to expand the knowledge of East Palo Alto about the organization and efficient management of a new city and to maximize citizen participation in local government affairs. The second series had a two-fold purpose: it was designed to define city problems and needs into a three to six year comprehensive plan for the new city, and to develop structures to continuously organize the city to address problems and needs.

As defined by East Palo Alto citizens, the prioritized list, shown in Table L, was divided by government function into six categories: general government; public safety; community planning and development; public works; community services; and public relations.

The addressing of these needs and the resolution of these problems are well within the ability and capability of this community.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

- Recruit City Manager
- Establish city boards and commissions
- Develop employment opportunities
- Establish Department of Public Works
- Launch all-out citizen participation campaign
- Review methods used by other cities to solve similar problems
- Encourage and ensure open communication between government and citizens
- Educate citizens about budget process; Ensure utilization of citizen input into same
- Establish citywide information network
- Set aside allocation in budget for investment purposes
- Convene periodic informational town hall meetings
- Educate community about city-county relations
- Recruit full-time research and grants-seeking person
- Investigate feasibility of City repossessing its lands from Menlo Park and Palo Alto
- Develop mechanism for holding elected and appointed officials accountable for quality of city services
- Create a City seal
- Convene leadership training classes for council persons
- Establish conflict of interest ordinance
- Develop intercity shuttle bus service
- Establish city-owned public utilities
- Promote and develop relationship with a "sister" city
- Establish citizen recognition awards
- Investigate and promote city's involvement in cable tv
- Establish Joint Powers Agreement with neighboring cities relative to common usage areas
- Promote minority representation on boards and commissions

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Educate citizens on role of police
- Establish residency requirement for city policemen, if possible
- Aggressively recruit Black officers
- Establish citizen review board
- Eliminate the following: burglary; police dogs; gambling in homes; drug trafficking and drug-related crimes; heavy traffic in residential areas; overnight and extended parking on city streets; abandoned automobiles on streets
- Enforce the following: traffic, barking dog ordinance; leash law; curfew for youth; truancy laws; ordinances pertaining to heavy trucks and the loud playing of music; police responding to citizens needs in a respectful, courteous manner; 24 hour availability of police
- Develop a work program in-lieu of jail for certain offenses

TABLE L (Continued)

PUBLIC WORKS

- Establish and enforce building codes and ordinances for this department
- Clear streets of potholes
- Underground utilities and telephone wiring
- Develop city-wide clean-up program
- Maintain city streets on a continuous basis
- Establish and enforce health and sanitation codes
- Improve and pave sidewalks
- Improve city-wide lighting system
- Clean and maintain vacant lots on a continuous basis
- Establish door-to-door youth recycling program

COMMUNITY PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT

- Develop a sensible land use policy
- Establish neighborhood standards
- Acquire Ravenswood High School site for city hall and other government offices
- Adopt policy limiting number of churches
- Establish zoning codes to regulate, and eventually eliminate, wrecking yards
- Enact ordinance regulating and limiting number of residential care homes in city
- Enact ordinance limiting number of liquor stores
- Enact regulations governing "Ma and Pa" stores in community
- Establish landlord/tenant board
- Develop industrial plan for city
- Enact ordinance to limit the number and to regulate social clubs and bars in city
- Enact ordinance prohibiting street vendors
- Enact ordinance to stop people from using private residences to run a business  
(e.g. there are many auto repair businesses using front yards/streets)
- Enact ordinance to outlaw usage of single family dwelling for multiple family purposes
- Enact business license tax for both revenue and regulatory purposes
- Develop major hotel and convention center
- Develop a marina, if feasible
- Establish cultural and business center
- Acquire and operate the shopping center on Bay and University
- Create city-owned lending institutions
- Provide increased sewage capacity to encourage commercial development
- Promote and encourage: low income and affordable housing; good relations between landlords and tenants; businesses tailored to needs and attitudes of citizens; good working relationship with community financial institutions so that citizens will be given appropriate, respectful consideration for loans and other matters without any hassles.

TABLE L (Continued)  
PUBLIC RELATIONS/IMAGE BUILDING

- Rename City to give it its own identity
- Accentuate positive assets
- Develop and support local newspaper
- Develop a theme of inspiration
- Highlight visible and/or tangible signs of City's accomplishment  
(before incorporation and after incorporation)
- Promote an ongoing voter registration program
- Promote and support the arts
- Encourage participation of ministers
- Develop social, political, economic, educational, and cultural network
- Encourage inter-agency, district, city and county cooperation
- Encourage and influence good education through neighborhood schools, alternative schools, committed teachers
- Support higher education

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Make the parks and recreation department the recreational and educational hub of City
- Develop programs and activities to reduce unemployment and loitering among our youth
- Develop programs reducing drug addiction and pregnancy among our youth
- Eliminate food stamp abuse
- Nurture and develop crime reduction programs, neighborhood watch and block organizations
- Improve services for senior citizens
- Develop crisis intervention program
- Develop and promote services for the handicap
- Develop mental and physical health programs
- Develop, nurture, promote a senior/youth program
- Establish tutorial center for students
- Hold a tree planting day
- Promote youth participation in city government
- Promote and support Chamber of Commerce
- Promote youth job development
- Establish a community garden
- Encourage neighborhood picnics and games
- Host a health awareness week
- Develop a day care center for working mothers



## CLOSING VIEW

Most smaller municipalities in California have a five member council; although a seven or nine member council is not unusual. Each general law city selects its mayor from a consensus of its elected council. In charter cities, such as Berkeley, Oakland, and San Jose, the mayor is selected by the electorate and usually serves a term of four years.

Whatever form the decision-making model (council or council plus mayor) assumes, it should address the following:

- o It must provide direct access to the decision-making process through citizen participation.
- o There must be a continuous information flow to the community. Much anger and frustration have been generated by community residents who are affected by a decision and become aware of that decision after it has been signed, sealed, and delivered.
- o There must be a willingness on the part of decision-makers to continuously research community attitudes and conditions. The resultant knowledge will provide them with information well in advance of their consideration of policies and programs.
- o Local governments must be willing to listen closely - however spurious or frivolous the comment may seem - to the community citizen trying to articulate his or her concern about an issue.
- o Involvement of citizens must be an integral part of the decision-making process, not just a token consideration.
- o Outsiders must not be allowed to use their monetary resources to influence decisions . . . No longer can a municipality permit the media, outside vested interests, or community members acting as covers for those outside interests to divide and conquer.
- o Citizens must have the courage and conviction to reduce or eliminate the negative effect of an individual, either elected or appointed, who is posturing in a manner that is not conducive or beneficial to or for the good of that community.
- o Training processes should be established to help community citizens develop effective leadership skills. Among these skills are effective group participation, conflict resolution, and understanding the role and responsibilities of the respective advisory bodies (boards, commissions, et cetera).

As stated at the beginning of this paper, one of the purposes of this citizen participation study is to provide an overview of various models of citizen participation in local government to help those so desiring the assistance to shape a model that will best serve their needs.

Citizen participation must be more than just superficial involvement or mere dissent. The history of our nation has recorded the fact that at various

times in the past 208 years, participation by citizens has meant the loss of their freedom, their possessions, and sometimes even their lives.

Citizen participation means and entails our right as citizens to choose, and take responsibility for bringing about certain outcomes; it may mean risking a wrong choice where we, community citizens and not outsiders, bear the primary consequence of that choice.

Citizen participation is an effort of the people, by the people, and for the people. It's us doing our thing for ourselves!

## APPENDICES

- A. Glossary of Citizen Participation in Nearby Municipalities
- B. Introductory Letter To Nearby Municipalities and Libraries
- C. Letter of Welcome to East Palo Alto Community Seminars
- D. Bibliography
- E. History of the Institute - Philosophy and Mission

## APPENDIX A\*

GLOSSARY OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION BODIES  
IN NEARBY MUNICIPALITIESCOMMISSION ON AGING

Is charged with identifying the needs of the aging, creating a citizens awareness of these needs, and encouraging improved standards of services to the aging.

ARTS COMMISSION

Is charged with advising the council on matters related to city cultural programs; charge includes advising on (a) arts concerned with line, color, and form - painting, sculpture, architecture; (b) arts concerned with sound - music, dance; (c) arts concerned with the exploitation of words for both their musical and expressive value - literature, prose, and poetry.

CITIZENS HUMANE COMMISSION

Oversees the treatment of animals in all shelters established within the city; advises council concerning the care, treatment, and control of animals. (B)

CIVIC CULTURAL COMMISSION

Duties are very similar as those of the Arts Commission. It recommends to the city or city manager: establishment of programs stimulating and encouraging the development and maintenance of the performing and visual arts in the city; the establishment of programs memorializing or giving recognition to matters of cultural significance in the city; the removal, relocation, or alteration of existing works of art or items of cultural significance in the possession of the city; on any matter affecting the beauty and culture of the city. (R.C.)

COMMISSION ON EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Advises council on allocation of Comprehensive Employment and Training Act funds received for public employment and training programs.

CIVIC ARTS COMMISSION

See Arts Commission and/or Civic Cultural Commission. (B)

ENVIRONMENTAL BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION

Is charged with the effectuation of the city's environmental beautification plan and the establishment of policy regarding the plan. (M.P.)

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Seeks to improve all conditions affecting women and advocates women's issues.

ENERGY COMMISSION

Advises the council on matters relating to energy conservation and alternative energy development. (B)

FAIR CAMPAIGN PRACTICES COMMISSION

Primary responsibility is to carry out the purposes of the (Berkeley) Election Reform Act of 1974. (B)

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\*Where there is a body unique to one jurisdiction, such as the Citizens Humane Commission in Berkeley, the municipality's initial follows the description of that body.

#### HOUSING COMMISSION

Advises the city council on housing matters: housing supply and housing related problems; community attitudes about housing - range, distribution, racial, social economic problems; programs for evaluating, maintaining, and upgrading the distribution and quality of housing stock in the city; planning, implementation and evaluation of city programs under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. (M.P.)

#### HUMAN RELATIONS AND WELFARE COMMISSION

Advises council on issues concerning social welfare needs; creates citizen awareness of these needs; encourages improved standards of social welfare.

#### HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Has the discretion to act with respect to any human relations matter when the commission finds that any person or group does not benefit fully from public or private opportunities or resources in the community, or is unfairly or differently treated due to factors of concern to the commission. (P.A.)

#### LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Designates structures, and sites having special interest and value; encourages preservation; maintains list of landmarks or historic sites; reviews construction applications. Duties very similar to those of Historic Resources Committee (B)

#### LIBRARY COMMISSION

Advises city council on matters related to the maintenance and operation of the library. See Library Board.

#### PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Acts in an advisory capacity to the city council in policy matters pertaining to the acquisition and development of parks and the formulation of a recreation program to meet the needs of the citizens; periodically reviews and makes recommendations on the recreation and parks element of the city's general plan; actively promotes recreation and park activities within the city; reviews and makes recommendations to the city council on the annual proposed budget for recreation and parks from a pure policy standpoint, pertaining only to programs, levels of service, and capital improvements.

#### PLANNING COMMISSION (also ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING COMMISSION)

Has the primary duty to prepare, adopt, and recommend to the city council for its adoption, a long-range, comprehensive general plan to guide the future development of the city and of any land outside its boundaries which in the commission's judgment bears relation to its planning; the general plan may contain basic recommendations as to the distribution of land use areas within the city, standards for population distribution and density, and standards and recommendations for circulation routes as between the various land use areas and through and around the city. (A comprehensive general plan may comprise any or all or any combination of the following: transportation plan, community design plan, housing plan, and such additional plans which relate to physical development of the city.)

#### POLICE REVIEW COMMISSION

Provides for community participation in setting police department policies, practices, and procedures; provides a means for investigation of complaint against police department.



## SENIOR AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Recommends to the city council or city manager the establishment of programs, stimulating and encouraging the development and maintenance of senior programs and services in the city, and to review periodically such programs as are so established; reviews and makes recommendations to the city council and city manager regarding the funding of senior programs and services that operate within the city for the benefit of the city's senior population; upon request therefor, to advise the council and other boards and commissions of the city regarding any matter affecting the city's senior citizen population.(R.C.)(P.A.)

## SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

Duties are to develop a local plan for reducing solid waste generated; is to prepare a solid waste management plan, and is to study the problems of solid waste management. (B)

## TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Advises the city council on matters related to the adequacy and improvement of all types of public and private transportation within and across the city. Its general charge includes: the best approaches to establishing and maintaining systems and facilities for the transport of people and goods around the city; the coordination of motor vehicle, bicycle, mass transit, and pedestrian traffic facilities; the development and encouragement of the most efficient and least detrimental overall transportation system for the city supporting the goals of the general plan; coordination with regional transportation systems; serving as an appeals board (e.g. appeals from staff determinations concerning establishment of traffic signs, pavement markings, speed zones, parking regulations, traffic signals, bike lanes, bus stops, etc).

## YOUTH COMMISSION

The youth commission is designed to give youth a voice in effecting city policies and services and to encourage improved standards of service to youth.

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

GLOSSARY OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION BODIES  
IN NEARBY MUNICIPALITIESBOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS

Makes findings and recommendations and grants or denies variance and use permits as provided for in the Neighborhood Commercial Preservation Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance. (B)

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

Reviews the design of a project. Public property and projects are involved. Applies to all new construction (including paved areas and all other exterior work and signs which require a permit from the city). Singly developed single family dwellings and duplexes and additions are exempt. (P)

BOARD OF BUILDING REVIEW

Reviews the updating of the city's building regulatory codes including suggested local amendments and provides recommendations to the city council pertinent to the adoption of such codes.

Determines the suitability of alternate materials and types of construction; hears appeals of persons denied a building permit, inspection approval, or certificate of occupancy for the reason that the material or type of construction intended for use is not deemed to be in compliance with city codes. (R.C.)

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Elected by voters of the city; set policies for the school district.

COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD

Acts in an advisory capacity to assist in the administration of a community action program. (B)

HOUSING ADVISORY AND APPEALS BOARD

Hears all matters pertaining to substandard buildings; investigates specific building and housing problems as may be referred by the city council. (B)

LIBRARY BOARD

Acts in an advisory capacity to the city council in all matters pertaining to the library department; adopts such rules and regulations as necessary for the administration and protection of the library; assists in the library program planning; considers provisions of the annual budget relating to the library and makes recommendations to the city manager and city council; accepts money, personal property or real estate donated to the city for library purposes, subject to the approval of the council; contracts with school, county, or other government agencies to render or receive library services or facilities, subject to the approval of the city council; in some cities, subject to civil service provisions and council confirmation, appoints, disciplines, and removes officers and employees of the library.

MATERNAL CHILD AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH BOARD

This is a state mandated board consisting of parents of young children, child educators, pediatricians, and other health professionals concerned with health services to children. (B)

MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

Reviews and evaluates the community's mental health needs, resources, and programs; advisory to city council on community mental health services. (B)

PERSONNEL BOARD

Advises city manager on matters concerning personnel policy and administration in city service; conducts hearings to assist in resolving complaints relative to city employees.

BOARD OF PORT COMMISSIONERS

Supervises and controls port area, waterfront properties, and adjacent lands; provides for the needs of commerce, shipping and navigation at the port; responsible for the development, construction, re-construction, alteration, repairs, maintenance, equipping and operating all waterfront properties; regulates and controls all public service and public utilities operated in connection with the port; fixes all rates, dockage, rental, tolls, wharfage, and related charges for the use and occupation of the public facilities and services of the port, and provides for collection thereof. (R.C.)

RELOCATION APPEALS BOARD

Hears complaints by residents of any project area relating to relocation. The Board transmits findings and recommendations to the Redevelopment Agency.

RENT STABILIZATION BOARD

Administers a rent stabilization program; evaluates programs in conformity to enabling ordinance; sets rents, sets rent ceilings, makes adjustments, conducts hearings, and issues rules and regulations. (B)(EPA)

SAFETY MEMBERS PENSION BOARD

This is a quasi-judicial body with fact-finding powers which administer to employees of the police and fire departments. (B)

WATERFRONT ADVISORY BOARD

Reviews plans, policies, programs and projects affecting the waterfront; responsible for developing a master plan for waterfront public and private lands. (B)

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

GLOSSARY OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION BODIES  
IN NEARBY MUNICIPALITIESCITIZENS COMMITTEE ON RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENTS

Advises council on policy for deposit of city funds in financial institutions (without South African interests) and on adoption of a comprehensive investment policy. (B)

CITIZENS COMMITTEE ON UNDERGROUNDING UTILITIES

Advises council on matter of undergrounding utilities, criteria used to determine priority in undergrounding, and areas to be undergrounded. (B)

COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Concerned with health planning; educational and informational service to the community; reviews health proposals submitted by public and private agencies for funding. (B)

HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Renders advice and guidance to property owner upon his/her application for alteration of any designated single family or duplex building; informs the Architectural Review Board of the historical and/or architectural significance of designated commercial and multi-family structures being reviewed; recommends to the council the designation of additional buildings and districts as landmarks. (P.A.)

HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS COMMITTEE

Acts as an advocate for the improvement of the quality of life of community members; additionally, acts to assure that human considerations, as set forth in the general plan, are given adequate consideration in physical and economic decision making. (R.C.)

HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM LOAN COMMITTEE

Receives applications for home improvement and assistance after they have been prepared and processed by the housing improvement advisor; among the general issues it considers relative to a loan application are: Does the credit information support applicant's ability to assume requested loan? Should the loan be amortized? Other collateral issues which are presented by individual situation and need; et cetera. (R.C.)

PROJECT AREA COMMITTEE

Advisory to council and, as requested, the Redevelopment Agency with respect to redevelopment planning, policies, and practices.



*Institute for the Study of Community Economic Development*

22 February 1983

Dear Local Municipal Official\*:

The Community Development Institute is in the process of developing a comprehensive plan for citizen participation in East Palo Alto affairs.

In order for the plan to be as comprehensive as possible, we are: (1) reviewing whatever literature there may be on citizen participation models in urban areas; and (2) interviewing municipal officials in nearby cities regarding their citizen participation programs.

We would appreciate whatever information and/or assistance you are able to furnish on citizen participation in your city's affairs. We are aiming at an April 30, 1983 date for distribution of a preliminary draft of the project report.

I will be calling you next week to set up an interview with whomever you feel would be the appropriate person for me to discuss the above project.

Thanking you in advance for your help and consideration, I remain.

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) Barbara A. Mouton  
Project consultant

- \* Mayor Billy Ray White, City of Menlo Park
- Mayor John W. Dinkelspiel, City of Atherton
- Mayor William J. Stangel, Redwood City
- Mayor Betsy Bechtel, City of Palo Alto
- Mayor Patricia Figueroa, City of Mountain View
- Mayor Eugene G. Newport, Berkeley
- Mayor Lionel J. Wilson, Oakland

A similar letter was sent to Palo Alto and Menlo Park Libraries (reference departments).





# CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO

## MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

BARBARA A. MOUTON  
Mayor  
JAMES E. BLAKEY, JR.  
Vice-Mayor  
RUBEN ABRICA  
OMOWALE SATTERWHITE  
GERTRUDE WILKS

MUNICIPAL SERVICES BUILDING

2415 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, EAST PALO ALTO, CA 94303 (415) 324-1308

September 24, 1983

Dear Citizen:

Welcome, and again, thank you for preparing our future. As you know, we made history on July 1, 1983, and that history is continuing. For the first time in modern history citizens of a newly incorporated city have literally put together their city. This is what you have been doing for the past several months in general and the past two weeks in particular.

On September 10th, your task - via town hall meetings - was to establish a laundry list of your needs and discuss same; on September 17th, your task was to prioritize the list; today, September 24th, your task is to review the laundry list, make amendments, additions, and deletions that you deem necessary, and identify - through brainstorming - all of the different kinds of citizen participation structures that you want; these include Boards, Commissions, Task Forces, and other linkages with various groups and organizations. You may want to be governed in your choices by the following: What should be the membership of these advisory entities? How should their members be selected? What should be their size and composition? And finally, what should be the roles and responsibilities of their structures?

Remember, together we can make East Palo Alto the city it should be, it must be, for all the citizens.

Very truly yours,

(Mrs.) Barbara A. Mouton  
Mayor

BAM:VVJ:db



APPENDIX D  
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## APPENDIX E

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

#### HISTORY OF THE INSTITUTE

The Community Development Institute (CDI) was formed in May 1982 to provide technical assistance and administrative services to community development organizations serving low-income urban areas. As a non-profit tax-exempt corporation, CDI aims to serve the public interest by assisting low-income communities to combat the causes and consequences of poverty.

The Institute was conceived in recognition of the need for Black professionals to utilize their collective expertise and resources to address the escalating political, economic, and social crises in minority communities. Thus, during the initial years, the Institute is focusing on (1) organizing a viable Board of Directors; (2) securing fiscal resources to maintain its administrative offices; (3) developing a long-range plan for program delivery; and (4) implementing concrete programs of benefit to the community.

#### PHILOSOPHY and MISSION

There is considerable evidence that public services in urban communities are not adequate to address the salient problems and the striking needs. For this reason, urban community-based organizations (CBO's) offer a range of life-support services which make them indispensable institutions with vital roles. In fact, these organizations share, with local government, much of the burden for the provision of urban services.

By and large, CBO's are committed to responsibly addressing local problems and issues. Their mission is ambitious -- defining and responding to the socio-economic needs and priorities of urbanized areas; their role ambiguous -- attempting to provide urban services with uncertain authority and unpredictable resources; and their task monumental -- trying to mitigate the inequities and hardships of urban life.

In a fundamental sense, CBO's are one of the keys to socio-economic transformation in urban areas. We are convinced that there will not be a basic change in local urban conditions until, and unless, there is a basic change in the capacity of our urban institutions. Unfortunately, CBO's often do not employ administrative techniques and management tools that can maximize their efficiency and capability. One of the most pressing needs in urban communities is to strengthen the CBO's that provide vital urban services. Through this means, it is possible to build a solid foundation for community development and to creatively address the challenges of modern urban life.

The primary mission of CDI is to promote community development and socio-economic revitalization in urban communities. CDI provides professional services to community development organizations, human service agencies, educational institutions, local governments, and business/industrial firms. Our services are primarily geared toward (1) improving the efficiency and maximizing the capability of non-profit community-based organizations, and (2) facilitating long-range planning on a community-wide basis. CDI offers training, technical assistance, and consultation in the areas of management, organization development, resource development, program planning and evaluation, public relations, conflict resolution, and research and policy analysis.

