



EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD REGULAR SESSION AGENDA

Wednesday, October 14, 2026, 7:00 PM
City Hall
2415 University Ave. Second Floor
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

NOTICE

This meeting will be held virtually and in-person at the Council Chambers located on 2415 University Ave, First Floor East Palo Alto, CA 94303. The virtual portion of this City Council meeting will be conducted in accordance with City of East Palo Alto Resolution adopted pursuant to Assembly Bill 361.

The public may participate in the City Council Meeting via Zoom Meeting or by attending in-person in the Council Chambers at 2415 University Ave, First Floor East Palo Alto, CA 94303. Community members may provide comments by emailing rentboard@cityofepa.org, submitting a speaker card at the meeting, or using the **RAISE HAND** feature when the Chair or Administrator call for public comment. Emailed comments should include the specific agenda item on which you are commenting.

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Webinar ID: 893 8901 4142

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1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

4. **APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR**

4.1 **Rent Stabilization Program Annual Registration Fee for Program Year 2026-2027**

Recommendation: Adopt a resolution setting the Annual Registration Fee of \$378 per rental unit for the July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027 Rent Stabilization Program Year for rental units regulated under the 2010 Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

4.2 **2026-08-12 Rent Stabilization Board Meeting Minutes - Corrected**

Recommendation:

By motion, adopt the corrected minutes for the August 12, 2026, Rent Stabilization Board meeting.

4.3 **2026-08-26 Rent Stabilization Board Meeting Minutes - Corrected**

Recommendation:

By motion, adopt the corrected minutes for the August 26, 2026, Rent Stabilization Board special meeting.

4.4 **2026-09-09 Rent Stabilization Board Meeting Minutes**

Recommendation: By motion, adopt the minutes for the September 9, 2026, Rent Stabilization Board meeting.

4.5 **Adoption of Resolutions for Appeal Hearings Heard August 12, 2026 and Concluded August 26, 2026**

Recommendation:

By motion, adopt the resolutions containing the Boards decisions on the appeals in the following cases:

1. *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 20240013 - 20240021; concerning 201 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
2. *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 2024007 - 20240012; concerning 245 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
3. *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 20240022 -

- 20240036; concerning 301 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
4. *Gallegos, et al., v. 2370 Cooley Ave, LLC, et al.*, Case Nos. 2025001;
concerning 2370 Cooley Avenue, Unit #2, East Palo Alto, CA

5. **STAFF ORAL REPORTS**

6. **INFORMATIONAL REPORTS**

6.1 **Informational Update on City Ballot Initiatives**

Recommendation: Receive an informational update from the City Manager on the City Ballot Initiatives

7. **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

7.1 **Rent Stabilization Ellis Act Presentation**

Recommendation: Receive an informational presentation from staff on the Ellis Act as laid out in Section 14.08 Withdrawal of Rental Units of the City of East Palo Alto Municipal Code.

8. **PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE**

9. **POLICY AND ACTION - NONE**

10. **BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS & REPORTS**

11. **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS & AGENDIZED ITEMS**

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

Upcoming meetings:

Regular Meeting	December 9, 2026	7:00pm

Board members:

Seat Number	Name	Subcommittee	Term Expiration
1	Vacant		5/31/2027
2	DeVan Taylor	Education & Outreach	5/31/2029
3	Karl Magnus Larsson	Rules & Regulations	5/31/2027
4	Laura Rubio	Education & Outreach	5/31/2027
5	Francisca Guzman	Habitability	5/31/2027
6	Goolrukh Vakil	Rules & Regulations	5/31/2029
7	Vanessa Smith	Rules & Regulations, Habitability	5/31/2028
8 (Alternate)	Vacant		5/31/2028

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The City Council meeting packet may be reviewed by the public in the Library or the City Clerk's Office. Any writings or documents pertaining to an open session item provided to a majority of the City Council less than 72 hours prior to the meeting, shall be made available for public inspection at the front counter at the City Clerk's Office, 2ND Floor, City Hall, 2415 University Avenue, East Palo Alto, California 94303 during normal business hours. Information distributed to the Council at the Council meeting becomes part of the public record. A copy of written material, pictures, etc. should be provided for this purpose.

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DECLARATION OF POSTING

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POSTED: Friday, October 9, 2026

ATTEST:



Natasha Raiburn, Administrator
Rent Stabilization Program



EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION STAFF REPORT

DATE: October 14, 2026

TO: Honorable Members of the Rent Stabilization Board

BY: Natasha Raiburn, Rent Stabilization Program Administrator
Elena Lee, Community and Economic Development Director

SUBJECT: Rent Stabilization Program Annual Registration Fee for Program Year
2026-2027

Recommendation

Adopt a resolution setting the Annual Registration Fee of \$378 per rental unit for the July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027 Rent Stabilization Program Year for rental units regulated under the 2010 Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

Background

On June 8, 2010, the East Palo Alto voters approved the Rent Stabilization and Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance of 2010 ("2010 Ordinance"). The 2010 Ordinance has been codified in the Municipal Code under Chapter 14.04. Section 14.04.070.M of the Municipal Code provides that the Board shall finance the reasonable and necessary expenses for its operation by charging landlords an annual program fee for each unit in an amount determined to be reasonable and necessary by the Board.

Accordingly, the Ordinance provides the Rent Stabilization Board ("Board") with the authority to annually set the rent registration fee to support implementation of the Ordinance. Section 14.04.080.C of the Municipal Code states:

There shall be an annual program fee per unit, set by the board in accordance with Subsection 14.04.070.D.2 of this chapter, which shall be paid by the first business day in January each year.

Section 600.D of the regulations implementing the 2010 Ordinance provides for the Board, by December 15 of each year, to send an annual registration form and registration fee statement

to each landlord in the City. Fees for the July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027 Rent Stabilization Program Year are due by Friday, January 4, 2027 (since January 1, 2027, is a City Holiday and thus not an open business day for EPA).

The Board first adopted a resolution establishing fees in December 2010 at a rate of \$234 per space and per unit, which was applicable to both mobile home park rent spaces and residential units. The \$234 fee was based on the Board-approved 2010 budget divided by the number of spaces and units in the program. Due to the non-compliance penalties that Program has collected, the Board was able to reduce and had maintained an annual program fee of \$222 between the 2017-2018 and 2021-2022 program years.

In September 2024, the Finance Department hired Matrix Consulting Group to conduct a full cost allocation and user fee study. The consultant interviewed staff, collected cost and staffing data, analyzed service costs and confirmed the results with each division or department impacted by this update in the user fees reflected in the Master Fee Schedule. Matrix used Fiscal Year 2024-25 fees and data, utilized generally acceptable time estimation calculations, and came up with estimates reflecting average service times (excluding unusually complex or simple cases). They are based on typical staff roles, reviewed for reasonableness, and aligned with current or proposed staffing to ensure there is no over-allocation of staff resources to fee and non-fee related activities. The completed study determined, based on the prior year's workload, that the rent program had an annual cost recovery of approximately 63%. The study recommended an annual registration fee of \$369 per unit. The comprehensive review and evaluation of citywide user fees was concluded by Matrix in June 2025. After three City Council meetings, the study and Master Fee Schedule were adopted on September 16, 2025.

As part of the City's annual Comprehensive Fee Schedule update presented to the City Council on May 19, 2026, effective July 18, 2026, most user and regulatory fees were adjusted by 2.5% based on the San Francisco–Oakland–Hayward Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), using the 12-month average. This annual adjustment reflects increases in personnel and operating costs and maintains cost recovery between comprehensive fee studies. The updated schedule listed the Rent Stabilization Program's annual registration fee at \$378 per unit, reflecting the CPI adjustment to the \$369 fee, subject to Rent Stabilization Board approval in October 2026

Analysis

In June 2026, the City Council approved an annual budget for Fiscal Years 2026-27. The Fiscal Year 2026-27 adopted Program Budget was approved and the budget anticipated the program will collect \$852,390 from registration fees. The adopted Program Budget includes 50% of the cost for a one-year limited term Housing Specialist split between Rent Stabilization and Housing.

A breakdown of the Program's budget is set forth below.

Expenses:	\$649,097	Direct program expenses (includes Limited Term Housing Specialist)
	\$354,148	City-wide overhead (includes City Attorney and other costs)
	\$1,003,245	Total Expenses
Revenue:	\$848,700	Registration fees
	\$19,952	Other revenues
Variance	\$ (130,903)	

The projected expenses (\$1,003,245) and projected revenue (\$872,342) at a lower annual fee of \$378 per unit, considering the current number of non-exempted regulated units at approximately (2300) results in a negative variance. Due to this negative variance and the completed fee study it militates in favor of study registration fee of \$378 per rental unit. Should this result in a carry-forward balance, as done in previous years staff can recommend a reduction of the annual registration fee in the next program year.

Thus, staff recommends setting the Annual Program Fee at \$378 per unit for the 2026-27 program year. See Attachment 1 for the proposed resolution, setting the rent registration fee for July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027 at \$378 per rental unit.

Attachments

1. Resolution

RSB RESOLUTION NO. 26-

A RESOLUTION OF THE RENT STABILIZATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO SETTING THE RENT REGISTRATION FEE AT \$378 PER RENTAL UNIT UNDER THE RENT STABILIZATION AND JUST CAUSE FOR EVICTION ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO FOR THE JULY 1, 2026 TO JUNE 30, 2027 RENT STABILIZATION PROGRAM YEAR

WHEREAS, on June 8, 2010, voters approved the Rent Stabilization and Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance of the City of East Palo Alto (“2010 Ordinance”); and

WHEREAS, on November 8, 2016, the voters of the City of East Palo Alto approved Measure J, amending the 2010 Ordinance to simplify and clarify various processes and procedures; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 Ordinance is codified under Chapter 14.04 of the East Palo Alto Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, Section 14.04.070.D.2 of the Municipal Code provides that the Board shall have the power to require registration of certain rental units and set fees for such registration; and

WHEREAS, Section 14.04.070.M of the Municipal Code provides that the Board shall finance the reasonable and necessary expenses for its operation by charging landlords an annual program fee for each unit in an amount determined to be reasonable and necessary by the Board; and

WHEREAS, Section 14.04.080.C of the Municipal Code provides that the Board shall set an annual program fee per unit which shall be paid by the first business day in January each year; and

WHEREAS, the Board first adopted a resolution establishing mobile home park rent spaces and residential units registration fees in December 2010 at a rate of \$234 per space and per unit, based on the Board approved 2010 budget divided by the number of spaces and units in the program; and

WHEREAS, there are currently 2300 non-exempted registered rental units with certificates of Maximum Allowable Rent that are subject to annual registration fees; and

WHEREAS, the East Palo Alto City Council (“Council”) adopted a Rent Stabilization Program (“Program”) budget for Fiscal Years (FY) 2026-27 with a spending level not to exceed \$1,003,245; and

WHEREAS, the projected available revenue of \$872,342 for the 2026-2027 program year will allow the Program to continue administering the rent stabilization ordinances in full, funded by the annual program fee of \$378 per unit.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that for each rental unit required to be registered under the 2010 Ordinance, the Board sets a registration fee of \$378 per rental unit under the Rent Stabilization and Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance of the City of East Palo Alto for the period of July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Rent Stabilization Board of the City of East Palo Alto on the 14th day of October 2026 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

SIGNED:

DeVan Taylor, Chair

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Natasha Raiburn, Administrator
Rent Stabilization Program

John D. Lê, City Attorney



EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION STAFF REPORT

DATE: October 14, 2026

TO: Honorable Members of the Rent Stabilization Board

BY: Natasha Raiburn, Rent Stabilization Program Administrator
Elena Lee, Community and Economic Development Director

SUBJECT: 2026-08-12 Rent Stabilization Board Corrected Meeting Minutes

Recommendation

By motion, adopt the corrected minutes for the August 12, 2026, Rent Stabilization Board meeting.

Attachments

1. 2026-08-12 RSB Meeting Minutes



EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD REGULAR MINUTES - Corrected

Wednesday, August 12, 2026, 7:00 PM
City Hall

2415 University Ave. Second Floor
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Rent Stabilization Board meeting was called to order by Chair Larsson at 7:25pm.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Present
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Present
Laura Rubio	Board member	Present
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Present
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Present
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Present

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Time: 7:26pm

A motion to move policy and action items ahead of hearings and to shift hearings so that item 8.1 is moved to after item 8.4 was made by Chair Larsson, seconded by Vice Chair Guzman and passed unanimously.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

TIME: 7:40pm

- Ravneel Chaudhary

4. APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR - NONE

5. **STAFF ORAL REPORTS**

TIME: 7:43pm

A Staff member is going on a Leave of Absence starting Mid-September. Our office has acquired temporary assistance, and they have started going through training.

6. **INFORMATIONAL REPORTS** - NONE

7. **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS** - NONE

9. **POLICY AND ACTION**

TIME: 7:44pm

9.1 *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities* Consolidated Appeal Case Numbers A20240013 through A20240021, Appeal Hearing & Procedure (AMENDED)

9.2 *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities* Consolidated Appeal Case Numbers A20240007 through A20240012, Appeal Hearing Schedule & Procedure (AMENDED)

A motion to adopt the scheduling of item 9.1 and 9.2 was made by Vice Chair Guzman and seconded by Taylor. Motion passed unanimously.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

8. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

TIME: 7:46pm

A motion to approve the hearing procedures as presented with the change of replacing “more facts” with “provide clarifications” made by Board member Taylor and seconded by Vice Chair Guzman. Motion passed unanimously.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Angel Padron
- Blanca Ceballos
- Leonel

8.2 Appeal Hearing in the Matter of: Calderon, et al. v. Woodland Park Communities, Case Nos. 20240013–20240021; 201 East O’Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA

Speakers: Andrew VanSlyke (Appellant)
Adelina Garcia (Appellee)
Amy Androw (Appellee Representation)

A motion to affirm the decision of the hearing examiner with the amendments and conditions that the attorney mentioned was made by Vice Chair Guzman and seconded by Board member Vakil. Motion passed unanimously.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

8.3 Appeal Hearing in the Matter of: Calderon, et al. v. Woodland Park Communities, Case Nos. 2024007–20240012; 245 East O’Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA

Speakers: Andrew VanSlyke (Appellant)
Brian Jenkins (Appellee)
Amy Androw (Appellee Representation)

Deliberation continued to special meeting to be held on Wednesday, August 26, 2026 at 7pm.

8.4 Appeal Hearing in the Matter of: Calderon, et al. v. Woodland Park Communities, Case Nos. 20240022–20240036; 301 East O’Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA

Speakers: Andrew VanSlyke (Appellant)
Tania Rass (Appellee)
Amy Androw (Appellee Representation)

Deliberation continued to special meeting to be held on Wednesday, August 26, 2026 at 7pm

8.1 Appeal Hearing in the Matter of: *Gallegos, et al. v. 2370 Cooley Ave, LLC et al.* Case No. 20250001; 2370 Cooley Avenue, Unit #2, East Palo Alto, CA

Speakers: Angel Padron (Appellant)

Deliberation continued to special meeting to be held on Wednesday,
August 26, 2026 at 7pm

10. BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS & REPORTS - NONE

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS & AGENDIZED ITEMS - NONE

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Larsson adjourned the meeting at 11:04pm.



EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION STAFF REPORT

DATE: October 14, 2026

TO: Honorable Members of the Rent Stabilization Board

BY: Natasha Raiburn, Rent Stabilization Program Administrator
Elena Lee, Community and Economic Development Director

SUBJECT: 2026-08-26 Rent Stabilization Board Corrected Meeting Minutes

Recommendation

By motion, adopt the corrected minutes for the August 26, 2026, Rent Stabilization Board special meeting.

Attachments

1. 2026-08-26 RSB Meeting Minutes
2. Statement - Board member Goolruhk Vakil



EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD MINUTES - **Corrected**

Wednesday, August 26, 2026, 7:00 PM

City Hall

2415 University Ave. Second Floor

East Palo Alto, CA 94303

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The Rent Stabilization Board meeting was called to order by Chair Karl Magnus Larsson at 7:09pm.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Present
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Present
Laura Rubio	Board member	Present
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Present
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Absent
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Present

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Time: 7:10pm

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Board member Taylor, seconded by Board member Rubio and passed unanimously.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Time: 7:03pm

- No public comment received

4. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Time: 7:11pm

Motion to reconsider the decision made on the Appeal Hearing in the Matter of: Calderon, et al. v. Woodland Park Communities, Case Nos. 2024 – 2024; 201 East O’Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA was made by Board member Taylor, seconded by Vice Chair Guzman. Motion passed.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Nay
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

Motion to remand the decision of the hearing examiner to verify the calculation of the tenant rebates and that the hearing examiner utilizes the definition of “Tenant” found in the City of East Palo Alto’s Rent Stabilization Ordinance and to only utilize the record already submitted was made by Board member Taylor and seconded by Vice Chair Guzman. Motion passed.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Abstain
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

**Appeal Hearing in the Matter of: *Calderon, et al. v. Woodland Park Communities* , Case Nos. 2024007–20240012; 245 East O’Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
(Continued from August 12, 2026)**

A motion to affirm the decision of the Hearing Examiner dated May 30, 2025 was made by Board member Taylor and seconded by Board member Vakil and passed unanimously.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

**Appeal Hearing in the Matter of: *Calderon, et al. v. Woodland Park Communities* ,
Case Nos. 20240022–20240036; 301 East O’Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
(Continued from August 12, 2026)**

A motion to Affirm the Decision of the Hearing Examiner dated June 9, 2025 was made by Board member Taylor and seconded by Vice Chair Guzman. Motion passed unanimously.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

**Appeal Hearing in the Matter of: *Gallegos, et al. v. 2370 Cooley Ave, LLC et al.*
Case No. 20250001; 2370 Cooley Avenue, Unit #2, East Palo Alto, CA
(Continued from August 12, 2026)**

A motion to affirm the decision of the Hearing Examiner dated July 18, 2025 was made by Vice Chair Guzman and seconded by Board member Rubio. Motion passed unanimously.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

5. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Larsson adjourned the meeting at 10:06pm

Statement by Board member Goolrukh Vakil on *Appeal Hearing in the Matter of: Gallegos, et al. v. 2370 Cooley Ave, LLC et al. Case No. 20250001; 2370 Cooley Avenue, Unit #2, East Palo Alto, CA*

Regarding this case, I mentioned it before also: the respondent was late in responding. Plus, without legitimate reasoning. But the case was read anyway by the examiner. It wasn't heard, so there were no parties present. But staff decided that although the response was late, the hearing examiner would read the case. And based on that, the hearing examiner made his decision.

So, the reasoning behind the decision to allow the late response was that the regulations say that a late response may be read, so the word "may" makes the whole regulation rather ambiguous. It doesn't state under what circumstances a late response can be heard. And generally, correct me if I am wrong, counsel, generally the excuses are medical, a real family emergency, administrative error, postage, things like that, with proof. But none of that was given. There were no excuses given. There was nothing given by the respondent.

So, the examiner may simply read the late response anyway. The mandatory time period in the regulation is meaningless. Actually, the late response should have been barred. The case proceeding thus far is based on, that is a procedural error, I assume.

Okay, and the ambiguous wording has caused so much time and effort on the part of staff to right this wrong. The board should not attempt, in my opinion, to amend or dynamically manage a flawed examination and decision. In a correct review, whether de novo or on the record, the only proper solution is to reject the examiner's decision entirely. The late response must be excluded from consideration. To not do so would set a precedent and possibly a pitfall for future litigation, etc.

This means that the applicants' request should be granted, period, without considering the examiner's decision.

I'm sorry about this wording. I have been on this board for 20 years, and I have been on the Rules and Regulations Committee all along, and we haven't done any work on that subcommittee for a long time. And so, I take equal responsibility for this ambiguity, but we have the capability for amending this for the future, of course. And we did mention this before also: the council, under the ordinance, instructs us to create the regulations, and so it is our responsibility to make sure the regulations are appropriate.

And so, I think this whole case is flawed and will be abstaining. Thank you.



EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION STAFF REPORT

DATE: October 14, 2026

TO: Honorable Members of the Rent Stabilization Board

BY: Natasha Raiburn, Rent Stabilization Program Administrator
Elena Lee, Community and Economic Development Director

SUBJECT: 2026-09-09 Rent Stabilization Board Meeting Minutes

Recommendation

By motion, adopt the minutes for the September 9, 2026, Rent Stabilization Board meeting.

Attachments

1. 2026-09-09 RSB Meeting Minutes



EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 9, 2026, 7:00 PM

City Hall

2415 University Ave. Second Floor

East Palo Alto, CA 94303

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Rent Stabilization Board meeting was called to order by Chair Larsson at 7:02pm.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Present
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Present
Laura Rubio	Board member	Present
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Present
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Present
DeVan Taylor	Board Member	Present

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Time: 7:26pm

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Board member Taylor, seconded by Board member Smith and passed unanimously.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Time: 7:03pm

- No public comment received

4. APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR

Vice Chair Guzman requested to pull 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3.

4.1 2026-06-10 Rent Stabilization Board Meeting Minutes

A motion to adopt the minutes for June 10, 2026, Rent Stabilization Board meeting was made by Board member Taylor, seconded by Vice Chair Guzman and passed.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	No
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

4.2 2026-08-12 Rent Stabilization Board Meeting Minutes

A motion to correct minutes for August 12, 2026, Rent Stabilization Board meeting and bring back for approval was made by Vice Chair Guzman, and seconded by Board member Vakil and passed unanimously.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

4.3 2026-08-26 Rent Stabilization Board Meeting Minutes

A motion to correct minutes for August 26, 2026, Rent Stabilization Board special meeting and bring back for approval was made by Vice Chair Guzman, and seconded by Board member Vakil and passed unanimously.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

4.4 Rent Stabilization Program in Numbers

A motion to approve the Rent Stabilization Program in Numbers for May 2026, June 2026 and Program 2025-2026 Year-to-Date was made by Board member Smith and seconded by Board member Taylor and passed.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Abstain
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

5. STAFF ORAL REPORTS

Time: 7:40pm

- Staffing during Ms. Moreno's leave of absence
- Two development application review
- Received multiple public records requests
- Update on individual appeals
- Staff report for annual registration scheduled for October meeting
- Staff preparing for annual registration

6. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS - NONE

7. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS - NONE

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE

9. POLICY AND ACTION

Time: 7:50pm

9.1 Selection of the Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2026-2027 Program Year

Board member Vakil nominated Chair Larsson to remain Chair, Vice Chair Guzman seconded and Chair Larsson accepted the nomination.

Board member Smith nominated Board member Taylor to Chair, Board member Rubio seconded, and Board member Taylor accepted the nomination.

Vote for Chair Larsson to remain Chair:

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	No
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Aye
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Abstain
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Abstain

Vote for Board member Taylor to become Chair:

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	No
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	No
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	No
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

Board member Smith nominated Board member Taylor to Chair and seconded by Vice Chair Guzman. Board member Taylor accepted the nomination.

Vote for Board member Taylor to become Chair:

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Chair	No
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	No
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Board member	Aye

Board member Taylor appointed to Chair for program year 2026-2027.

Vote for Chair Larsson to become Vice Chair:

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Karl Magnus Larsson	Board member	Aye
Francisca Guzman	Vice Chair	Aye
Laura Rubio	Board member	Aye
Goolrukh Vakil	Board member	Abstain
Vanessa Smith	Board member	Aye
DeVan Taylor	Chair	Aye

Board member Larsson appointed to Vice Chair for program year 2026-2027.

9.2 Selection of Rent Board Members to Rent Board Committees for the 2026-27 Program Year

Board Member Name	Committee
Chair DeVan Taylor	Education & Outreach
Vice Chair Magnus Larsson	Rules & Regulations
Francisca Guzman	Habitability
Laura Rubio	Education & Outreach
Goolrukh Vakil	Rules & Regulation
Vanessa Smith	Rules & Regulations Habitability
Vacant Seat	Needs Appointment
Alternate	Needs Appointment

10. BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS, REPORTS, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS & AGENDIZED ITEMS

Time: 8:18pm

- Board member Rubio requested workshops for tenants & landlords and requested that an update on the updated regulation 600(E) be agendized.
- Board member Guzman raised concerns regarding delays in requested agendized items coming back before the board. Discussion took place.
- Board member Smith and Board member Vakil requested updates more regularly about staff capacity.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Taylor adjourned the meeting at 9:07pm.



EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION STAFF REPORT

DATE: October 14, 2026

TO: Honorable Members of the Rent Stabilization Board

BY: Natasha Raiburn, Rent Stabilization Program Administrator

SUBJECT: Adoption of Resolutions for Appeal Hearings Heard August 12, 2026 and
Concluded August 26, 2026

Recommendation

By motion, adopt the resolutions containing the Boards decisions on the appeals in the following cases:

1. *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 20240013 - 20240021; concerning 201 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
2. *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 2024007-20240012; concerning 245 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
3. *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 20240022–20240036; concerning 301 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
4. *Gallegos, et al., v. 2370 Cooley Ave, LLC, et al.*, Case Nos. 2025001; concerning 2370 Cooley Avenue, Unit #2, East Palo Alto, CA

Background

On August 12, 2026, the Board conducted a public hearing on the record, on the Appeals in the following cases:

1. *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 20240013 - 20240021; concerning 201 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA

2. *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 2024007-20240012; concerning 245 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
3. *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 20240022–20240036; concerning 301 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
4. *Gallegos, et al., v. 2370 Cooley Ave, LLC, et al.*, Case Nos. 2025001; concerning 2370 Cooley Avenue, Unit #2, East Palo Alto, CA

After receiving the parties' arguments, and public comment, and questioning witnesses, the Board closed the public hearings. The meeting was then continued to August 26, 2026.

On August 26, 2026, the Board conducted a Special Meeting where at which it considered the administrative record for the petitions. After deliberation in open session, the Board voted on each appeal. The attached resolutions memorialize the decisions the Board reached at the conclusion of the hearings. Once adopted, the resolutions are effective immediately and constitute the Board's final written decisions. The resolutions will be served on the parties by staff.

Attachments

1. Resolution - *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 20240013 - 20240021; concerning 201 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
2. Resolution - *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 2024007-20240012; concerning 245 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
3. Resolution - *Calderon, et al., v. Woodland Park Communities*, Case Nos. 20240022–20240036; concerning 301 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA
4. Resolution - *Gallegos, et al., v. 2370 Cooley Ave, LLC, et al.*, Case Nos. 2025001; concerning 2370 Cooley Avenue, Unit #2, East Palo Alto, CA

RESOLUTION 26 - ____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD ADOPTING AN APPEAL HEARING DECISION IN MATTER OF CALDERON, ET AL. V. WOODLAND PARK COMMUNITIES, CASE NOS. 20240013–20240021; 201 EAST O'KEEFE STREET, EAST PALO ALTO, CA, AFFIRMING IN PART AND REMANDING IN PART THE MAY 30, 2025 HEARING EXAMINER DECISION

1. The City of East Palo Alto's ("**City**") Rent Stabilization And Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance ("**Ordinance**" or "**Rent Ordinance**") is codified in Chapter 14.04 of the City's Municipal Code ("**EPAMC**").
2. EPAMC section 14.04.070 establishes a Rent Stabilization Board ("**Board**"), consisting of seven City residents, and one alternate. The Board is a quasi-judicial body that is authorized to conduct hearings and to "decide on tenant petitions for refund of excess rent paid in violation of this chapter." pursuant to Chapter 14.
3. The apartment complex herein referred to as the "**Property**" is located at 245 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA, 94303, and is subject to the City's Ordinance.
4. Tenants of multiple units of the Property filed their Individual Rent Adjustment Petition ("**Petition**") with the Rent Stabilization Program ("**Program**") on September 18, 2024, seeking rent reductions and rebates based on habitability problems, failure to provide maintenance and services, and reductions in maintenance and services. The Program consolidated the petitions and bifurcated the issues into common area issues and individual unit issues, with common area issues to be heard and decided first.
5. A hearing was held on February 27, 2025. Five tenants testified: Alyce Spruell (Unit 208), Josephine Calderon (Unit 107), Reyna Del Cid (Unit 110), Maria Guadalupe (Unit 202), and Adelina Garcia (Unit 204). The tenants were represented by James Huynh and Laura Vasquez from the Regional Tenant Organizing Association. Respondent was represented by Aura Andrade (Community Manager), Andrea Bumagat (Compliance Manager), and Enrique Bedolla (Maintenance Supervisor).
6. The Hearing Examiner issued a decision on May 30, 2025 ("**Decision**") finding substantial evidence that common-area maintenance and repairs were not completed promptly, including nonfunctioning hallway light fixtures and bulbs, uneven floors and cracked or broken tiles, peeling exterior paint, and conditions noted in County inspection reports. The Decision acknowledged that the landlord performed maintenance but found that many repairs were unreasonably delayed. It also found that the swimming pool had been unavailable during summer months because of maintenance or permit issues and was not always properly maintained. The Decision concluded that the delayed maintenance and pool unavailability

reduced housing services, assigned 5% and 2% respectively to those conditions, and awarded a combined 7% rebate from September 2021 through May 2025. Assuming the pool was then available, it continued the 5% common-area reduction from June 2025 through May 2026. The Decision denied the remaining common-area claims.

7. On June 27, 2025, Landlord filed a timely Notice of Appeal challenging the findings supporting the rebate and reduction, the commencement date and prospective duration, and the relief awarded to the listed petitioners ("**Landlord's Appeal**").
8. During its March 11, 2026 meeting, the Board determined to conduct this appeal on the record submitted by to the Hearing Examiner, and not as a de novo hearing.
9. On August 12, 2026, the Board conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the Landlord's Appeal. Representatives of the tenants and the landlord were present for the hearing and provided arguments.
10. After receiving the parties' arguments, and public comment, and questioning witnesses, the Board closed the public hearing. The meeting was then continued to August 26, 2026.
11. On August 26, 2026, the Board conducted a duly noticed Special Meeting at which it considered the Administrative Record for the Petition. After posing clarifying questions regarding the Petition and Landlord's Appeal, and after deliberating in open session, the Board voted 5-0 to remand in part and affirm in part the Hearing Examiner's Decision and directed staff to prepare a written resolution memorializing the Board's findings and decision.

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD HEREBY FINDS, DETERMINES, AND RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Incorporation of Recitals.

Each recital set forth above is true and correct and is incorporated herein by this reference as part of the Board's decision.

SECTION 2. Record of Proceedings.

The Board hereby finds that its decision is based on the "**Administrative Record**" which includes the following: any materials timely and properly submitted to the Hearing Examiner and the Hearing Examiner's Decision; all of which are incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 3. Legal Framework.

Having identified the Administrative Record upon which this decision is based, the Board sets forth below the legal framework governing the review of an appeal under the Ordinance.

Under Chapter 14.04 of City's Rent Stabilization and Just Cause Eviction Ordinance and its corresponding regulations, a tenant may, in relevant part, petition the City's Board for a reduction of rent resulting from: (i) failure to comply with the "warranty of habitability" set forth in California Civil Code section 1941.1 ; (ii) failure to maintain the premises in a habitable condition consistent with building or housing codes ; and (iii) for decrease in housing services or failure to provide adequate maintenance without a corresponding reduction in rent . Under each of the foregoing grounds, a petitioner must evidence the grounds for a rent reduction by a preponderance of the evidence.

On appeal, an appellant must establish there was either an error or abuse of discretion on the part of the Hearing Examiner. "Error" nor "abuse of discretion" are defined in the Rent Ordinance nor its corresponding Regulations. Accordingly, the Board has interpreted "abuse of discretion" to mean and refer to the standard of review established by the state law applicable to judicial review of administrative decisions like the present one—California Code of Civil Procedure section 1094.5.

Under Section 1094.5, an abuse of discretion is found if: (i) the Hearing Examiner did not proceed in the manner required by law; (b) the decision is not supported by the findings; and (c) where the findings are not supported by substantial evidence. Where it is claimed that findings are not supported by the evidence, abuse of discretion is established only if the findings are not supported by substantial evidence in the light of the whole record.

Pursuant to Regulation, § 1500(G)(2)(h), the Board's scope of review on appeal is as follows:

"The Board may conduct a new (de novo) hearing or may act on the basis of the record submitted to the Hearing Examiner. Unless the Board determines that a de novo hearing is required, the Board's decision will be based exclusively on the record before the Hearing Examiner. If the Board does not grant a de novo hearing, the parties shall be instructed that their discussions or comments at the Board hearing may not include factual matters or evidence that were not presented to the Hearing Examiner or officially noticed. Parties may discuss or comment upon the legal matters in question and any other pertinent issues raised by the appeal. The Board shall disregard any discussion or comment regarding factual matters that were not in the record before the Hearing Examiner or officially noticed."

SECTION 4. Findings of the Board

After full consideration, and based on the preponderance of evidence in the Administrative Record, the Board determines the following, which constitutes the Board's final decision on the Landowner's Appeal.

On Remand: Remand back to the Hearing Examiner for further review and reconsideration, with no additional hearings and with the unmodified application of the City's RSO definition of "tenant", the tenancy status, periods, and rebate calculations for

each of the tenants included as parties to the Petition . Upon completion of the review, the Hearing Examiner shall submit a summary and chart of such conclusions to the Board for review and approval.

Remainder Affirmed: For the remainder of the Hearing Examiner's Decision (1) that the Hearing Examiner's findings are supported by substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, and (2) that the Administrative Record reflects no error or abuse of discretion on the part of the Hearing Examiner.

SECTION 5. Severability.

If any section or provision of this Resolution is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, or contravened by reason of any preemptive legislation, the remaining sections and/or provisions of this Resolution shall remain valid.

SECTION 6. Certification.

The Board Secretary shall certify to the passage and adoption of this Resolution; cause the same to be entered among the original resolutions of the Board; and make a minute of the passage and adoption thereof in the records of the proceedings of the Board in the minutes of the meeting at which time same is passed and adopted.

SECTION 7. Effective Date.

This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption by the Board.

PASSED, APPROVED, and ADOPTED on this 14th day of October 2026.

DeVan Taylor, Chair
Rent Stabilization Board

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Natasha Railburn
Rent Stabilization Administrator

John D. Le
City Attorney

RESOLUTION 26 - ____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD ADOPTING AN APPEAL HEARING DECISION IN MATTER OF CALDERON, ET AL. V. WOODLAND PARK COMMUNITIES, CASE NOS. 2024007–20240012; 245 EAST O'KEEFE STREET, EAST PALO ALTO, CA, AFFIRMING IN FULL THE MAY 30, 2025 HEARING EXAMINER DECISION

1. The City of East Palo Alto's ("**City**") Rent Stabilization And Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance ("**Ordinance**" or "**Rent Ordinance**") is codified in Chapter 14.04 of the City's Municipal Code ("**EPAMC**").
2. EPAMC section 14.04.070 establishes a Rent Stabilization Board ("**Board**"), consisting of seven City residents, and one alternate. The Board is a quasi-judicial body that is authorized to conduct hearings and to "decide on tenant petitions for refund of excess rent paid in violation of this chapter." pursuant to Chapter 14.
3. The apartment complex herein referred to as the "**Property**" is located at 245 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA, 94303, and is subject to the City's Ordinance.
4. Tenants of multiple units of the Property filed their Individual Rent Adjustment Petition ("**Petition**") with the Rent Stabilization Program ("**Program**") on September 18, 2024, seeking rent reductions and rebates based on habitability problems, failure to provide maintenance and services, and reductions in maintenance and services. The Program consolidated the petitions and bifurcated the issues into common area issues and individual unit issues, with common area issues to be heard and decided first.
5. A hearing was held on February 27, 2025. Some tenants appeared at the hearing along with their representatives James Huynh from the Regional Tenant Organizing Network and Laura Vasquez from the East Okeefe Tenant Association. Aura Andrade (Community Manager), Andrea Bumagat (Compliance Manager) and Enrique Bedolla (Maintenance Supervisor) appeared on behalf of the landlord.
6. The Hearing Examiner issued a decision on May 30, 2025 ("**Decision**") finding that the tenants carried their burden of proof that the overall lack of maintenance in the common areas warrants a reduction in or rebate or rent. Accordingly, the Decision awarded a 5% reduction in rent for a period of three (3) years prior to the filing of the Petitions (September 2021 through May 2025); and for a period of one (1) year after the Decision (June 2025 through May 2026) to provide the landlord with the opportunity to successfully address the issues and demonstrate that the landlord will meet its obligations to maintain the common areas on an ongoing basis
7. On June 27, 2025, the landlord filed a timely Notice of Appeal challenging the Hearing Examiner's findings, the retrospective rebate, the fixed one-year rent reduction, and the relief awarded to the listed petitioners ("**Landlord's Appeal**").

8. During its March 11, 2026 meeting, the Board determined to conduct this appeal on the record submitted by to the Hearing Examiner, and not as a de novo hearing.
9. On August 12, 2026, the Board conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the Landlord's Appeal. Representatives of the tenants and the landlord were present for the hearing and provided arguments.
10. After receiving the parties' arguments, and public comment, and questioning witnesses, the Board closed the public hearing. The meeting was then continued to August 26, 2026.
11. On August 26, 2026, the Board conducted a duly noticed Special Meeting at which it considered the Administrative Record for the Petition. After posing clarifying questions regarding the Petition and Landlord's Appeal, and after deliberating in open session, the Board voted 7-0 to affirm the Hearing Examiner's Decision in its entirety and directed staff to prepare a written resolution memorializing the Board's findings and decision.

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD HEREBY FINDS, DETERMINES, AND RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Incorporation of Recitals.

Each recital set forth above is true and correct and is incorporated herein by this reference as part of the Board's decision.

SECTION 2. Record of Proceedings.

The Board hereby finds that its decision is based on the "**Administrative Record**" which includes the following: any materials timely and properly submitted to the Hearing Examiner and the Hearing Examiner's Decision; all of which are incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 3. Legal Framework.

Having identified the Administrative Record upon which this decision is based, the Board sets forth below the legal framework governing the review of an appeal under the Ordinance.

Under Chapter 14.04 of City's Rent Stabilization and Just Cause Eviction Ordinance and its corresponding regulations, a tenant may, in relevant part, petition the City's Board for a reduction of rent resulting from: (i) failure to comply with the "warranty of habitability" set forth in California Civil Code section 1941.1 ; (ii) failure to maintain the premises in a habitable condition consistent with building or housing codes ; and (iii) for decrease in housing services or failure to provide adequate maintenance without a corresponding reduction in rent . Under each of the foregoing grounds, a petitioner must evidence the grounds for a rent reduction by a preponderance of the evidence.

On appeal, an appellant must establish there was either an error or abuse of discretion on the part of the Hearing Examiner. “Error” nor “abuse of discretion” are defined in the Rent Ordinance nor its corresponding Regulations. Accordingly, the Board has interpreted “abuse of discretion” to mean and refer to the standard of review established by the state law applicable to judicial review of administrative decisions like the present one—California Code of Civil Procedure section 1094.5.

Under Section 1094.5, an abuse of discretion is found if: (i) the Hearing Examiner did not proceed in the manner required by law; (b) the decision is not supported by the findings; and (c) where the findings are not supported by substantial evidence. Where it is claimed that findings are not supported by the evidence, abuse of discretion is established only if the findings are not supported by substantial evidence in the light of the whole record.

Pursuant to Regulation, § 1500(G)(2)(h), the Board’s scope of review on appeal is as follows:

“The Board may conduct a new (de novo) hearing or may act on the basis of the record submitted to the Hearing Examiner. Unless the Board determines that a de novo hearing is required, the Board’s decision will be based exclusively on the record before the Hearing Examiner. If the Board does not grant a de novo hearing, the parties shall be instructed that their discussions or comments at the Board hearing may not include factual matters or evidence that were not presented to the Hearing Examiner or officially noticed. Parties may discuss or comment upon the legal matters in question and any other pertinent issues raised by the appeal. The Board shall disregard any discussion or comment regarding factual matters that were not in the record before the Hearing Examiner or officially noticed.”

SECTION 4. Findings of the Board

After full consideration, and based on the preponderance of evidence in the Administrative Record, the Board determines (1) that the Hearing Examiner’s findings are supported by substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, and (2) that the Administrative Record reflects no error or abuse of discretion on the part of the Hearing Examiner. The Hearing Examiner’s Decision is affirmed in full. This constitutes the Board’s final decision on the Landowner’s Appeal.

SECTION 5. Severability.

If any section or provision of this Resolution is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, or contravened by reason of any preemptive legislation, the remaining sections and/or provisions of this Resolution shall remain valid.

SECTION 6. Certification.

The Board Secretary shall certify to the passage and adoption of this Resolution; cause the same to be entered among the original resolutions of the Board; and make a minute of the passage and adoption thereof in the records of the proceedings of the Board in the minutes of the meeting at which time same is passed and adopted.

SECTION 7. Effective Date.

This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption by the Board.

PASSED, APPROVED, and ADOPTED on this 14th day of October 2026.

DeVan Taylor, Chair
Rent Stabilization Board

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Natasha Railburn
Rent Stabilization Administrator

John D. Le
City Attorney

RESOLUTION 26 - ____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD ADOPTING AN APPEAL HEARING DECISION IN MATTER OF CALDERON, ET AL. V. WOODLAND PARK COMMUNITIES, CASE NOS. 20240022–20240036; 301 EAST O'KEEFE STREET, EAST PALO ALTO, CA, AFFIRMING IN FULL THE JUNE 9, 2025 HEARING EXAMINER DECISION

1. The City of East Palo Alto's ("**City**") Rent Stabilization And Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance ("**Ordinance**" or "**Rent Ordinance**") is codified in Chapter 14.04 of the City's Municipal Code ("**EPAMC**").
2. EPAMC section 14.04.070 establishes a Rent Stabilization Board ("**Board**"), consisting of seven City residents, and one alternate. The Board is a quasi-judicial body that is authorized to conduct hearings and to "decide on tenant petitions for refund of excess rent paid in violation of this chapter." pursuant to Chapter 14.
3. The apartment complex herein referred to as the "**Property**" is located at 301 East O'Keefe Street, East Palo Alto, CA, 94303, and is subject to the City's Ordinance.
4. Tenants of multiple units of the Property filed their Individual Rent Adjustment Petition ("**Petition**") with the Rent Stabilization Program ("**Program**") on September 18, 2024, seeking rent reductions and rebates based on habitability problems, failure to provide maintenance and services, and reductions in maintenance and services. The Program consolidated the petitions and bifurcated the issues into common area issues and individual unit issues, with common area issues to be heard and decided first.
5. A hearing was held on February 26, 2025. Some tenants appeared at the hearing along with their representatives James Huynh from the Regional Tenant Organizing Network and Laura Vasquez from the East Okeefe Tenant Association. Aura Andrade (Community Manager), Andrea Bumagat (Compliance Manager) and Enrique Bedolla (Maintenance Supervisor) appeared on behalf of landlord.
6. The Hearing Examiner issued a post-hearing order on April 3, 2025, to allow for the submission of additional evidence. Thereafter, both parties submitted additional documents, and the hearing record was declared closed as of April 21, 2025.
7. The Hearing Examiner issued a decision on June 9, 2025 ("**Decision**") finding that the tenants established reductions in housing services and/or habitability violations based on an intermittently malfunctioning elevator, leaking pipes and flooding in the parking area, and a malfunctioning motorized gate. The Decision awarded: (1) a 15% rent rebate for the petitioning tenants residing on the third level and a 7% rent rebate for the petitioning tenants residing on the second level for the elevator condition from January 2023 through February 26, 2025; (2) a 4% rent rebate for leaking pipes and flooding in the parking area from January 2023 through February

26, 2025; and (3) a 3% rent rebate for the motorized gate condition from January 2023 through January 1, 2025. The Decision also ordered continuing rent reductions for the elevator and leaking-pipe conditions until corrected. The Decision denied relief for the remaining common-area conditions.

8. On June 27, 2025, the landlord filed a timely Notice of Appeal challenging the Hearing Examiner's findings, the retrospective rebates, the continuing rent reductions, and the corrective conditions imposed ("**Landlord's Appeal**").
9. During its March 11, 2026 meeting, the Board determined to conduct this appeal on the record submitted by to the Hearing Examiner, and not as a de novo hearing.
10. On August 12, 2026, the Board conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the Landlord's Appeal. Representatives of the tenants and the landlord were present for the hearing and provided arguments.
11. After receiving the parties' arguments, and public comment, and questioning witnesses, the Board closed the public hearing. The meeting was then continued to August 26, 2026.
12. On August 26, 2026, the Board conducted a duly noticed Special Meeting at which it considered the Administrative Record for the Petition. After posing clarifying questions regarding the Petition and Landlord's Appeal, and after deliberating in open session, the Board voted 7-0 to affirm the Hearing Examiner's Decision in its entirety and directed staff to prepare a written resolution memorializing the Board's findings and decision.

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD HEREBY FINDS, DETERMINES, AND RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Incorporation of Recitals.

Each recital set forth above is true and correct and is incorporated herein by this reference as part of the Board's decision.

SECTION 2. Record of Proceedings.

The Board hereby finds that its decision is based on the "**Administrative Record**" which includes the following: any materials timely and properly submitted to the Hearing Examiner and the Hearing Examiner's Decision; all of which are incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 3. Legal Framework.

Having identified the Administrative Record upon which this decision is based, the Board sets forth below the legal framework governing the review of an appeal under the Ordinance.

Under Chapter 14.04 of City's Rent Stabilization and Just Cause Eviction Ordinance and its corresponding regulations, a tenant may, in relevant part, petition the City's Board for a reduction of rent resulting from: (i) failure to comply with the "warranty of habitability" set forth in California Civil Code section 1941.1 ; (ii) failure to maintain the premises in a habitable condition consistent with building or housing codes ; and (iii) for decrease in housing services or failure to provide adequate maintenance without a corresponding reduction in rent . Under each of the foregoing grounds, a petitioner must evidence the grounds for a rent reduction by a preponderance of the evidence.

On appeal, an appellant must establish there was either an error or abuse of discretion on the part of the Hearing Examiner. "Error" nor "abuse of discretion" are defined in the Rent Ordinance nor its corresponding Regulations. Accordingly, the Board has interpreted "abuse of discretion" to mean and refer to the standard of review established by the state law applicable to judicial review of administrative decisions like the present one—California Code of Civil Procedure section 1094.5.

Under Section 1094.5, an abuse of discretion is found if: (i) the Hearing Examiner did not proceed in the manner required by law; (b) the decision is not supported by the findings; and (c) where the findings are not supported by substantial evidence. Where it is claimed that findings are not supported by the evidence, abuse of discretion is established only if the findings are not supported by substantial evidence in the light of the whole record.

Pursuant to Regulation, § 1500(G)(2)(h), the Board's scope of review on appeal is as follows:

"The Board may conduct a new (de novo) hearing or may act on the basis of the record submitted to the Hearing Examiner. Unless the Board determines that a de novo hearing is required, the Board's decision will be based exclusively on the record before the Hearing Examiner. If the Board does not grant a de novo hearing, the parties shall be instructed that their discussions or comments at the Board hearing may not include factual matters or evidence that were not presented to the Hearing Examiner or officially noticed. Parties may discuss or comment upon the legal matters in question and any other pertinent issues raised by the appeal. The Board shall disregard any discussion or comment regarding factual matters that were not in the record before the Hearing Examiner or officially noticed."

SECTION 4. Findings of the Board

After full consideration, and based on the preponderance of evidence in the Administrative Record, the Board determines (1) that the Hearing Examiner's findings are supported by substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, and (2) that the Administrative Record reflects no error or abuse of discretion on the part of the Hearing Examiner. The Hearing Examiner's Decision is affirmed in full. This constitutes the Board's final decision on the Landowner's Appeal.

SECTION 5. Severability.

If any section or provision of this Resolution is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, or contravened by reason of any preemptive legislation, the remaining sections and/or provisions of this Resolution shall remain valid.

SECTION 6. Certification.

The Board Secretary shall certify to the passage and adoption of this Resolution; cause the same to be entered among the original resolutions of the Board; and make a minute of the passage and adoption thereof in the records of the proceedings of the Board in the minutes of the meeting at which time same is passed and adopted.

SECTION 7. Effective Date.

This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption by the Board.

PASSED, APPROVED, and ADOPTED on this 14th day of October 2026.

DeVan Taylor, Chair
Rent Stabilization Board

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Natasha Raiburn
Rent Stabilization Administrator

John D. Le
City Attorney

RESOLUTION 26 - ____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD ADOPTING AN APPEAL HEARING DECISION IN MATTER OF GALLEGOS, ET AL. V. 2370 COOLEY AVE, LLC ET AL. CASE NO. 20250001; 2370 COOLEY AVENUE, UNIT #2, EAST PALO ALTO, CA, AFFIRMING IN FULL THE JULY 18, 2025 HEARING EXAMINER DECISION

1. The City of East Palo Alto's ("**City**") Rent Stabilization And Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance ("**Ordinance**" or "**Rent Ordinance**") is codified in Chapter 14.04 of the City's Municipal Code ("**EPAMC**").
2. EPAMC section 14.04.070 establishes a Rent Stabilization Board ("**Board**"), consisting of seven City residents, and one alternate. The Board is a quasi-judicial body that is authorized to conduct hearings and to "decide on tenant petitions for refund of excess rent paid in violation of this chapter." pursuant to Chapter 14.
3. The apartment complex herein referred to as the "**Property**" is located at 2370 Cooley Avenue, Unit 2, East Palo Alto, California, 94303, and is subject to the City's Ordinance.
4. Tenants of the Property filed their Individual Rent Adjustment Petition ("**Petition**") with the Rent Stabilization Program ("**Program**") on January 12, 2025, seeking rent reductions based on habitability problems, failure to provide maintenance and services, and loss of/or reductions in maintenance and services.
5. In compliance with Regulation 1500(A)(9)(d), Program staff emailed a notice to the landlord on January 24, 2025 notifying them in relevant part, of the tenants' Petition, and the landlord right to object it, and that if an objection is submitted, it must be filed within 20 days after "the mailing of the notice"—February 13, 2025.
6. The Property's landlord provided an objection to the Petition, but it was received by the City via email on February 24, 2025—after the deadline to oppose the Petition had expired.
7. Given the landlord's failure to timely object to the Petition, and pursuant to Regulation 1500(A)(9)(d), a hearing was not held.
8. The Hearing Examiner issued a decision on July 18, 2025 ("**Decision**") finding that, in absence of a timely objection from the landlord, and for failing to provide any grounds for opposing the Petition, the tenants carried their burden of proof entitling them to a rent reduction/rebate based on their claims in the Petition.
9. The Decision awarded a total rent reduction of \$3,939.75, plus \$667.00 for tenant's out of pocket expenses for a total rent reduction of \$4,606.75.

10. On, August 5, 2025, the landlord timely appealed the Decision contesting in sum that there was an error of discretion by the Hearing Examiner in evaluating and accepting the tenants' claims ("**Landlord's Appeal**").
11. During its March 11, 2026 meeting, the Board determined to conduct this appeal on the record submitted by to the Hearing Examiner, and not as a de novo hearing.
12. On August 12, 2026, the Board conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the Landlord's Appeal. Representatives of the tenants and the landlord were present for the hearing and provided arguments.
13. After receiving the parties' arguments, and public comment, and questioning witnesses, the Board closed the public hearing. The meeting was then continued to August 26, 2026.
14. On August 26, 2026, the Board conducted a duly noticed Special Meeting at which it considered the Administrative Record for the Petition. After posing clarifying questions regarding the Petition and Landlord's Appeal, and after deliberating in open session, the Board voted 7-0 to deny the appeal and affirm the Hearing Examiner's Decision and directed staff to prepare a written resolution memorializing the Board's findings and decision.

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION BOARD HEREBY FINDS, DETERMINES, AND RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Incorporation of Recitals.

Each recital set forth above is true and correct and is incorporated herein by this reference as part of the Board's decision.

SECTION 2. Record of Proceedings.

The Board hereby finds that its decision is based on the "**Administrative Record**" which includes the following: any materials timely and properly submitted to the Hearing Examiner and the Hearing Examiner's Decision; all of which are incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 3. Legal Framework.

Having identified the Administrative Record upon which this decision is based, the Board sets forth below the legal framework governing the review of an appeal under the Ordinance.

Under Chapter 14.04 of City's Rent Stabilization and Just Cause Eviction Ordinance and its corresponding regulations, a tenant may, in relevant part, petition the City's Board for a reduction of rent resulting from: (i) failure to comply with the "warranty of habitability" set forth in California Civil Code section 1941.1 ; (ii) failure to maintain the premises in a habitable condition consistent with building or housing codes ; and (iii) for

decrease in housing services or failure to provide adequate maintenance without a corresponding reduction in rent . Under each of the foregoing grounds, a petitioner must evidence the grounds for a rent reduction by a preponderance of the evidence.

On appeal, an appellant must establish there was either an error or abuse of discretion on the part of the Hearing Examiner. “Error” nor “abuse of discretion” are defined in the Rent Ordinance nor its corresponding Regulations. Accordingly, the Board has interpreted “abuse of discretion” to mean and refer to the standard of review established by the state law applicable to judicial review of administrative decisions like the present one—California Code of Civil Procedure section 1094.5.

Under Section 1094.5, an abuse of discretion is found if: (i) the Hearing Examiner did not proceed in the manner required by law; (b) the decision is not supported by the findings; and (c) where the findings are not supported by substantial evidence. Where it is claimed that findings are not supported by the evidence, abuse of discretion is established only if the findings are not supported by substantial evidence in the light of the whole record.

Pursuant to Regulation, § 1500(G)(2)(h), the Board’s scope of review on appeal is as follows:

“The Board may conduct a new (de novo) hearing or may act on the basis of the record submitted to the Hearing Examiner. Unless the Board determines that a de novo hearing is required, the Board's decision will be based exclusively on the record before the Hearing Examiner. If the Board does not grant a de novo hearing, the parties shall be instructed that their discussions or comments at the Board hearing may not include factual matters or evidence that were not presented to the Hearing Examiner or officially noticed. Parties may discuss or comment upon the legal matters in question and any other pertinent issues raised by the appeal. The Board shall disregard any discussion or comment regarding factual matters that were not in the record before the Hearing Examiner or officially noticed.”

SECTION 4. Findings of the Board

After full consideration, and based on the preponderance of evidence in the Administrative Record, the Board determines (1) that the Hearing Examiner’s findings are supported by substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, and (2) that the Administrative Record reflects no error or abuse of discretion on the part of the Hearing Examiner. The Hearing Examiner’s Decision is affirmed in full. This constitutes the Board’s final decision on the Landowner’s Appeal.

SECTION 5. Severability.

If any section or provision of this Resolution is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, or contravened by reason of any preemptive legislation, the remaining sections and/or provisions of this Resolution shall remain valid.

SECTION 6. Certification.

The Board Secretary shall certify to the passage and adoption of this Resolution; cause the same to be entered among the original resolutions of the Board; and make a minute of the passage and adoption thereof in the records of the proceedings of the Board in the minutes of the meeting at which time same is passed and adopted.

SECTION 7. Effective Date.

This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption by the Board.

PASSED, APPROVED, and ADOPTED on this 14th day of October 2026.

DeVan Taylor, Chair
Rent Stabilization Board

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Natasha Raiburn
Rent Stabilization Administrator

John D. Le
City Attorney



EAST PALO ALTO RENT STABILIZATION STAFF REPORT

DATE: October 14, 2026
TO: Honorable Members of the Rent Stabilization Board
BY: Natasha Raiburn, Rent Stabilization Program Administrator
Elena Lee, Community and Economic Development Director
SUBJECT: Rent Stabilization Ellis Act Presentation

Recommendation

Receive an informational presentation from staff on the Ellis Act as laid out in Section 14.08 Withdrawal of Rental Units of the City of East Palo Alto Municipal Code.

Background

The Ellis Act is a California state law that establishes a process allowing property owners to withdraw rental units from the rental housing market. The City of East Palo Alto Municipal Code Chapter 14.08 establishes local requirements applicable to Ellis Act withdrawals within the City.

An Ellis Act withdrawal is different from a typical eviction. Rather than terminating a tenancy based on tenant conduct or another just cause ground, the owner withdraws the rental units from the rental market in accordance with state and local requirements.

Chapter 14.08 - Withdrawal of Rental Units

Chapter 14.08 establishes requirements and procedures for owners withdrawing rental units from the rental market. These requirements include notices to affected tenants and relocation assistance for eligible tenants. The chapter also establishes protections intended to address the impacts of withdrawal on displaced tenants.

The City's Rent Stabilization and Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance works in conjunction with the Ellis Act and Chapter 14.08 by recognizing withdrawal under the Ellis Act as a basis for termination of tenancy when the applicable requirements are satisfied.

Tenant Impacts

Ellis Act withdrawals result in the termination of tenancies because the rental units are being withdrawn from the rental market. Depending on the circumstances, eligible tenants may receive relocation assistance and other protections provided by state law and the Municipal Code.

Certain tenants, including households that may qualify as protected tenants under applicable law, may be entitled to additional protections or relocation benefits.

Property Owner Requirements

Property owners seeking to withdraw rental units must comply with applicable state and local requirements. The process generally includes providing required notices, filing the appropriate documentation with the Rent Stabilization Office, complying with applicable relocation requirements, and completing the withdrawal process established by law.

Administrative Impact

This is an informational item only and does not propose any changes to City policy or the Municipal Code. Staff will continue to administer Chapter 14.08 consistent with applicable state and local requirements.

Conclusion

The purpose of this presentation is to provide the Rent Stabilization Board with an overview of the Ellis Act withdrawal process and the City's existing requirements under Chapter 14.08, including the protections and relocation requirements applicable to affected tenants.