

Dear City Selection Committee Members,

I am a Council Member for the City of Palo Alto and respectfully seek the honor of your appointment to the Recycling and Waste Reduction Commission of Santa Clara County.

I have a longstanding interest in our environment. When I started my career as a patent lawyer in New York City in the late 1980s, I volunteered to do pro bono work for the Natural Resources Defense Council. I was assigned to litigation related to the disposal of toxins and I recall pouring over the Solid Waste Disposal Act. I was able to understand and evaluate the underlying technical issues because I hold a BS in Biochemistry.

I worked in Manhattan in the early years of recycling. As a young associate, I convinced my law firm to partner with We Can, a nonprofit that collected aluminum soda cans. The firm agreed to put cardboard collection boxes in the lunch rooms of our Manhattan skyscraper. I am pleased today to see how recycling has grown and that more and more residents embrace the need to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

More broadly, my background with respect to environmental and climate issues includes:

- a. Coursework in environmental law at Georgetown Law School.
- b. In 2016, I ran on protecting the environment and climate action during my campaign for the State Assembly. I was honored to earn an endorsement from the Sierra Club and the California League of Conservation Voters (now California Environmental Voters). I also earned endorsements from the California Environmental Justice Alliance and environmental leaders including former Congressman Pete McCloskey and former State Senators Byron Sher and Fran Pavley.
- c. In November 2022, I ran for the Palo Alto City Council and was the only candidate endorsed by both the Sierra Club and the League of Conservation Voters. As a Council Member, I will be serving on the City's S/CAP Committee and the Joint Palo Alto/Santa Clara Valley Water District Recycling Committee.

I have litigated life science patent cases for several decades now and am eager to use my knowledge of chemistry and biology, background with environmental issues, and experience evaluating expert opinions and data on the Recycling and Waste Reduction Commission. I have litigated patent cases in courts across the country, primarily related to biotechnology and medical devices. Those cases involved analyzing the views of competing expert witnesses. My years of experience analyzing technical reports and competing views would be a useful asset in this position.

In addition, I will be serving simultaneously on Palo Alto's Sustainability and Climate Action Plan Committee, which would create natural synergies with the work of this commission.

As a patent lawyer, I have honed the art of being a quick study on technical issues. I have also made a career of understanding and catalyzing innovation. I believe this skillset would be an asset on the RWRC and equips me well to get up to speed quickly on the complex issues that come before it.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me at vicki@vickiforcouncil.com if you would like any additional information. It would be an honor to serve in this capacity.

Respectfully,

Vicki Veenker

Council Member
City of Palo Alto