

# Planning and Transportation Issues of Interest - July 2012

The following list outlines recent actions and the current status of planning and transportation projects and issues that may be of interest to boards and commissions, staff and the community:

## City Council

- Communications Power Industry (CPI) Zoning and Hazardous Materials: On June 4, 2012, the Council directed staff to retain a consultant to evaluate a) the hazardous materials off-site impact of CPI's plating shop operation on adjacent residential area, and b) the potential for additional zoning approaches to provide adequate health and safety protections for neighborhoods adjacent to research and industrial operations that use and/or store hazardous materials. On April 23, 2012, the Council hosted a public discussion of zoning options and hazardous materials issues related to the CPI site at 811 Hansen Way in the Stanford Research Park. Staff commissioned an "amortization" study to assess the time and cost associated with reducing or phasing out the use of certain hazardous materials. The study results suggested a 15-year amortization period, but in the meantime CPI has reduced hazardous material quantities below the State "Title 19" thresholds. Council directed that staff return in 30 days with a scope, budget and schedule (a 6-month process was directed) to be presented to provide further technical analysis of the risk to residents of a toxic leak at CPI, and also to address the broader zoning concerns about locating industry using hazardous materials adjacent to residential areas, including zoning practices adopted and used elsewhere in similar situations. Staff expects to release a Request for Proposal the week of July 9. Contact: [Curtis.williams@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Curtis.williams@cityofpaloalto.org)
- 335/355 Alma Street Mixed Use Project: On June 11, 2012, Council approved the Lytton Gateway Planned Community ordinance on second reading, following Council's May 14, 2012 approval of the mixed use project on the 21,713 square foot former Shell station site. The project would include approximately 50,000 square feet of office and retail space, including about 1,600 square feet of subsidized rent for a Palo Alto-based non-profit organization. The revised project plans approved by Council were then reviewed, along with the features required by Council conditions of approval to be reviewed, by the Architectural Review Board on June 21, 2012. Contact: [Jason.nortz@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Jason.nortz@cityofpaloalto.org)
- VTA Bus Rapid Transit: On June 18, 2012, Council postponed consideration of a recommendation to the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) regarding VTA's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. VTA requested the delay after receiving negative feedback from other cities in Santa Clara County. The project would include a new Bus Rapid Transit network between San Jose and Palo Alto that includes enhanced stations along El Camino Real, enhanced buses with rider-focused amenities, and increased headways to encourage ridership. The proposed route includes alternatives for center-street station platforms along El Camino Real or enhanced curbside station platforms, depending on local agency preferences. On May 14, 2012, staff provided an update of the project to the Council. The Planning & Transportation Commission received a presentation on the project on May 30, 2012. Contact: [Shahla.yazdy@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Shahla.yazdy@cityofpaloalto.org).
- 195 Page Mill Road: On June 25, 2012, the Council unanimously approved a revised Park Plaza project, a 3-story mixed use building but with reduced density (82 rental residential units rather than 84 residential condominiums), reduced residential floor area (104,174 sf) and reduced ground floor research and development floor area (47,917 sf at the ground floor, with potential for up to 2,400 square feet of ground floor retail within the corner ground floor space). The Council had previously reviewed the appealed Park Plaza project on October 3, 2011, when direction was given to the applicant to proceed with a rezoning, then on June 4, 2012 when direction was provided to the applicant to modify the project plans. The project still includes 17 affordable housing units. Contact: [amy.french@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:amy.french@cityofpaloalto.org)
- Wireless Communications Workshop: On June 25, 2012 and July 2, 2012, Council held discussed and then approved staff's recommendation to issue a request for proposal to provide wireless communication facilities, including the potential use of City electric substations, City Hall

and other city-owned properties for wireless communications facilities, to better meet the community's needs for a City-wide wireless network. The staff will report back to Council in six months with information or a proposal for action. Materials and links were posted to the website at: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pln/news/details.asp?NewsID=1761&TargetID=85>.

- **Draft Housing Element:** On July 9, 2012, the Council authorized staff to transmit the City's Draft Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The Planning and Transportation Commission reviewed a draft of the document on April 11, 2012 and May 9, 2012 and recommended that the City Council forward the Draft Housing Element to HCD. The Council's Regional Housing Mandate Committee reviewed the document on June 14 and 26, 2012, and recommended several changes. The Housing Element outlines various housing (and related land use) policies of the City, as well as listing potential sites zoned to allow future housing development. The Housing Element is required by State law, and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) specifies housing targets to be addressed (in zoning) for a particular planning period, in this case from 2007-2014. The Council will subsequently review the draft, and then will forward the document HCD, which determines whether the plan complies with State housing law. Typically, a city then revises the document in a series of iterative reviews with HCD. Contact: [tim.wong@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:tim.wong@cityofpaloalto.org)
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan:** On July 9, 2012, the Council adopted the City's updated Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan. The Council reviewed the Draft Plan on November 7, 2011, and directed further changes and review by the community, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Planning and Transportation Commission. The City sponsored a South Palo Alto focused community meeting on January 12, 2012. The Parks & Recreation Commission recommended approval of the updated plan at its February 28 meeting. The Planning and Transportation Commission recommended approval of the revisions at its March 28 meeting. The Parks & Recreation Commission approved an additional recommendation by Transportation to include two additional Bay-to-Ridge routes within the Plan at its April 24 meeting. For more information, see below under Transportation Projects or on the website at: [www.cityofpaloalto.org/bike](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/bike). Contact: [Jaime.rodriquez@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Jaime.rodriquez@cityofpaloalto.org)
- **Downtown Parking Study and Residential Permit Parking:** On July 16, 2012, Council will consider a range of parking study actions to address concerns related to downtown parking and residential neighborhood impacts. In particular, the Council will be asked to approve a trial residential permit parking program for a portion of the Professorville neighborhood. Parking impacts will be evaluated during the trial prior to a determination of a permanent implementation, a revised boundary, and permit costs. Staff will also discuss potential parking supply opportunities (including study for a new garage), parking technology improvements, and zoning-related issues.
- **California Avenue Streetscape Improvements:** On July 23, 2012, Council will consider final design concepts for sidewalk widening and the Park Boulevard Plaza, in order to proceed to final design and potential construction in the Fall of 2013. The final design stage will include better definition of the location and details of street furniture, loading zones, parking, and landscaping. Staff will also be working with the merchants in the area to minimize disruption during construction. The City will consider a variety of methods to assure access to businesses, marketing to let the public know the businesses remain opening, and phasing to best lessen the construction period for individual businesses.
- **Rail Corridor Study:** On September 17, 2012, Council will consider the final draft of the Rail Corridor Study Report for the areas between and adjacent to Alma Street and El Camino Real. The study outlines a vision for land use, transportation and urban design components of the corridor, particularly relative to potential improvements to rail service along the Caltrain tracks. The plan focuses on providing for safe pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connections across the tracks, Alma and El Camino, also enhancing access to public facilities and commercial services for neighborhood residents. A community workshop was held on March 29<sup>th</sup> and the Council's Rail Committee provided comments on April 26<sup>th</sup>. The Rail Corridor Task Force recommended that the City Council approve the final report on May 1. The Planning and Transportation

Commission recommended approval of the study on May 30. For further information, see below under Other Projects or the website at: <http://www.paloaltorailcorridor.org/>.

- Council Summer Recess: The Council will be on recess following its July 23 meeting until September 4, the day after Labor Day.

#### Planning and Transportation Commission

- PTC Vacancies: On July 2, 2012, Council appointed Alex Panelli and Greg Tanaka (an incumbent) to two of the three vacant Commission seats. The third candidate for filling a vacancy is to be decided on July 23, 2012 following an interview on July 16, 2012.
- Draft Housing Element: The Planning and Transportation Commission reviewed a draft of the document on April 11, 2012 and May 9, 2012 and recommended that the City Council forward the Draft Housing Element to the State's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review. The Council's Regional Housing Mandate Committee reviewed the document on June 14 and 26, 2012, and the Council considered the Housing Element on July 9, 2012. The Housing Element outlines various housing (and related land use) policies of the City, as well as listing potential sites zoned to allow future housing development. The Housing Element is required by State law, and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) specifies housing targets to be addressed (in zoning) for a particular planning period, in this case from 2007-2014. The Council will subsequently review the draft, and then will forward the document to HCD, which determines whether the plan complies with State housing law. Typically, a city then revises the document in a series of iterative reviews with HCD. Contact: [tim.wong@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:tim.wong@cityofpaloalto.org)
- 1095 Channing Avenue: On June 13, 2012, the Commission reviewed a request by Elizabeth Seton School and Roman Catholic Bishop of San Jose for a Conditional Use Permit Amendment allowing the operation of a new Pre-Kindergarten program within an expanded building, and an after school day care program, associated with an existing private school (K-8 program). The Commission continued the hearing to a date uncertain to allow the applicant to discuss with neighbor(s) their concerns and come to a resolution. Contact: [rina.shah@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:rina.shah@cityofpaloalto.org)
- Community Services Element of Comprehensive Plan: On June 13, 2012, the Commission reviewed draft revisions to the Community Services Element of the Comprehensive Plan and continued their review to July 25, 2012. Each of the Comprehensive Plan's elements are being revised as part of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Project. The Community Services Element identifies the goals, policies and programs related to the provision of community services, including parks, libraries, social services and cultural and recreation programs for all age groups within the City. City staff from the Planning and Community Services departments has been working with a subcommittee of the Commission over the past eight months to review and revise the element. Outreach activities with various City boards and commission have helped to refine the recommended revisions. The Commission comments from the June 13 and July 25 meetings will be forwarded to the City Council for their review at a meeting to be scheduled for Fall 2012. Contact: [Chitra.moitra@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Chitra.moitra@cityofpaloalto.org)
- California Avenue Streetscape Improvements Project: On July 11, 2012, the Commission will consider the preferred street alignment for the project so that the final design process may continue. The preferred street alignment responds to City Council requests for sidewalk widening and improvements to the Park Boulevard Plaza. The City anticipates construction in the Fall 2013 pending approval of the preferred street alignment and completion of funding this summer. The final design stage will include better definition of the location and details of street furniture, loading zones, parking, and landscaping. The Council will consider the design improvements on July 23, 2012. Further information is available at: [www.cityofpaloalto.org/calave](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/calave).
- Arastradero Road Trial Restriping and Traffic Calming: On July 25, 2012, the Commission will consider a recommendation to Council as to whether to make the trial traffic calming and restriping permanent. The Council will consider the issue in September. Additional project information is available under the Transportation Projects section below, and on the City's website at: [www.cityofpaloalto.org/arastradero](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/arastradero).

- Natural Environment Element of Comprehensive Plan: On August 8, 2012, the Commission will consider draft revisions to the Natural Environment Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Each The Natural Environment Element identifies the goals, policies and programs related to the use of open space, the preservation of natural resources, outdoor recreation, and public health and safety. Also included are policies relating to creeks and riparian areas, the urban forest, wetlands, air quality, hazardous materials, and energy. City staff from Planning and other City departments has been working with a subcommittee of the Commission over the past four months to review and revise the element. Outreach activities with stakeholder groups and various City boards and commission have helped to refine the recommended revisions. The Commission comments will be forwarded to the City Council for their review at a meeting to be scheduled for Fall 2012. Contact: [Chitra.moitra@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Chitra.moitra@cityofpaloalto.org)
- Transportation Element of Comprehensive Plan: On August 29, 2012, the Commission will consider draft revisions to the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Transportation Element identifies the goals, policies and programs related to roadways and circulation, public transit, walking, bicycling, parking and special needs transportation. City staff from Planning has been working with a subcommittee of the Commission over the past four months to review and revise the element. The Commission comments will be forwarded to the City Council for their review at a meeting to be scheduled for Fall 2012. Contact: [roland.rivera@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:roland.rivera@cityofpaloalto.org)

#### Transportation Projects

- California High Speed Rail and Caltrain: On December 2, 2010, the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) announced that initial funding for high speed rail (HSR) will be devoted to a 65-mile stretch of rail corridor in the Central Valley. In March, State Senator Simitian, Assemblyman Rich Gordon, and Representative Anna Eshoo suggested a modified system to use an upgraded (electrified) two-track Caltrain system in lieu of a four-track HSR system from San Jose to San Francisco. The Blended System (two-track) would integrate electrified Caltrain service with High Speed Rail train service between San Jose and San Francisco. Funding options for matching HSR funding for the Blended System are currently being explored by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and other agencies on the Peninsula. The Rail Committee is following this issue closely, along with the electrification of Caltrain. The Rail Committee also recently approved a letter (February 16, 2012) from the City commenting on the Revised Program EIR for the Central Valley to Bay Area segment of HSR. The Committee will also be following the latest release of the Business Plan for the project, which proposes a reduced cost (still \$20+ million over the 2008 estimate) and phased timeline. The City Council's Rail Committee meets every fourth Thursday of the month at 8:30 a.m. in the Council Conference Room at City Hall. The City has established a web page to keep the community informed about the project at: [www.cityofpaloalto.org/cahsr](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/cahsr). Contact: [Jaime.rodriquez@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Jaime.rodriquez@cityofpaloalto.org)
- Oregon Expressway Improvements: The County of Santa Clara is leading the design and construction of operational improvements on Oregon Expressway between from Page Mill Road to Highway 101 to help improve operations at signalized intersections. The County has been working with City Staff on the development of the design plans. The project includes traffic signal updates at each existing signalized intersection, sidewalk improvements, pedestrian ramp improvements, street resurfacing, and roadway markings/signage improvements. The County of Santa Clara received Council approval of the concept plans in November 2009, and is hoping to begin construction later this year. As part of the project, a new bicycle-friendly traffic signal will be installed at the intersection of Ross Road and Oregon Expressway through a funding partnership with the City approved by the City Council on April 23, 2012, for which the City is contributing \$410,000 towards the project; an executed funding agreement for the project was completed in June. Contact: [rafael.rius@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:rafael.rius@cityofpaloalto.org)
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Update: On July 9, 2012, the Council adopted the updated proposed Plan. The Planning and Transportation Commission recommended adoption of the update at its March 28, 2012 meeting. The City Council previously reviewed the plan at its November 7, 2011 meeting and directed that changes be made and that the revisions be

reviewed by the Planning and Transportation Commission and the Parks and Recreation Commission. Staff sponsored a South Palo Alto focused community meeting on January 12 to help solicit input from residents regarding bikeway connections through south Palo Alto and into Mountain View and Los Altos. The Parks and Recreation Commission reconsidered the Draft Plan on February 28 and voted to forward a recommendation to the City Council for approval of the Plan. The Parks & Recreation Commission approved an additional recommendation by Transportation to include two additional Bay-to-Ridge routes within the Plan at its April 24 meeting. Further information about the Plan is available at: [www.cityofpaloalto.org/bike](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/bike). Contact: [jaime.rodriquez@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:jaime.rodriquez@cityofpaloalto.org)

- California Avenue Transit Hub Corridor Streetscape Project: On November 28, 2011, the City Council adopted a Negative Declaration, approved a Resolution to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission confirming the City's commitment to grant funding, and established a Capital Improvements Program account for the project. The action was a follow-up to respond to a Superior Court order to rescind the prior approvals for those items and to reconsider them, with environmental review preceding other actions. Continued community meetings have been conducted to refine the design, including alternative layouts for the Park Blvd. plaza, so that a preferred street alignment may be presented to the Planning and Transportation Commission on July 11 and Council on July 23 for final design to be completed. Further information is available at: [www.cityofpaloalto.org/calave](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/calave). Contact: [shahla.yazdy@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:shahla.yazdy@cityofpaloalto.org)
- VTA Bus Rapid Transit: The Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is working on the development of a new Bus Rapid Transit network between San Jose and Palo Alto that includes enhanced stations along El Camino Real, enhanced buses with rider-focused amenities, and increased headways to encourage ridership. The proposed though route includes alternatives for center-street station platforms along El Camino Real or enhanced curb-side station platforms, depending on local agency preferences. Staff provided an update to Council on the project during a study session on May 14. A city council discussion date with the VTA was scheduled on June 18 but deferred at the request of the VTA after receiving feedback from other cities in Santa Clara County. . Contact: [shahla.Yazdy@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:shahla.Yazdy@cityofpaloalto.org).
- Greer Road Safe Routes to School/Traffic Calming. The Greer Road traffic calming plan was constructed in August 2011 for a six month trial period. The plan consists of two speed humps on Greer Road between Oregon Expressway and Embarcadero Road. Fifty-four percent (54%) of project area households supported the installation of this plan during the post card survey. Staff has collected traffic data, accident data and input from various departments to determine the success of this project. The evaluation report and another postcard survey will be sent to residents this month to determine if the project should be retained permanently. Contact: [Ruchika.aggarwal@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Ruchika.aggarwal@cityofpaloalto.org).
- Arastradero Road Corridor Restriping Trial: On August 1, 2011, the City Council approved extension of the Phase 2 - Trial Restriping along Arastradero Road between El Camino Real to Gunn High School for an additional one year period to June 2012 due mainly to a change in the Gunn High School bell schedule to begin classes at 8:25 AM instead of the previous start time of 7:55 AM. Gunn High School approved permanent retention of the modified bell schedule in April. The City presented the findings of recent traffic data and crash history analysis at a community meeting on June 12. feedback from the meeting was positive for the operation of the improvements. The Planning and Transportation Commission will consider permanent implementation of the trial on July 25 and City Council consideration is scheduled for September 4. For further information, visit the City's website at: [www.cityofpaloalto.org/arastradero](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/arastradero).
- Highway 101 Auxiliary Lanes: Proposition 1B passed by the voters in 2006 included funding for the installation of auxiliary lanes on Highway 101 in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. Caltrans began construction of the project in April, including the placement of traffic control devices along local roads adjacent to Highway 101, such as East and West Bayshore Roads, to accommodate upcoming construction activities. Construction of the project is estimated to last approximately one year. Contact: [Shahla.yazdy@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Shahla.yazdy@cityofpaloalto.org)

- Transportation Element – Comp Plan Update: The City received a grant in the amount of \$75,000 from the Valley Transportation Authority's CDT – Planning Grant program to bring on a consultant team (Hexagon Transportation Consultants) to help expand the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff will supplement the grant to allow for a new Transportation-Land Use Model to be developed and traffic data collected to allow for various scenarios to be explored during the update of the Comprehensive Plan. Contact: [Rafael.rius@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Rafael.rius@cityofpaloalto.org)
- Parking Study: The Downtown Parking Study Group comprised of residents, merchants, staff, and representatives from the Planning & Transportation Commission and City Council seven times to review a proposed trial residential permit parking program for the Professorville area. The City administered a survey of residents within the proposed trial area in June and the Council will consider the results of the survey and the implementation of a trial permit parking program at its July 16, 2012 meeting. A new Permit Management System Database project was kicked off in February and is on scheduled to be completed this summer. This new software will allow permits or renewals to be purchased on-line or in person. An online waiting list will also be available to further encourage persons to apply for and obtain parking permits. Further information is available online at: [http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pln/transportation/projects/university\\_parking\\_study.asp](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pln/transportation/projects/university_parking_study.asp).
- Electric Vehicles: The Planning and Community Environment Department participates in a multi-department task force that is working on the development of Electric Vehicle policies. The task force focuses on policies to streamline residential and commercial installations and related permitting issues. A Request for Information (RFI) solicitation will be released by the City in the Fall 2012 inviting charging station manufacturers and operators to present their qualifications and ideas in creating a public charging station network in Palo Alto. Following the RFI, the City will update the Planning & Transportation Commission and City Council to consider an allocation of resources for the implementation of future projects in 2013. Contact: [Jaime.rodriquez@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Jaime.rodriquez@cityofpaloalto.org)
- Safe Routes to School Program: The City received a \$528,000 grant from the VTA – VERBS Program to expand the City's Safe Routes to School Program. The new program will include the development of Walk and Roll Maps for each school within the district, develop new policy for reduced speed limit zones near schools, assess adult crossing guard deployment locations against state and industry-standard best practices, deploy bicycle and pedestrian data collection equipment to monitor trends, and develop new education curriculum for middle schools and parents. The City has completed four Walk and Roll Maps during the Spring 2012 for Addison School, Ohlone School, Palo Verde School, and Walter Hays School. A series of minor signage and roadway marking improvements will be implemented over the summer in response to resident safety concerns. The City is planning to implement many of the minor transportation improvements such as signage for each school over the summer. Staff Contact: [kathy.durham@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:kathy.durham@cityofpaloalto.org)

#### Other Projects/Issues

- 27 University Avenue/Theater Project: On March 5, 2012, the Council authorized the use of up to \$250,000 in Stanford University Medical Center project funds to retain design and other consultants to evaluate a performing arts theater and office proposal at 27 University Avenue. John Arillaga, the potential applicant, has proposed a mix of uses for the site, and the City's consultants are now engaged in providing a proactive approach to site design that accommodates public spaces and facilitates pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connections through the site, as well as recognition of the extended site area as gateway to downtown. The Stanford funds (\$2.2 million) were intended to provide for enhanced connections and \$250,000 was to be set aside for design. Regular meetings with the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Stanford, City staff, and other stakeholders continue and a status report is being prepared to present to Council in September. Staff expects to return to Council with a concept design and perhaps an application submittal within 3 months. Contact: [amy.french@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:amy.french@cityofpaloalto.org).

- **Edgewood Plaza and Final Environmental Impact Report:** Building permits have been submitted and are under review for site work and renovation of the commercial buildings. On March 19, 2012, the Council certified the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and approved the proposed Planned Community zoning for the Edgewood Plaza project at 2080 Channing Avenue. The project consists of renovation of three existing structures for a neighborhood commercial shopping center (including grocery store), 10 single-family homes, and a .22-acre park on a total of 3.6 acres. The Council's approval also included a resolution to adopt the Final EIR for the project. More information is available at: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pln/news/details.asp?NewsID=1874&TargetID=85>. Contact: [Elena.lee@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Elena.lee@cityofpaloalto.org)
- **Sustainable Communities Strategy:** On April 19, 2012, the Council's Regional Housing Mandate Committee reviewed the "Preferred Scenario" for regional growth, as released by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). The plan is intended to accommodate approximately 1.1 million new jobs and almost 700,000 new housing units in the region between now and 2040. The Preferred Scenario outlines a future of extensive employment growth in Palo Alto, as well as substantial housing, but has considerably reduced the housing projections for the city since the prior iteration. Further information is available at: [http://www.onebayarea.org/pdf/SCS\\_PREFERRED\\_Scenario\\_Jobs\\_Housing\\_Connection\\_3-9-12.pdf](http://www.onebayarea.org/pdf/SCS_PREFERRED_Scenario_Jobs_Housing_Connection_3-9-12.pdf). The Council has formed the Regional Housing Mandate Committee to assess ways to address the planning proposals, including working with legislators and other cities to question the assumptions and formulas upon which the plans are being developed (Committee meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Conference Room at City Hall). A comment letter to the regional agencies was prepared and approved by Council on March 5. The Council also reviewed and approved a comment letter on February 21 regarding the One Bay Area Transportation Grant Program criteria, which outlines several prerequisites for obtaining future grant funding. The Committee has met most recently on June 14 and 26 to review the City's Draft Housing Element. Contact: [curtis.williams@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:curtis.williams@cityofpaloalto.org) More information is available at: <http://www.onebayarea.org/>.
- **Palo Alto Rail Corridor Study:** In 2010, the Council authorized a study of the Caltrain and potential High Speed Rail corridor in conjunction with the City's Comprehensive Plan and consideration of High Speed Rail issues. The study is intended to address land use, transportation and urban design components of the study area. A 17-member task force was appointed by the City Manager to represent multiple stakeholders across the community. The Task Force has met 15 times and has identified a number of issues and opportunities in the corridor. A final draft report was released on May 16. The report has been reviewed and recommended for approval by various boards and committees, including by the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) on March 14 and May 30 and Architectural Review Board on March 15 and May 24. A Community Workshop was held to review the document on Thursday, March 29. The report has been scheduled for City Council approval on September 17. Information about the study and upcoming meetings is available at: <http://www.paloaltorailcorridor.org/>.
- **SUMC Project Construction:** Construction work continues on three components of the SUMC Facilities Renewal and Replacement Project. The Welch Road Utility Project will upgrade underground utility equipment, widen certain sections of Welch Road and provide new landscaping in preparation for the new hospitals. The renovation of Hoover Pavilion also continues, which will result in a comprehensive building rehabilitation and improvements for future medical offices. Construction activities for the new Hoover Pavilion Parking Structure began in May. Excavation and shoring activities for the expansion of the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital is also underway. Information regarding the project is available at the SUMC website: [www.stanfordpackard.org](http://www.stanfordpackard.org), and specifics about ongoing construction activities may be found at: <http://www.stanfordpackard.org/construction>. Contact: [steven.turner@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:steven.turner@cityofpaloalto.org)

- Comprehensive Plan Amendment: A subcommittee of the Commission has been meeting with staff over the past several months to review full Commission comments made at several meetings over the last year and a half regarding the Comprehensive Plan's policies and programs. The subcommittee and staff are developing specific changes to the plan to discuss with the full Commission into the summer of 2012. Information regarding the Comprehensive Plan update is posted on the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Project Website. The website can be accessed at: [www.paloaltocompplan2020.org/](http://www.paloaltocompplan2020.org/). Community members may sign up on the website to receive notice of new information or upcoming meetings regarding the Comprehensive Plan Amendment. Contact: [roland.rivera@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:roland.rivera@cityofpaloalto.org)
- Housing Element: City staff has been preparing the 2007-2014 City of Palo Alto Housing Element as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. The Housing Element outlines various housing (and related land use) policies of the City, as well as listing potential sites zoned to allow future housing development. The Housing Element is required by State law, and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) specifies housing targets to be addressed (in zoning) for a particular planning period, in this case from 2007-2014. The Planning and Transportation Commission reviewed a draft of the document on April 11, 2012 and May 9, 2012 and recommended that the City Council forward the Draft Housing Element to the State's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review. The Council's Regional Housing Mandate Committee reviewed the draft on June 14 and June 26. The Council will review the draft on July 9, and then will forward the document to the HCD, which determines whether the plan complies with State housing law. Typically, a city then revises the document in a series of iterative reviews with HCD. Contact: [tim.wong@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:tim.wong@cityofpaloalto.org)
- East Meadow Circle and California Avenue Concept Plans: On October 12, 2011, the Planning and Transportation Commission recommended to Council a draft East Meadow Circle Concept Area Plan. The City Council tentatively accepted the Plan on February 13, 2012, with direction to staff to incorporate the Plan into the Comprehensive Plan to study its environmental impacts, prior to final consideration. Potential land use scenarios for the California Avenue area were reviewed by the Planning Commission on October 27, 2010. An update meeting with the Commission will be scheduled in summer of 2012 for review of a draft Preferred Alternative and for recommendation to Council of a draft plan. More information on the concept plans can be found at: [www.paloaltocompplan2020.org](http://www.paloaltocompplan2020.org).
- Professorville Historic Design Guidelines: The City of Palo Alto is in the process of preparing design guidelines for the Professorville Historic District. The guidelines are intended to identify compatibility parameters for new construction in Professorville, focusing on the overall intent of the district, and to provide applicants and the community with a measure of predictability for future project review. Staff is working with a committee comprised of community representatives and two Historic Resources Board members to develop draft guidelines. The community members of the committee are also to act as liaisons to the Professorville neighborhood. A draft of the guidelines is under review by City staff. A community meeting to discuss the guidelines will be scheduled for late July to be followed by a meeting with the Historic Resources Board and City Council. More information on the guidelines is available on the City's website at: [http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pln/advance\\_planning/professorville\\_design\\_guidelines.asp](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pln/advance_planning/professorville_design_guidelines.asp). Contact: [steven.turner@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:steven.turner@cityofpaloalto.org)
- Wireless Communications: On May 16, 2011, Council sponsored a study session to review issues related to wireless communications facilities (cell towers and antennas). Consultants to the City and staff presented an overview of the need for and technology related to such facilities, health issues, and relevant federal, state, and Palo Alto regulations. The Council asked that staff continue the dialogue with the community to provide better understanding for the public and the wireless industry. On December 8, 2011, the Architectural Review Board recommended approval of the AT&T proposal for 20 distributed antenna systems (DAS) installations. Approval of the project by the Planning Director was appealed to the City Council, which approved 19 of the sites on January 23, 2012 (one was deferred for further study, and was later approved at staff level in an alternate location). An update on wireless communications activities was provided in an

informational report (<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=29635>) to the Council on December 12, 2011. Staff continues to develop resources about City sites that might be leased for wireless antenna use. Council directed staff on July 2, 2012 to issue a request for proposal for a consultant/vendor to prepare a citywide wireless communications facilities plan. The website with information and resources about wireless technology can be found at: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pln/news/details.asp?NewsID=1761&TargetID=85>.

- **Living in Vehicles Issue:** Staff continues to coordinate with a working group of residents, businesses, homeless advocates, the faith community, and social service providers to seek solutions to problems attributed to persons living in their vehicles on City streets or other City facilities. Options being considered include a program to allow religious institutions and businesses to host such individuals, subject to certain rules, and/or an ordinance restricting or prohibiting vehicle habitation on City land or streets. A second community meeting was held on June 26<sup>th</sup>, and attended by about 35 people. Staff expects to present recommendations to the City Council's Policy and Services Committee on September 11. Contact: [Consuelo.hernandez@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Consuelo.hernandez@cityofpaloalto.org).
- **Disposition of U.S. Post Office:** On February 21, 2012, the U.S. Postal Service made a presentation to the City Council and public, outlining the process to be used to sell the Post Office site at 380 Hamilton Avenue. The USPS has indicated a desire to sell and to relocate to a smaller location in the immediate area (or to remain on a lease basis within the existing building). The building is on both federal and local historic lists, and is expected to remain. The Council asked staff to consider developing an offer for City purchase, perhaps with a lease back to the USPS for a reduced size post office. The City has sent a letter of interest to the U.S Postal Service expressing interest in acquiring the building and site and has contracted with firms to provide an appraisal and analyses of the structural integrity and historic significance of the building. The City's due diligence effort continues; however, the USPS has not yet placed this property on the market. Contact: [steven.turner@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:steven.turner@cityofpaloalto.org).
- **Construction at 278 University Avenue:** Building construction continues at this site at the corner of University and Bryant is complete. The new project will include a ground floor retail use with three floors of office above. Temporary walkways are provided along University and temporary closures or road narrowing of Bryant may be needed periodically to accommodate some of the construction. The project is expected to be complete by late 2012. No tenants have yet been announced. Other construction underway on University Avenue includes the new Apple Store, the 317-323 University Avenue project, and the re-construction of a former home into an office at 564 University (delays have occurred due to changes in ownership and designers). Contact: [russ.reich@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:russ.reich@cityofpaloalto.org)
- **3445 Alma Street (Alma Plaza):** Construction of the Alma Plaza Shopping Center (to be renamed Alma Village) continues, including a 20,000 square foot grocery store, and an additional 6,000 square feet of commercial space. The grocery store will be complete for occupancy by Fall of 2012. Some of the building permits for the thirty-seven (37) single family homes have been issued and model homes are under construction. A traffic signal is being installed at the main entrance to the shopping center. Contact: [Elena.lee@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Elena.lee@cityofpaloalto.org)
- **Architectural Review Board (ARB):** The following key projects were recently reviewed by the ARB or are scheduled for upcoming meetings:
  - a) **ARB Vacancies:** On July 2, 2012, the Council reappointed Alexander Lew (incumbent) to the ARB and appointed Naseem Alizadeh to the seat that will be vacated by Judith Wasserman in October 1, 2012. Council also appointed Randy Popp to the current vacancy created by Heather Young's resignation.
  - b) **4214-4220 El Camino Real, Hilton Garden Inn:** On May 24, 2012, the ARB recommended approval of a request by OTO Development for Architectural Review of a new four-story hotel with 174 guest rooms, with follow-up review by the ARB subcommittee of minor items. On June 21, 2012, the ARB subcommittee reviewed

architectural details required by conditions of the Director's May 31, 2012 approval of the application. Contact: [Jason.nortz@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Jason.nortz@cityofpaloalto.org)

- c) 180 Hamilton Avenue: On June 7, 2012, the ARB recommended approval of modifications to the Casa Olga building, including exterior renovations of the existing eight-story building and conversion to an 86-room hotel use and ground floor restaurant. The Director approved the application on June 12, 2012, but it was appealed on June 25, 2012 and is tentatively scheduled for the Council agenda of July 23, 2012. The first preliminary review was held on February 16, 2012 and a study session was conducted on May 3, 2012. Contact: [Clare.campbell@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Clare.campbell@cityofpaloalto.org)
  - d) 180 El Camino Real: On June 7, 2012, the ARB recommended approval of a proposal by Simon Properties for phased renovations on a portion of Stanford Shopping Center, including demolition of 246,118 square feet of space, construction of a new freestanding one-story 7,063 square foot restaurant (Fleming's), and site plan locations for 239,055 square feet in five (5) retail buildings. The ARB application was approved on July 3, 2012. Contact: [Jodie.gerhardt@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Jodie.gerhardt@cityofpaloalto.org)
  - e) 435 Portage Avenue: On June 7, 2012, the ARB recommended approval of a project proposed by Fergus Garber Young Architects to elevate an existing single story building in order to provide structured at-grade parking below; the Director's approval was issued on June 12, 2012. Contact: [Russ.reich@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Russ.reich@cityofpaloalto.org)
  - f) 260 California Avenue: On June 21, 2012, the ARB conducted a preliminary review of a new three-story building proposed to replace the "Illusions" night club. The building would have approximately 3,800 square feet of retail space at the ground floor and the two upper floors would contain offices totaling approximately 23,000 square feet. No formal application has been submitted. Contact: [Russ.reich@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Russ.reich@cityofpaloalto.org)
  - g) 1701 Page Mill Road: On June 21, 2012, the ARB conducted a preliminary review of a new two-story Research and Development building of approximately 111,335 square feet. No formal application has been submitted. Contact: [Jason.nortz@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Jason.nortz@cityofpaloalto.org)
  - h) 355 Alma (Lytton Gateway): On June 21, 2012, the ARB reviewed revised plans for the Lytton Gateway Planned Community (PC) zone district approved by City Council and conditioned to return to the ARB for a four story mixed office and retail building on the former Shell Station site. The ARB had reviewed a five-story building on November 3, 2011. Specific items that were required to return to the ARB for review include: landscaping at the northeast corner, signage, final resolution on the tower design, complete lighting details and bike rack selection. Contact: [Jason.nortz@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Jason.nortz@cityofpaloalto.org)
  - i) 50 El Camino Real: On July 12, 2012, the ARB will conduct a preliminary review of the proposed Ronald McDonald house expansion project. This proposal includes a new three-story building to be constructed adjacent to the existing Ronald McDonald House facility on Sand Hill Road. The proposed 42-foot tall building would be approximately 51,000 square feet and would provide a total of 70 new guest rooms. Contact: [Russ.reich@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Russ.reich@cityofpaloalto.org)
- Historic Resources Board (HRB): The following key projects were recently reviewed by the HRB or are scheduled for upcoming meetings:
    - a) 564 University Avenue- On June 20, 2012, the HRB reviewed a request for a proposed historic resource restoration to correct unpermitted demolition of a Category 2 resource on the City's Historic Inventory. The unpermitted demolition occurred as part of a renovation of the building to allow a change of use from Residential to restaurant. The proposed project would restore the building to its Category 2 status and would provide offices uses rather than a restaurant use. The HRB made its recommendation for approval to the City Council, which will make the final decision on the proposed project. The project will be on the City Council Consent Agenda for July 16, 2012. Contact: [russ.reich@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:russ.reich@cityofpaloalto.org)

- b) 411 Lytton Avenue- On July 18, 2012 the HRB will review a request by Hayes Group Architects for a proposal to designate the building, constructed in 1901, to the City of Palo Alto's Historic Inventory in Category 2 as an example of square cottage architecture.
- c) 1213 Newell Road- On July 18, 2012, the HRB will review a request by City of Palo Alto Public Works Engineering Division for a 4,132 square foot addition to the existing 25,836 square foot Main Library, including site and landscape improvements.

#### Staff Notes

- Assistant Director Recruitment: An offer for the Assistant Director position has been accepted and, pending final negotiations, the new staff member should begin work in August.
- Sustainability Planner: A final selection for the Sustainability Planner position is expected in July.
- Other Planning and Development Center Staff Recruitments: Recruitment for positions in the Development Center as restructured, including three Project Managers and a Plans Examiner, is in process, with finalization of job announcements prior to application review. Transportation will also begin recruitment for a new Assistant Engineer to assist in the implementation of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation Plan.
- Inspector Robert Dunbar Receives CASp Credential: Building Inspector Robert Dunbar has recently received certification as a Certified Access Specialist from the State Architect's Office. The certification recognizes Mr. Dunbar's qualifications to determine compliance with "accessibility" requirements set forth by the State. Congratulations, Bob!