TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY SERVICES

DATE: MARCH 14, 2005 CMR:159:05

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 22.04.220 PERTAINING TO PARKS AND RECREATIONS BUILDING USE AND REGULATIONS TO DEREGULATE THE OPERATION OF SKATEBOARDS, ROLLER SKATES AND COASTING DEVICES ON THE RENZEL TRAIL AND OTHER PAVED OFF-ROAD MULTI-USE OPEN SPACE TRAILS

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that Council adopt the attached ordinance amending Paragraphs (a) and (c), Section 22.04.220, of Title 22 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code restricting the use of skateboards, roller skates, and coasting devices.

BACKGROUND
Paragraph (c) of Section 22.04.220 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code currently bans the operation or use of skateboards, skates or other coasting devices anywhere within open space lands. The intent of this ordinance was to protect the safety of park users by avoiding possible conflicts between pedestrians and persons on coasting devices on narrow trails. The ordinance also aims to protect habitat resources in open space areas by preventing coasting devices to be used off-trail.

DISCUSSION
The trail system at the Palo Alto Baylands Preserve includes nearly three miles of paved, off-road multi-use trails. The longest stretch of this trail shared by bikes, pedestrians, and other users runs from near Elwell Court parallel with East Bayshore Frontage Road, and extends to the O’Connor Street bridge over San Francisquito Creek behind the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course. This 9-foot wide asphalt path is striped (down the center) for the safety of trail users. The smooth paved surface is an appropriate surface for park visitors who wish to exercise on skates, scooters or roller blades. There is an unpaved trail (Adobe Creek Trail) that provides hikers and bikers with an alternative route between Elwell Court and the O’Connor Street Bridge along the edge of Charleston Slough and San Francisco Bay. Staff recommends amending the ordinance to provide an appropriate area for skaters and roller blade enthusiasts to exercise in open space areas.

Foothills Park, Enid Pearson Arastradero Preserve and Esther Clark Park (open space) do not have off-road, paved trails, and therefore would not be affected by the proposed amendment.
RESOURCES IMPACT
Revenue from citations issued pursuant to the violation of the current ordinance are deposited into the City’s General Fund. The revenue decrease anticipated from the adoption of this ordinance amendment will be less than $50 (one citation) per year.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS
The proposed amendment is consistent with existing City policy allowing for shared use of some trail facilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
This is not a project subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements.

ATTACHMENTS
Attachment A: Draft Ordinance

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