



August 2014

Welcome to Our Palo Alto eNews

Thanks for joining the conversation about the future of our City. Since we officially launched *Our Palo Alto* in April, we have hosted workshops, community meetings, a speaker series, online dialogues and even a coffee chat. All of these took place beyond City Hall, and have generated ideas, connections, solutions and a lot of community interaction and engagement.

As the thoughts and ideas on the future of our City continue to flow, we want to make sure you have all the latest news and information about *Our Palo Alto* events and opportunities for discussion.

Our first event, [Who Are We](#), focused on the ever-changing demographics of Palo Alto and what those changes mean for the future of our City. Housing affordability is a topic at the forefront of everyone's mind. It was also the topic of the second *Our Palo Alto* event. The [housing affordability](#) roundtable discussion provided significant feedback and insight into the struggles of community members when it comes to finding housing in Palo Alto. It also provided staff

Calendar of Events

**City Council Meeting
Public Hearing
Aug. 4, 8 p.m.
Continuing on Aug. 6
(approximately 7
p.m.)
City Council
Chambers
250 Hamilton Ave.,
Palo Alto**

City Council will hold a public hearing and discuss the Comprehensive Plan with City staff summarizing the input we have received from the community through our various conversations and tools.

**Litquake Palo Alto
Aug. 17, 2-8 p.m.
Oshman Family
Jewish Community
Center, 3921 Fabian
Way, Palo Alto**

Our Palo Alto will be one of the sponsors of this year's Litquake Palo Alto. The literary festival will feature over 40 bestselling authors, writing workshops, keynote speakers and kids programming. Be

with important input from residents as they prepare to update the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

We also hosted the first Coffee Chat With Our City with City staff and City Manager Jim Keene spread out at seven different coffee houses around town to talk with citizens and listen to what is on their minds. We posed the question, “How would you describe Palo Alto to someone who has never been here?” We also had lots of conversations on our social media channels, with the Coffee With Our City reach (eyeballs) on Facebook (more than 61,000) and Twitter (more than 159,000) extending the community conversations. Check out this [video](#) for some interesting answers and photos from that day.



Community Input is Vital as the Comprehensive Plan Update Progresses

The City is currently in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan, the City’s overarching planning document that presents the community’s vision in sections that address land use, transportation, housing, the natural environment, community services, and business and economics. The plan was last updated in 1998, and the current update, scheduled to be finished in 2015, would bring all of the plan’s elements up to date through 2030.

On May 8, the update process officially [kicked off with a celebration](#) of what’s to come, and a look back at the previous update process. Since the kickoff, we have held three community workshops to spark conversation on [critical issues](#), [growth management](#) and [alternative futures](#). We continued the community conversation with an online tool,

sure and stop by the *Our Palo Alto* booth while in attendance and learn how you can get involved in shaping the future of Palo Alto.



Connect with Us

Find us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

Subscribe to *Our Palo Alto* [eNewsletter](#)

Our Palo Alto [Community Events Calendar](#)

[Open City Hall](#), to solicit additional ideas and input.

On Aug. 4 and continuing on Aug. 6, the City Council will hold a public hearing and discuss the Comprehensive Plan and alternative futures and issues to be considered within the Environmental Impact Report. City staff will summarize the input we have received from the community through our various conversations and tools. For more information, click [here](#).



Help Chart the Future of Palo Alto Parks and Recreation

It is no secret that some of Palo Alto's best assets are its parks and open spaces, and preserving them is a priority. We want to ensure that they are around for future generations of Palo Altans to enjoy as we do today. The City is currently in the process of updating its master plan for Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation to decide how we will meet future demand and maintain environmental and recreational integrity. But first, we need valuable input from you to help guide the process. Please take a minute and complete this quick [interactive survey](#) and tell us how you use our parks, open spaces and recreation facilities.



Leadership Group Appointed to Increase Community Engagement

As the update to the City's Comprehensive Plan moves forward, we are looking to broaden and deepen public participation in the process. To help us in this effort, City Manager Jim Keene has selected 13 Palo Alto citizens to be part of a leadership group to work with City staff and assist with reaching out to the community, and advising about alternatives to the plan. The leadership group is scheduled to meet monthly, and members were selected based on a combination of qualifications, including living or working in Palo Alto, and established connections and networks in the community. The members of the Leadership Group are Jackie Schoelerman, Ellen E. Uhrbrock, Rebecca Sanders, Doria Summa, Helen Li, Catherine Ballantyne, Michael Nelson, Elaine Uang, Mehdi Alhassani, Hemant Bahnoo, Mila Zelkha, Cheryl Lilienstein, and David S.G. MacKenzie. For more information on the leadership group, click [here](#).



Ways to Connect

Conversations and connections are the key to *Our Palo Alto* and we want to keep you informed of all that is happening and provide ways for you to give us your thoughts and ideas. We'd love to hear your ideas about ways to connect or create opportunities for community conversations. Here are some ways to connect:

- Bookmark our site at www.ourpaloalto.org to keep up on what's happening
- Follow us on social media: [Connect with Us](#)
- Answer questions about the City on [Open City Hall](#)
- Join your neighbors on [Nextdoor](#)
- Email us at info@ourpaloalto.org with your questions or ideas

To find out how you can get involved, or more information about Our Palo Alto, go to: www.ourpaloalto.org