



## Welcome to *Our Palo Alto* eNewsletter, December 2014

### OPEN CITY HALL

## What Should the Council Priorities Be for 2015?

Each year, the [City Council](#) reviews its priorities for the year at its Annual Council Retreat. The priorities for 2014 included:

- The Built Environment: Mobility, Parking and Livability
- Infrastructure Strategy and Funding
- Technology and the Connected City

A Council priority is defined as a topic that will receive particular, unusual and significant attention during the year. Generally, there is a goal of adopting no more than three priorities each year, and they have a three-year time limit.

The City is asking the community to weigh in and submit their ideas for what priorities they think the City Council should adopt for 2015. Go to Open City Hall [here](#), and send us your thoughts. And, be sure and sign up to receive email alerts when we post new questions.

### Calendar of Events

#### **Parks and Open Space Survey Through Dec. 19**

The City of Palo Alto is asking community members to weigh in on the future of its parks and open spaces, and has released a survey to gather public input to help prioritize potential improvements. This information will also help to identify the recreation programs, events and park features that are most important to the community. Go [here](#) to submit your ideas until Dec. 19.

#### **Mitchell Park Library and Community Center Grand Opening**

**Dec. 6, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.**  
**3700 Middlefield Road**

The community is invited to celebrate the grand opening of the new center with a full day of free activities geared toward all ages from young children to seniors. For more information, go to <http://cityofpaloalto.org/mymitchell>.

#### **City Council Meeting Comprehensive Plan Update Dec. 8, 6 p.m.**

**City Hall, Council Chambers**  
**250 Hamilton Ave.**

City Council will hold a discussion on the Comprehensive Plan update and direct staff on next steps. To view the staff report, click [here](#).

#### **Leadership Group Meeting**

**Dec. 16, 5-6:30 p.m.**

**Mitchell Park Community Center, Adobe Room**



## California Avenue Renovations Pass Halfway Point

The sprucing up of California Avenue is moving right along, and as construction passes the halfway point, work will take a break for the holiday shopping season. During this time, community members are encouraged to visit, shop, dine, and see the progress taking shape along the corridor. From now until Jan. 4, construction work will be isolated to the east end of the plaza.

Work to enhance the California Avenue corridor and make it more pedestrian and bicycle friendly began in March 2014 and includes streetscape, infrastructure, and utility improvements along California Avenue between El Camino Real and the Park Boulevard Plaza. The project is expected to be completed in March 2015.

For more information on the [California Avenue Streetscape Project](#), click [here](#). To receive email updates on the project, click [here](#).

## Palo Alto Named as Leading Digital City

As the birthplace of Silicon Valley, technology is key to the identity of Palo Alto, and plays a major role in how the City functions. It seems only fitting that for the second year in a row, Palo Alto has been [named as a leading digital city](#) by the [Center for Digital Government](#). The annual award recognizes cities that adopt innovative ways of using information technology more efficiently, providing the public with easier access to government information.

Palo Alto was recognized for technology innovations including:

- [Cloud-first](#) and [mobile-first](#) approaches to deploying new technology.
- More than [50 online services](#), including those for the web and smartphones.
- Serving as a model for [open data](#) featuring real-time data.
- Comprehensive use of [social media](#) and online tools to support and promote community and civic engagement.
- Solutions such as [Pulse Point](#) and [Buildingeye](#).

For more information on the City's Information Technology Strategy, click [here](#). To connect with the City on social media, click [here](#).

### 3700 Middlefield Road

Appointed to work with City staff on the community engagement aspect of the Comprehensive Plan update, the [Leadership Group](#) meets monthly to discuss ideas and give feedback to staff. The meetings are open to the public and all are welcome.



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## Palo Alto Gets High Marks for Street Conditions

While California's local street and road conditions continue to deteriorate, Palo Alto gets high marks for its street improvement program in a recent [report](#) from the California State Association of Counties. The City's proactive management and investment in its [Street Maintenance Program](#) is highlighted as a model for cities. Since the program began three years ago, more than 80 lane miles have been repaved, and another 38 are either completed or underway for this year.

Statewide, the average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) stands at 66 ("at risk"), while Palo Alto's streets have a score of 78 ("good"). With [additional funding](#) approved for the Street Maintenance Program budget in an effort to step up and address aging streets, the City expects to reach a citywide PCI of 85 ("excellent") by 2019.



## VTA Seeking Community Input on Bus Rapid Transit Project

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority is seeking comments from the public on the environmental analysis of its El Camino Real Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project. The El Camino Real BRT corridor extends from downtown San Jose to downtown Palo Alto, passing through the cities of Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, Mountain View and Los Altos. The project will replace and upgrade the Rapid service along El Camino Real, and is aimed at increasing ridership along the corridor with faster and more reliable service. The Palo Alto City Council will be submitting a comment letter to the VTA in January, focusing on potential impacts and alternatives within the City. Members of the community are also invited to provide their input directly to VTA.

Information on the project can be found [here](#). Comments on the project can be emailed to [ecrbt@vta.org](mailto:ecrbt@vta.org).

## Housing Element Adopted by City Council

On Nov. 10, the City Council adopted the 2015-2023 updated [Housing Element](#) that is mandated by the state and is a component of the [Comprehensive Plan](#) that ensures jurisdictions plan for housing in their communities. The Housing Element is now on schedule to meet the state's deadline for certification at the end of January 2015 and has been sent to the State Department of Housing and Community Development for approval.

## Join the Conversation on Nextdoor

Over the past year, the number of Palo Alto residents participating in conversations on the private social network Nextdoor has more than doubled. The City joined Nextdoor in October 2013 when there were about 4,000 members signed up. Today, nearly 1 in 10 residents are on the platform where neighbors talk about issues, using verified names and addresses, and connect with their community. A variety of City departments post on Nextdoor on topics including crime and safety, special events, public works/utilities and general information. Are you on Nextdoor in your neighborhood? To join, go to [www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com).



## Tweets

Are you following us on Twitter yet? [Connect with us](#) and tell us what's on your mind.



[@bernadettstj](#) [#PaloAlto](#) [#mymitchell](#) [@cityofpaloalto](#) Grateful 4 a new [@PaloAltoLibrary](#) & [@AdascafePA](#)!! 4 all of my students [@PaloAlto\\_USD](#) will work there! :-)

[@SAPBayArea](#) Congrats [@cityofpaloalto](#) for being named leading digital city by the Center for Digital Government! <http://spr.ly/6013sbQh>

[@EBHarvill](#) Congratulations to Palo Alto! Named as a Leading Digital City for Second Year in a Row  
<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=2892&TargetID=268> ... via [@Cityofpaloalto](#)

[@siamliv](#) Great idea: "[@cityofpaloalto](#): We launched an online tool that displays daily updates of planning applications <http://bit.ly/copaPlan> "

[@GetWaterSmart](#) Congratulations, [@cityofpaloalto](#)! Way to reduce residential consumption and increase customer engagement in your programs!

[@suprgeek](#) Enormous Christmas tree in Palo Alto downtown [@cityofpaloalto](#)

To find out how you can get involved, or more information about Our Palo Alto, go to: [www.ourpaloalto.org](http://www.ourpaloalto.org)



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