Palo Alto will provide high quality community services to its residents, businesses, and visitors. Its schools, libraries, parks, community facilities, and performing arts and cultural centers are treasured and will be enhanced to serve current and future generations. Its police and fire services will be managed to provide consistently high levels of public safety. The City will continue to provide services and programs that meet the needs of special populations— including children, seniors, and people with disabilities— as well as programs in recreation, lifelong learning, and the arts that benefit all populations. Palo Alto’s success in providing these services will be expressed and measured by the satisfaction of its customers, the public at large. The City will pursue new ways to deliver community services in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible. It will coordinate its efforts with other public agencies, nonprofits, and the private sector to reduce overlap and maximize the use of resources.

Introduction

The Community Services and Facilities Element is not explicitly required by State law; however, the topics addressed here are an integral part of the City’s overall planning strategy and a basic consideration in setting growth and development policy. This Element emphasizes the importance of providing responsive, efficient, and cost-effective community services. It acknowledges the vital role that public facilities like parks and schools play in shaping community life. The Element describes how the City will meet the needs of groups with special needs, how it will maintain its physical facilities, and how it will provide educational, recreational, and cultural services to a population with ever changing needs and demands.

The Element includes a Background section that profiles schools, libraries, parks, police, and fire services in Palo Alto and briefly describes the City’s service provisions for young children, seniors, and persons with disabilities. It proceeds with goals, policies, and programs that address how these facilities and services will be provided in the future. City policy related to solid waste collection, energy, water supply, storm water, and emergency management services can be found in the Natural Environment Element.
Background

SCHOOLS

Palo Alto’s public schools are operated by the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD). PAUSD operates one preschool, eleven K-5 elementary schools, two 6-8 middle schools, two 9-12 high schools, a continuation school, a self-supporting adult school, the Children’s Hospital School at Lucile Salter Packard Children’s Hospital, and a summer school. The elementary, middle, and high schools had a combined enrollment of approximately 9,200 in 1996. PAUSD serves students in Palo Alto, Stanford, and part of Los Altos Hills. It also serves over 300 students in the Ravenswood School District in San Mateo County through a Volunteer Transfer Program and over 100 students from other communities through a State provision that allows parents to enroll their children in the district where they work. PAUSD currently has a substantial over-enrollment problem. Projected enrollment increases would exacerbate the existing over-enrollment problem, should capacity remain constant.

PAUSD Historic and Projected Enrollment

School enrollment in Palo Alto peaked prior to 1970, declined in the 1980s, and has been rising again in the 1990s.

The “new wave” of increased enrollment is expected to peak between 2003 and 2007, beginning at the elementary school level.

Capacity vs. Enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1997 Capacity</th>
<th>1997 Enrollment</th>
<th>2010 Projected Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>4,077&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4,406&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>2,359</td>
<td>2,087</td>
<td>2,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2,869</td>
<td>2,842</td>
<td>3,346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>9,305</td>
<td>9,335</td>
<td>9,804</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 - Capacity figures do not include school facilities currently leased to other users
2 - 1996
LIBRARIES

Palo Alto’s public library system is comprised of six libraries: Main, Children’s, Downtown, College Terrace, Mitchell Park, and Terman Park. The City has one of the highest library item per capita circulation rates in the nation with over one million volumes loaned in 1996-7 and some 900,000 people using the libraries annually. The Main Library houses the Palo Alto Historical Association Collection.

Access to library collections and information is provided through a variety of computer-based services, including the Internet and an automated catalog. The latter is available from remote locations 24 hours a day. The Mitchell Park Branch is equipped with a variety of equipment to serve persons with disabilities. There are also weekly and special event programs for children, ranging from toddlers to middle school ages. Library revenues are supplemented through a variety of fund-raising activities orchestrated by the Friends of the Palo Alto Public Library.

Public libraries across the country are grappling with unprecedented change caused by the emergence of the Information Age and the significant social and economic forces impacting the ways people live their lives. These changes are affecting library collection formats and how information is transmitted and received. The Palo Alto library system is adopting a strategic plan to place the library in a position to respond to the new challenges. The major components to the plan include the adaptation of services to accommodate technology and diverse needs, and improvements to the aesthetics of the buildings to increase their appeal as community gathering spaces.

For more information, log on to the City of Palo Alto website, library page: www.city.palo-alto.ca.us/palo/city/library
PARKS
The City owns and operates 29 neighborhood and district parks that total approximately 190 acres. They include ten “mini-parks” that range in size from one-half acre to two acres. These parks generally include small playgrounds for children and/or grass and landscape areas for playing or sitting. Most of the other parks are “neighborhood” parks and provide a mix of active and passive recreational areas. There are also three “district” parks that serve larger areas and contain a wider range of facilities. The district parks provide playing fields, picnic grounds, and community centers.

The City also owns and operates several large open space preserves such as Byxbee Park and Foothills Park. These are described in the Natural Environment Element. Because of the “built-out” nature of the community, it is unlikely that many new parks will be created in Palo Alto. Maintenance and rehabilitation of existing facilities will continue to be the City’s primary concern relating to parks.

RECREATION SERVICES
The City of Palo Alto Recreation Division takes great pride in its presentation of diverse and high quality programs. These programs include youth and adult sports, teen and middle school activities, after school programs, a variety of classes for all ages, and a wide range of special events. Recreation facilities include the Cubberley, Lucie Stern, Mitchell Park, Ventura, and Terman Community Centers; Rinconcada Pool; and a teen center. In 1996, the Cubberley Center was host to over 500,000 people. The Center offers a wide range of classes, activities, sports facilities, and special events. Ventura Community Center houses a police substation as well as administrative offices for Palo Alto Community Child Care, several child care centers, and other nonprofit groups. The Terman Community Center hosts a variety of nonprofit groups and includes a branch library and community meeting room.
POLICE

Law enforcement services are provided by the Palo Alto Police Department, located adjacent to City Hall and in a substation in the Ventura neighborhood opened in 1996. In 1995, Palo Alto had approximately 40 crimes per 1,000 residents, a rate very close to the rate for Santa Clara County as a whole and other similarly sized communities such as Mountain View. The Department had 173 employees in 1997, with 100 sworn officers including reserves. It shares Special Weapons and Tactical (SWAT) Teams with the cities of Los Altos and Mountain View and provides dispatching to the Stanford University Police through the City’s Communications Center. The City provides animal services, including a Spay and Neuter Clinic and pet adoption program, and contracts with Mountain View, Los Altos, and Los Altos Hills to provide emergency and State-mandated animal control services. A key challenge for the Department over the life of the Comprehensive Plan includes implementation of the community policing program, a philosophy that is intended to get the community involved in problem solving relating to police protection and crime prevention. Other challenges for the future include the potential increase in white collar crime, and the continued need for interagency cooperation.

FIRE

Fire protection services are provided by the Palo Alto Fire Department. The Department operates eight fire stations around the City and on the Stanford campus. In 1997, the Department had 123 personnel, including 116 sworn or uniformed positions. The City has mutual aid agreements with Menlo Park, Mountain View, Los Altos, and Woodside. Emergency medical services provided by the Fire Department include the Bicycle Response Team.
CHILD CARE

There are approximately 83 licensed child care facilities in the City of Palo Alto, including 51 center-based operations and 32 in-home operations. The center-based operations include 15 that offer infant/toddler care, 34 that offer preschool care, and 17 that offer school-age care. The combined capacity of these 51 facilities is 3,407 children, with many centers offering care for more than one age group. The center-based child care centers are operating at or near capacity. In 1997, there was a waiting list of over 1,000 children, most at the infant and preschool levels.

The City's Department of Community Services, through a partnership with the PAUSD, administers contracts for after school child care at each of Palo Alto's eleven elementary schools. In 1990, these programs served a combined total of 395 children. By 1997, most of the programs had increased their capacities to serve a combined total of over 800 children.

The City of Palo Alto also funds a program that provides a subsidy for child care expenses to qualifying low income households. It is administered through the Palo Alto Community Child Care (PACCC) organization, a private group that operates several center-based facilities in Palo Alto. This subsidy can be used at PACCC-run facilities or at other child care centers. The City has a Child Care Advisory Committee that advises the City Manager on child care issues.

From the late 1980s and through the late 1990s, Palo Alto experienced an increased demand for quality child care services. These increases can be attributed to an increasing number of women in the workforce, and the increase in the number of families with children. As transportation and traffic issues demand more comprehensive solutions, the provision of child care close to homes and/or work places will emerge as one of the components of a multi-faceted program to reduce traffic congestion. The challenge that lies ahead is ensuring an adequate supply of quality child care to meet the growing demand. One method to increase the supply of child care includes the evaluation of proposed development projects for their impact on child care demand, and the encouragement of the provision of onsite child care services.

SENIOR SERVICES

Services are provided to seniors by the Senior Coordinating Council of the Palo Alto Area. This nonprofit organization offers a broad range of services supporting independent living, education, and enrichment. Programs include transportation, housing, counseling services, social work, support groups, health screenings and lectures, adult day health care, home fix-it repair, and referral services. Programs in the City also include the Senior Day Health Program and the Senior Home Repair Service. The Palo Alto Senior Center provides a central facility for the delivery of these services, as well as a social center for seniors. Palo Alto has, and is projected to continue to have, a higher percentage of persons over 60 years of age compared to other communities and, therefore, has a greater demand for senior services. As the primary provider of senior services in the City, the Senior Coordinating Council will continue to update its services based on data from market research of the needs of seniors in Palo Alto.
SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Services to people with disabilities are administered by the City's Community Services Department with guidance provided by the Palo Alto Human Relations Commission. The Commission recruits service providers and programs serving residents with disabilities and makes funding recommendations to the City Council. Organizations receiving City funding for 1996/1997 include the Community Association for Rehabilitation providing educational and recreational services to people with disabilities, and the Peninsula Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired providing rehabilitative services for low-income residents disabled by loss of sight. Additional activities for disabled persons, including an aquatics program, are provided by the City Recreation Division. The City's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) coordinator is the Chief Building Official in the Department of Planning and Community Environment. The primary challenge for the City in the area of providing services to disabled persons is the implementation of the Compliance Plan required by the ADA. This plan identifies all of the public access projects necessary for the City to comply with the Act.

CULTURAL ARTS

The mission of the City's Arts and Culture Division is to establish an environment conducive to the growth and understanding of the arts. Programs and services offered by this division of City government include an art exhibition and museum education program, performances for and by children, a related education outreach program offered to the Palo Alto Unified School District, adult theater and opera productions, classes in visual and performing arts, and music and dance concerts. The City also has a Public Art Program and a Public Art Commission. Private community organizations supporting the arts include the Standing Committee for the Arts and Culture, Friends of the Children's Theater, Cultural Center Guild, and Council for the Palo Alto Arts. Additional cultural facilities include the Children's Theater, the Community Theater (home of TheatreWorks, the Palo Alto Players, and the West Bay Opera) at the Lucie Stern Community Center, the Art Center, and the Cubberley Center, which contains a theater and studios for resident artists.
Goals, Policies, and Programs

**Efficient Service Delivery**

**Goal C-1:** Effective and Efficient Delivery of Community Services.

Delivering high quality City services with finite fiscal resources requires efficiency and coordination, along with a recognition of changing community needs. Demand for services like child and senior care, education, and recreation continue to grow and change. Technology has revolutionized the way many services are provided, but has also added a new level of complexity. At the same time, the service delivery system itself has changed. Services that were once exclusively provided by the City may now be provided by another public entity or by a nonprofit agency or private company. The result of this trend has been a growing emphasis on partnership and coordination. The only way to achieve maximum efficiency in City service delivery is to collaborate with other jurisdictions, avoid duplication of efforts, build coalitions with the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD), and enlist the assistance of businesses and volunteers to supplement City resources.

**Policy C-1:**
Encourage the creation of partnerships within the Mid-Peninsula or the greater Bay Area to seek effective solutions to shared problems and community service needs.

**Policy C-2:**
Where economies of scale are possible, cooperate with neighboring communities in providing municipal services such as police and fire protection, libraries, and recreation.

The City already takes advantage of these opportunities in the provision of police, fire, solid waste, and recycling services. Additional opportunities may be available for these and other types of services, particularly through coordination with Stanford University and the City of East Palo Alto.

The annual May Fete parade is the happy result of a cooperative effort between the Palo Alto Recreation Foundation, the Palo Alto Weekly, and the Downtown Marketing Association.
**Policy C-3:**
Palo Alto should continue to take a leadership role in addressing community service issues that cross jurisdictional lines.

Palo Alto has been recognized as a national leader in the delivery of community services. The City is committed to continuing this leadership role in the future.

**Policy C-4:**
Maintain a close, collaborative relationship with the PAUSD to maximize the use of school services and facilities for public benefit, particularly for young people, families, and seniors.

In the past, school facilities have not been available for non-school uses due to insurance requirements, liability concerns, maintenance costs, and other issues. The City is committed to working with PAUSD to change this situation and increase the number and type of school facilities available for community use.

**Program C-1:**
In cooperation with existing public and private agencies and PAUSD, develop a service program that will coordinate the efforts of agencies providing services to families and youth in Palo Alto.

The Children and Family Services Program would reinforce the message that education begins at home and that parental participation in supervising homework and other school activities is a critical component of the education process.

**Program C-2:**
Continue to use the City/School liaison committee to remove barriers to community use of schools and facilities and coordinate other areas of mutual interest.

The City/School Liaison Committee consists of two School Board Members and two City Council members. The Committee meets regularly to identify and address issues of mutual interest to the City and PAUSD.

**Program C-3:**
Assess the potential for City use of PAUSD facilities for child care, libraries, recreational facilities, community meeting space, education, health care, culture, and computer resources.

**Program C-4:**
Work with PAUSD to determine ways that schools can be made more available to the community for weekend and evening use.

**Program C-5:**
Consider joint provision of library services with PAUSD.

**Policy C-5:**
Recognize the importance of schools to the social and economic vitality of the City.

**Policy C-6:**
Continue and enhance City efforts to assist PAUSD in anticipating and addressing land development-related school enrollment impacts.
PROGRAM C-6:
Provide regular status reports to PAUSD on potential and approved development projects.

PROGRAM C-7:
Require an assessment of school impacts prior to the approval of development projects that require legislative acts, including general plan amendments and zoning changes.

POLICY C-7:
Actively work with private, nonprofit, and public community service organizations to avoid duplication and to coordinate the delivery of services like child care, senior services, and recreation.

POLICY C-8:
Welcome and encourage corporate citizenship in the provision of community services.

Corporate citizenship refers to the active participation of local business in community affairs. It reflects an acknowledgment by the business community that they too are members of the community and have a responsibility in making it a better place to live and work. Corporate citizenship has always played an important role in Palo Alto community life and businesses continue to sponsor programs that enrich the lives of residents. These programs include the annual Black and White Ball, the May Fete Parade, the Downtown Street Fair, and others.

PROGRAM C-8:
Establish a program to facilitate continuing corporate support for community services through contributions of funds, time, materials, and expertise.

See also Policy L-65.
CUSTOMER SERVICE

GOAL C-2: A Commitment to Excellence and High Quality Customer Service Among City of Palo Alto Officials and Employees.

The City of Palo Alto is committed to providing high quality, responsive customer service for its residents and businesses. This priority is reflected in policies and programs throughout this document. The policies and programs below more specifically address the City's intentions to reinforce the customer-service ethic. Changes in City staff management techniques, performance review criteria, and public service processes are proposed to improve the quality of service delivery.

POLICY C-9:
Deliver City services in a manner that creates and reinforces positive relationships among City employees, residents, businesses, and other stakeholders.

PROGRAM C-9:
Establish performance review criteria for City employees that consider the quality of customer service provided.

PROGRAM C-10:
Establish tangible incentives and enhance rewards and recognition programs to encourage City staff to deliver high quality services.

Some aspects of this program may require negotiations with the City's labor unions to achieve criteria and incentives that are workable and mutually acceptable.

POLICY C-10:
Perform customer-oriented evaluations of City service delivery and develop strategies for improving customer service.

PROGRAM C-11:
Continue to budget for City staff training in customer service-oriented management techniques.

Several management philosophies stress customer satisfaction as a measure of success. Such philosophies use performance data as a way of identifying problems and encourage the participation of employees in solving these problems.

PROGRAM C-12:
Encourage City work groups to examine and improve operating procedures.
SOCIAL SERVICES

GOAL C-3: Improved Quality, Quantity, and Affordability of Social Services, Particularly for Children, Youth, Seniors, and People with Disabilities

Services for children, youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities are constrained by limited resources. Coordination among the many agencies and organizations serving these populations is critical to stretch these resources as far as possible. At a time when the number of children and seniors is increasing, it is essential to develop long-term and short-term strategies to deliver the comprehensive package of services needed by these groups.

The Peninsula Center for the Blind & Visually Impaired is one of many special service organizations in Palo Alto. Here an instructor from the center gives a lesson in mobility. Since the date of the photo, the city has installed an audible signal at this as well as two other intersections.

POLICY C-11
Support and promote the provision of comprehensive child care services in Palo Alto by public and private providers, including employers.

The supply of child care facilities in Palo Alto has not kept pace with demand. As the number of children and working mothers in Palo Alto increases, the demand for convenient, high-quality child care will continue to grow. New residential development in the City and continued changes in demographics may make the existing shortage of facilities even worse in the future. Coordination with PAUSD, new child care services, and child care provisions within new development will become more imperative.

PROGRAM C-13:
Use the Child Care Master Plan to guide the delivery of child care services. Update and amend this Plan to include standards for evaluating the impacts of new development on child care service needs.

PROGRAM C-14:
Work with the Child Care Advisory Committee to evaluate the feasibility of requiring child care impact assessments for proposed development projects.
POLICY C-12:
Coordinate delivery of child care services with other service providers, including the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD).

The City leases space and provides administrative oversight for the school age child care programs located at each of PAUSD’s elementary schools. In 1997, these 11 programs served a combined total of 805 children.

POLICY C-13:
Continue strong support for and long-term commitment to school age child care programs on PAUSD sites.

POLICY C-14:
Encourage inter-generational interaction in providing solutions to child care needs.

POLICY C-15:
In residential or neighborhood commercial development projects, strongly encourage child care and/or senior care facilities, along with measures to mitigate potential conflicts between these facilities and surrounding uses.

PROGRAM C-15:
Study changes in zoning, parking, and landscaping requirements that would facilitate the development of neighborhood child and/or senior care facilities.

PROGRAM C-16:
Create development incentives (such as increased floor area ratio or reduced parking requirements) for employers or developers who include child and/or senior care facilities in the design of new housing and commercial buildings.

PROGRAM C-17:
Facilitate the application process for proposed child and/or senior care centers. Work with applicants or potential applicants to identify appropriate locations for such centers.

POLICY C-16:
Identify existing or potential locations for child and/or senior care in public facilities and actively promote the establishment of such facilities.

POLICY C-17:
Continue to support provision, funding, and promotion of services and programs for children and youth (e.g., those offered at the teen center).

PROGRAM C-18:
Encourage the continuation and development of after-school and evening programs for children and youth. Maximize participation in such programs by increasing the number of locations where the programs are provided and by supporting transportation options to these locations.
**Policy C-18:**

Support and promote the provision of comprehensive senior services in coordination with senior service providers.

Approximately 20 percent of the population is over 60, and this percentage is expected to increase even more during the next 15 years. The continued growth of the senior population will increase the demand for a broad range of social services. Palo Alto can directly assist in meeting these needs by providing new City services and facilities. It can also indirectly assist by facilitating service provision by other parties. This could include changes to the Zoning Ordinance that accommodate senior care and senior service centers, City staff participation in the planning of such facilities, and cooperation by the City with other service providers to ensure comprehensive service coverage.

See also Goal T-7 and associated policies and programs on special transportation needs.

See also Policies H-19, H-20, and H-21, and Programs H-30 and H-31 in the Housing Element.

**Policy C-19:**

Continue to support provision, funding, or promotion of services for persons with disabilities through the Human Relations Commission, the Parks and Recreation Division, and other City departments. Support rigorous compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The ADA is implemented under the supervision of the City’s Chief Building Official. Implementation of this Act over the last several years has resulted in a redesign of many civic facilities and services and will continue to be an important element in the future design of public and private buildings and programs.

**Policy C-20:**

Support and promote services addressing the needs of the unhoused community.
PARKS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES


Palo Alto's parks, community centers, libraries, and other civic buildings are an important part of what makes the City a desirable place to live. The City is committed to continued investment in its infrastructure and public facilities, as resources are available. This commitment requires a strong emphasis on maintenance, rehabilitation, and modernization. Retrofitting existing facilities to incorporate new technology is important to ensure that these facilities remain useful. The City is also committed to providing new facilities in areas that are under-served, and in areas where change is expected in the future. New parks, plazas, and community facilities will help the City sustain its position as a model for public service delivery.

POLICY C-21:
Where appropriate, maintain existing community facilities in public ownership to prevent potential shortages in the future.

The City is committed to retaining underutilized City facilities rather than selling them as surplus properties. This is intended to prevent potential shortages of such facilities in the future when the community's needs may be greater or different than they are now.

The facilities at Mitchell Park provide opportunities for a variety of uses and user groups.

POLICY C-22:
Design and construct new community facilities to have flexible functions to ensure adaptability to the changing needs of the community.

New facilities should be designed to allow for changing community needs. Flexibility is essential, both in the initial layout of the space and in its on-going use. The pressure to use community facilities in more varied and intense ways may translate into requests for longer operating hours, more diverse programs, and more frequent activities. Such demands will require better coordination of services, modification and expansion of facilities to allow more users, program changes (and associated changes in space requirements), and higher maintenance costs.

Embracing the New Century
**Policy C-23:**

Explore ways to expand the space available in the community for art exhibits, classes and other cultural activities.

Consider expansion of the Art Center to provide space for more classes and exhibits, and investigate possible sites for Art Center annexes. Look for opportunities to adapt existing buildings and to make provision in new facilities for art exhibition space.

**Policy C-24:**

Reinvest in aging facilities to improve their usefulness and appearance. Avoid deferred maintenance of City infrastructure.

Palo Alto is committed to the maintenance of its facilities to maximize their potential life and avoid the costly effects of deferred maintenance. In addition, the City is committed to on-going improvements that make facilities more welcoming to the public. These improvements, such as those completed at Civic Center Plaza and in the lobby at City Hall, could allow public buildings and spaces to truly function as “community centers.” Reinvestment could include modernization of existing facilities to add computer systems, electronic communication equipment, and other changes that improve access to services and increase operating efficiency.

**Program C-19:**

Develop improvement plans for the maintenance, restoration and enhancement of community facilities, and keep these facilities viable community assets by investing the necessary resources.

Examples of such plans include the Infrastructure Plan, the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Master Improvement Plan, and the Cubberley Master Plan.

**Program C-20:**

Conduct comprehensive analyses of long-term infrastructure replacement requirements and costs.

**Program C-21:**

Incorporate as an additional criterion used in prioritizing sidewalk repairs, a standard related to the level of pedestrian usage.

**Program C-22:**

Assess the development of a performing arts center as an asset to the community and local economy.

The City’s existing performing arts facilities are dated and would be difficult to retrofit to meet today’s standards. The City could consider a joint venture with Stanford University to construct a contemporary state-of-the-art performing arts center. This partnership would allow the cost of the facility to be shared and would maximize its potential use. Such a center should also include exhibition space.

**Policy C-25:**

Make infrastructure improvements on public open space only when these improvements are consistent with the goals of protecting and conserving the natural environment.

**Policy C-26:**

Maintain and enhance existing park facilities.
Most of Palo Alto's parks are used more heavily now than they were 10 years ago. The increase can be attributed to a number of factors, including an increase in women's and girl's sports programs, regional population growth, and larger participation in recreational activities. Meanwhile, playground acreage in Palo Alto actually decreased during the last 15 years as surplus school properties were sold and redeveloped. Increased use has taken a toll on park facilities, leaving many parks with signs of deferred maintenance. In some parks, landscaping and irrigation improvements are needed and park “furniture” is worn and in need of replacement.

**Program C-23:**  
Study and recommend methods of private and public financing for improved park maintenance, rehabilitation, and construction.

**Program C-24:**  
Preserve El Camino Park as a recreational resource for the community.

El Camino Park is owned by Stanford University and is leased by the City through June 2033.

**Policy C-27:**  
Seek opportunities to develop new parks and recreation facilities to meet the growing needs of residents and employees of Palo Alto.

**Program C-25:**  
Consider potential park sites when preparing coordinated area plans.

**Program C-26:**  
In conjunction with new development proposals, pursue creation of park, plaza, or other public gathering places that meet neighborhood needs.

**Policy C-28:**  
Use National Recreation and Park Association Standards as guidelines for locating and developing new parks. These guidelines are as follows:

- Neighborhood parks should be at least two acres in size, although sites as small as one-half acre may be needed as supplementary facilities. The maximum service area radius should be one-half mile. Two acres of neighborhood parkland should be provided for each 1,000 people.
- District parks should be at least five acres in size. The maximum service area radius should be one mile. Two acres of district park land should be provided for each 1,000 people.

A park should be provided within walking distance of all residential neighborhoods and employment areas. The National Recreation and Park Association defines walking distance as one-half mile.

**Access**

**Goal C-5:** Equal Access to Educational, Recreational, and Cultural Services for All Residents.

Equal access refers to the location of facilities, their design, and the availability of transportation to reach them. Currently, some neighborhoods are better served by public facilities than others. In the future, the City will seek to provide new facilities in areas that lack them, helping to achieve the goal of “walkable” residential neighborhoods. It will also adapt existing facilities to ensure their accessibility to all persons, and will improve bicycle, pedestrian, and transit provisions to reduce reliance on the automobile.
POLICY C-29:
Strategically locate public facilities and parks to serve all neighborhoods in the City.

POLICY C-30:
Facilitate access to parks and community facilities by a variety of transportation modes.

The City of Palo Alto is committed to providing equal access to all services and facilities for all people. Cultural, ethnic and economic diversity strengthen the community, ensuring Palo Alto’s bright future.

POLICY C-31:
Facilitate access to educational, recreational, and cultural services by continuing to provide financial assistance programs for residents with low-incomes and/or disabilities.

POLICY C-32:
Provide fully accessible public facilities to all residents and visitors.

PROGRAM C-27:
Continue to implement Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements in City facilities including, but not limited to, sidewalk curb cuts, building entrances, meeting room access, and sight and hearing adjuncts.

New technology and changes in our public and private facilities have positively impacted people with disabilities by moving them from the confines of their homes into the community at large. As people with disabilities become more mobile, additional impediments not previously anticipated have arisen. Continued awareness and planning will facilitate seamless participation by all community members.

See also Goals T-2 and T-3 and associated policies and programs

See also Goal T-7