



# Planning & Transportation Commission

## Staff Report (ID # 11974)

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**Report Type:** Action Items **Meeting Date:** 5/12/2021

**Summary Title:** Review of 2022 - 2026 CIP for Comprehensive Plan Consistency

**Title:** Review and Recommendation to Finance Committee and the City Council on Proposed 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Plan and Comprehensive Plan Compliance

**From:** Jonathan Lait

### Recommendation

Staff recommends the Planning and Transportation Commission take the following action:

1. Recommend to the City Council that the proposed 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs) listed in Attachment B are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan 2030 policies and programs.

### Report Summary

Every year, the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) reviews the proposed Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs) for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and forwards their recommendations to the City Council. This is part of the annual budget process. The Fiscal Year 2022 Proposed Capital Budget<sup>1</sup> was presented to the City Council on May 3, 2021 and is available on the City's website.

The 2022-2026 proposed Capital Improvement Plan consists of a total of 171 CIPs, including seven new CIPs. Staff has reviewed these seven new projects and found they are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan 2030. The remaining 164 projects in this year's Capital Budget book were previously found consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and do not require additional compliance review. Staff recommends that the PTC find that the proposed new CIPs are consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> [Fiscal Year 2022 Proposed Capital Budget](#)

## Background

The PTC is required to review the proposed CIPs for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and forward its recommendations to the City Council Finance Committee and City Council. The authority for this review is contained in Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) Section 19.04.040.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, this section states:

*“The planning commission shall submit an annual report to the council regarding the capital improvement program, which shall review each project for its conformity to the master plan; review the program as a whole in order to suggest any improvement in economy or efficiency which might be effected through the combining of various projects; and suggest any needed improvements which do not appear in the program.”*

The PTC communicates its findings through a letter to the City Council via the Finance Committee. The PTC is asked to consider the draft letter (Attachment A) reflecting staff’s recommendations; this letter may be revised to reflect the PTC action.

The PTC’s recommendation for FY 2022 will be presented during budget hearings to the City Council, which is tentatively scheduled to adopt both the Operating and Capital budgets for Fiscal Year 2022 on June 21, 2021.

## Discussion

The 2022-2026 Proposed Capital Improvement Plan includes a total of 171 projects; of these projects, seven new CIPs (approximately four percent) have been added. Each new project is reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The relationship of each new project to the City’s Comprehensive Plan is established in two ways. First by linking the project to an element and section of Comprehensive Plan. Second, by reviewing the project for consistency with individual goals, policies, or programs of that element.

### New Capital Improvement Projects

The new CIPs are listed below with a brief project description and Comprehensive Plan compliance information. Additional information about the projects and their funding can be found on the respective project pages in the FY 2022 Capital Budget document (see Footnote 1 above).

1. San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority Ongoing Creek Projects (PE-22000)

This project is comprised of studies and design completion for the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority (SFCJPA) upstream project. It includes creek channel widening and the Continuing Authority Program Section 205 (CAP 205) study. Completion of the CAP 205 study will make the channel widening components eligible for federal funding for the construction of the upstream project. The study will address elements of the SFCJPA’s comprehensive flood management program. The City of Palo

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<sup>2</sup> [Palo Alto Municipal Code Section 19.04.040](#)

Alto is a contributing member of the JPA. Support from City of Palo Alto along with contributions from the other member agencies, will be used to complete the project. This will protect nearby creek residents from future San Francisquito Creek flooding.

The funding for this project comes from the Capital Improvement Fund. This CIP is aligned with the Safety Element of the Comprehensive Plan and complies with Goal S-2, Natural Hazards section, Policy S-2.8 and Program S-2.8.4.

#### 2. Airport Temporary Office Buildings (AP-22001)

This project includes installation utilities connections, and procurement of furniture, fixture, and equipment (FF&E) for the existing temporary modular buildings at the Palo Alto Airport. The buildings were donated to the City by the Palo Alto Unified School District and will provide adequate office space for airport staff as well as terminal space for the public.

The funding for this project is from the Airport Fund. This CIP is aligned with the Land Use and Community Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan and complies with Goal L-10, Palo Alto Airport section, and Policy L-10.1.

#### 3. Colorado Distribution Feeder Outlet Replacement (EL-22002)

This project is to replace and redesign the distribution feeder cables and conduit duct bank from the Colorado substation. The underground cables and equipment installed prior to 1990 have an expected life of 30 years and needs to be replaced before they fail and cause outages. These equipment and cables were installed in subsurface enclosures that have undergone weather related wear and tear and requires the rebuilding of the facilities. In addition, some utility design standards have changed and improved since this original installation. New design standards will be implemented to improve the resiliency and reliability of the feeder cables.

The funding for this project is from the Electric Fund. This CIP is aligned with the Natural Environment Element of the Comprehensive Plan and complies with Goal N-7, Energy section, and Policy N-7.1.

#### 4. Green Stormwater Infrastructure (SD-22001)

This project provides funding for Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) projects and the integration of GSI features in the design and implementation of planned CIP projects supported by other funds. GSI mimics the natural environment to slow, spread, sink, and filter storm runoff through native or engineered soils rather than discharging it directly into storm drain inlets. Elements include bioretention planters, rain gardens, tree wells, green roofs, pervious pavement, and rainwater harvesting (rain barrels and cisterns) to manage stormwater runoff. Implementing GSI projects and incorporating GSI features into the design of planned project sites throughout the City will reduce street flooding and capture pollution before it reaches the creeks or Bay by mimicking

natural environment to slow, spread, and sink storm runoff. This will assist the City in the future maintenance of the City's assets.

This project is supported by funds from the Stormwater Management Fund. This CIP is aligned with the Natural Environment Element of the Comprehensive Plan and complies with Goal N-4, Water Quality and Storm Management section, Policy N-4.10 and Program N-4.10.1

5. Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Upgrade (TE-23000)

This project provides funding for the upgrade of the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system that serves the City of Palo Alto's public safety departments along with the departments responsible for Utilities, Public Works, Animal Control, Park Rangers, and Stanford Department of Public Safety. The CAD system is a combination of hardware, software, database, network devices and switches to facilitate the quick and accurate transfer of information from reporting parties to operators in the field. The system is interoperable with systems in the cities of Mountain View and Los Altos. An operating agreement is currently being considered by all three cities, and the project is expected to be completed within 18 months of vendor selection. This project will help to conserve resources, improve response times, increase the resiliency, and reduce redundancy of these critical operating systems. Additionally, this will greatly enhance the interoperable communications between the three cities' first responders.

This CIP is funded by Technology Fund. This CIP is aligned with the Safety Element of the Comprehensive Plan and complies with Goal S-1, Community Safety section, Policy S-1, Policy S-1.9 and Program S-1.9.1.

6. Scheduled Vehicle and Equipment Replacement-Fiscal Year 2026 (VR-26000)

Funding for this project will allow for the replacement of 24 vehicles and pieces of equipment scheduled for replacement in Fiscal Year 2022. The ongoing replacement of City fleet vehicles and equipment is prescribed by the City's policy for vehicle replacement, which includes guidelines based on age, mileage accumulation, and obsolescence. Timely replacement of vehicles lowers maintenance costs, helps to maintain, or even increase the productivity of client departments, and allows the City to take advantage of new technology. As part of the policy, staff will first consider electric vehicles and then other alternative fuel vehicles when replacing existing vehicles.

This project is funded by Vehicle Maintenance and Replacement Fund. This CIP is aligned with Natural Environment Element of the Comprehensive Plan and complies with Goal N-5, Air Quality section, and Policy N-5.2.

7. Horizontal Levee Pilot (WQ-22001)

This project is the design, permitting, and construction of a horizontal levee pilot system. The horizontal levee system will utilize treated wastewater to create a transitional brackish habitat on the Bayside of a future flood control levee to be in the

Palo Alto Baylands, adjacent to the City of Palo Alto's Regional Water Quality Control Plant (RWQCP). Information and data collected by this pilot system could support broader implementation of horizontal levees as green infrastructure components in larger flood control levee improvement projects within Palo Alto and beyond. Horizontal levees provide multiple benefits beyond traditional wave attenuation technologies including sea-level rise protection, habitat improvement, and polishing treatment for treated wastewater.

The funding for this project comes from the Wastewater Treatment Fund. This CIP is aligned with Natural Environment Element of the Comprehensive Plan complying with Goal N-8, Climate Change and Climate Adaptation section, Policy N-8.4 and Program N-8.4.1.

Attachment B provides:

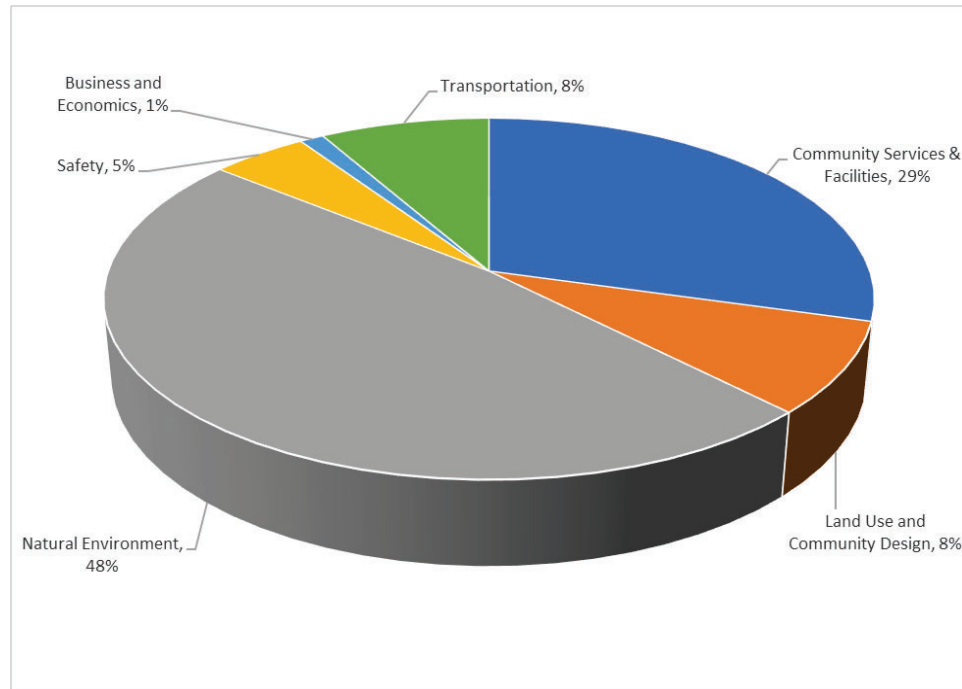
- The list of new CIPs;
- The applicable Comprehensive Plan element, goal, policy and/or program that the projects are consistent with;
- Information on expected board and or commission reviews; and
- The anticipated environmental review for each new CIP.

Attachment C lists the full text of all cited goals, policies, and programs from the Comprehensive Plan 2030 that are relevant to the new CIPs.

### **Existing Capital Improvement Projects**

In addition to the new CIPs, the FY 2022 Proposed Capital Budget includes 164 existing and/or continuing CIPs from previous years. These projects account for nearly 96% of the 2022 CIP budget book. All these existing and/or continuing CIPs have been previously reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and, therefore, do not require additional consistency review, as those previous findings are carried over to FY 2022 Proposed Capital Budget.

The Natural Environment Element was the most cited Comprehensive Plan element followed by Community Services and Facilities Element, Transportation Element, and Land Use and Community Design Element. Figure 1 shows the distribution of CIPs by Comprehensive Plan elements.



**Figure 1: Distribution of CIPs by Comprehensive Plan Elements**

### Environmental Review

The review of the CIPs for Comprehensive Plan consistency does not constitute a ‘project’ under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Individual CIP projects may or may not be subject to CEQA. The environmental determination will be made on each individual project at the time of project implementation.

### Public Notification, Outreach & Comments

Public notice in the newspaper is not required for this action item. It was posted in the online meeting agenda. At the time of this report’s writing, no written public comments were received.

### Next Steps

The City Council and the Finance Committee will be reviewing the City’s budget from May through June, and the final budget adoption hearing will be held on June 21, 2021.

#### Report Author & Contact Information

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<sup>3</sup> Emails may be sent directly to the PTC using the following address: [planning.commission@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:planning.commission@cityofpaloalto.org)

**Attachments:**

- Attachment A: PTC Conformance Letter, 2021 (PDF)
- Attachment B: List of New Capital Improvement Projects, 2021 (PDF)
- Attachment C: Comprehensive Plan Goals, Policies and Programs, 2021 (PDF)

**ATTACHMENT A**

May 12, 2021

Honorable City Council  
C/O City of Palo Alto  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

**RE: Review of 2022-2026 Proposed Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs)**

The Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) reviewed the 2022-2026 proposed Capital Improvement Plan on Wednesday, May 12, 2021 and determined that, all of the seven new Capital Improvement Projects included in the 2022-2026 Capital Budget are consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan and recommended forwarding this finding to the City Council and Finance Committee. The motion was made by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_. The motion was approved by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_.

Respectfully submitted

Bart Hechtman, Chair  
Planning and Transportation Commission



ATTACHMENT B

Number	Title	Division	Project Category	Default Fund	Recurring Project	Project Status	Year Identified	Primary Comprehensive Plan Element	Primary Comprehensive Plan Section	Primary Comprehensive Plan Goal	Primary Comprehensive Plan Policy	Primary Comprehensive Plan Program	Environmental Review	Potential Committee Review	Project Location
AP-22001	Airport Temporary Office Buildings	PWD CIP Airport Fund	Airport Facilities	530 - Airport Enterprise Fund	No	Active	2022	Land Use and Community Design	Airport	L-10	L-10.1		This project is expected to have a possible exemption from CEQA under section 15301	No	1925 Embarcadero Road
EL-22002	Colorado Distribution Feeder Outlet Replacement	UTL CIP Electric Fund	System Improvements	523 - Electric Fund	No	Active	2021	Natural Environment	Energy	N-7	N-7.1		This project is expected to have a possible exemption from CEQA under Section 15301	Yes	Colorado Substation
PE-22000	San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority Ongoing Creek Projects	PWD CIP Stormwater Management Fund	Buildings and Facilities	471 - Capital Improvement Fund	Yes	Active	2021	Safety	Natural Hazards	S-2	S-2.8	S2.8.4	An EIR and was completed for the downstream and upstream projects	Yes	San Francisquito Creek upstream
SD-22001	Green Stormwater Infrastructure	PWD CIP Stormwater Management Fund	System Improvements	528 - Stormwater Management Fund	Yes	Active	2022	Natural Environment	Water Resources	N-4	N-4.10	N4.10.1	This project is exempt from CEQA under Section 15302	Yes	Various
TE-23000	Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Upgrade	ITD CIP Technology Fund	Department Technology Upgrades and Improvements	682 - Technology Fund	No	Active	2023	Safety	Community Safety	S-1	S-1.9	S1.9.1	Not Applicable	No	Not Applicable
VR-26000	Scheduled Vehicle and Equipment Replacement - Fiscal Year 2026	PWD CIP Vehicle Fund	Vehicle and Equipment Replacement	681 - Vehicle Replacement & Maintenance Fund	No	Active	2026	Natural Environment	Air Quality	N-5	N-5.2		This project is expected to have a possible exemption from CEQA under Section 15301	Yes	3201 E. Bayshore Road
WQ-22001	Horizontal Levee Pilot	PWD CIP Wastewater Treatment Fund	System Improvements	526 - Wastewater Treatment Fund	No	Active	2022	Natural Environment	Climate Change and Climate Adaptation	N-8	N-8.4	N8.4.1	This project is expected to have a mitigated negative declaration or focused Environmental Impact Report	Yes	Palo Alto Baylands

Source: City of Palo Alto Planning Department and ASD Office of Management and Budget 2021

## ATTACHMENT C

### List of Cited 2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Policies and Programs

#### LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

Palo Alto Airport

GOAL L-10: Maintain an economically viable local airport with minimal environmental impacts.

Policy L-10.1: Operate Palo Alto Airport (PAO) as a vital and efficient facility at its current level of operation without intruding into open space areas. PAO should remain limited to a single runway and minor expansion shall only be allowed in order to meet federal and State airport design and safety standards. (AP-22001)

#### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT

##### *WATER RESOURCES*

GOAL N-4: Water resources and infrastructure that are managed to sustain plant and animal life, support urban activities, and protect public health and safety.

Water Quality and Storm Management

Policy N-4.10: Reduce pollution in urban runoff from residential, commercial, industrial, municipal, and transportation land uses and activities.

Program N-4.10.1: Monitor and implement practices for reducing water pollution. Examples include state-of-the-art best management practices (BMPs), land use planning approaches and construction of modern stormwater management facilities. (SD-22001)

##### *AIR QUALITY*

GOAL N-5: Clean, healthful air for Palo Alto and the San Francisco Bay Area.

Policy N-5.2: Support behavior changes to reduce emissions of particulates from automobiles. (VR-26000)

##### *ENERGY*

GOAL N-7: A clean, efficient energy supply that makes use of cost-effective renewable resources.

Policy N7.1: Continue to procure carbon neutral energy for both long-term and short-term energy supplies, including renewable and hydroelectric resources, while investing in cost-effective energy efficiency and energy conservation programs. (EL-22002)

*CLIMATE CHANGE AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION*

GOAL N-8: Actively support regional efforts to reduce our contribution to climate change while adapting to the effects of climate change on land uses and city services.

Policy N-8.4: Continue to work with regional partners to build resiliency policy into City planning and capital projects, especially near the San Francisco Bay shoreline, while protecting the natural environment.

Program N-8.4.1: 1 Prepare response strategies that address sea level rise, increased flooding, landslides, soil erosion, storm events and other events related to climate change. Include strategies to respond to the impacts of sea level rise on Palo Alto's levee system. (WQ-22001)

**SAFETY ELEMENT**

*COMMUNITY SAFETY*

GOAL S-1: A safe community that is aware of risks and prepared for emergencies.

Policy S-1.9: Design Palo Alto's infrastructure system to protect the life and safety of residents, ensure resiliency in the face of disaster and minimize economic loss, including in the context of climate change and sea level rise

Program S-1.9.1: Develop an Infrastructure Master Plan that projects the future needs of streets, underground utilities and all City assets and plans for the incorporation of new technology that improves efficiency and effectiveness. (TE-23000)

*NATURAL HAZARDS*

GOAL S-2: Protection of life, ecosystems and property from natural hazards and disasters, including earthquake, landslide, flooding, and fire.

Flood Hazard and Mitigation

Policy S-2.8: Minimize exposure to flood hazards by protecting existing development from flood events and adequately reviewing proposed development in flood prone areas.

Program S-2.8.4: Work with East Palo Alto, Santa Clara Valley Water District and San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority on efforts to increase the flows within the San Francisquito Creek possible solutions include replacing the City-owned Newell Road Bridge and District-owned Pope Chaucer Street Bridge. (PE-22000)