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**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
May 26, 2015
CITY HALL
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California**

13 **Commissioners Present:** Stacey Ashlund, Deirdre Crommie, Jennifer Hetterly Ed Lauing, Pat
14 Markevitch, Keith Reckdahl

15 **Commissioners Absent:** Abbie Knopper

16 **Others Present:** Council Liaison Eric Filseth

17 **Staff Present:** Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus, Peter Jensen, Matthew
18 Krupp

19 **I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY:** Catherine Bourquin

20
21 **II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

22
23 None.

24
25 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

26
27 None.

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29 **IV. BUSINESS:**

30
31 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the Special Meeting of April 28, 2015.**

32
33 Approval of the draft April 28, 2015 Minutes as amended was moved by Commissioner
34 Lauing and seconded by Vice Chair Markevitch. Passed 4-0

35
36 **2. Approval of Memo to Council on Supporting Funding for the Implementation
37 of the Foothills Park Fire Master Plan.**

38
39 Chair Reckdahl: Do we want to do the presentation and then have public comment?



40
41 Commissioner Lauing: We do?
42

43 Chair Reckdahl: Yeah. Herb wants to talk. Let's have Daren present first, then we'll
44 have Herb talk.
45

46 Daren Anderson: Good evening, Daren Anderson. Sorry, go ahead.
47

48 Commissioner Lauing: Do we want to do it that way or do we want to do it in terms of
49 recapping from the CIP process?
50

51 Mr. Anderson: However you'd like. I could just give a quick background on this and
52 explain what's in the CIP.
53

54 Commissioner Lauing: In the context of CIPs.
55

56 Mr. Anderson: Sure. Good evening, Daren Anderson, Division Manager, Open Space,
57 Parks and Golf. The memo that was attached was originally drafted on behalf of the
58 Commission to the Finance Committee. It was at the request of the Commissioners at the
59 retreat when I explained that funding that was originally submitted for the Foothills Fire
60 Master Plan as a capital improvement project had been turned down last year. Instead of
61 going in as another capital project, we were informed that from now on it would be in the
62 operating budget. A quick back story on the plan itself. It was adopted by Council in
63 2009. The plan was about lessons learned from Oakland Hills Fire and how the Palo Alto
64 Foothills is very similar with similar threats. The goals are designed to mitigate and
65 address those impacts and those fire hazards. The plan has 51 treatment areas, and
66 they're largely centered around Foothills Park, Pearson-Arastradero Preserve, and 12
67 miles of City roads. When it was first created, the plan had a cost estimate of about
68 \$700,000 for the cycle of treatments. A few years later in fiscal year '12, Council
69 approved a capital improvement project to fund \$200,000 worth of the plan. It was slow
70 to take off, largely because staff lacked the capacity to manage this project. The other
71 important thing to note is there was only \$200,000 even though there was \$700,000 of
72 work. As I mentioned, we struggled. This was co-managed between Public Works, Fire
73 Department, Emergency Services and Police and Community Services, all working
74 cooperatively. It didn't have much traction until we formed a partnership with the Fire
75 Safe Council. They have helped us manage and implement this project and have utilized
76 the vast majority of funding that was in that capital improvement project. Knowing that
77 the funds were running out, we contracted with the author of the original plan in 2009,
78 who gave us fresh numbers, reevaluated what there was to do. The memo I attached
79 explains the breakdown, but roughly it delineates the little pot of funding for Fire. Fire
80 already had that money in a previous budget allotment that they were operating from.
81 There was \$60,000 mainly focused on doing prescribed burns, fuel load assessments, and

82 then a portion of the project management consultant fee. Public Works by and large does
83 the roadside clearing. They also have a portion of the project management. Everything
84 inside the parks was going to be Community Services' portion. You can see that's
85 reflected in the \$66,700 price. That's the back story. I'll turn it over to Commissioner
86 Lauing.

87
88 Commissioner Lauing: The ad hoc committee has been meeting for a couple of years,
89 three years now I think, with the CIP staff to review CIPs which has been a very effective
90 process for all of us. This project of fire prevention, as Daren discussed, was funded as
91 he discussed, but then it was underfunded by a lot and it still is. Instead of depending on
92 the vagaries of the CIP approval process, we discussed at the retreat the idea that we
93 should have this amount of expenditures put in the budget regularly and annually,
94 because it's a safety hazard. We previewed that last month. Tonight with Daren's
95 introduction, we have a motion that is itemized in your packet in the boldface, which is to
96 ensure that residents are protected from fire risks in Foothills Park and Arastradero
97 Preserve, PRC recommends that Council approve the necessary maintenance for the
98 Foothills Fire Management Plan annually and routinely in the respective departmental
99 budgets rather than have this work be subject to prioritization and potential non-approval
100 of longer term CIP projects. The way this document is constructed, part of that motion is
101 a summary of the explanation of why, particularly that we want to emphasize and
102 prioritize the safety of our residents in all of our parks. I would like to make that motion.
103 If it's seconded, then we'll have a discussion.

104
105 Female: What time are we letting the public speak?

106
107 Commissioner Lauing: After we make the motion.

108
109 Chair Reckdahl: Okay.

110
111 Commissioner Lauing: I need a second to that.

112
113 Chair Reckdahl: I will second that.

114
115 **MOTION:** Commissioner Lauing moved, seconded by Chair Reckdahl, to recommend
116 that Council approve necessary maintenance for Foothills Fire Management Plan
117 annually and routinely in the respective departmental budgets rather than have this work
118 be subject to prioritization and potential non-approval of longer term CIP projects.

119
120 Now public comment. We have one speaker, Herb Borock. You have three minutes.

121
122 Herb Borock: Chair Reckdahl and Commissioners, I was at the Finance Committee
123 meeting this afternoon. One concern I had was trying to decipher what was being done

124 (inaudible) the budget and related Request for Proposal for the Foothills Fire
125 Management Program. Despite its having been explained to me in general terms, I
126 attempted to go to the operating budget to see if I was going to be using it to find this out.
127 If you turn page-by-page and you're lucky, you might find all three of these, but they are
128 in the descriptions in the part of the budget document for each department program. It
129 says budget adjustments. It's only then you would know. Maybe if year-to-year they're
130 the same, then it wouldn't appear there. I would hope that if it continues to be in the
131 operating budget rather than the capital budget, that there's some central way in the
132 budget document itself of finding this rather than having to find it in three different
133 departments. There's no index for this. Other than the fact that it mentions in each of
134 them that it's in the other departments as well, it would seem to me to make more sense to
135 have it all in one place. My second concern is that the operating budget is something
136 that's adopted every year by the Council. They're not committing themselves to future
137 expenditure amounts in each succeeding budget. This is the Commission's
138 recommendation to the Council. I haven't seen an action the Council can take that would
139 ensure today that it's going to be in the budget in year 2, 3, 4, 5. Finally, the last sentence
140 of the letter says that the joint department implementation plan and projected budget from
141 CSD staff is attached for your reference. My question is, is that something from the
142 memorandum or is that some other document. What is it? I don't see anything to
143 indicate what that attachment is. Thank you.

144
145 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Discussion?

146
147 Commissioner Lauing: Speaking to the motion at this point. The objective is to take
148 some of the vagaries out of this safety hazard by being able to clear the brush and not
149 have it be an ongoing safety hazard. The thought is that by our recommendation of
150 having it be annually and routinely approved, that it is an operating thing for the safety of
151 the parks as opposed to being dependent on the difficulties of the prioritization of CIPs. I
152 want discussion on this as well, but I'm proposing that we send this overlay letter in
153 reverse order of how it came in the packet. The memo that Daren wrote on behalf of staff
154 was very thorough and detailed as it always is when it comes from Daren. It's very much
155 appreciated. That lays out the budget as it's broken down in those three departments and
156 is in support of the idea of why it makes sense to do it as part of the annual budget.

157
158 Chair Reckdahl: I have some questions. How is the City budget allocated? For the CIP
159 process, we do one year at a time, but we have a five-year allocation going forward.
160 Even though we're not committing to that, we are saying these are the coming attractions.
161 We expect to be paying this in the next five years. Is there anything like that for the City
162 budget? Can you put a placeholder in future years, so that when they're doing the budget
163 they know these fixed numbers are already in the budget?

165 Rob de Geus: There's not a five-year plan for the operating budget. As we submit new
166 requests, new needs like this one, we submit it as, in this case, an ongoing funding need.
167 That's how it's being presented to the Finance Committee and then ultimately to Council.
168 We can also submit things as a one-time need, and it's not in the base budget essentially.
169 We have to ask for it again for the next year.

170
171 Chair Reckdahl: If you designate it as ongoing, then it is like the CIP.

172
173 Mr. de Geus: It becomes part of the base budget. Each year we have to approve the
174 operating budget and this is true and things can get removed. There needs to be a good
175 reason for that. Generally when things are ongoing and we have a need like this one
176 where there's a plan that says that we need to do this to keep the residents and property
177 safe, it's unlikely that it would be removed.

178
179 Chair Reckdahl: How does it work if you have money left over? For the CIPs, if you
180 have money left over, you have a little window of time to spend it past the end of the
181 calendar year, don't you?

182
183 Mr. de Geus: Generally that's not the case. In the operating budget, if you don't spend
184 the money and it's not encumbered for something, then it returns back to the reserve.

185
186 Chair Reckdahl: CIPs, if it's not used, you can extend it into the next year.

187
188 Mr. de Geus: We can reappropriate it, right.

189
190 Chair Reckdahl: By putting it in the operating budget, we are losing some flexibility
191 then.

192
193 Mr. de Geus: Correct. It becomes part of the base budget. You have to help me out
194 here, Daren. If it's \$150,000 a year, that's the estimate for keeping up with the Fire
195 Management Plan, then we would do as much as we can to spend down those funds and
196 make sure we're doing the work. If we don't spend it all, you're right, it would return to
197 the reserve. Then the next fiscal year begins July 1, and you get another \$150,000 to
198 continue to work.

199
200 Mr. Anderson: The only thing I'd add to that is ASD had contacted us and said this is not
201 the kind of program we're going to do through the capital budget any longer. It's not even
202 applicable for the capital budget in their eyes. Hence, they were the one who originally
203 directed us to put this into the operating budget.

204
205 Mr. de Geus: Say Daren, for his piece of it related to Foothills Park, enters into a
206 contract with some firm to do work in Foothills Park but the work is not complete by the



207 end of the fiscal year, he can choose to extend that contract and move the money into the
208 new fiscal year to continue to spend on it.

209
210 Chair Reckdahl: If you contract out and the work is not done, it's the same thing. You
211 lose that money.

212
213 Mr. de Geus: No, you can actually choose to reappropriate like a CIP project. You can
214 say this work is going to continue. We didn't get it done by the end of the fiscal year.
215 We intend to get it done within such-and-such time in the new fiscal year. We want to
216 take this 2015 funds into 2016.

217
218 Chair Reckdahl: That doesn't decrease the amount you get for the next year?

219
220 Mr. Anderson: I don't think so. That does have to be encumbered, the contract.

221
222 Mr. de Geus: It does have to be encumbered, correct.

223
224 Commissioner Lauing: Keith, could I just add one other thing to your point? It seems
225 like it would be more accurate, because you're making these budgeting decisions a year in
226 advance or six months in advance of when you're going to use them. Whereas, with a
227 CIP, you're taking a five-year horizon and saying, "I think it's about \$100,000 a year."
228 He's making these decisions in a very short term and knows that it's a safety problem and
229 knows that he wants to be able to use it. The fact that it's being contracted out also
230 minimizes the constraint on staff time. It seems like it's a pretty low probability. I raise
231 that for you to speak to, not me, that it wouldn't be used.

232
233 Mr. Anderson: We agree, and I think we can spend it down appropriately especially with
234 that relationship we have now with the Fire Safe Council. They're really helping to
235 project manage this. Also, it puts a little onus on us to be tight with our schedules, to be
236 planning a little more diligently and strictly, which is a good thing.

237
238 Chair Reckdahl: In the past, the flexibility to spend in future years actually maybe has
239 slowed us down a little. We didn't have the gun to our head and some of the work wasn't
240 done when we expected it to be done originally.

241
242 Mr. Anderson: That can be true, yes. There is some added flexibility. There are times
243 with certain capital improvement projects where we have a five-year project and it's
244 ongoing. In the case of tennis courts, maybe we load up a couple of big sites that lend
245 themselves to getting done. The annual funding for tennis courts isn't enough to do all
246 the courts at the site, so you have to save a little and it rolls over and allows you to plan
247 like that. It's not necessarily something you can do in this scenario with the operating
248 budget, but that was an added flexible component of the capital budget that was helpful

249
250 Chair Reckdahl: In this memo, we said \$181,000. How much of that is due to making up
251 work that wasn't done in the past, and how much of that is ongoing?
252

253 Mr. Anderson: That's a good question. In my memo you'll see that it's anticipated in FY
254 '17 we're going to require less funding for CSD, approximately \$48,000. This year we're
255 \$66,000. It is variable due to the cyclical nature of vegetation control. We made some
256 good strides this last year or two since we formed that relationship with the Fire Safe
257 Council and spent that money. You might see a little dip, and then you might see a little
258 increase, where it goes even higher than what we originally asked. It's continual
259 evaluation. Like I said, we did hire the consultant. He is going to redo the Fire
260 Management Plan, so we'll have revised numbers. We'll monitor it closely and request
261 what we need.
262

263 Chair Reckdahl: The yearly budget, in steady state when we get everything taken care of,
264 will be in the neighborhood of \$180,000?
265

266 Mr. Anderson: About.
267

268 Chair Reckdahl: Maybe a little lower, but in that neighborhood. Not dramatically lower.
269

270 Mr. Anderson: Right. I think you're going to see peaks and valleys, and not too deep or
271 too high.
272

273 Chair Reckdahl: The work that we're doing for this, we're clearing brush. Are we doing
274 anything with fire breaks? If a fire does start, it only burns a segment of the park.
275

276 Mr. Anderson: Yes. The \$66,700 for CSD's portion also includes fire break clearance
277 inside the park, clearing around the facilities inside the park, the interpretive center, the
278 restrooms, the picnic areas, all those kind of areas, and the roadways as well inside.
279

280 Chair Reckdahl: Is there anything else we could do if we're worried about fire at
281 Foothills Park? Could we add additional hydrants up in the park or is there any other
282 type of action we could take other than clearing brush?
283

284 Mr. Anderson: No. The plan was well thought out. It was a comprehensive one and
285 looked at the whole area. There are components of our relationship with the Fire Safe
286 Council and especially this consultant who drafted it. We've got a good relationship with
287 them. We're looking at things like educating surrounding residents that they're doing the
288 right thing, contacting our associates like Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space. We own
289 a good portion of the right side of the road as you're going up Page Mill. We own the
290 Palo Alto side. There are components of the left side of Page Mill Road that are owned

291 by Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District or managed by them. It doesn't make a
292 lot of sense to clear one-half of the road. You've got to clear both. Having
293 communications with them, making sure they understand what we're going to work
294 towards and what they could do cooperatively to achieve the same goal, those are the
295 steps we're taking. I think we're on the right path.

296
297 Chair Reckdahl: If a fire starts there and we want to put it out with water, is it tanker
298 trucks or do we have some hydrants up in the park?

299
300 Mr. Anderson: We have four reservoirs, one inside the park up by Station 8 and three
301 others in and around the adjacent area, one in Pearson-Arastradero Preserve. They would
302 utilize those. In the past, they've also utilized Lake Boronda. We've done training
303 exercises where they'll bring down a helicopter and fill up their bucket from the lake, and
304 come and do targeted drops when they need to. There are hydrants in and around the area
305 as well.

306
307 Chair Reckdahl: Where are the hydrants?

308
309 Mr. Anderson: There's one in Foothills and, I know there's another one in and around
310 Page Mill Road that they could utilize.

311
312 Chair Reckdahl: It's down near the interpretive center, or where would it be?

313
314 Mr. Anderson: Forgive me, I don't have that information handy at this moment. I can get
315 back to you.

316
317 Chair Reckdahl: I'm just curious. Clearing brush, I think, is a very good thing to do, but
318 sometimes we get so focused on what we do for fire plan and not look at the big picture.
319 There are other things we can do that can mitigate the fire risk. That's all my questions.
320 Do you have any questions?

321
322 Commissioner Crommie: Yes.

323
324 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

325
326 Commissioner Crommie: Can you remind me who is the Fire Safe Council?

327
328 Mr. Anderson: There are a few Fire Safe Councils. They are nonprofits formed by
329 citizens that are concerned about the issues of fire safety. They've just hired a staff
330 person, so they're becoming a little more robust. It's two to three people who help
331 manage that and they have relationships with all the surrounding agencies, CAL FIRE,
332 Menlo Fire, of course Palo Alto Fire. They essentially work as a project manager for us.

333 We've entered into a contract with them. We provide them with the funding, and they
334 contract with CAL FIRE, for example. The CAL FIRE hand crews will come in and take
335 care of some of the brush work. They can also enter into contracts with private tree
336 companies, for example, to take care of the work for us.

337
338 Commissioner Crommie: I read the fire plan. How many years ago did that pass? You
339 said 2009?

340
341 Mr. Anderson: 2009.

342
343 Commissioner Crommie: That was six years ago. I have to say I don't understand this
344 well enough to vote on it. I have to abstain, unless I somehow gain more clarity. At the
345 time when the fire plan came through, we had time to digest it. We did a site visit. At
346 that point, I got a good sense of what it was all about and what we were spending the
347 money on. I'm just really confused by this. It seems like it's a multijurisdictional issue,
348 because we're bordering also Los Altos Hills. I don't know what they're doing. Do they
349 put any money in the pot to help? I don't know if that's a reasonable request. Does Los
350 Altos Hills contribute anything to this?

351
352 Mr. Anderson: Not to our work, because our work is focusing on our land. We're not
353 doing any work on anybody else's.

354
355 Commissioner Crommie: What if a fire breaks out across the street from our land? Do
356 they have their own fire plan to come put things out? Is it going to cross the street over to
357 our property? It seems like we have to work together with the bordering communities. I
358 don't understand how this budget works exactly. I can't really agree to voting yes on
359 something where I don't understand how the money flows and how it works year after
360 year. I will have to not vote on it yet. If we're going to do a new fire plan, that's when it
361 should come back to us so we know what we're voting on.

362
363 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Lauing.

364
365 Commissioner Lauing: Were you here for the first part, when we went over the memo
366 and all this? I don't remember when you came in.

367
368 Commissioner Crommie: I came in five minutes late.

369
370 Commissioner Lauing: There's no difference in the fire plan. The issue on the table is
371 not to re-discuss the fire plan. That's not the policy issue. The policy issue of this motion
372 we're making is a recommendation to move the same amount of funds from a CIP process
373 to the normal operating budget, so that we make sure we can do these things, that these
374 folks are going to do anyway wherever that money is, on the same fire plan to make the

375 parks safe. There's no readdressing of the fire plan in this at all. Could there be or should
376 there be is a whole different discussion, which could be perfectly fine. It's just a question
377 of where to put the monies to make sure that the work gets done.

378
379 Commissioner Crommie: Do you know why our fire plan didn't get approved and funded
380 adequately when it went before Council?

381
382 Mr. Anderson: It was approved by the Council in 2009. It was funded, but it was
383 underfunded. My hunch is that it was a time when there wasn't a lot of excess money. It
384 was probably \$200,000 to get the process started to see how it goes. That's why it was
385 funded at \$200,000. It was approved. It was well vetted at the time. A great deal of
386 public outreach went into it. The plan is still good. Again, this calls for no scope change.
387 It's just allocating funding. The request has already been submitted; it's gone through the
388 Finance Committee who had no issues with the funding as proposed. Again, parts of it
389 are already in there. Fire, for example, has \$60,000. That had been part of their
390 operating budget for some years, and it was dedicated towards the fire plan, specifically
391 for their component which is that prescribed burn and fuel load assessment. Public
392 Works has always done the roadside clearing. Before the fire plan, that was always in
393 their department's responsibilities; although, it wasn't as robust as it's called out in the fire
394 plan. They are heading up that portion. CSD as stewards of the land have the inside of
395 the park component. I think you heard it suggested that maybe it would be best as one
396 pot of money, as we discussed it, between all the various departments who are involved.
397 No one wanted to bear the full responsibility of having all the funding in one site.
398 There's always the vagaries of budget years. When you're in a down year, someone is
399 prone to take it. The onus is all on the department with all the money to manage the
400 entire thing. The criteria we have right now is each of those departments will stagger or
401 vary leadership. Right now CSD is leader of this committee that is working on the fire
402 plan. Come July 1st, that'll switch to Public Works, and they'll do a year. That's why the
403 funding is separated the way it is.

404
405 Commissioner Crommie: It seems really confusing to me. For something as important
406 as fighting fire, we should have a clear funding pathway. I've never seen anything come
407 before us this complicated.

408
409 Chair Reckdahl: Let's keep it simple and keep it focused here. Commissioner Lauing,
410 can you reread the motion that we have? This is what we're voting on, the motion.
411 There's a lot of other things associated with it, but this motion is very simple. Can you
412 please read it again?

413
414 Commissioner Lauing: Sure, thank you. To ensure that residents are protected from fire
415 risks in Foothills Park and Arastradero Preserve, PRC recommends that Council approve
416 necessary maintenance for Foothills Fire Management Plan annually and routinely in the



417 respective departmental budgets rather than have this work be subject to prioritization
418 and potential non-approval of longer term CIP projects.

419
420 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie, knowing that that's the motion, does that
421 change your objections?

422
423 Commissioner Crommie: No.

424
425 Chair Reckdahl: What are your objections with that motion?

426
427 Commissioner Crommie: Is there a precedent for this kind of management, multi-
428 departmental CIPs getting approved? We're trying to put some money in an operating
429 budget. How are our other operating budgets handled? Are they handled by the City
430 Manager, making sure that the proper department has jurisdiction over them? I'm
431 confused about the management side of this. I feel like it's patched together. That's okay,
432 but I don't understand it exactly. Maybe other Commissioners do, and you don't need
433 my vote to carry it.

434
435 Mr. Anderson: Just for the sake of clarity, in my mind it's not so confusing and it's not
436 ill-placed. Having prescribed burn funding for the Fire Department makes sense to me.
437 No one else is going to do that but the Fire Department. Having the inside the park work
438 funded by Community Services, we manage that park, we have the funding to do all the
439 other operating components within the park. That seems to make sense to me too. Public
440 Works has routinely done roadside clearing as far as the last 25-30 years. It also seems
441 appropriate that roadside clearing would remain a portion of their budget. That was the
442 rationale behind the division.

443
444 Chair Reckdahl: Our motion is not specifying this break out. What we're saying is we
445 think the City Council should make a commitment to funding fire prevention every year,
446 annually.

447
448 Vice Chair Markevitch: As opposed to it being possibly not funded if some other CIP
449 comes in the short term and has a higher priority. This is just making sure we have it
450 every year. We're not at risk of losing the funding because it's in the CIP process. This
451 keeps going year to year to year. We don't have to keep fighting for it. It's just a matter
452 of which bucket we're taking it out of.

453
454 Chair Reckdahl: A further issue is what Daren mentioned earlier. We can't even fund
455 this by CIP anymore. They've changed the rules for CIPs, and this does not qualify as a
456 CIP. The funding has to come from a different source other than CIP.

457
458 Commissioner Crommie: If we don't do anything, what's going to happen?

459
460 Mr. Anderson: The money would be exhausted. There would be no funds other than the
461 existing \$60,000 that resides in the Fire Department's budget. They could use that to
462 partially fund the Fire Safe Council. They would get a small amount of work done. By
463 and large the picnic areas, the evacuation routes and the defensible spaces would over
464 grow eventually, and we would have a higher and more dangerous fire risk.
465

466 Mr. de Geus: Let me just add to that. The money's not necessarily in danger of going
467 away. Who puts the budget together, you asked. It's the City Manager. It's the City
468 Manager's operating budget, and he prepares that with department heads. The Public
469 Works Department, Community Services and Fire Department put it in the proposed
470 budget for '16 as an ongoing cost to keep up with the Fire Management Plan. The
471 Council approved the Fire Management Plan, so it is in the proposed budget that's going
472 through the process now. The memo is more to support the recommendation that it be in
473 the operating budget and be ongoing. To the other question you had, Commissioner
474 Crommie, I was trying to think of an example where we share responsibility. I don't
475 know if this one helps or not. For our parks, CSD manages the parks in a lot of ways, but
476 Public Works manages the trees within the parks. They'll go in and do the tree
477 maintenance, while Community Services is managing ground maintenance work. We
478 share that responsibility. We also meet regularly with them, park by park, to talk about
479 maintenance of the parks. We do a lot of that shared work with other departments.
480

481 Commissioner Crommie: With a standing budget?
482

483 Mr. de Geus: Right. They have a tree budget, in that example, and they have contractors
484 and crews. We have our contractors that do the mowing and other landscape work. We
485 share in that to maintain the parks.
486

487 Commissioner Ashlund: I have a couple of questions.
488

489 Chair Reckdahl: Okay. Commissioner Ashlund.
490

491 Commissioner Ashlund: I have four of them, and I'm not sure who can provide the
492 answers. The first one is why was this a CIP in the first place considering it's not capital
493 improvement. It's always been ongoing maintenance. That's the first question. Why did
494 it start that way that we have to change it? Second, if it's only a question of allocating
495 appropriate budget, why is it coming to our Commission at all? What feedback do you
496 want from us? If the Finance Committee approves it, then I'm not clear what feedback
497 you are looking for from us. The third one was, how does this ongoing work that CSD is
498 doing inside the parkland differ or overlap with the other ongoing maintenance that's
499 already happening in the park. That's not clear to me as well. We don't have that budget
500 or those tasks delineated, so I'm unclear if there's overlap or if they're the same or how

501 that relates. Lastly, if this is an ongoing expense, why are we allocating it to a consultant
502 rather than hiring the Staff to handle this work?

503
504 Vice Chair Markevitch: Consultants are cheaper.

505
506 Mr. Anderson: Let me start with your first question, why a CIP. At the time lots of CIPs
507 were strung together to support programs on an ongoing basis. Usually they were more
508 capital related, obviously, like tennis courts. There are other ones like weed
509 management. There's one called open space, lakes and ponds. It's predominantly used to
510 clear the milfoil weeds that grow in Boronda Lake. That's a vegetative clearing too, and
511 it was a CIP and remains one. It's grandfathered in; it was set to be ongoing. It was a
512 different paradigm, I guess, where that kind of thing was encouraged and thought to be
513 the way we're going to do things. ASD has changed. Now we're no longer doing that
514 kind of program through the capital budget. Instead they want it in operating. Your
515 second question, why not hire staff. It's just exponentially more expensive. This is the
516 wave of the future as we work with a nonprofit partner who has the time and resources to
517 make this happen. For example, we had the funding in 2012 and four departments
518 involved, but nothing happened. It took off once we formed this partnership. It's a good
519 thing; it's effective; it's certainly cost effective relative to hiring a person to run this
520 independently. We still have oversight. CSD, myself, I'm heavily involved. I help
521 develop the work plan with the Fire Safe Council. We manage their contract. We're
522 involved in oversight. Our rangers are on scene at every single bit of work that happens.
523 Staff is still involved; it just helps take some of the onus off. Can you repeat your two
524 other questions?

525
526 Commissioner Ashlund: Yeah. If this is just a question of which bucket of money does
527 it come from, why is it coming to our Commission? What feedback are you looking for
528 from us? How does this overlap with other ongoing park maintenance that we're already
529 doing?

530
531 Mr. Anderson: The feedback and the reason I'm coming to you is at our Commission
532 retreat we brought up that we would be requesting these funds. It was brought to me as,
533 "Would you please draft a memo for us to consider sending to the Finance Committee to
534 say we support this." The feedback is essentially I was sharing the memo that I was
535 asked to create. The Commission, if it felt so inclined, could express that to the Finance
536 Committee or, as we found out, it's more appropriate to send it to Council. You can show
537 your support or lack thereof to the Council. How it differs from routine maintenance is
538 routine maintenance is not strictly focused on fire. There may be some components that
539 address that, but by and large it has to do with fixing fences, mowing grass, routine
540 maintenance, trail clearing. Fire safety that's prescribed in the plan is far more robust and
541 involves clearing. That's already happened, of course, because this has been going on
542 since fiscal year '13. Clearing areas that haven't been cleaned for some time. One

543 example would be on Page Mill Road. The norm had been that Public Works would
544 clear something like 3-4 feet off the road. The fire plan calls for 30 feet. It's not clear
545 everything 30 feet in, but it has a very clear and detailed prescription of what we're going
546 to limb up, ladder fuels which are fuels that will lead into trees. Canopy over the road
547 can cause all sorts of potential for spreading fire faster. It's very different; it's far more
548 robust.

549
550 Commissioner Ashlund: Thanks.

551
552 Vice Chair Markevitch: I call the question.

553
554 Commissioner Lauing: I was just going to make one comment ...

555
556 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Lauing.

557
558 Commissioner Lauing: ... since Daren is absolutely correct. He did this on our behalf.
559 We've been talking about this from the CIP program for the last two-plus years openly at
560 the Commission. This isn't a budgeting issue. Our role is to advise Council on important
561 policy or substantive issues with respect to parks. The view in putting this memo
562 together, which we also did discuss at the retreat, was to say, "We have a safety problem
563 in our parks that hasn't been treated adequately for the last X years, since 2009 it turns
564 out. This is a way that we feel you can address it in a very simple way, by just changing
565 around how it's funded." Annually and routinely being the critical words there. That's
566 the role that we're taking here. We're not taking a budgeting role or anything like that.

567
568 Chair Reckdahl; We're not voting on the implementation. We're voting on whether the
569 City Council will have a commitment of funding this every year or we encourage them to
570 have the commitment.

571
572 Vice Chair Markevitch: Call the question.

573
574 Chair Reckdahl: Okay.

575
576 **MOTION PASSED:** 4-0 Crommie abstaining

577
578 Commissioner Crommie: I'm abstaining because I don't feel qualified to vote on it. I
579 don't understand it well enough.

580
581 Commissioner Lauing: Thanks, Daren, for all your help behind the scenes and on the
582 scene. Thank you.

583

584 Mr. de Geus: I need to ask a question about how to get this to the Council in a timely
585 manner so that they see it. I think it's June 8th, looking at Council Member Filseth, the
586 first time the Council will review the operating budget for this year. The hope is that they
587 see the memo or hear from the Commission on this issue this year. It might be best if a
588 Commissioner comes and says a few words about it and hands it in at that time.
589

590 Commissioner Lauing: The format was put together so they could get this at any time,
591 now if it's approved, which it has been. With this note setting the background, borrowing
592 liberally from Daren's work in the front for the summary, and then the detail in the back
593 in case they want to get into the budget. I don't know what that means in terms of when
594 the packet goes out and they would physically receive it.
595

596 Mr. de Geus: The packet is like six weeks in advance with so many reviews. That's one
597 concern, that it would be difficult to get it in there.
598

599 Commissioner Lauing: So is this an in-place memo, Council Member Filseth?
600

601 Council Member Filseth: As I look at this, it's \$181,000 in 2016. Is that already in the
602 capital budget and it's just a question of moving it from the capital budget?
603

604 Mr. de Geus: It's already in the operating budget.
605

606 Council Member Filseth: It's already in the operating budget. I would say ...
607

608 Commissioner Lauing: It's just in support of what's already there.
609

610 Council Member Filseth: Yeah. I would say double check with Walter and all to see
611 what the best way to include it in the budget process is.
612

613 Mr. de Geus: We'll see if we can figure out how to include it as an attachment.
614

615 Council Member Filseth: I'm sure they're going to have an addenda sheet of some kind.
616

617 Mr. de Geus: Right. I'll let you know.
618

619 Commissioner Lauing: Thanks.
620

621 **3. Approval of Recommendation to Council to Adopt a Park Improvement**
622 **Ordinance for Improvements Identified in the Byxbee Park Hills Interim**
623 **Park Concepts Plan.**
624

625 Chair Reckdahl: We have one speaker, Emily Renzel.

626
627 Emily Renzel: I think staff has done a good job in developing the interim plan. It's
628 barren out there right now, as you probably know. Every little blade of weed or whatever
629 is going to grow out there is important for now. In the cover sheet of this Master Plan,
630 you will see that cute little burrowing owl. There's intention in this plan to provide some
631 little areas where the burrowing owl can survive. They use squirrel holes for their homes.
632 Due to State regulations, we are under some sort of mandate to kill all the squirrels out at
633 the park. When I go hiking on Monday mornings, someone is out there gassing all the
634 squirrels, which are practically the only wildlife out there on the land itself. I've read up
635 online about squirrels. They don't generally burrow more than 3 or 4 feet in for their
636 burrows. They go horizontal. That makes sense. If you were a squirrel, you're not going
637 to dig a hole that water will run into. Part of the issue from the State is whether water
638 will run into this. I'm just hoping that you guys might call this out to give a little bit more
639 power to our staff when they go to the State to try to alter that regulation. If you look in
640 the plan, the 10-acre Measure E site has nothing planned in it. That's appropriate,
641 because nothing can be done unless it's rededicated. However, as you look at the rest of
642 the plan and think toward the future, make sure that what gets put in place at least allows
643 for connections through there if and when it should become park again. I think that's an
644 important consideration. I noted this week when we were out there, and maybe it's been
645 there a while and I hadn't noticed it, every 50 feet along the road as you're looking out
646 toward the Bay are signs that say "no parking any time." They're these little signs
647 marching along there in an open space where you're trying to have a natural experience. I
648 know that at some point there was an attempt to have a signage plan for open spaces and
649 for parks. I don't know whatever became of it, but I think it would be important to try to
650 find out what became of it. If it was adopted, to find out how it's being implemented and
651 what the trigger points are for people to pay attention to them. I think "no parking any
652 time" is fine in an urban area where you know the patrol cars are going to come and
653 maybe tow somebody and you want to have the authorization ...

654
655 Vice Chair Markevitch: You're over three minutes.

656
657 Ms. Renzel: I'm sorry. I think that should be reviewed, because nobody's going to go out
658 there and ticket and tow people, especially on weekends. Thank you.

659
660 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.

661
662 Vice Chair Markevitch: Thank you.

663
664 Chair Reckdahl: Daren, go ahead.

665
666 Daren Anderson: Excellent. Good evening, Daren Anderson, Open Space, Parks and
667 Golf. Tonight I'm here with my colleague, Matt Krupp, from Public Works, and Taylor

Peterson. She's with TRA Environmental Sciences who created the plan. Thank you for being here. We are here tonight as an action item, seeking your recommendation to Council to adopt the Park Improvement Ordinance with improvements identified in the Byxbee Park Hills Interim Park Concepts document. I'm going to give you a quick background of the project and the site. The park was developed and opened in phases. Phase 1, you can see it—I'm sorry that screen is small. It's a 29-acre area located in the northeastern part of the former landfill. It's currently developed as a passive park with trails, restrooms, and some art features. Phases 2A and 2B are 46 acres. Matt might be able to use the cursor to identify what I'm talking about next. This is the 46-acre area south of Phase 1 that was capped and opened to the public in July 2011. Twenty-seven acres of Phase 2C were opened to the public in April 2015, the celebration of Earth Day. Staff is currently completing the cap construction for the final 24 acres of Phase 2C to comply with the regulatory requirements and safely open up all of Byxbee Park Hills to the public by the end of 2015. The initial landscape design for Byxbee Park was completed by Hargreaves Associates in 1991, which is the skeleton or model we used with our very first draft. Let me bring a little background but more recent. In June 2013, Council approved the final landfill closure plans, which included a preliminary configuration for this dual-use trail system which serves both landfill maintenance vehicles and park visitors, habitat island concepts, other park amenities, and an evapotranspiration (ET) cap. The ET cap is a new soil cap that replaces the older-style clay cap with more soil. With that, we'll go to the current Interim Park Concept and design. The City entered into a contract with TRA to prepare this Interim Park Plan for Byxbee Park Hills in March 2014. The purpose of the plan was aimed at improving and managing the habitat first and foremost, managing for the burrowing owls, creating a trail system that allows for safe public access that doesn't impact wildlife, ensure that the closed landfill can meet all regulatory requirements ongoing, identify opportunities for interpretive signage, propose adaptive management techniques for maintenance which is especially important given this is an interim plan. This is not long term or indefinite. This is to make this a park now. Some examples of what adaptive management would look like. One example would be the kind of plants that succeed up there. In different areas, you sometimes have luck with certain species, and in others you don't. We intend to adapt and learn from the mistakes and find an appropriate palette that benefits the wildlife and does well up there. The same thing with the irrigation. We've got a plan right now, but we'll learn from it to see how successful it is, how long is it going to have to run, how long do we need it there. The long-term plan is to let the plants live without any supplemental irrigation. I'll give you a little background on the public outreach and the Commission and ad hoc committee feedback and involvement. In July 2014, staff met with some Baylands stakeholders representing general park users, bicyclists, hikers and environmentalists to discuss the project. Suggestions included reducing the number of trails to reduce the potential impacts to wildlife, to add signage connecting the regional trail system to the proposed trails on Byxbee, and to include benches at scenic outlooks. All these suggestions were incorporated into the design. Some of the stakeholders



710 advocated for a larger parking lot. No changes are part of this existing plan, so you'll see
711 the existing parking lot still in this design. That's largely because a bigger parking lot
712 would require more substantial and lengthy environmental and planning reviews as well
713 as exceed our allocated budget for this particular project. There is a little overflow lot
714 adjacent to the parking lot that can accommodate six to seven cars. Less than a quarter
715 mile away we've got some parking at the duck pond, and not too much further from that
716 at the golf course. Permanent parking, final maintenance plans and other structures like
717 covered lookout areas could be considered in future planning efforts for Byxbee Park
718 Hills or hopefully incorporated into the Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan,
719 which Staff proposes a CIP in 2017. In September 2014, staff presented a draft Byxbee
720 Park Hills concept to the Commission. The Commission formed an ad hoc committee to
721 discuss the project in more detail. Staff started meeting in October 2014 with the ad hoc
722 committee and met several times. Staff also brought the project to the Architectural
723 Review Board and received approval from them on these concepts on November 20,
724 2014. Staff modified and clarified many aspects of the plan based on the comments from
725 the meetings of the stakeholders, the Commission and especially the ad hoc committee.
726 A big thanks to the ad hoc committee; thank you again for all your work. I do have to
727 note and apologize that in a previous time we came to the Commission the plans were not
728 balanced so you could see them on a foldout like they are now. Commissioner Crommie
729 had gone to extraordinary lengths to fashion a map and go out there and hike it. I admire
730 that dedication and appreciate it very much. Hopefully this one is much better and easier
731 to read. That's adaptive management. The key modifications we made. Based on all that
732 feedback, we're adjusting the mowing and weed management regime. For example, in
733 response to a request and suggestion for less mowing and a "greater variety of
734 vegetation" hike, you'll notice that the slide slopes of Byxbee will not be mowed. There
735 are other elements of the maintenance plan that also call for varying heights of vegetation
736 to remain. We redefined an educated (inaudible) and management with vegetative
737 islands, low mowed grassland, mid-mowed grassland, untended grassland, delineated the
738 management for burrowing owls and squirrel areas. That will highlight the three areas
739 that I'm referencing. These are the areas where we would encourage and want burrowing
740 owls, ground squirrels and any other burrowing animal to use and not be abated as they
741 are on the rest of Byxbee Park Hills to protect that cap that I mentioned. We would bring
742 in 5 feet or more of soil. As you have heard, most of the time ground squirrels don't go
743 any deeper than 4 feet and usually branch off laterally, so there'd be no threat to the cap.
744 Staff totally supports this. We think it'd be a benefit for the park, but we do have to
745 receive regulatory approval. CalRecycle as of now has not conceded to staff's request.
746 Other feedback and modifications. The plan included reducing the number of trails to
747 create larger, uninterrupted habitat areas. We reduced 1,400 linear feet of trails based on
748 the feedback we received. Minimize habitat impact from maintenance vehicles. The
749 landfill purchased a lightweight golf-sized cart to conduct a lot of their inspections, as
750 much as possible. We corrected the map. A Commissioner pointed out that the rock
751 swales were overrepresented in the original map. We put the proper scale in this one, so

752 it looks more like it really does in reality. Improved recommendations for park signage
753 to keep people on trails and away from the habitat area, should we get approval to put it
754 in. We'll put in trail etiquette signs and the appropriate signage around that burrowing
755 owl habitat area should we receive approval. Reduce the size of the group gathering
756 node. The ad hoc committee had gone out and looked at it. Matt, maybe you can
757 highlight the group gathering area with the cursor. It called for a 50-foot diameter
758 meeting area. Once they were up there, the Commissioners felt this was too big. We did
759 a little more internal analysis on the kind of groups that would be there. Considering how
760 far that hike is, it probably does not need to be that big. 35 feet is a more appropriate
761 diameter and width for a meeting area. It should accommodate volunteer groups,
762 interpretive programs that go out there. We're confident that would meet their needs.
763 There was another request and concern about trails being too wide. The average width of
764 the trails is 10 feet, and that accommodates the aforementioned dual use. They said, "Is
765 there any way we can narrow certain ones?" Public Works said the problem is these
766 heavy vehicles that are going to pass through there at various times of the year, including
767 wet times. We'd end up with deeper ruts and other issues like that. Vegetation, it's prone
768 to do this; it does this on every trail we've got. It will gradually creep in. We could mow
769 it to come in on that trail about 1-2 feet periodically. We can allow it to stay there. In
770 essence we'll have the durable surface at 10 feet. A truck can drive over that little portion
771 without leaving deep ruts or getting stuck. Yet, you still achieve a narrowed look via the
772 vegetation creeping over the edge. At this point we're going to walk you through some of
773 the key components of this plan. First and foremost is that trail configuration, how this
774 differs from what we once had. We again started with what Hargreaves originally
775 proposed and slowly cut away based on the feedback we had from the stakeholders, the
776 Commission and the ad hoc committee to what we have now. This still allows our
777 maintenance crews to get where they need to for leachate and gas well monitoring and
778 repairs, which is key to their operation and required of them. Most of the trails were
779 designed to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. There are a few small
780 sections of trail where the slope couldn't be adjusted due to drainage requirements.
781 They're fairly limited, and I believe they're marked on the plan in such a way that you can
782 tell if you were planning a trip and you weren't able to travail anything above the 5
783 percent slope, which does meet ADA. The plan also identifies locations for park
784 benches, interpretive signs and wayfinding signs. At this point, I'll give you a little detail
785 on the vegetative habitat islands. We're going to start with construction of three sets of
786 the vegetative islands. You can see what they look like on the display there. If we back
787 out to the main screen, you can see we have several delineated. Some of them are little
788 pockets. Each of those pockets, we're calling them the set of islands. We're going to do
789 three of those sets to start with. We believe we have funding to accommodate that via
790 that CIP. We will proceed as funding allows and as we see how successful they are. We
791 may find out with that three sets that we've got to redesign. Maybe it's not successful and
792 we've got to relook at our technique and come up with something a little different. What



793 we've got on paper right now, we think we'll be successful and we're looking forward to
794 getting it installed as quickly as possible.

795
796 Chair Reckdahl: Do you know which three you're going to start with?
797

798 Mr. Anderson: Yes. We are looking at two of them being near the gathering areas.
799 Maybe Matt can identify them. We still may play with this a little bit, but those are the
800 two we were first looking at. Then one further away from any meeting area or seating
801 area. Matt's identifying those two other spots. They all are somewhat close to trails,
802 because we're going to have to get out there with equipment to service them and care for
803 them and weed them. I mentioned already the adaptive management plan and how we're
804 going to adjust as we go. The plan also mentions the three habitat areas. I think Matt
805 already showed you on the map about that. I mentioned in the staff report that we'll
806 continue to seek permission from CalRecycle to allow us to put this there. As we spoke
807 about it internally, it's staff's belief that it is incredibly beneficial to have stakeholders and
808 residents come to this organization or agency, CalRecycle, and anyone else who may
809 oppose it to voice their concern about how important this is and to get this out there, how
810 important it is to the diversity of wildlife that calls this their home. Staff is willing to
811 work with those organizations, in partnership with any sort of environmental group to
812 help make that connection happen. We'll also continue on our own to put in this request
813 to CalRecycle. It's been our experience that sometimes a resident's complaint seems to
814 carry more weight than a government agency. The timeline. The 27 acres of Phase 2C
815 were opened to the public in April 2015. We've got those last 24 acres of 2C to open in
816 January 2016. We're hoping we can complete construction of all the elements that you
817 see in the plan by the summer of 2016, hopefully in advance of that. That concludes our
818 presentation. We're available for questions. The author of the plan is here to help us with
819 specifics and especially environmental portions.
820

821 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.
822

823 Commissioner Crommie: Thank you. I'll go first with this. I appreciate working with
824 you, Daren and Ron, on this and our consultant as well. We had a productive time with
825 our ad hoc committee getting to give feedback and getting to advocate in different
826 directions that we thought would help with the wildlife, specifically the wildlife
827 experience in this open space. That's very tricky here. A good part of this plan is
828 dedicated toward trying to establish some burrowing owls in this area. One reason our ad
829 hoc and stakeholders advocated to reduce some of the trails was to allow more space for
830 the wildlife and not completely criss-cross it. Originally the trails were laid down along
831 the maintenance roads to get access to all these leachate sites. We didn't want to
832 recapitulate that in the trail system, to allow bigger areas of land for animals to settle and
833 not get flushed out as bikes, people and dogs and trucks to a certain degree go past.
834 We've made a lot of progress in this plan. I appreciate that. The vegetative islands are

835 the way to go. Daren has thought that through. I hope that they work and, if they don't
836 work, there's another way that we can keep chipping away at what to do there to get
837 native grasses established. That's what we know the wildlife needs. I have a couple of
838 small points here, and I'll try to bring them up now. I wanted to talk first about the bigger
839 picture here. I might have to circle back to some of my smaller points. In terms of the
840 big picture, my main concern with this document is it doesn't have the teeth to help the
841 owls. It talks about what to do if they come. The mowing descriptions are really good.
842 Our consultant understands what you need to do to try to make a place conducive for the
843 owls to come and then what to do once they're there. We are missing the key component
844 of the ground squirrels. I know I've probably asked you this already, but is it true that it's
845 Shoreline where they have burrowing owls? They don't gas the squirrels on their
846 landfill?

847
848 Mr. Anderson: That's my understanding, yes.
849

850 Commissioner Crommie: That's my understanding too. That is an area that's been
851 successful in terms of bringing burrowing owls in. They do have the squirrels. I struggle
852 with this document. We probably need the description in there to talk about the
853 burrowing habits of squirrels, maybe a section in here to say there's a reason that we don't
854 need to be concerned. We're trying to advocate before this permitting group called
855 CalRecycle, but I don't see any teeth in this document to do that. I know Daren has
856 mentioned that they are responsive potentially to concerned residents, but we don't have
857 anyone to lead that charge. As far as I know, I haven't heard that we have a stakeholder
858 that's necessarily willing to take that on. It's somewhat tricky to take that on, because
859 we're also going to be drawing attention to Shoreline Park. Shoreline Park which has
860 burrowing owls isn't compliant with what the permitting department wants. I don't
861 understand the history of that. Maybe Ron Arp can help us. Maybe it went under the
862 radar when they were setting up their program. I don't know why they're allowing
863 squirrels there. That's a fatal flaw in our plan to get burrowing owls. We have
864 everything there except for the squirrels. I want to brainstorm maybe with our staff and
865 consultants what we can do. I'm concerned that we don't in the document make a
866 stronger case for the squirrels. I'm also concerned that we don't have a plan to advocate
867 to our permitting facility. I'd like to have a plan in place before we approve this, so that
868 we know what's going to happen. Just saying, "It works best if residents say something,"
869 I don't see that gaining traction. I don't know who would again lead the charge on that. I
870 want to brainstorm about that, but I want your responses about how this is going to work
871 so it doesn't look like window dressing, that we would try to get some owls in there.
872 Everything looks good, except we don't have the squirrels. We have a big onus on the
873 supervising ranger, is that what the person is called? There's a reference to this all
874 throughout the document, that the maintenance plan is managed by the supervising, what
875 is the phrase in here?
876

877 Mr. Anderson: Supervising park ranger?
878

879 Commissioner Crommie: The supervising park ranger. As a secondary branch of my
880 discussion, I'm wondering who that person is, if we know who the supervising ranger is?
881 They have such responsibility in terms of the maintenance of the fauna and flora within
882 this document. I'm wondering also if that person has the expertise in all of those realms
883 to do that job. Can you guys go over those things?
884

885 Mr. Anderson: Sure, yeah. There's a lot of comments and questions there. I'll see if I
886 can recall the first ones. Maybe I'll just start with it doesn't have enough teeth for
887 squirrels. It is a balance, because we're obligated by those rules. To compare us to
888 someone who's not following rules is a little unfair. We put ourselves at risk for heavy
889 fines, and other communities may be violating that as we pointed out.
890

891 Commissioner Crommie: Do we not know?
892

893 Mr. Anderson: We do know they are.
894

895 Commissioner Crommie: You do know they are. I just didn't know.
896

897 Mr. Anderson: They are violating that. It's not something we can do. We are going to
898 follow the rules. We came up with a pretty good plan to work around that. That's some
899 pretty extensive areas highlighted on the back of this thing that shows those green spots
900 where we could have burrowing owls. You raised a good point though. How are we
901 going to get CalRecycle on board? Is it enough just to say staff's going to continue to
902 try? Maybe not. Separate from this plan, I could take it on myself, because we have a lot
903 of good relationships with environmental groups. We have a tremendous partnership
904 with Acterra. We have a tremendous partnership with Save the Bay. We have good
905 relationships with the Audubon Society. Partnering with them would be very, very easy.
906 Whether they're willing to come to CalRecycle or not would take a conversation or two,
907 but I'm willing to make that happen. I could commit to sitting down with them and
908 saying, "This is important for the park as a whole, not just Byxbee but the entirety of the
909 Baylands. I'd appreciate it." Almost like drafting a memo here, where I do the leg work
910 and say, "Can you guys get behind this? Can you support this?" I can't imagine an
911 environmental agency that wouldn't support opportunities to enhance a threatened species
912 like burrowing owls. I think we can get some traction there. I can't say for certain that
913 CalRecycle is going to be amenable to that. I think that's our very best endeavor, and I'd
914 be glad to lead that effort. That's a viable technique.
915

916 Commissioner Crommie: Is CalRecycle going to read this report?
917

918 Mr. Anderson: Probably not. They've been dealing with landfills; that's all they deal
919 with, regulations regarding landfills. When a landfill reaches its capacity, it's not
920 uncommon for it to turn to parkland. This is not the first time they've heard this
921 argument to do something different. We need to sway them through a little bit of science.
922 I think we've got a good argument to make, that we've got some evidence that proves that
923 ground squirrels don't go deeper than 4 feet. If that's the case and we're having
924 substantial soil to address that, then why would it be an issue?

925
926 Commissioner Crommie: Can you put that in the report and cite the evidence? Just to
927 have that documented.

928
929 Mr. Anderson: It's possible, though I don't think we'll need it to sit down with
930 CalRecycle. It's a conversation, sitting down with people. We're not submitting a formal
931 amendment. It's a conversation. Ron Arp is not here today; my colleague Matt Krupp is.
932 Ron has sat down with CalRecycle and had the discussion and didn't get very far. As I
933 said, we'll continue, but I think (crosstalk).

934
935 Commissioner Crommie: Is Ron the right person? Mr. Krupp might be the right person
936 to do that.

937
938 Mr. Anderson: They're both involved in the same areas, and both have similar expertise.
939 Ron has managed the landfills, and he wrote the permits. He's the right person.

940
941 Commissioner Crommie: The tension here is we need somebody who understands the
942 wildlife to sit down with them. People who understand public works, I do not think
943 they're the best spokesperson. I do not feel comfortable putting Ron Arp in charge of
944 that. When I sat down with him as a part of our ad hoc committee, he didn't understand
945 the environmental concerns that much. I want to put that out. If he's in charge of getting
946 them to do this, I don't think he's the right person.

947
948 Mr. Anderson: He won't be alone, as I pointed out. We've got a good partnership with
949 Public Works. We did this collaboratively, together. We brought in an expert; we
950 brought in Tay Peterson, a well-respected expert in this field, to help with exactly what
951 you're talking about. Our Senior Supervising Ranger is Richard Bicknell. He's got a lot
952 of experience up at the Baylands, as do I. I work with him very closely, especially
953 around the Baylands since it's my baby. That's where I cut my teeth with Palo Alto, and
954 I'll never leave it alone. I'll always be there working for it, fighting for it. Rich is in good
955 hands, but he's also got a very comprehensive document to help him manage it, which is
956 exactly what we wanted. (crosstalk)

957
958 Commissioner Crommie: That's why I'm asking again. To educate Ron Arp, it needs to
959 be documented in this document, the burrowing behaviors of owls to educate people in

960 Public Works who don't understand animal behavior. I feel like that's a serious concern
961 in our City, because we have these two arms that don't understand each other. Public
962 Works has a really big role in this. I won't be on this Commission after this year. I've
963 worked hard to try to have a voice for conservation among staff members who are in
964 Public Works. They don't get it as far as I can tell.
965

966 Chair Reckdahl: I have a big picture question here. I want to go back to focus on what
967 we're trying to accomplish here. We're here to hopefully approve the interim plan. It's
968 not the final plan, it's the interim plan. Currently, they're not waiting for this interim plan
969 to be passed, right? The trucks are driving everyday and dumping soil down there.
970

971 Mr. Anderson: As I mentioned early on, there was already a Council-approved landfill
972 closure plan. That included having that system of pathways to get them to the leachate
973 wells. We couldn't wait on that; they needed to do that immediately. The capping
974 process also has already been approved, outside the purview of the Parks and Rec
975 Commission because they have to do it. That part has started. The rest of the plan with
976 the real park components, no, that won't start until we get your recommendation and we
977 go to Council and get approval for this.
978

979 Chair Reckdahl: When we vote on this, this will then go to Council. Council will
980 approve it. At that point, you're free to do the gathering spot and other park amenities,
981 put up signs?
982

983 Mr. Anderson: That's correct.
984

985 Chair Reckdahl: Those types of things will not happen without this plan?
986

987 Mr. Anderson: That's correct.
988

989 Chair Reckdahl: This is the interim plan. Down the road there will be a final plan?
990

991 Mr. Anderson: My hunch is that in 2017 we could tie that into the Baylands
992 Comprehensive Conservation Plan and have a Master Plan that finalizes this, learns from
993 where we've made wrong steps, and hopefully improves it. That's already in the five-year
994 CIP book.
995

996 Chair Reckdahl: At that time, I assume we would know what our standing is with
997 CalRecycle.
998

999 Mr. Anderson: I'm hoping it's sooner than that. I would like to concurrent with the rest
1000 of this construction have an answer and push CalRecycle into moving forward with the
1001 soil import on those three areas delineated for the owls.

1002
1003 Chair Reckdahl: If Council passes this and then a month later CalRecycle says yes, you
1004 can do this with the owls.

1005
1006 Mr. Anderson: We can still do it.

1007
1008 Chair Reckdahl: You would not have to go back to Council to get approval?

1009
1010 Mr. Anderson: Correct.

1011
1012 Chair Reckdahl: How about if CalRecycle compromises and says, "You can do this, but
1013 you can't do that"? Do you have that ability to work with CalRecycle?

1014
1015 Mr. Anderson: Yes.

1016
1017 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.

1018
1019 Matthew Krupp: Can I add something?

1020
1021 Mr. Anderson: Please do.

1022
1023 Mr. Krupp: Hi, Matt Krupp with Public Works Environmental Services, Zero Waste.
1024 One of the interesting challenges that we have in terms of trying to address the burrowing
1025 owls is the regulatory restrictions that we're under and that Daren did a great job in
1026 talking about. Ultimately, we do hope to put pressure on the State and believe that this is
1027 an issue that can be resolved by the State EPA. Fundamentally it's two different State
1028 EPA Divisions that are in conflict with each other. It's the California Fish and Wildlife,
1029 which wants to see this happen, and CalRecycle, which doesn't want to see it happen.
1030 They both have different reasons obviously. We in Palo Alto and in Public Works are
1031 committed to seeing this out. It's a priority for us. We invested a lot of resources in this
1032 plan to making a burrowing owl habitat happen. We'd be very disappointed if it doesn't.
1033 We think it's an opportunity that's unprecedented in the Bay area. It's a rare commodity
1034 to be able to find burrowing owl habitat. There isn't much in the south Bay. We are
1035 committed to making this happen. We're going to work with Daren and CSD to the best
1036 extent of our abilities to put pressure on the State to make this happen. Ultimately, it's an
1037 intramural State fight to be able to resolve it. CalRecycle being the regulator of authority
1038 over the landfill is the one that has all the cards in their hand. We believe that we can
1039 make a difference in that community pressure and staff pressure can make a difference
1040 and make this happen. That's why we put it in here. We actually talked at length about
1041 taking it out, the whole burrowing owl plan. We were afraid that it wasn't going to
1042 happen. Because we were confident that we can make it happen, we've put it in there,

1043 we've left it in there. It's a prominent part of the plan. Like I said before, I'm confident
1044 that we can make it happen for Palo Alto.

1045
1046 Mr. Anderson: I would also note that the habitat section of the western burrowing owl
1047 plan does call out how heavily dependent upon the presence of burrowing animals,
1048 commonly the ground squirrel and their habitat, the burrowing owl is for their nesting
1049 place. It does capture in the document that they are dependent on them. It's not like it
1050 completely excludes squirrels. It just really calls out a separate area, given the confines
1051 of the regulations that we're under. You know what I mean when I say those three?
1052

1053 Commissioner Crommie: I understand that. That's why I think you need to put the
1054 science behind how owls burrow. You're not going far enough, like Emily Renzel said.
1055 You're almost there, but why not put in your arguments that you're going to take this to
1056 the permitting agency? I want to see the strongest arguments within this document.
1057

1058 Mr. Anderson: We don't need the document to make that argument. I can make that with
1059 a separate memo. Again, it's going to be a sit-down meeting with them, and I'll have the
1060 most robust argument I can muster.
1061

1062 Commissioner Crommie: I don't understand why you wouldn't cite that burrowing
1063 behavior within this document. Does it harm your case?
1064

1065 Mr. Anderson: No. It's just that we're here now. I don't see how it will affect this. I'd
1066 like to get this plan approved and move forward, rather than coming back another time. I
1067 just don't see it necessary or germane to make the case that I need to make to CalRecycle.
1068

1069 Vice Chair Markevitch: I agree.
1070

1071 Chair Reckdahl: Other comments?
1072

1073 Commissioner Ashlund? I do.
1074

1075 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Ashlund.
1076

1077 Commissioner Ashlund: The first is about what's going on, why squirrels have to be
1078 gassed here and don't have to be at Shoreline. I understand this is up for a vote tonight. I
1079 don't want to delay that. This is a very delicate question to ask. Why is it happening and
1080 is there a timeline that it needs to happen? Maybe Shoreline has passed that timeline, and
1081 they no longer have to. We don't have that information. That would be worthwhile to
1082 know. Additionally, I'm not sure if this is because this is an interim plan, but there are
1083 very few of these vegetative islands shown on the diagram and a lot of intersections of
1084 the walkways where there aren't any proposed. I'm wondering why that is it. It seems

1085 like it would enhance the natural environment we're trying to create there as well as
1086 increase wildlife habitat and improve the aesthetics.

1087
1088 Mr. Anderson: Your first question is why is Shoreline not abating their ground squirrels.
1089 They're not following the regulatory requirements. Is there a timeline? As I understand
1090 it, no. Right now the requirements are you protect that cap, otherwise you run the risk of
1091 leachate and gas escaping. That's why Shoreline is not following it. In Palo Alto, we're
1092 going to follow the law. Your last question, can you repeat that one more time?

1093
1094 Commissioner Ashlund: Increasing the vegetative islands.

1095
1096 Mr. Anderson: Originally, my hope was that we'd allow them to expand out. In some
1097 areas, that might be possible. You would plant a couple, and the concept is they'd spread.
1098 Some of the species on the island itself unfortunately are deep tap rooted. Each of those
1099 islands have to have extra soil added. Some species will be able to spread out, and that'll
1100 be great, and we'll encourage that. Some species that are on there have a tap root that will
1101 go down and damage the cap, so they'll have to be pulled. Originally my thought was
1102 plant a few. They'll naturally spread out. Eventually, we'll have this one big, giant, lush
1103 native garden out there. That's part of the answer of why so few. The other one is these
1104 all have to be hand-manicured. We're not going to come in with a mower and clear the
1105 vegetation and weeds that grow into those. They're really labor intensive. We're going to
1106 have our hands very full with three sets, to be honest. You can't come in with a weed
1107 whip; it'll all have to be hand-pulled. We utilize volunteers as best we can, and staff will
1108 do it as well. Again, this is adaptive. We're going to start with what we've got there. We
1109 come back in 2017 with a more elaborate plan, and we'll have learned are these
1110 successful, can we manage them and sustain them, and how many can we manage and
1111 sustain. My intent is we'll learn from these. We'll have our hands plenty full with three
1112 to start. Maybe we'll get lucky and they'll be very successful and easy, and we'll do
1113 everything on the plan and then do many more when we come back with a master plan.

1114
1115 Commissioner Ashlund: Thank you.

1116
1117 Chair Reckdahl: Any more?

1118
1119 Commissioner Hetterly: I'm coming in late, so I apologize for that. I gather there's been
1120 a hearty discussion already. I'm just going to ask one brief question about the vegetative
1121 islands. I do hope they're successful and we can do several more of them in the future.
1122 My question is whether the current plan includes a bench in all three of them. Is that a
1123 standard layout? You have all these layouts with the bench outlook nestled in the wall of
1124 the vegetative island. I would hope that as we expand those, every one of them does not
1125 have a bench.

1127 Mr. Anderson: That's definitely the plan. We had mentioned earlier, I'm not sure if you
1128 caught this part, that we were going to start with two near the benches and then do,
1129 forgive me it's hard to show you on the plan. Maybe Matt can pull it up. If you'll look
1130 behind you, he'll identify with the cursor some of the areas away from those meeting
1131 areas, so you can see the seating areas that will also be part of that iteration of groups.
1132

1133 Commissioner Hetterly: They will be?
1134

1135 Mr. Anderson: Mm-hmm. We're going to do three clusters of them. We'll start with two
1136 on the far right near those meeting areas. That essentially gives more people a chance to
1137 see it up close and experience some of that native vegetation, we hope. Then one more
1138 remote, to see the differences they have, different success rates for any reason that we
1139 can't predict. I don't know. That's the starting ones, and then we'll expand out from there
1140 and certainly include many that are further away and eventually ones way off the trail as
1141 well. That is our hope.
1142

1143 Commissioner Hetterly: Thank you.
1144

1145 Chair Reckdahl: You're concerned with wildlife or what was ...
1146

1147 Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah.
1148

1149 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Lauing.
1150

1151 Commissioner Lauing: Just a couple of quick ones. In the absence of Palo Alto and
1152 Baylands Golf Course, I do play the Shoreline Golf Course, which I did yesterday. I was
1153 astonished. The science on how to raise these little owls is very clear, because they're
1154 proliferating everywhere. This far away from the squirrels and this far away from one of
1155 my golf balls. They have them marked off, so they're relatively, I don't want to say tame,
1156 but they don't blast away and get all freaked out when you go in.
1157

1158 Rob de Geus: It's fascinating, isn't it? They're beautiful.
1159

1160 Commissioner Lauing: Yeah. They're beautiful animals. The other thing that was just
1161 fun is that the squirrels and the owls are not always mutually complementary. One
1162 mamma had a couple of babies, and the squirrel got a little bit too close. Smacked him
1163 down. It was very exciting, much better than (crosstalk) the golf shots that I witnessed
1164 out there. This has made a lot of improvements from an already good document that we
1165 saw the first time back about eight months ago, I think it was. Hats off for digging in on
1166 that. Process question. Eight months is probably a little bit too long. It probably would
1167 have been good to have it come back to the Commission one more time before we have it

1168 as an action item and have to adjust this. The changes have been really good. I salute the
1169 ad hoc for that.

1170
1171 Mr. Anderson: If I could make one point about the burrowing owls. In the vast other
1172 parts of the Baylands Nature Reserve, we have ground squirrels. We don't abate them.
1173 In some areas, we put in artificial mounds, and the squirrels are allowed to be in there,
1174 they're all mixed in. We put in the right kind of grasses; we did everything right. Those
1175 squirrels came. I say that only to point out that just having squirrels is no guaranty you're
1176 going to have the owls. There are a lot of other factors. Some of it's hard to predict. I've
1177 gone to several owl trainings with Lynne Trulio, the foremost expert in our area and a
1178 professor at San Jose State. She shows lots of slides of owls in the middle of Mission
1179 College, right below a little uplifted section of concrete, no squirrels there. It's where
1180 hundreds of students walk every day, and that's where the owl decided to nest and raise
1181 babies successfully. Sometimes it's just hard to predict. I totally agree that the best case
1182 scenario is have squirrels there, have mounds there, have the vegetation cut the right way.
1183 That's what we're going to aim for, but I'm just letting you know that mother nature
1184 doesn't say, "You checked off all the boxes, we'll move in." It just doesn't happen that
1185 way every time.

1186
1187 Chair Reckdahl: I have a couple of comments. I've been up there recently. It looks a lot
1188 better than it did six months ago. It looks much less barren. I mentioned this to you
1189 before, the seeding in some spots looks good. In other places, it looks a little sparse. Are
1190 we planning to reseed? Is that yes, no, maybe?

1191
1192 Mr. Anderson: Yes, there'll be more hydroseeding to come.

1193
1194 Chair Reckdahl: How do you do that? Do you do that by hand or do we have a truck that
1195 drives around?

1196
1197 Mr. Anderson: A truck comes and sprays out the hydroseed. It's incumbent on us to time
1198 it with rain, which is difficult. If you just put down the seed, it will not survive. Your
1199 germination rate will be very, very low.

1200
1201 Chair Reckdahl: How long did it take to reseed the whole thing the last time we did it?

1202
1203 Mr. Anderson: They've done a few hydroseedings. Some unfortunately continue to settle
1204 below an acceptable standard, so they had to come in and add more soil and reseed on top
1205 of that. Matt, do you have any more information on the seedings?

1206
1207 Mr. Krupp: I know that we had one that essentially failed completely on a good portion
1208 of Phase 2. The last one did much, much better where the plants are starting to take hold.
1209 What we're concerned about now is getting monocrop weeds. There's a lot of mustard

1210 out there and some other things we don't want to see. It's a huge area. It's hard to keep a
1211 handle on it.

1212
1213 Chair Reckdahl: Do we have funding to go through and take out the non-native species?
1214 There is mustard everywhere up there.

1215
1216 Mr. Anderson: Maybe I can address that one. We've unfortunately got a tremendous
1217 problem with invasive species all over the Baylands, not just on Byxbee Hills. We do a
1218 tremendous amount already, 10,000 volunteer hours a year where they come in and pull
1219 invasives and plant natives. It's worked wonders, but there's no way you can do it all
1220 with one shot. Sometimes we use alternative methods like sheet mulching, where you lay
1221 down cardboard and put mulch. Then you basically solarize the plants. The absence of
1222 sun kills the weeds; you come back and plant natives in there. You can't do that
1223 everywhere, so sometimes you mow. We use all these different techniques. In very, very
1224 few locations, you can use herbicide when absolutely necessary, when you can't control it
1225 any other way. We're talking about a 120-acre area, and so hand pulling is out. It'll never
1226 ever be possible to hand pull all of Byxbee. There's just no way; there's not an army big
1227 enough to go in there and pull the bad ones. We'll use techniques in some areas, and in
1228 other we'll let it be. Even though it's an invasive weed, we're going to let it be. In some
1229 areas there are worse things. It provides some limited cover. Maybe Tay can speak to
1230 this a bit. We prescribed in our plan areas, all the slopes which is not an insignificant
1231 amount of acreage, to let them grow in. Most likely they will be mustard and aloe and
1232 other less beneficial plants. It's not the end of the world. We're going to do our best to
1233 maximize those native ones, because it's our belief that you give your best bet to habitat
1234 and to wildlife when it's native vegetation.

1235
1236 Chair Reckdahl: Over the winter I went up there, and there's a lot of wildflowers on the
1237 slopes, some of the slopes. If you have mustard there, you won't get to see the
1238 wildflowers. That's a shame. Also, I like the interpretive signage. Baylands has some,
1239 but a lot of it is dated. It's been 20, 25 years since they were put in. You've identified
1240 some spots here. None of the spots are down below it, at ground level there. Do we plan
1241 to put any down there or is that outside the scope of this?

1242
1243 Mr. Anderson: That's outside the scope. The Junior Museum and Zoo have staff that
1244 help staff the nature center. We're looking at a holistic view of all our interpretive
1245 messaging throughout the preserve to get a unified and holistic message out in different
1246 areas to make sure we're not sending the same message too much and make sure we're in
1247 concert with our neighbors in Shoreline to our south and Cooley Landing to our north.
1248 Make sure we all gel in together. That's something that's in the works. It'll help inform
1249 and update those 20-year-old signs that you mentioned. We'll probably populate some
1250 signage on that lower portion of Byxbee as well. For this plan, it'll be focused on the top.

1252 Chair Reckdahl: I noticed you have park regulations up top here. We have the D over on
1253 the middle left. That's a park regulation sign. I would think you'd have that down below
1254 as people come up the hill as opposed to—no to the left. Right there, that's a park
1255 regulation sign. I would think you would move that down to one of the entrances as you
1256 come up. At some of the entrances, you have Ds.

1257
1258 Mr. Anderson: We should get them all at the entrances, but on occasion we have one up
1259 top. I'm pretty sure we've got them in every way up, which is the standard.

1260
1261 Chair Reckdahl: If you look on the far right, that slope on the far right is not—middle
1262 right farther up. That slope up does not have any signs on it, as you come up that slope.

1263
1264 Mr. Anderson: Over by the remnant marsh, Matt.

1265
1266 Chair Reckdahl: Yeah, right there. That does not have any. Also if you look up at the
1267 very top near the burrowing owl site, the green slope there does not have any signs at the
1268 entrance. Those two entrances don't have any signs as you come up.

1269
1270 Mr. Anderson: Part of that is we're catching them before. You can't get to any spot out
1271 there, you can't get to the one on the far right that you mentioned without passing one on
1272 Matadero and East Bayshore. Every way into the preserve, you're going to get hit with a
1273 regulatory sign so you can know the basic rules. The one on top is often helpful for the
1274 ranger who comes up to someone with their dog off-leash and says, "I didn't know it."
1275 There's one right there and every single way up here, you passed something that said you
1276 can't do that.

1277
1278 Chair Reckdahl: I assume you're not wedded to these sites.

1279
1280 Mr. Anderson: No.

1281
1282 Chair Reckdahl: You could (crosstalk). If you down the road don't like this, you have
1283 the freedom to move the signage wherever you want.

1284
1285 Mr. Anderson: Yeah, there's flexibility. Like we do everywhere in our preserves, if
1286 something's not working or it becomes a problem or is no longer effective in that area, we
1287 can do the appropriate thing. Sometimes we change the sign too. Sometimes the same
1288 message becomes invisible. They see the same sign over and over. We see that with our
1289 non-feeding ones. If we don't mix it up, there will be people standing right in front of it,
1290 because they no longer see it. Yes, sometimes we move it.

1291
1292 Chair Reckdahl: One last question is about funding. I agree we're not going to be able to
1293 nail it the first time. We're going to learn a lot as we plant things and change things.

1294 What pot of money is now, as opposed to two or three years from now, (crosstalk) come
1295 out of the same pot?

1296
1297 Mr. Anderson: Yes. It'll be the capital budget.

1298
1299 Chair Reckdahl: It's not like there's a special budget that the landfill people have made
1300 for making it a park?

1301
1302 Mr. Anderson: No.

1303
1304 Chair Reckdahl: It's coming out of our general City budget?

1305
1306 Mr. Anderson: That's right.

1307
1308 Chair Reckdahl: We don't have any rush.

1309
1310 Mr. Anderson: There was a steady contribution from the landfill budget to the
1311 components, the trails for example that were already done. If you were to have done that
1312 same trail system with oyster shell, you were like \$800,000 in. It was ridiculously
1313 expensive. We got that quote from one of our better contractors. We got a fantastic deal
1314 by having our own Public Works build it.

1315
1316 Ms. Renzel: It's not as easy to walk on as oyster shells.

1317
1318 Vice Chair Markevitch: Do you have any other questions?

1319
1320 Chair Reckdahl: No.

1321
1322 Commissioner Crommie: I have just a couple.

1323
1324 Chair Reckdahl: Okay.

1325
1326 Commissioner Hetterly: I have one question too.

1327
1328 Chair Reckdahl: Let's start with Jen here.

1329
1330 Commissioner Hetterly: I just have one question that you maybe already covered.
1331 There's a trail in the bottom left, from the bottom C and D going off to the right, that
1332 connects to the other trail. It's currently restricted. Is that going to be open?

1333
1334 Mr. Anderson: Am I right here?

1335

1336 Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah. It's on here as an accessible trail. Is that going to then be
1337 open to the public?

1338
1339 Mr. Anderson: If you look at my cursor, are you talking about this part right here? Or
1340 are you talking about this?

1341
1342 Commissioner Hetterly: I'm talking about to the right.

1343
1344 Mr. Anderson: It's closed off-screen right over here. That's a cable that has always been
1345 there. The plan is to open this up so you could go this way. Where did we leave this,
1346 Matt? That we're ending right here, right? For the interim. Yes, this will be open, and
1347 you can get in here. What we're working on is connecting so you can come down
1348 through this way, which we think will happen soon.

1349
1350 Commissioner Hetterly: That's where the fox are, on the left there?

1351
1352 Mr. Anderson: There are fox in here. They travel through this area. Yes, there is a den
1353 site in and around this area, off-screen.

1354
1355 Commissioner Hetterly: Thank you.

1356
1357 Mr. Anderson: They use Byxbee Hills too.

1358
1359 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie. Just one note. That was a 20-minute item,
1360 and we're at 50 minutes right now. If we can keep it crisp, let's keep it crisp.

1361
1362 Commissioner Crommie: You gave us this edited piece of paper that was based on the
1363 width of the gathering node that came out of discussion with our ad hoc subcommittee,
1364 which is great. When I looked at the document, it was still sited as 50 feet. Has that been
1365 corrected in the document?

1366
1367 Mr. Anderson: I couldn't change it in the plan. That's why we added this amendment
1368 here.

1369
1370 Commissioner Crommie: Why can't you change it in the plan?

1371
1372 Mr. Anderson: It's a complicated answer. Help me with this one.

1373
1374 Commissioner Crommie: Can you please let me know why?

1375
1376 Mr. Krupp: We can add it in as an attachment to it. We were basically out of money and
1377 had to finalize the plan. That's the nuts and bolts of it. We didn't have any more funds

1378 available to our consultant to change the actual document, so we did that other drawing
1379 in-house.

1380
1381 Commissioner Hetterly: You can append that to the plan?

1382
1383 Mr. Krupp: Yeah.

1384
1385 Mr. Anderson: It is.

1386
1387 Mr. Krupp: That's why we attached it to this document. We wanted to make sure that it
1388 was reflected as our intention of what would happen over there. We also wanted to show
1389 it as well, because it did reduce some of the seating in that area. We had to lose two
1390 benches of that seating.

1391
1392 Commissioner Crommie: It's confusing when there's two statements in the plan, how you
1393 know which one to follow.

1394
1395 Mr. Anderson: The plan won't be the construction document. When we put this out to
1396 bid, all the nuances will be scripted by both Matt and I with this contractor. The guaranty
1397 is that when we write the contract to actually do the construction, it'll go in with a 35-foot
1398 diameter meeting area.

1399
1400 Commissioner Crommie: There's a statement in this plan that is a little confusing on one
1401 of the bullet points. It's on page 22 of the plan, where you say what this plan does. The
1402 last set of bullet points on the final one-third of the page. You precede it by saying what
1403 the Byxbee Master Plan says we should do, and then you say what this plan is doing. On
1404 the third bullet point down, it says the trail system in the park provides pathways to keep
1405 pedestrians and bicyclists from entering environmentally sensitive areas. You really need
1406 to say there are barriers to entering environmentally sensitive areas. This is saying the
1407 opposite of what we're trying to say here. It almost seems like you're saying that you're
1408 enhancing the ability to get into those sensitive areas. The way I read this.

1409
1410 Taylor Peterson: The idea is that they stay on the pathways, and the pathways guide
1411 them past the sensitive areas and not into them. We could certainly clarify the ...

1412
1413 Commissioner Crommie: There needs to be some clarification in the language there.

1414
1415 Commissioner Hetterly: Is there any signage encouraging people to stay on the trails?

1416
1417 Mr. Anderson: Is that on the general sign? It may not be. We do periodically put in a
1418 "stay out sensitive habitat area" sign. We have that throughout the rest of the preserve.
1419 That's what we were going to use along the habitat areas for the owls, for example. The

1420 message we were trying to send with that comment was we're providing trails in the
1421 appropriate places to guide you and keep you where you should be as opposed to no trails
1422 and you can go where you want. That's where people end up in places they shouldn't be.
1423 Every once in a while someone will creep into the flood basin; we don't have trails in the
1424 flood basin. You're not supposed to be out there, but people end up in all sorts of crazy
1425 places, mainly because we're not providing the place that says this is where you need to
1426 go, this is where you're supposed to go.

1427
1428 Commissioner Crommie: The way you said it was very clear, but it's unclear here. If we
1429 can pay for another minute of consultant time, there's a bullet point missing where you
1430 say this concept provides habitat for wildlife. This is missing from here, and this is the
1431 issue I keep bringing up over and over again. We have these forces at play to make it
1432 Public Works oriented to taking care of a dump, a former dump. Are we really putting
1433 teeth into this document that this is for the preservation of wildlife? There's one bullet
1434 point which says it provides three locations to create burrowing owl habitat, which we
1435 know are subject to this permitting. There's no other bullet point about wildlife habitat.
1436 It's recreationally oriented, but I'd like to have another bullet point that speaks to all the
1437 work that's going in to provide habitat. That's what this plan is doing, which is consistent
1438 with our Master Plan which is guiding this document. I don't know if we can afford to
1439 have that extra bullet point added. If we can, it would be important in this document.

1440
1441 Mr. Anderson: Matt just highlighted—was it page 22, Matt?

1442
1443 Commissioner Crommie: Yeah, I'm on page 22.

1444
1445 Mr. Krupp: Going from the goals, the idea is that the Byxbee Park Hills plan would be
1446 working with all the goals that are established in the Baylands Master Plan which, we're
1447 at the top of page 22, is preserve and expand marshes, protect wildlife and restore upland
1448 diversity to plants and animals. We would be consistent with those key core goals.

1449
1450 Commissioner Crommie: The top bullet point, preserve and expand marshes, is
1451 incredibly important, but you're not doing any of that in this plan. That's why you're
1452 missing the statement about what you're actually doing, providing habitat. This plan does
1453 nothing for marshes. It doesn't make the connection to what this plan actually is doing.
1454 It's not written from the perspective of wildlife.

1455
1456 Ms. Peterson: The reason that this section is in here is to lay out what the Baylands
1457 Master Plan goals are, just in the general. Then to identify what goals in the Master Plan
1458 this interim Byxbee plan is (crosstalk).

1459
1460 Commissioner Crommie: I understood that, yes. The goal of providing habitat is not in
1461 there.

1462
1463 Ms. Peterson: That's not on the list.
1464

1465 Commissioner Crommie: That's what preserve and expand marshes is. It's providing
1466 habitat. It's just for marshland creatures. The spirit of the Baylands Master Plan is
1467 conservation with non-invasive recreational activities. I've read the Baylands Master
1468 Plan several times, and that is the spirit of the Master Plan. I want to see that spirit of the
1469 Master Plan carried into this document. Public Works doesn't quite understand that, and
1470 that's why I want it in this document. I want to force it in there. I forced it all the way on
1471 the ad hoc subcommittee, and it's just a continuation of that effort to now force that bullet
1472 point into this document if we can pay for another couple of minutes of consultant time.
1473 I've never had a report come to us where we couldn't add a necessary point in here as our
1474 Commission. I've never been told we can't do that on my seven years on this
1475 Commission.
1476

1477 Mr. Krupp: I don't know the answer to that. It's their work product. We can't wholesale
1478 modify their work. It's their work product for us, so we can make modifications, but they
1479 have to be okay with those modifications. If they're okay with it, we can modify it.
1480

1481 Mr. de Geus: It's our plan.
1482

1483 Mr. Krupp: It's our plan, and we can modify it. It's also based on their work product. As
1484 long as the consultant is okay with the modification, then we can make that modification.
1485

1486 Mr. de Geus: Did you have specific language that you ...
1487

1488 Commissioner Crommie: "Provides habitat for wildlife" is the bullet point. Also to fix
1489 the bullet point that's hard to read, and Daren already said some good language for that.
1490 The third bullet point down is too confusing.
1491

1492 Mr. Krupp: We can make those changes.
1493

1494 Commissioner Crommie: While we're making those, can you reference the scientific
1495 studies that show how squirrels burrow into this document? This document is about
1496 burrowing owls. That's one of the main features of this document. It's missing from
1497 here. I suspect you know the references.
1498

1499 Ms. Peterson: I suspect the references are in the reference section, so it would not be
1500 difficult for us to ...
1501

1502 Commissioner Crommie: Thank you. If you could just site that, that would be fabulous.
1503 I really appreciate that. Just some small points. We have these three locations that are

1504 labeled 6. Those are locations for burrowing owls. Since we have our consultant here,
1505 one of these locations, the one that is in this corner over here, this one, the contour lines
1506 are very close together. I'm just wondering if owls had ever burrowed in an area that
1507 that's steep. I was the one who said I thought there was a mistake on the contour lines.
1508 When I first looked at this map, I didn't see the contour lines listed in the sphere for 6.
1509 When I walked that, it's such a steep area. I was baffled that owls could hope to settle in
1510 an area that steep. Is there precedence for that?

1511
1512 Ms. Peterson: That's the area where they have burrowed in the past. They like to burrow
1513 where they can come out of their burrows and see everything. That's gives them an
1514 angle. It must be flat enough for them to be happy.

1515
1516 Commissioner Crommie: I didn't want to have a document go forth that we declare this
1517 is a place for them; yet, scientifically they've never been known to be on a slope that
1518 steep. I didn't want to carve new scientific hopes.

1519
1520 Ms. Peterson: They also have mounds ...

1521
1522 Commissioner Hetterly: It sounds like they have.

1523
1524 Ms. Peterson: ... built for them with artificial burrows.

1525
1526 Commissioner Crommie: To help supplement the steepness of the grade. Good. As long
1527 as there's a sensitivity. I just wanted to point that out in this document, from having
1528 walked it. Lastly, on your page A6, which is this page, it's the mowing page. I want to
1529 make sure this is clear. You have the yellow part and you say side slopes mowed less
1530 frequently. I'm a little bit confused as to what mowing is being done in this yellow
1531 quadrant. Right here. It's labeled as page A6. In the key it says that the side slopes are
1532 mowed less frequently. What does that mean exactly? That covers a lot of space.

1533
1534 Commissioner Hetterly: It's Appendix A.

1535
1536 Ms. Peterson: That's not the best graphic to look at. It's better to look at this new one.
1537 The steep slopes are in darker blue.

1538
1539 Commissioner Crommie: Can you fix this? It's too confusing. I don't think someone
1540 could follow the directions based on this figure. I don't know how someone ...

1541
1542 Ms. Peterson: I don't think that would be the figure that they will have in hand when
1543 they're following directions.

1544

1545 Commissioner Crommie: It's in this report, and I don't think it should be in this report
1546 unless someone can look at it and make sense out of it. I don't know what this is saying.
1547 It's implying that that's the only place that there's slopes. Yet, we know other mowing is
1548 going on there. It's very confusing.

1549
1550 Mr. Krupp: Probably it would be best if we just remove the graphic. It's something that
1551 doesn't reflect the most up-to-date mowing regime. Thank you for that. We can pull that
1552 out.

1553
1554 Commissioner Crommie: I wanted to let Emily Renzel know that we are going to have a
1555 CIP for signs in the Baylands. We might want to revisit signs as we get through that CIP.
1556 The idea that John Aiken had was to take a more comprehensive look at how we do our
1557 signage. That's when we can address the problem of having signs that are eyesores
1558 without conveying the information.

1559
1560 Chair Reckdahl: We're at 65 minutes, so ...

1561
1562 Commissioner Crommie: Lastly, I hope you would not put a sign that says "don't dump
1563 feral cats here." It gives the wrong impression, and it gives people more ideas than
1564 anything. I'd really not like that in there. That was the end.

1565
1566 Chair Reckdahl: If we vote now, the vote is on the modified document. Is that how it
1567 works?

1568
1569 Commissioner Crommie: Can we specify that in the motion?

1570
1571 Chair Reckdahl: Okay. Do we have a motion to modify the document and approve it
1572 (crosstalk).

1573
1574 Commissioner Crommie: I'll make that motion.

1575
1576 **MOTION:** Commissioner Crommie moved, seconded by Vice Chair Markevitch, that
1577 the Parks and Recreation Commission approve the plan with the specified modifications
1578 to which the consultant and staff agreed.

1579
1580 Mr. Anderson: Let me just clarify those modifications. I want to make sure I get
1581 everything right. Matt, maybe you can help me if I miss this, or Rob. We're adding
1582 bullet points. I want to make sure that the page (crosstalk).

1583
1584 Commissioner Crommie: One bullet point.

1585

1586 Mr. Anderson: That provides habitat for wildlife. We're fixing the language on the third
1587 bullet point. This is page 22, right?

1588
1589 Commissioner Crommie: Correct.

1590
1591 Mr. Anderson: We're adding a reference under the burrowing owl plan about ground
1592 squirrels, strengthening that component of the association with burrowing owls.

1593
1594 Commissioner Crommie: With a citation to the scientific literature.

1595
1596 Mr. Anderson: Especially details on typically 4 feet deep max.

1597
1598 Commissioner Crommie: And horizontal versus down.

1599
1600 Mr. Anderson: Was the comment about owls on that steep slope addressed to your
1601 satisfaction so that we don't need additional comments on that?

1602
1603 Commissioner Crommie: Yeah, I think so.

1604
1605 Mr. Anderson: We're removing A6, the ambiguous yellow area. Is that everything?

1606
1607 Commissioner Crommie: Yep.

1608
1609 Mr. Anderson: We're good.

1610
1611 **MOTION PASSED: 6-0**

1612
1613 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you, Daren.

1614
1615 Mr. Anderson: Thank you.

1616
1617 **4. Matrix Comments Review for the Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation**
1618 **Facilities Master Plan.**

1619
1620 Chair Reckdahl: Peter Jensen.

1621
1622 Peter Jensen: Rob has stepped out to make a short phone call, but he's going to be back
1623 in here. Good evening, Commissioners. Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect for the City
1624 of Palo Alto. Our continuous process of the Park Master Plan. It's going to be a two-
1625 phase discussion tonight. One is going to focus on the comments received from the
1626 homework item that you were given last time to review some of the matrix items. There
1627 were a few Commissioners that had some specific comments on that. Those were in your

1628 package, if you saw those things. We're also going to pass out some updated binder
1629 items, which we can go through and put them in, in a few seconds. Hopefully at the end
1630 we're going to start the initial transition to the next phase of the project, which is setting
1631 up the principles that will guide the process of making recommendations. Without
1632 further ado, I'll give it over to Ryan and Ellie, consultants from MIG, to go through this
1633 process.
1634

1635 Ryan Mottau: Thanks for having us back. A few things have run over, so I'm going to
1636 try to keep my part real brief and make sure that we get a chance to make sure that you
1637 guys are comfortable with the comments and revisions that we've made and introduce
1638 perhaps the timeframe discussion. We can continue that conversation as you guys get a
1639 chance to sit and ponder it. It's important to get a little more time. As Peter mentioned,
1640 we're in a place right now where we've been spending a lot of time and effort right here
1641 with our wonderful binders and our great big matrices. We have an updated matrix for
1642 you tonight as well as a few other pieces. Out of the comments and responses that you
1643 made, we're feeling like you all are doing pretty well working with this. This has helped
1644 to share what we're working from in terms of our raw material as well as how we're
1645 putting all of those pieces together. It feels like the comments are showing a pretty high
1646 level of comfort with that. Our intention is not to say, "Now we're done with that and
1647 we're moving on." What we want to do with this in terms of process is to continue to
1648 work, continue to use and reference this matrix and especially to use and reference this
1649 extensive library of source material you'll see as we go through some of the stuff tonight.
1650 We'll continue to reference things specifically by section number. We may well find that
1651 there are some pieces of information that we still need to tease out. We still need to dig
1652 up a little bit of additional of information. We came up with this at the last meeting: how
1653 do we transition from that last column of the Statement of Need and the findings of this
1654 overall process and into action that we can take as a part of this plan to move forward?
1655 We're right in the crux of that. We're right on the arrow between that data needs
1656 summary and the actions criteria and prioritizing part of this process. With that, I want to
1657 run through quickly with you what the materials are and what our intention is for you
1658 guys. The comment and response memo that you guys got is responding to both what we
1659 heard at the meeting last month as well as the comments that were submitted on line over
1660 the couple of weeks following that meeting. We tried to be as descriptive as possible of
1661 "yes, we made a change based on this thinking. This is what we changed it to." What we
1662 want to give you tonight is the updated actual documents, so you have them in your
1663 binder, that reflect those changes. We didn't have them printed and prepared in time for
1664 your packet. We wanted to make sure that you got them and had them in place for your
1665 binder. There's basically four pieces that are in play here. In the comment and response
1666 memo we just talked about, it did come in your packet, and it details the reasoning behind
1667 what we might have changed. The updated data needs matrix will be your new version of
1668 the great big sheet which responds to some specific comments about inventory. It
1669 responds to the specific comment, the request to provide a little bit more of our thinking

1670 in Column K which is that projected demand. Each one of our line items has a little bit
1671 more explanation on that front now. It resolves a few other questions that were
1672 clarifications from the comments and response. We also talked last meeting about the
1673 inventory and it missing a page that explained which sites we had identified as serving
1674 the different activities and some of the access to nature and those kind of things. The
1675 new inventory which you'll be receiving here, I'm going to have them pass all of this out,
1676 has a third page that explains all of this. It was intended to be a part of that original
1677 inventory. We've also updated the inventory to react to the comment about the sports
1678 fields at the high schools, specifically to make sure that they are not part of the sum totals
1679 of what's available to the community. I didn't want to take them out of the inventory
1680 entirely, so we gave them asterisks and took them out of the totals, took them off of the
1681 matrix. That inventory is a replacement for what's in your binder. Just clarifying there.
1682 Just pull the other stuff and drop this stuff in. The same with the program analysis. We
1683 made some clarifications and revisions to that. We wanted to give you a whole chunk to
1684 replace that section, so that we know that we have the current version. I know there was
1685 some question last time as well about making sure we have current versions of
1686 everything. We're trying to clean up some of that as well. Those are the materials that
1687 have been revised. The revisions that we spoke of are pretty much detailed in that
1688 comment and response memo. I know that many of you took advantage of the
1689 opportunity to do the homework assignment. I wanted to make sure there weren't any
1690 other lingering comments that we wanted to get out on the table at this point. I also want
1691 to do a little bit of explaining following that, of how we have used this working document
1692 and carried it forward into building some direction and some recommendations for this
1693 plan. I'll let Peter start passing some things around. I don't know if anybody had any
1694 other notes that they wanted to relay about the specific revisions or points on the matrix.
1695 I'll give that an opportunity while we're handing things out real quick.

1696
1697 Mr. Jensen: I didn't know if each of your binders had a pocket in the front, so I gave you
1698 that clip if you wanted to clip it into the front inside of your binder. You can, but it's not
1699 necessary for you to have a (inaudible).

1700
1701 Mr. Mottau: Unless you have your own notes that you really want to keep, there isn't any
1702 particular reason to keep the old version of the matrix either. There's no magic. It was
1703 pretty much an additive process in terms of responding to your comments.

1704
1705 Mr. Jensen: Ryan, what section is the inventory?

1706
1707 Mr. Mottau: Inventory is Section 8.

1708
1709 Mr. Jensen: It has two 11 by 17 ...
1710

1711 Mr. Mottau: As I said with Section 8, you can just tear out what's in there and drop this
1712 in.

1713
1714 Commissioner Crommie: I'm sorry. Where does this go?

1715
1716 Mr. Jensen: That's Section 8 in your binder. Let's take out the old and put that in as the
1717 new.

1718
1719 Mr. Mottau: It's behind the map. Sorry. I told you, you could tear out a whole section;
1720 I'm lying. Sorry. It's the Excel sheets that are behind the map. Don't take out the map.
1721 The map will be useful.

1722
1723 Commissioner Crommie: I have one thing to put on the table. Can I do it now?

1724
1725 Mr. Mottau: Please.

1726
1727 Commissioner Crommie: I wanted to talk a little bit more about the high school playing
1728 fields, because one issue I've had forever on this Commission is just how we use the
1729 schools' resources for our City. Sometimes it seems like we do a really good job using
1730 them. We have the middle school athletic program. From what I have understood, it's a
1731 good partnership. I'd have to ask Staff whether they think so. Superficially from what
1732 I've heard, that seems like a really good partnership. It does provide resources for our
1733 residents. We don't have that same thing going on with the high schools. I'm in a unique
1734 position. I live in Palo Alto, but my kids are actually in the Los Altos school district.
1735 The Monroe Park neighborhood, the 150, now 178 families because we've built 24
1736 condos there. We have 178-ish families going over to the Los Altos school district. I see
1737 how they use their high schools. They have two high schools, just like Palo Alto does.
1738 Los Altos also has two high schools. My kids have always used those resources as
1739 students, and I see the community using them a lot in Los Altos. I've never drilled down
1740 by talking to people in the City structure, of how they do it. What I've heard anecdotally
1741 in this City is that there are these fiefdoms within the high schools, and they're controlled
1742 by the coaches. It's a money maker for the school, because they can rent the facilities at
1743 very high prices to all these hungry clubs, many of which do not have residences within
1744 our City. They're hungry for high-quality fields. Paly has a beautiful, new high-quality
1745 field. I don't know about Gunn's resources as much. Yet we have this movement within
1746 our City to possibly build more playing fields way out in the Baylands, which are really
1747 hard for kids to get to. At one point we had at least one Council Member interested in
1748 doing that. I saw the power of that, because I sat on the golf course ad hoc, and that
1749 person had a lot of sway. I don't know if that person still wants fields out there or not.
1750 I'm saying why are we not trying to do something about these beautiful resources that are
1751 actually located geographically closer to where the residents are. Now based on a
1752 comment from at least one Commissioner, I don't know how many Commissioners

1753 wanted those taken off our table. I don't know if taking them off is getting us farther
1754 away. I don't agree with any movement that hides that resource and buries it.
1755

1756 Mr. Mottau: I agree with that, especially the part about not removing them. We didn't
1757 end up removing them. They are not calculated in the total. There's a note at the bottom
1758 of the second sheet that says the high school fields are not available for community use.
1759 They're starred essentially. They don't add into the total available for community use.
1760

1761 Rob de Geus: You just want to add "quite yet."
1762

1763 Mr. Mottau: There we go, yet. Carrying your thought forward, that is a recommendation
1764 that could certainly be in this plan, to continue to make this ...
1765

1766 Vice Chair Markevitch: I'd like to say that we're getting off topic on this. The high
1767 school fields are not owned by the City of Palo Alto. They are school district property.
1768 We have no jurisdiction over them at this point. I don't see that in the foreseeable future.
1769 We need to move on.
1770

1771 Mr. Mottau: The other piece that Peter has passed out, just so that we have this correct, is
1772 the program analysis. This replaces Section 5 in your binder. It's both pieces of the
1773 program analysis. As we talked about before, the first part was supplemented later by the
1774 extensive data analysis of the recommendations which we talked about at the last
1775 meeting. Both of those are now pretty much as a whole complete. They are now Section
1776 5 in your binder. The references all remain the same. We are cleaning up a few
1777 clarification points.
1778

1779 Commissioner Hetterly: There's no major substantive change from the earlier version?
1780

1781 Mr. Mottau: The only thing is an addition to Part 2 that is worth drawing your attention
1782 to. At the very end, we did add on at your request some of the data about the visitation of
1783 the preserves. We had that conversation at the last meeting. It's the final section of Part
1784 2, so it's really the last page or two that highlights a few key facts that we discovered
1785 from that data analysis.
1786

1787 Commissioner Lauing: I know you're putting a new date on here now, which is the way
1788 you're doing version numbers.
1789

1790 Mr. Mottau: Yes. Anything that we do, we'll make sure that we have the revised date
1791 listed so that you can tell it's the current one. Thank you again for that. We were trying
1792 to clean that up. That was one of the reasons why we gave you both sections again, so
1793 that we didn't have any clarification necessary there.
1794

1795 Commissioner Crommie: I just want to clarify that the packet that Peter handed us,
1796 where does that go?

1797
1798 Mr. Mottau: Section 5.

1799
1800 Commissioner Crommie: It looks pretty different.

1801
1802 Commissioner Hetterly: This doesn't go in Section 5.

1803
1804 Commissioner Crommie: I must have something switched. I'll talk to Peter afterwards.

1805
1806 Mr. Mottau: Peter can help you sort out any of those. The first section, I believe, has the
1807 resource list which has the document titles as well. You can double check that too. Like
1808 I said, I don't want to say, "We're done talking about this. We can't bring this back up at
1809 some point." The matrix is something we're going to continue to reference. The binder is
1810 something we're going to continue to reference. If you find questions that you want to
1811 get answered, let us know. I would like to use a little bit of your precious time tonight to
1812 talk through the plan framework, which is what we're working on. We're just introducing
1813 this to you. This is not something that is final. We don't feel like we have this 100
1814 percent done yet, 100 percent right. We want to introduce it to you to illustrate to you
1815 how we're envisioning moving from these needs, from all of this data analysis into some
1816 direction for this planning effort. Peter's handing out to you now ...

1817
1818 Mr. Jensen: This is going into the binder.

1819
1820 Mr. Mottau: This is a concept. Before we did the matrix process, we wanted to show
1821 you where we were going and how. We wanted you to have this in hand, give us a
1822 chance to introduce it and talk about it a little bit. We will continue to work with this.
1823 It's something that is in process as we go forward. What it's really about is this transition
1824 between the data and actions. The key piece that is necessary to shape the development
1825 of actions, what ultimately are the recommendations of this planning effort, is to make
1826 sure that we are setting some direction, where this park system is going. We aren't just
1827 going to pull that out of the air. We aren't pulling that out of our pocket. We're drawing
1828 that from what we heard in this community, what we've heard from you, what we've
1829 heard from your staff, but putting a high priority on what we've heard from the
1830 community. There are four pages to this document. The first page is a little bit of an
1831 introduction, where we're at with this. The second page, I'll highlight the second section
1832 here. There is a set of bullets that really do emphasize what we're talking about here.
1833 This is a working version. What we're hearing, the themes that we're hearing, and I don't
1834 think these will be foreign to you, are that Palo Alto's parks, trails, open space and
1835 recreation system is or should be in the future inclusive, accessible, balanced, healthy,
1836 flexible, sustainable and playful. I'm going to walk through each of those quickly just to

1837 give you a sense of how we're organizing this. The third page then talks a little about
1838 where those came from, where we heard those themes, particularly in some of the public
1839 involvement and outreach results. If you want to go back and look at, "Where did we
1840 hear this? What did we see," these are some specific sources. As we said, we see these
1841 as themes that have come up in a lot of different places and are supported by what we're
1842 hearing from you all as well. The final page on this, page 4, is about applying these
1843 ideas. One of the ways that we find this to be most useful is as you're considering any
1844 given action, any given recommendation, one of the questions that you would ask
1845 yourself is to see if it fits. We've offered a couple of these questions for each of these
1846 principles to give a sense of, as we apply this, how would we judge this meeting this
1847 principle or coming close to this principle or approaching this principle. We don't
1848 necessarily consider this to be an exhaustive list yet. We're working on it. We wanted a
1849 chance for you all to provide some feedback. I want to walk through these quickly to
1850 give you a sense of what we're talking about when we use the word inclusive in this
1851 context. The wording may shift. You guys may have some thoughts on that as we go
1852 forward. I want to quickly walk through each of those principles. Inclusive, thinking of
1853 ages and abilities, languages, cultures, all levels of income, involving the whole spectrum
1854 of this community in the recreation opportunities that we're offering. There's a couple of
1855 questions that we posed to start thinking about that and some sources that tie back into
1856 that. All the material that's on the slide here is just reorganized out of this memo. There's
1857 nothing new. It's just giving me something to follow along with. Accessible is about
1858 making it easy for people of all abilities to get to and to use those activities year round,
1859 get there by walking, biking, rolling, however they need to. This one has a few more
1860 questions, a few more sources. Balanced is another way of thinking about the mix, how
1861 are we going to do this. It's not going to be all about one thing. It's not going to be all
1862 about trail or it's not going to be all about nature. It's not going to be all about
1863 competitive sports. We want to seek those different points of balance. We've suggested
1864 a few of those points of balance, that we've been hearing, between natural spaces and
1865 manicured landscapes, historic elements and high-tech and high-design features, self-
1866 directed and programmed activities. What we heard in the community was that it should
1867 not overly emphasize any one side of those kinds of balances. Healthy mostly speaks for
1868 itself, but I do want to emphasize that we are talking about both physical and mental
1869 health and well being here. There's a lot of great evidence around that. We have a lot of
1870 potential to benefit both physical and mental health with our system. Flexible is talking
1871 about how can we pack in those layers of activities. Multiple uses across time including
1872 adaptable spaces that will create some space not only for what we're doing now but what
1873 will emerge with future use. Sustainable, while a well-used if not over-used term these
1874 days, there is a standing definition with the City around the Es of sustainability,
1875 economy, environment, and social equity. We felt like there's some important aspects of
1876 that that we really want to work into this overall. Finally playful. This is the one that I
1877 personally feel pretty strongly about. There's a lot of potential, and this goes to how do
1878 we get people to get excited about the park system. There's an inspiration factor. That's



1879 play for kids. That's play for adults. Imagination, creativity, joy, innovation is very tied
1880 into these kinds of things. We wanted to make sure that that element is continually
1881 worked into this as well. I know this is a lot. This is new. This is a lot. I'm curious
1882 about your first responses to these principles. In talking with staff about these, there are
1883 some that feel like maybe seven is too many. Maybe there's some that could be
1884 collapsed. Maybe there's some things that are missing or aren't explained well enough at
1885 this point. On first blush, they're "I get that. That makes sense to me." I'd like to have
1886 you guys' first blush about the principles themselves. I have a couple of examples, if we
1887 have a little bit of time, that I can walk through of how we would start to apply these. I'd
1888 like to walk through some of that. Maybe some thoughts.

1889
1890 Vice Chair Markevitch: I'd put playful at the top.

1891
1892 Mr. Mottau: Put playful at the top.

1893
1894 Vice Chair Markevitch: That's the whole reason to go to a park, to have fun and relax.
1895 The other one, accessible, for people of all abilities to use year round and to get to by
1896 walking, biking or rolling. Rolling is such an odd word. I would just say "vehicular."
1897 There are people who have limited mobility and can't walk or bike to a park. It just
1898 seems a little too out there. Spell it out more.

1899
1900 Mr. Mottau: Appreciate that.

1901
1902 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

1903
1904 Vice Chair Markevitch: I'd like ...

1905
1906 Chair Reckdahl: Are you done?

1907
1908 Vice Chair Markevitch: No, I'm sorry. Sustainable, I do think it's overused. I'm seeing it
1909 start to creep in a lot. I'd like to be cautious about how we proceed with that bullet point.
1910 I'm not sure how yet, but I need to give it some thought. I do like the other ones.
1911 Inclusive, balanced. The rest of them ...

1912
1913 Commissioner Lauing: Don't resonate?

1914
1915 Vice Chair Markevitch: Yeah. I'm good.

1916
1917 Commissioner Crommie: I also concur with Commissioner Markevitch. Sustainable
1918 needs some definition in there, more than what you've given it. A clearer statement.
1919 Balanced, I don't like that bullet point particularly. All the bullet points add up to
1920 balanced, so I don't think you need that. It's confusing. The bullet point that's missing

1921 here is the word "nature." I would suggest a bullet point that says "respectful of and
1922 connected to nature." Your bullet points should bring balance, and you don't need a
1923 specific one. It's trying to say too much.

1924
1925 Mr. Mottau: Appreciate that.

1926
1927 Commissioner Hetterly: I actually like the balanced bullet. It's really important. Under
1928 all of these principles, there's a balance that has to be struck.

1929
1930 Mr. Mottau: You could go too far on any one of them.

1931
1932 Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah. Particularly the flexible one. I wanted to add something
1933 there about balance. I don't want the impetus to be to cram everything you can into a
1934 park. The questions that are raised here could well lead to that.

1935
1936 Mr. Mottau: That's helpful.

1937
1938 Commissioner Ashlund: Accessible, public transportation ought to be mentioned there. I
1939 wasn't sure about when it says for all people of all abilities to use year round. I don't like
1940 to go to the park in the rain. I do like to go inside to nice places in the rain. It seems like
1941 that is trying to say a little bit more than is really feasible. Maybe it's implying there's a
1942 variety of amenities such that there are indoor facilities as well as outdoor facilities.

1943
1944 Mr. Mottau: I see where you're going with that.

1945
1946 Commissioner Ashlund: For the healthy bullet, I was thinking of adding social or
1947 community to that in some way. It's physical and mental health and well being, but it's
1948 also social opportunities and community building that I felt like was missing from the
1949 list.

1950
1951 Mr. Mottau: That community health piece.

1952
1953 Commissioner Ashlund: Bringing people together and enabling that.

1954
1955 Commissioner Lauing: We've got good comments already, so I won't even (inaudible) to
1956 that. The flexible one, there should be somewhere in here that we're actually trying to tell
1957 people the limits. Commissioner Hetterly's comment, that was a good one. We can't just
1958 jam it all in, because everybody needs it. We also have to be tolerant of multiple uses
1959 with the limited amount of stuff we have. Somehow that teaching moment could be here
1960 for residents. I don't know how we escape the sustainability, because it's a big deal in
1961 Palo Alto. It is a guiding principle and since it is, it has to be there. Wordsmithing could

1962 be fine. Not there, but the right tone. If you could get it a little smaller, the tendency is
1963 to get it even bigger than this. If you get it a little smaller, it's just ...
1964

1965 Mr. Mottau: We'll keep working on dialing that in. That is an important one especially
1966 as you start applying them. The more factors you start trying to work with, the less clear
1967 it becomes sometimes. I would agree.
1968

1969 Chair Reckdahl: When I first looked at the list, my first instinct was "What a bunch of
1970 (inaudible) buzz words." When I walked through each one, each one seems reasonable. I
1971 wouldn't necessarily yank any of them. The one thing that came to my mind which isn't
1972 on this list is the growing population. We have no more space to buy parks and we have
1973 a lot more people coming in. That's a huge challenge. I don't know how you work that in
1974 or if you even do. In my mind that is the biggest challenge that I look for.
1975

1976 Mr. Mottau: There's something to that. Where we fit that in, that is one of the big
1977 challenges.
1978

1979 Vice Chair Markevitch: That goes in the sustainable one if it's spelled out and worked a
1980 little.
1981

1982 Mr. Mottau: That's an interesting point. As population grows, you've got the capacity
1983 component of that. That's another one like balanced that hits probably on a number of
1984 different points. Capacity is going to be an issue for a lot of them.
1985

1986 Commissioner Ashlund: Flexibility will (inaudible).
1987

1988 Mr. Jensen: Ryan, do you want to go over an example real quick?
1989

1990 Mr. Mottau: Let me run through one really quickly. Like I said, we'd love to get any
1991 additional thoughts on this. Just thinking about what action might start looking like, if it
1992 was guided by these principles as we originally wrote them and as we were thinking
1993 about them. We've talked a little bit about nature play as an additive feature in the
1994 system. As an action, you can think about these as recommendations as well, but action
1995 items that we would be thinking about in the plan. Add universally accessible nature play
1996 feature to existing sites. There's a few key words in this. What the guidance of these
1997 principles allows us to do as we're developing these actions is to try to tailor them a little
1998 bit, rather than just saying, "Wouldn't it be great to have nature play." Let's talk about
1999 how we would do that in order to react to the guidance that we've heard from the
2000 community. Universally accessible nature play, not just nature play, not just universally
2001 accessible play. Adding it to existing sites in this case is a specific choice as well. The
2002 needs we're addressing here are about those additional play experiences. These are pulled
2003 right off that last column on the matrix. We're trying to find ways to meet multiple needs

2004 as well as multiple principles as we go through this. We've got several needs specifically
2005 called out here, including integration of accessibility of all ages and abilities across the
2006 system. Nature play experiences as a way to experience nature but also as a different
2007 type of play experience. Thinking about that same action against these principles. You
2008 can make a pretty convincing case, as that action is written, that it could address all of
2009 those principles pretty directly. I'm not going to rattle through them, but if anybody has a
2010 particular question about one, I do have some thinking about each one of those. To give
2011 you the other example as well. On the programmatic side, thinking about "That works
2012 for a physical addition to the system, but what about something that is purely about
2013 people, purely about the interaction of services that we provide." One of the things we
2014 heard a lot about, and one of the things that came out in the comments from you all, was
2015 the importance of developing coaching capacity for middle school athletics, for sports
2016 programs as a whole. One way to approach that might be to develop a coach training
2017 program that feeds into middle school athletics and other sports. It's based on building
2018 capacity within those volunteers. It addresses a variety of those needs that were called
2019 out. This one, however, doesn't necessarily in our minds hit all those principles.
2020 Ultimately, we think that's okay. The intention is to build as much of those principles
2021 into everything as you can, but you're not going to hit seven out of seven every time.
2022 That's a little bit about how we would apply this. What we're saying here is this is how
2023 we, as your planning team, take these needs and shape them into an action. We're using
2024 these principles as the guidance. This is your opportunity in helping us shape these
2025 principles to shape what those recommendations might look like as they start coming out
2026 onto the ground. With that, I'm curious if you guys see immediate questions or thoughts
2027 about what would that do in terms of the overall plan or specificity of guidance that you
2028 guys want. I'm happy to talk about other topics, but these two came to us as good
2029 examples to start with. I know that's a lot as well, but it's something that you wanted ...

2030
2031 Commissioner Lauing: It doesn't have to meet them all?

2032
2033 Mr. Mottau: It doesn't have to meet them all.

2034
2035 Commissioner Lauing: It can't violate them violently.

2036
2037 Mr. Mottau: That's an important point. They should be ...

2038
2039 Commissioner Lauing: It doesn't have to check the box with bells ringing.

2040
2041 Commissioner Crommie: Can I ask you a question? What do you mean as our
2042 consultants when you say nature play? What does that mean for you?

2043
2044 Mr. Mottau: Nature play, for me, is primarily about creating creative play environments
2045 that integrate natural surfaces, natural environments. It's so much easier to explain in

2046 experience. It emulates the "playing in a vacant lot or a forest" experience in a designed
2047 environment. That's my shortish answer. There are a lot of things it can mean though.

2048
2049 Commissioner Crommie: That really scares me, because I don't want that to substitute
2050 for what I see people saying as wanting a connection to nature. You can't replicate
2051 nature. You can preserve it and allow people to come into nature. That's what is at huge
2052 risk in the City. Maybe we can do both. I don't want one to replace the other. It's very
2053 superficial to decide you're going to bring nature into an urban landscape. It doesn't cut it
2054 for me. It's one of those things that looks good. It's great to do it. If you have a choice
2055 of a bunch of plastic or more natural materials, great. Kids benefit by having contact
2056 with natural materials. I'd say do it. If you think it's substituting for that, I would look
2057 very closely at the end of this at how much you're allowing. Those ideas of the butterfly
2058 garden and the bee garden, where kids have an experience of real nature, not fake nature
2059 that you buy through the internet by having these lovely natural materials. That's natural
2060 materials. It's not nature. I would always support using natural materials, but I don't
2061 think it substitutes. As long as you can do both, that's great.

2062
2063 Mr. Mottau: Thank you. That's an important point.

2064
2065 Commissioner Ashlund: I recently heard, and I can't remember which park it was, but
2066 that some of the new benches that were installed were actually plastic designed to look
2067 like wood instead of wood. Are you familiar ...

2068
2069 Mr. Jensen: I think they're recycled material.

2070
2071 Mr. de Geus: Much more durable.

2072
2073 Commissioner Ashlund: We are going plastic in our park benches now?

2074
2075 Mr. de Geus: Not all our park benches. I know that we're experimenting with some of
2076 that.

2077
2078 Vice Chair Markevitch: Experiment that when it's 90 degrees. Go sit down on it with
2079 shorts. You're not going to be happy.

2080
2081 Commissioner Crommie: That's pure sustainability creep.

2082
2083 Vice Chair Markevitch: Yes, exactly. That's exactly right.

2084
2085 Commissioner Crommie: It's invisible, yet pervasive.

2086

2087 Mr. Jensen: I think you got what we wanted to do. We wanted to put this out to the
2088 Commission so you guys can look over it, have some time with it, have some thought
2089 with it. Next time we're going to come back and have a more extensive conversation
2090 about what this is. The other thing is that this isn't the end of how you get to the
2091 recommendations and how to prioritize them. You can get a list of recommendations
2092 from this process. There's going to be another process on that that talks about the
2093 prioritization of those recommendations. They'll talk about timeline and how much
2094 things cost and how many things that we have and how big it is and if we have room for
2095 it. We're applying detail that will go past this. This allows us to start to form that list of
2096 those items and then to get into that process.

2097
2098 Mr. Mottau: We're filtering as we go, and we're working from the big list, the needs and
2099 everything that was possible. There were things that we identified from data and from
2100 input that were the needs. We're starting to work down to the actions that could address
2101 as many of those needs as we can work in. As Peter said, there's going to be a process in
2102 this that will be those practical points around how do we figure out which we do first,
2103 how do we apply limited resources.

2104
2105 Commissioner Crommie: I wanted to comment on accessibility, because I think we're
2106 talking about some big ideas based on your presentation. As far as accessibility goes, we
2107 have to be very researched-based. I want to make the point that our City just invested in
2108 this beautiful new park, the Magical Bridge Playground. Just being there and talking to
2109 the people who are using it and excited about it, that community would like features of
2110 that park in all of our parks. That's exclusively accessible. Eventually maybe all parks
2111 can be exclusively accessible, but that's a pretty big price tag. I want to know what is our
2112 City doing to keep the research going. Of the elements that were put into that park,
2113 which are the most popular? Also throw in natural materials if you want, to fold in more
2114 than one feature. Are the ones that have some natural materials really popular within that
2115 park that can bring what you're calling nature play? I consider more natural materials in
2116 my own head, unless you're going to build a stream or something, but it won't have any
2117 fish in it probably. To me real nature has little critters in it, bugs and fish and that kind of
2118 stuff. I'd really like the accessible community to have an ongoing voice to let us know
2119 what works, what holds up. It seems like a lot of those things are very expensive. How
2120 is that going to be documented? Is this an appropriate question?

2121
2122 Mr. Jensen: As far as the Magical Bridge goes, it is. It's one of a kind that should be
2123 always looked at and improved hopefully in the future. We should learn from it. We can
2124 use some of those things that we review and understand over the next years. This process
2125 goes on to put into our Master Plan. They are two separate things. I don't know the
2126 process or how it's documented now or if we we're going to do that. The Friends are out
2127 there every day, and they make comments to me about what they think is working or

2128 what's good or what needs work. We can start to document that somehow and add it to
2129 the Master Plan.

2130
2131 Commissioner Crommie: At the end of this, when we're getting to prioritization,
2132 accessibility I see as essential and it's one of the tenets, rightfully so. It can go in a lot of
2133 different directions. I want to make sure at the end of the day we're not lost in terms of
2134 where do you want to go with that. Do you feel like you're gathering enough information
2135 over time? I don't feel like I know enough right now.

2136
2137 Mr. Mottau: There's two pieces that I'll add to that. I don't think that we're going to, in
2138 this plan, be recommending at the level of what features are going to be in a playground.
2139 That will come in the subsequent process of designing that playground on that site. In
2140 terms of the guidance, we will be able to draw on some of the things that we've heard.
2141 Magical Bridge will be forefront knowledge, but we also have a group within our firm
2142 that does nothing but accessibility largely focused on parks and is in constant
2143 communication with the ability and disability community in California, specifically
2144 around what is working, what can be worked into existing sites. Those pieces of
2145 guidance are something we can bring to this plan.

2146
2147 Commissioner Crommie: To broaden that, to connect it to paths, I consider accessibility
2148 to also relate to elderly getting down a path. We have had comments in Byxbee Park on
2149 surfaces. Some surfaces are easier for elderly to walk on than other surfaces. I would
2150 like that dialog to happen with the proper people, so they can give that kind of feedback.

2151
2152 Commissioner Hetterly: This is a good start, and it's helpful to look at it this way with
2153 these principles and these kinds of questions. It would be helpful for me to have a few
2154 more examples of where this would lead you, so that we can contemplate. It may lead us
2155 one place; it may lead you another place. If they're far apart, we're going to want to come
2156 back together. Some more examples would be helpful to react to. If we could get them
2157 in advance of the meeting and not at the meeting.

2158
2159 Mr. Mottau: Now that we've had some general discussion about this, we can definitely
2160 do that. That was one of the things I wanted to end with. What would be most useful? It
2161 sounds like a few more examples, some tweaking of language based on the comments
2162 here. We can build from that.

2163
2164 Chair Reckdahl: The tricky part is when you have so many options or so many criteria.
2165 How do you weight them? If you give a group of people the rules and say here are the
2166 park decisions, even with the same criteria they'd make different decisions because they
2167 would weight them differently. It all comes down to the weighting.

2168

2169 Vice Chair Markevitch: It also depends on the park and the neighborhood and who lives
2170 near there. That's what's important to them.

2171
2172 Mr. Mottau: There is a level of specificity that will be a trick. This kind of guidance can
2173 help keep it in a discussion that's going in a direction that is in line with the rest of the
2174 system. That's important.

2175
2176 Vice Chair Markevitch: Humans are like squirrels; they're unpredictable. If you have a
2177 park that is going up for renewal, this is a good guiding document but it might not always
2178 work. That needs to be acknowledged.

2179
2180 Mr. Mottau: Thank you all. I know that this is a lot of material to drop on you again.
2181 Like you said, we wanted to bring back some feedback and take a step forward.
2182 Hopefully you guys will get a chance to dig into both of those and let us know if there's
2183 any other thoughts. Please contact Peter about that specifically.

2184
2185 Mr. de Geus: Can we talk about next steps and the next few months and what we can
2186 expect? There's some new material that you were given last month. There's some new
2187 material again today. There are some big things there. Reviewing all of that and making
2188 sure that you're comfortable with it. Reviewing this new framework. We come back in
2189 June and look at this again?

2190
2191 Mr. Mottau: We're working with your staff on this. We will continue this conversation
2192 at your next meeting. What we're going to be building are the list of actions, whether
2193 they stay in the public (inaudible) and larger categories of actions, and then start refining
2194 down from there. Because of the summer break, we don't want to push too much
2195 community engagement into the holiday. We're going to build towards a check-in with
2196 the community about what seems most important to them probably first thing at the
2197 beginning of the school year. That's what we're aiming for right now. We're going to
2198 spend the summer building towards that with you all and with us and staff. At that point,
2199 we will have most of the content for the overall plan in place. It will be getting down to
2200 more review and getting into the specifics of timeline and how we will ultimately push
2201 things forward. We're figuring that the last public push would be at the end of the
2202 summer, possibly with some type of outreach effort to make sure that we get as much
2203 involvement as we can. We've been talking a little bit about possibly asking some
2204 questions in an online forum that leads up to a public meeting forum that tries to
2205 maximize what we can get out of that last push for what seems most important to them.
2206 Using that as another major input for you guys in thinking about what comes first and
2207 how to move that forward. That's the thrust right now. We'll be able to get you a little bit
2208 more detailed schedule based on some conversations we were having with staff today.
2209 Probably by your next meeting, it'll get more fleshed out on what that looks like.

2211 Mr. de Geus: We're trying to set a time for a Council study session. We've asked for
2212 that. It'll be right after the summer break, which will be good. We have the stakeholder
2213 meetings and community meetings and the plan for a draft plan to get ready. What was
2214 the timeline again?
2215

2216 Mr. Mottau: We're looking at the end of the year, depending on how it falls. Because of
2217 the holidays and everything else, it's going to be the end of the year, beginning of the year
2218 to get that draft out. Then things get a little bit more dependent on things like Council
2219 and Commission schedules, so the timeline becomes harder for us to dictate. We'll have
2220 to turn it over to the whims of the scheduling people. We'll try to push that through the
2221 process appropriately.
2222

2223 Female: I don't know exactly when I can ask. I'm just a citizen of Palo Alto. I'm
2224 interested in a couple of issues regarding parks. Is this the right time and place to ask it?
2225

2226 Vice Chair Markevitch: No, but you can leave your name and one of us will get back to
2227 you.
2228

2229 Commissioner Crommie: Does she want to speak to this agenda item?
2230

2231 Mr. de Geus: Is it related to the Parks Master Plan?
2232

2233 Female: It's about off-leash dog parks within the existing parks. I don't know if it could
2234 be part of the Master Plan.
2235

2236 Chair Reckdahl: We can't talk about that, because of the agenda.
2237

2238 Vice Chair Markevitch: It's not agendized.
2239

2240 Chair Reckdahl: You can come back next month. The fourth Tuesday of every month
2241 we have a meeting, and you can talk about anything you want right at the very beginning
2242 of the meeting, right at 7:00.
2243

2244 Female: I see.
2245

2246 Chair Reckdahl: You have three minutes to say whatever you want.
2247

2248 Mr. de Geus: We're almost finished.
2249

2250 Commissioner Crommie: You can also write us a letter by looking at our website.
2251

2252 Commissioner Ashlund: We don't have a joint meeting tomorrow, right? You canceled
2253 that.

2254
2255 Mr. de Geus: Right. For me, the biggest part is this framework, just to really spend some
2256 time thinking about that. This is a filter that will be used as we do the public outreach
2257 and think about priorities. We can't do everything, so how do we start to prioritize
2258 recommendations? This is the filter for the first draft.

2259
2260 Commissioner Hetterly: Keith's point is a good one. It's easy to come up with priorities
2261 that represent all these issues. It's hard to prioritize among the items.

2262
2263 Mr. de Geus: Yeah. That was my reaction.

2264
2265 Commissioner Hetterly: This doesn't address how you're going to weight the various
2266 pieces.

2267
2268 Mr. de Geus: Think about that over this next month. This is going to be the main topic
2269 for next month, how to deal with that.

2270
2271 Chair Reckdahl: They're all admirable goals. It's like arguing against motherhood and
2272 apple pie. In practice we're going to have to weight some higher than others. We're not
2273 going to weight things equally.

2274
2275 Mr. de Geus: We're going to have two interests for the same park. How do we make a
2276 decision?

2277
2278 Chair Reckdahl: I have some comments on the matrix. Should I email that or do we talk
2279 about that now?

2280
2281 Mr. Jensen: It's up to you.

2282
2283 Chair Reckdahl: It's pretty quick. In the middle section, we're talking about recreation
2284 facilities. We need to determine whether we have enough capacity. On column F, that is
2285 in the middle section. When I looked at them, a lot of them come under Source 5.
2286 Source 5 is City programs. Knowing how many people sign up for tennis classes doesn't
2287 tell you how much tennis courts are being used. You really can't use the under-
2288 subscription or over-subscription of tennis courts to justify the number of tennis courts.
2289 We see that up and down ...

2290
2291 Commissioner Crommie: Which column?
2292

2293 Chair Reckdahl: That's Column F. It's not bad data. It does give you some insight. For
2294 something like tennis, people who have been playing tennis for 40 years are not taking
2295 tennis classes, but they're playing every Saturday morning. That by itself is not enough
2296 data to justify tennis courts. That was my comment. Are you done with everything else?
2297

2298 Mr. Jensen: Yep. Thank you.
2299

2300 **5. Other Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates**
2301

2302 Chair Reckdahl: Do we have any ad hocs? I contacted some people, and I don't think
2303 any of them had anything that they wanted to say about their ad hocs. We have stuff in
2304 the works, but nothing that needs sharing.
2305

2306 Commissioner Lauing: When are dogs going to come back?
2307

2308 Chair Reckdahl: Dog parks were penciled in for next month to have an update. Are you
2309 having a public meeting between then and now?
2310

2311 Commissioner Hetterly: I don't think so. We're waiting on Abbie for something, and I
2312 see she's not here tonight. I don't know what her status is on that.
2313

2314 Commissioner Reckdahl: If you have something in the next month, we'll talk about it.
2315 Otherwise, two months from now. No more ad hoc announcements.
2316

2317 **V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**
2318

2319 Chair Reckdahl: Rob, do you have anything?
2320

2321 Rob de Geus: I don't have anything.
2322

2323 **VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR JUNE 23, 2015 MEETING**
2324

2325 Rob de Geus: The Parks Master Plan will come back. That's the main topic.
2326

2327 Chair Reckdahl: I sent you an email, Rob, about cost of services. That was scheduled to
2328 go to City Council?
2329

2330 Mr. de Geus: Cost of services has gone to City Council. It was on consent and was
2331 approved. Within the staff report, it talks about Community Services and how we have a
2332 fee-based cost recovery policy. Once the larger Citywide policy was approved, then we
2333 would go back and review that policy specific to our department.
2334

2335 Chair Reckdahl: Is that coming back to us then or is that going to staff?
2336

2337 Mr. de Geus: It goes to staff first, and then it'll go to the Commission.
2338

2339 Commissioner Crommie: Is it going to City Council before it comes to us?
2340

2341 Commissioner Hetterly: It's already gone.
2342

2343 Commissioner Crommie: It's already gone.
2344

2345 Mr. de Geus: The Citywide cost of services (crosstalk).
2346

2347 Commissioner Crommie: It was already presented at City Council.
2348

2349 Mr. de Geus: It was on consent. It went through the Finance Committee. It was
2350 approved there unanimously, and then it went to Council.
2351

2352 Commissioner Hetterly: I have a question for you, Rob, about that. How do you see the
2353 intersection between the cost of services study and the Master Plan in terms of the cost
2354 recovery for Community Services? The last time we talked about it here, the Community
2355 Services Department had a tiered approach for subsidizing various types of programming
2356 that's based on principles of what the City's goals ought to be in serving certain
2357 populations. Shouldn't that same framework somehow integrate with the Master Plan?
2358

2359 Mr. de Geus: I think it will. It'll intersect. There's a part of the Master Plan that'll talk
2360 about revenues and cost recovery. It's in the scope. That's one of the last elements of the
2361 plan. The Citywide cost recovery policy mirrors in a lot of ways the Community
2362 Services cost recovery policy, which is tiered. The more personal individual benefit, the
2363 higher expectation that you would pay to recover the cost of that compared to a more
2364 public benefit.
2365

2366 Commissioner Hetterly: I'm concerned that we don't want to end up with some internal
2367 inconsistencies between that major project and this major project. How do we check
2368 that? That's my question.
2369

2370 Mr. de Geus: We'll make sure that that happens. I can resend the policy to you all, so
2371 that you can take a look at it, make sure it makes sense to you and refreshes your
2372 memory. I'll also send out the policy that was approved probably seven or eight years
2373 ago related to just our department. You can take a look at that. I think we'll start in the
2374 fall with reviewing that policy, which will be right when the Master Plan is starting to
2375 come together.
2376

2377 Commissioner Crommie: Is that the policy that Lam presented to us?

2378
2379 Mr. de Geus: That's right.

2380
2381 Commissioner Crommie: It'd be great if you'd resend that.

2382
2383 Chair Reckdahl: My major complaint with that cost of services was we are constraining
2384 ourselves artificially low on our costs, because we were not reflecting the fact that we're
2385 using City facilities. If we were a private company and we wanted to use City facilities,
2386 we'd have to pay rent. We were just looking at how much labor we have for our costs.
2387 We really should be looking at the cost of renting that parkland or renting that room.
2388 That would reflect a more accurate cost. That's doesn't necessarily mean we have to
2389 charge more, but we have the freedom by the law to charge more.

2390
2391 Commissioner Hetterly: There's an opportunity cost for using it ourselves instead of
2392 renting it out.

2393
2394 Chair Reckdahl: Exactly. We could be renting it out to someone else.

2395
2396 Mr. de Geus: Some of those costs are built in. There's an overhead factor built into the
2397 cost of services policy.

2398
2399 Chair Reckdahl: That was my general complaint. Because we're constrained, we can't
2400 make money off of it. I thought we were constraining our costs artificially low by not
2401 representing the City assets that we're using.

2402
2403 Vice Chair Markevitch: Is that something you want to bring back to discuss next month?
2404 To Policy and Services or ...

2405
2406 Chair Reckdahl: Let staff chew on it for a month.

2407
2408 Mr. de Geus: Let me send that to you all. If there's an interest, certainly.

2409
2410 Chair Reckdahl: I would like to see it in the next two or three months if possible. If we
2411 don't do anything but chew on it and maybe give staff some recommendations.

2412
2413 Commissioner Crommie: Have you thought about having John Aiken come back next
2414 month?

2415
2416 Chair Reckdahl: We penciled him in for next month.

2417
2418 Commissioner Lauing: For what?

2419 Commissioner Crommie: The signage CIP.

2420
2421
2422 Chair Reckdahl: For the Baylands.

2423
2424 Commissioner Lauing: Not the zoo?

2425
2426 Commissioner Crommie: No, nothing to do with the zoo. He's also in charge of open
2427 space at Baylands. He wears two hats.

2428
2429 Mr. de Geus: He's responsible for programming at the interpretive center in the
2430 Baylands. He's helping with the CIP for that center.

2431
2432 Commissioner Crommie: Do you want to have any staff? We're coming upon summer,
2433 and we could get a presentation on how summer camps are going. That kind of thing is
2434 always really nice to have around now.

2435
2436 Mr. de Geus: I'll see if someone can come in and present on that.

2437
2438 Commissioner Crommie: A report on how the new facility is.

2439
2440 Mr. de Geus: The new Mitchell Center?

2441
2442 Commissioner Crommie: Yeah. How we're integrating teens, something catchall that
2443 has to do with teens as well. It's always nice to hear about them.

2444
2445 Chair Reckdahl: I found our last meeting with the zoo to be unsatisfying. What's the
2446 path forward for that?

2447
2448 Mr. de Geus: This is the new Junior Museum and Zoo potential rebuild. We're working
2449 through a process with the Friends of the Junior Museum and Zoo on a potential
2450 construction agreement and governance agreement. We're meeting regularly, but we're
2451 not anywhere near an agreement yet on that. At the same time, there is an environmental
2452 assessment happening of the design of the building and Rinconada Park Master Plan
2453 generally. That's still several months away before being completed.

2454
2455 Chair Reckdahl: We had some comments. Could they use offsite storage to shrink the
2456 building? Could they have a basement to squeeze it into a smaller footprint? Are any of
2457 those being considered?

2458
2459 Mr. de Geus: We shared that information with the architect for the Friends Board and
2460 John.

2461
2462 Commissioner Crommie: Do you think we need an ad hoc committee on that, just to
2463 have representation from our Commission on some of those conversations? Maybe we
2464 could discuss it on our agenda, whether to put together an ad hoc.
2465

2466 Mr. de Geus: You could do that. I don't think the Commission was interested in meeting
2467 onsite at the Junior Museum and Zoo, so we could look at the facility, think about it, walk
2468 out to the park and look at the boundaries. If I recall, the Commission didn't think that
2469 was the best idea. Rather it wanted the team to come back with some more thinking.
2470

2471 Commissioner Lauing: We wanted to see some alternatives. (crosstalk) only one option.
2472 There's always more than one option for every project.
2473

2474 Commissioner Crommie: We asked for that in Byxbee, and we only got it through
2475 having an ad hoc committee. It's hard to get those things. It takes a more intimate
2476 meeting time.
2477

2478 Commissioner Lauing: They can't misread the comments that we gave. (crosstalk) past
2479 this Commission would be my conviction.
2480

2481 Mr. de Geus: Unless they can define it a little better. My assessment is that it's
2482 somewhat rightsizing the activity that happens there now. It's so busy there. There's so
2483 many people that use that site. It's not just Palo Alto residents; it's a regional draw of a
2484 program. It's jam packed. They certainly don't think this is the big option for them. This
2485 is rightsizing the program for (crosstalk).
2486

2487 Chair Reckdahl: If I take both of those comments that I said before about whether they
2488 have a basement to shrink the footprint or whether they have offsite storage so they can
2489 have 100 percent of the space utilized for programs, those would be things they could
2490 certainly consider.
2491

2492 Mr. de Geus: I'll bring it up to them again. They need to come back to the Commission,
2493 and they need to come back with some thinking around alternatives. The alternatives
2494 might be, "We could make it smaller, but it compromises what we're trying to do here in
2495 these ways, and that's why we don't want to do that." On the other hand, they could say,
2496 "We were able to tweak a little bit and not encroach onto the parkland as much."
2497

2498 Chair Reckdahl: I'm worried that if we don't get ourselves involved, they will go down
2499 the path and say, "Sorry, Park Commission. It's too late. We've done all this work on the
2500 new design, and we can't go back and revisit anything."
2501

2502 Mr. de Geus: It requires a Park Improvement Ordinance to get this passed. The
2503 Commission will have a say at some point. Preferably we want to bring something to the
2504 Council ...

2505
2506 Commissioner Crommie: It's better early than late.
2507

2508 Mr. de Geus: ... that the Commission feels good about. It's better to have a process like
2509 this, where it comes back a few more times. It does get changed a little bit, tweaked so
2510 we get a better product. Usually we get a better product at the end. That's why you go
2511 through this. I'll talk to them again, and see what makes sense in terms of the timing for
2512 them to come back.
2513

2514 Commissioner Hetterly: Another possible agenda item is the Field Use Policy. It's been
2515 two years now since we did that. We have this great matrix in here, but it doesn't
2516 represent all of the sports field users. It represents the City programs for the most part. It
2517 would be helpful to have Adam come and give his sense of how the brokering is going,
2518 how much clamoring is there for more or different, what's working, what's not working.
2519 That would be helpful in building into the prioritization process that we're getting started
2520 on here.
2521

2522 Mr. de Geus: He just finished last week fall brokering with all of the users. You know
2523 how those meetings are. It would be good timing.
2524

2525 **VII. ADJOURNMENT**
2526

2527 Meeting adjourned in honor of Ray Bacchetti on motion by Vice Chair Markevitch and
2528 second by Chair Reckdahl at 10:00 p.m. Passed 6-0