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**MINUTES  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
June 23, 2015  
CITY HALL  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, California**

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

15 **Commissioners Absent:**

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

17 **Staff Present:** Daren Anderson, Rob de Geus, Ashley Ford, Adam Howard, Peter Jensen

18 **I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY:** Ashley Ford

19  
20 Rob de Geus: This is Ashley Ford. I'm not sure everybody's met Ashley. She's a new  
21 employee with the Community Services Department. She took the position that Sally  
22 Camozzi had. Some of you know Sally; she retired.

23  
24 **II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

25  
26 None.

27  
28 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

29  
30 None.

31  
32 **IV. BUSINESS:**

33  
34 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the Special Meeting of May 26, 2015.**

35  
36 Approval of the draft May 26, 2015 Minutes was moved by **Vice Chair Markevitch** and  
37 seconded by Commissioner Lauing. Passed 6-0  
38



39 **2. Update on Park Improvement Projects.**  
40

41 Daren Anderson: Good evening. Daren Anderson, Open Space, Parks and Golf. I'm just  
42 going to take a few minutes to give you a briefing on some of our park renovations and  
43 capital improvement projects. I'll start with King Plaza. This is a project Landscape  
44 Architect Peter Jensen is leading. This week the maintenance work began on King Plaza,  
45 and it's going to continue through the end of July. The project will have a little bit of  
46 impact on the circulation of the plaza; you may encounter small areas cordoned off for  
47 your safety. The work on the plaza is going to include refreshing the decomposed granite  
48 walkways under the magnolia trees; removing turf and shrub plantings along Hamilton  
49 Ave.; removing ivy in the driveway entrances; replacing irrigation valves around the  
50 entire building; replacing benches; and replanting with drought-tolerant plants. El  
51 Camino Park is on schedule.

52  
53 Chair Reckdahl: King Plaza, what's the schedule for that?

54  
55 Mr. Anderson: It's ongoing. It'll be completed July, the end of July. It's already  
56 underway.

57  
58 Chair Reckdahl: We are underway.

59  
60 Mr. Anderson: El Camino Park is on schedule, slated for completion November 2015.  
61 We've got a few photos to show you that I took this morning. This is the north field, the  
62 softball field. This is the pathway that heads towards the Utilities pump station. This  
63 will be a pathway, and there's lighting and other posts for fences. This is the parking lot  
64 closest to the synthetic turf field, which will be over here. Just starting to take shape.  
65 This is the scorekeeper's booth. This is the edge of the north synthetic turf field. On  
66 target which is great, so we're looking good. Stanford-Palo Alto Playing Fields are up for  
67 synthetic turf replacement. That's going to happen December, looking like December 1st  
68 through February 15th. Both fields will be replaced. Right now the game plan is to  
69 stagger them, so we'll leave one open as we do the other and then flip flop. We'll have El  
70 Camino Park synthetic turf field up by that time, so we're hoping the impact will be  
71 reduced on our field users. Scott Park is slated to be completed mid-July. The Baylands  
72 projects, we've got a couple. We've got the Interpretive Center and the Boardwalk. The  
73 consultants for both those projects are onboard and have begun work. Contractor FOG  
74 will be working on the—this is the inside of the Baylands Nature Center. They've  
75 already begun work on the structural evaluation of the facility. The contractor working  
76 on the Boardwalk independently but still in communication is Biggs and Cardosa.  
77 They're up and working on it. The next step on that process will be a community meeting  
78 late summer/early fall to look at both projects together.  
79

80 Chair Reckdahl: What's the scope of those projects? Are those investigations of what  
81 we're going to do or is it actually work?  
82

83 Mr. Anderson: One of them, the Boardwalk, is the investigation one. It's an analysis and  
84 feasibility study on how we can repair it, looking at short-term, medium-term, long-term  
85 fixes. The other is a project to replace more infrastructure inside the building and some  
86 ADA improvements as well. Monroe Park is going to Council for approval of the Park  
87 Improvement Ordinance. It should be going in August. We're working on bids with  
88 purchasing right now. Buckeye Creek hydro study. As you know, the capital budget got  
89 approved, so we're working right now on writing the scope of that to get ready and  
90 hopefully get going as soon as possible. We're just getting started. Bowden Park is just  
91 about ready to go out to bid. That concludes my updates on the park projects.  
92

93 Commissioner Lauing: What about the bocce ball court park?  
94

95 Mr. Anderson: That's at Scott Park, and that one is again slated for mid-July.  
96

97 Vice Chair Markevitch: Daren, also Scott Park, there was that little piece of asphalt  
98 between the rehabilitation center and the park. Is that going to get replaced?  
99

100 Mr. Anderson: Again, that one's not on park property, so we weren't able to incorporate  
101 it in ours. I'll have to double check this with one of my staff, but they worked out an  
102 arrangement. I believe it's going to be done. This is a small connecting piece of asphalt  
103 about 5 feet wide by 4 feet wide. It's very small, but it wasn't on park land, which was  
104 the challenge. It needs to be replaced. I'll have to double check, but I believe it's going  
105 to be replaced.  
106

107 Chair Reckdahl: We talked, was it last month or the month before, about El Camino Park  
108 and the fact that now if we put outfield grass in the softball field, that may take a lot of  
109 water. We were hesitant to put new grass in when we're trying to cut down on water.  
110 What's the status of that?  
111

112 Mr. Anderson: That's a great question. Do you mind if I answer or do you have a ...  
113

114 Rob de Geus: No, go ahead.  
115

116 Mr. Anderson: You might recall that the plans had the south field grass and then a  
117 passive grass area north of the synthetic turf field. The passive grass area, contingent and  
118 consistent with our evaluation on what we're cutting for the drought, that passive  
119 aesthetic turf is going to be let go. We won't be installing that. We're still working out  
120 what will take its place. We were planning on putting trees in that area, in and around it  
121 anyway, so we're going to feel our way through on that one. I don't have an exact answer

122 of what will replace it, but it won't be turf. The south field, which will be athletic fields,  
123 will be turf. We're going to put it in; we're going to sod it.

124  
125 Chair Reckdahl: It will be natural turf?

126  
127 Mr. Anderson: Yeah, it will be. If you look at the historic water use of that site, it'll be  
128 50 percent less than it was historically. It's still exceeding our expectation of 34 percent  
129 for most of our parks. It's an example of where we're exceeding it, because we're putting  
130 this great investment into a synthetic turf field.

131  
132 Chair Reckdahl: When you said that the park water use is going to be 50 percent, that's  
133 because the soccer field now is synthetic?

134  
135 Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

136  
137 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

138  
139 Commissioner Crommie: What park did you mention right after Bowden Park? Did you  
140 say something about Buckeye?

141  
142 Mr. Anderson: I just mentioned the Buckeye Creek hydrology study. We hope to get  
143 going soon. Since the budget got approved, that project can now happen. I was just  
144 mentioning that we're going to be kicking it off sometime soon.

145  
146 Commissioner Crommie: That's great. It's in process.

147  
148 Mr. Anderson: Just starting, yeah. The money's not available yet, but we're going to start  
149 working on the scope, finding the available contractors. I've already got a partial list.  
150 We really want to ramp up and get that going.

151  
152 Commissioner Crommie: That would be for a hydrology study?

153  
154 Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

155  
156 Mr. de Geus: I'll just add since you talked about the drought, there's an informational  
157 report that is in the packet for the Council on the 29th. You'll find that interesting. It's  
158 from Public Works. It talks about City facilities generally, but it also talks about parks to  
159 some degree. I have to give Daren here some major kudos, because there's high  
160 expectations of water savings from our park system. As you can imagine, it's one of the  
161 City's highest uses of water. We have a lot of parks, and we have a lot of athletic fields  
162 and a lot of use of those fields. Daren and his staff went park by park and looked at how  
163 we might reduce water, but save trees and save athletic turf so that play can continue. It

164 was an enormous amount of work, working closely with our Utilities Department that  
165 oversees the drought plan. I'd encourage you to take a look at that informational report. I  
166 can send you the link. That's a commitment.

167  
168 Commissioner Hetterly: I have a quick follow-up question on that. Are we also trying to  
169 reduce our recycled water use? I've noticed Greer Park has gone very brown in the last  
170 couple of weeks. That is our primary recycled water park.

171  
172 Mr. Anderson: Yeah, excellent question. Greer Park was due to a pump failure. We are  
173 not reducing our recycled water use. In fact, we're trying to ramp that up and drop the  
174 potable.

175  
176 Chair Reckdahl: We also talked about the pipeline that carries the recycled water, and  
177 eventually it'll be extended. Where does it go right now?

178  
179 Mr. Anderson: That might be a great exhibit I could bring the next time I come to talk  
180 about drought. I could bring maps for you and show you where it is now and where we're  
181 planning to have it go.

182  
183 Chair Reckdahl: For example, Bowden Park is not going to get recycled water.

184  
185 Mr. Anderson: No.

186  
187 Chair Reckdahl: Isn't the pipeline pretty close to Page Mill?

188  
189 Mr. Anderson: I'd have to bring you a map; I'm not prepared tonight.

190  
191 Chair Reckdahl: We can put that off. Thank you. Any other questions? Commissioner  
192 Crommie.

193  
194 Commissioner Crommie: As far as Monroe Park goes, it seems like it's been really slow.  
195 Is there any glitch that's going on right now? Have some of those problems been solved  
196 as far as planning? You said there were some unexpected things that you encountered.

197  
198 Mr. Anderson: We did. Frankly, I just have to take the blame on this one. My schedule  
199 became overbooked with so many projects. It slipped behind some other high priority  
200 ones. It's my own fault. The delays are my own. I'm going to try to get it done as soon  
201 as I can.

202  
203 Commissioner Crommie: It's back in the queue?

204  
205 Mr. Anderson: Yeah.

206  
207 Commissioner Crommie: One of the trees died. We had all these big, mature trees die,  
208 and then some of them got replanted. One of those died and got cut out again. I'd like to  
209 hear about what happened with that.

210  
211 Mr. Anderson: I'd be glad to check in with our trees department and find out.

212  
213 Commissioner Crommie: I think it was one of the more unusual ones that had gotten  
214 planted. One of the bigger ones.

215  
216 Mr. Anderson: A new unusual tree?

217  
218 Commissioner Crommie: Yeah.

219  
220 Mr. Anderson: It was a disease that had affected a number of those. I'm curious to know  
221 if that passed over somehow to the new one. I'll try to find out and let you know.

222  
223 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you, Daren.

224  
225 **3. Review of the Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Facilities Master**  
226 **Plan.**

227  
228 Rob de Geus: We'll have Peter Jensen come join us and Ellie Fiore from MIG. We have  
229 a presentation here that we'll have to load up.

230  
231 Peter Jensen: Commissioners, good evening. Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect for the  
232 City of Palo Alto, here in our monthly meeting to discuss the Parks Master Plan. Tonight  
233 we want to focus on three areas. Firstly, we're going to look at the principles that we  
234 discussed last time. We'll discuss how those were revised from your comments before.  
235 We're looking to try to finalize those so we can move to the next process. If there are  
236 extensive comments on those, we will be probably bringing back those at the next  
237 meeting, but would like to focus on getting those solidified. The next step that we're  
238 looking at tonight is areas of focus. That's something new that we're talking about. It  
239 focuses on the community outreach aspect and what we're going to be asking the  
240 community to do in our prioritization phase as far as ranking these areas to establish a  
241 point that we can use for the criteria in ranking prioritizations when we come to that  
242 point. We're also going to review briefly criteria that will work with the  
243 recommendations and how we'll eventually end up ranking the recommendations. Those  
244 are the three areas we're focusing on tonight. In general just to give you an overview of  
245 our timeline, what we'd like to do is again solidify the principles tonight, talk about the  
246 areas of focus this evening, and then bring them back next month in July, because they  
247 dictate how the community meetings will be set up. I think we're in discussion on if

248 you're going to take a break. If you are going to take a break, August is the time to do it  
249 so we can have our community meeting at that point, and then come back to you in  
250 September to talk about what we've heard from the community as far as the prioritization  
251 and the areas of focus. Then move forward and talk more in-depth about the criteria at  
252 that time. That's our next few months of how we're going to be moving through this  
253 process. Ellie's going to take us through her presentation tonight, talking about those  
254 three phases. Of course, we'll be taking feedback from you on the things that we're  
255 talking about tonight, and we'll be bringing those comments and how we address them at  
256 the next meeting. Without further ado, I'll let Ellie take over and give the presentation.  
257

258 Ellie Fiore: Great, thank you. Good evening, Commissioners. Following up on Peter's  
259 introduction, I want to reorient us to where we left off, which is in the transition between  
260 the data and needs summary which culminated in our matrix that we've been spending a  
261 lot of time on the last couple of months. Now, pivoting towards what do we do with that  
262 information and how do we move forward. We're moving into the actions, criteria and  
263 prioritizing phase of work. We also created this additional graphic that helps show how  
264 we filter the ideas that we've heard from the community, the ideas that we get from the  
265 PRC and from staff and how that becomes a Plan at the end of the day. It's a bit of a  
266 funneling, filtering process, a winnowing down of ideas. What we want to do tonight is  
267 focus on the framework and actions, and then give you a little preview on the criteria and  
268 prioritization phases. This is our path forward; the key elements of that process. The  
269 matrix we're all very familiar with now. The framework which we introduced last time  
270 and will revisit here shortly shapes how the recommendations are tied to the  
271 improvements. The recommendations or actions are the actual system enhancements  
272 that'll be part of the Plan. The criteria are what we'll use to sort those recommendations  
273 into an action plan. Going back to the framework. We spent some time wordsmithing  
274 and reviewing these concepts last time, and then we did so with staff as well. We ended  
275 up with the same list of seven, though we've revised the content of each. I want to  
276 quickly go through those for your review and hopefully approval. Based on some of your  
277 input, we put playful first, because we decided that's the intent of the parks and recreation  
278 system. Healthy, physically and mentally, and community health were all highlighted in  
279 this definition. That's a primary focus as well. Sustainable. We had a lot of conversation  
280 on this, and folks feel like it's an overused word. We went back and forth, but we ended  
281 up keeping it because we felt like it's the only term we could come up with that  
282 encompasses these three elements; the natural environment, economic stability of the  
283 system, and the social and community elements of what a parks and recreation system  
284 does in Palo Alto. We also incorporated the words natural and stewardship, because  
285 those are important. We also kept inclusive and accessible, but fine tuned the language to  
286 better explain the difference between those two; ages, abilities, language, income.  
287 Accessibility. People's ability to travel to and take advantage of the resources in the City.  
288 Flexible. Again this is pretty important, because you have a constrained system. We're  
289 not going to be expanding and building lots of new stuff or finding new land, so we need



290 to find ways to have multiple uses in the same space in a way that's balanced, so it's not  
291 overwhelmed by any given use or any given style of development. Any final thoughts or  
292 reactions to those as they've been presented tonight?

293  
294 Chair Reckdahl: Apparently not.

295  
296 Ms. Fiore: No.

297  
298 Commissioner Crommie: I've beaten this to death, but I always like to see the word  
299 nature in here. That to me implies ecosystem, not just a natural space that doesn't include  
300 any animals, insects or some kind of ecosystem that's living, something living other than  
301 trees or animals. I just don't see it in here.

302  
303 Ms. Fiore: We did build it into the definition of sustainable, but I hear what you're  
304 saying.

305  
306 Commissioner Crommie: I'd like to see the word nature.

307  
308 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Lauing.

309  
310 Commissioner Lauing: Did you want any comments at this point on the next part,  
311 applying the principles?

312  
313 Ms. Fiore: Not yet.

314  
315 Chair Reckdahl: Go ahead.

316  
317 Ms. Fiore: Moving forward. Where we're going with all of this is we're going to be  
318 moving into our next phase of community outreach. The first phase that we started last  
319 summer was asking people what are the community needs, what are the opportunities for  
320 improvement throughout the system. Now, we want to go back and start talking about  
321 prioritization. How do we address those issues, opportunities and community needs that  
322 we spent this time defining? We're looking at a late summer/fall two-pronged process.  
323 We want to do an online survey, because we had a ton of success. We got almost 1,200  
324 responses to our last one. As well as an in-person workshop, one or two, still to be  
325 decided, probably in August or September when school is back in session. The online  
326 survey would ideally launch in July and then be ending following that workshop. We'd  
327 be pushing the survey, pushing the workshop, allowing people to do either or both, and  
328 then wrapping in September to do the data analysis on that. We'll also be reconvening  
329 our stakeholder advisory group that met once last year. We did individual meetings with  
330 several of those members over the last six months or so as well. We'll do a similar  
331 prioritization exercise with them.



332  
333 Chair Reckdahl: This will be the same stakeholders as last time?  
334

335 Ms. Fiore: Correct,. What we want to talk about tonight is how we structure that  
336 prioritization exercise. As we all know from looking at that matrix for a couple of  
337 months, that's not the level of detail that we can put in front of the public and expect them  
338 to be able to digest and react meaningfully to it. We want to make sure we're striking the  
339 right level of detail here and also not overwhelming them. Not presenting so little detail  
340 that it's not very meaningful; not presenting so much detail that it's impossible to digest or  
341 prioritize or that allows people to promote their narrow interests. If we put neighborhood  
342 park suggestions up there, people tend to vote for whichever neighborhood park is closest  
343 to them rather than supporting system-wide neighborhood park improvements. If that  
344 makes sense. Our proposed structure, this is what we'd like to focus on tonight, is what  
345 we're calling the areas of focus. It's an awkward name; we're open to other suggestions.  
346 These are essentially categories or groupings of recommendations. There's 18 of these,  
347 and they're on page 3 of the memo that was in your packet. They're presented here about  
348 four or five at a time, just so they're readable. The idea is that this is the level of detail  
349 that we'd be presenting to the community and asking them to help us prioritize and rank  
350 these. The conversation we want to have with you tonight is do these sound right, is  
351 there anything missing. Projects, improvements, things that you were hoping would be  
352 part of this Parks Plan, would they fall into one of these categories?  
353

354 Rob de Geus: I would add to that that it intends to reflect the matrix and that needs  
355 column. To Ellie's point, the matrix was a lot of good work, and this is a lot of good data  
356 that we're pretty comfortable with now. Having the workshop for two hours with people  
357 that may be new or have been involved only to a certain extent, we need to provide an  
358 environment where it can be meaningful and productive to them.  
359

360 Chair Reckdahl: It's not a weekend retreat.  
361

362 Mr. de Geus: No, it's not. That's why these are the first parts, areas of focus is what  
363 we're calling them right now, that would help us develop the workshop.  
364

365 Mr. Jensen: Our general idea is that we present these to the community and then allow  
366 the community in some form to rank them what they are. That's either done through how  
367 the first community meetings were done with the clicking devices and getting a live count  
368 of what's happening right there. Rob has suggested a good tactic as well of giving people  
369 pennies and then they could put as many pennies as they want next to it. How they added  
370 up would help to rank those things.  
371

372 Mr. de Geus: I'm going to have to explain that, because you didn't do that very well.  
373 There was an award given, I think it was to Newark or an East Bay city, by the California

374 Parks and Recreation Society. It was during some budget cuts in 2008-2009, I think.  
375 They called it A Penny for Your Thoughts. They did a big community workshop where  
376 everyone got a certain amount of pennies. You could use them up in the way that was  
377 most important to you. It was very effective, the way they wrote it up. Obviously you  
378 can't afford everything. When you have something to work with, you've got to make  
379 some decisions. You can put it all under state parks, if that's your interest, or you can  
380 divide it up. It's an approach we might consider.

381  
382 Chair Reckdahl: That might get some interesting results.  
383

384 Ms. Fiore: We're in the process of developing what that exercise looks like, both in the  
385 community workshop and online. What we want to spend the bulk of time on tonight is  
386 getting your reaction to this list.  
387

388 Commissioner Crommie: I'm a little confused why that list is so much shorter than the  
389 one in our packet.  
390

391 Ms. Fiore: There's four more, three more. We just wanted to make sure they were  
392 legible for you on the slide, so we grouped them together.  
393

394 Commissioner Hetterly: Can I just ask a clarifying question?  
395

396 Ms. Fiore: Mm-hmm.  
397

398 Commissioner Hetterly: At your community outreach, you're planning to only discuss  
399 these areas of focus and ask the public to rank the areas of focus in a vacuum from  
400 everything else that's going on?  
401

402 Ms. Fiore: I wouldn't say in a vacuum. We'll provide the context of what we've done so  
403 far, present some themes that we heard from the community input from 2014 and to date  
404 and let them know where this fits in, that process, path forward. Again, we're trying to  
405 zero in on what the right level of detail is to discuss with the public. We feel like this is a  
406 manageable level.  
407

408 Mr. de Geus: I would add to that it definitely shouldn't be in a vacuum. Again, this is a  
409 first pass. The areas of focus should be reflective of the data that we've been gathering.  
410 If there's a piece missing, then we should add it. There's also going to be an opportunity  
411 for the other category. There's going to be folks that show up that just have new  
412 information that we need to hear about and know about. That'll be an opportunity, both  
413 the stakeholder meetings and the workshops.  
414

415 Commissioner Hetterly: Can you also explain what is the interrelationship between the  
416 areas of focus and the principles?  
417

418 Ms. Fiore: Just to add onto what Rob said quickly, we're moving people into that  
419 tradeoff discussion. What we've heard is that there is need and desire for all of these  
420 things, but we're operating within constrained resources, both financially and space.  
421 That's where we start getting into the budgeting, prioritizing, ranking exercise, is the  
422 intent here. I'm sorry, can you repeat your first question? Second question.  
423

424 Commissioner Hetterly: My second question was what's the interrelationship between  
425 the areas of focus and the principles.  
426

427 Ms. Fiore: They don't necessarily talk to one another. The principles are used to  
428 generate and to review the actions, the recommendations, all of which will fall into one of  
429 these areas. This is an organizing structure for the recommendations as well as a tool for  
430 presenting it to the public. The principles do two things. They set the vision for the  
431 system as a whole, what the Plan will achieve, and then they help us review the  
432 recommendations themselves.  
433

434 Commissioner Hetterly: We expect the principles to all apply to the whole Plan. The  
435 areas of focus, we want the public to help us prioritize among those.  
436

437 Ms. Fiore: Within them, yes. As a whole, all of the recommendations will bring those  
438 principles to life. It's three tiers, if you will. The principles of what we're trying to  
439 achieve and what that vision is. The areas of focus are the different types of  
440 recommendations and actions. Then the recommendations and actions themselves.  
441

442 Commissioner Ashlund: I do have some questions and comments about this list. You  
443 mentioned the clickers which we had used at the previous community meeting. Where it  
444 says the Penny for Your Thoughts, I have a strong preference for the Penny for Your  
445 Thoughts method, because it's much more interactive. I know from talking to people at  
446 the previous community meetings, with the clickers they felt very disconnected. They  
447 just clicked their button and they didn't feel heard. This sounds much more  
448 approachable, that people are in conversation with each other and their actions are  
449 showing. You can see how other people are casting their votes as opposed to it being  
450 removed from that. That sounds like a great approach to try. Can I just go through the  
451 list on these?  
452

453 Ms. Fiore: Absolutely.  
454

455 Commissioner Ashlund: Number one, expanding existing parks. Can you please explain  
456 what that means? We can't expand our parks, so do you mean adding parks or  
457 expanding?  
458

459 Ms. Fiore: Adding land if possible, through any possible acquisitions.  
460

461 Commissioner Ashlund: Then maybe we could say "if possible" or "where possible."  
462

463 Ms. Fiore: Where possible, yeah.  
464

465 Commissioner Ashlund: Then it would be more clear. On the second one, enhancing  
466 capacity of sports fields. The other thing I heard at the community meetings was quality  
467 of the sports fields as well. The third one, indoor spaces sounds like staff speak more  
468 than the public speak. We refer to it as community buildings or facilities.  
469

470 Ms. Fiore: The language itself?  
471

472 Commissioner Ashlund: The language feels a little awkward. I would assume it includes  
473 gyms, yeah. Indoor spaces sounds not so clear to the layperson. Jumping down to  
474 number seven on diversifying play experiences for all ages and abilities. You mentioned  
475 the terms of inclusive and accessible. That would be nice to add here, because it does  
476 help explain what you're talking about. It's not just a diversification effort, but it is for  
477 inclusion and accessibility. Stop me if I'm going too fast. Number ten, it's not creating a  
478 system of community gardens; that should be expanding. The following one, I was not  
479 clear; integrating nature into all Palo Alto parks. In general we think of parks already as  
480 a place where by definition nature is. I wondered if that meant something about  
481 providing opportunities to interact or protect or learn with nature. I'm just throwing those  
482 out.  
483

484 Ms. Fiore: I think all of the above. It could be clearer.  
485

486 Commissioner Ashlund: Protecting nature on large scale preserves, creeks and  
487 waterways. Don't we also want to protect nature on the smaller scale as well? I wasn't  
488 sure why that was just large. Number 14, it says encourage active transportation to and  
489 from. We might add active and/or public transportation as opportunities to provide. The  
490 only one that I didn't see here that I thought we might consider adding was something  
491 about opportunities for community building and for social interaction in our community.  
492

493 Ms. Fiore: Thank you.  
494

495 Vice Chair Markevitch: The one that I was going to mention and you did was the  
496 community gardens. I'm actually getting push back from neighbors at the Johnson Park

497 area, because they are now saying they want more play space for kids and can we take it  
498 away from community gardens. It's a two-way street on that one. We'll make sure they  
499 come to the community meetings, so they can use their pennies.

500  
501 Commissioner Crommie: Can I ask a question about that? Our existing community  
502 gardens are in really big parks. Commissioner Markevitch, were they referring to any  
503 particular park?

504  
505 Vice Chair Markevitch: Johnson.

506  
507 Commissioner Crommie: They're feeling squished in Johnson?

508  
509 Vice Chair Markevitch: They're feeling the community garden is taking up space that  
510 could be used—they need a bigger place because there's more kids in the neighborhood.

511  
512 Commissioner Lauing: I agreed with every item that Commissioner Ashlund commented  
513 on. The point is we just need to be clear when we go to the community about what  
514 they're "voting on." Two other things, a little bit bigger picture. As I look at these things,  
515 the weight or impact of each of these things is either very obvious or very confusing.  
516 What I mean by that is obviously if we're going to expand existing parks or get more  
517 parkland, that's a pretty big deal. Whereas, the second to last one, the last one is using  
518 program signage and art to increase awareness. That's very helpful, but it's a completely  
519 different order of magnitude. To have all these on the same list and have the folks  
520 ranking that, I don't know how they're going to do that. I don't know how you give  
521 guidance on that. Just the natural impact of those is quite different.

522  
523 Ms. Fiore: The question we'll ask at the community workshops and in the online survey  
524 is what's most important to you. If you could only choose five, which would they be?  
525 People will be able to express their preferences that way. When we get to prioritizing  
526 that whole bigger list, there's another set of criteria, which we'll introduce in a minute,  
527 that starts to get at that and cost and impact.

528  
529 Commissioner Lauing: In your prior experience, if they ranked this last one of signage as  
530 one of the top five instead of more park space, that'd be pretty revealing. Has that  
531 happened? I don't want to call it trivial, because it's not. It's just lower impact.

532  
533 Ms. Fiore: It's low-hanging fruit. You're right. Expanding parks, my gut tells me that it  
534 would be more popular; however, something like using more signage and increasing  
535 interpretation is pretty easy to implement, so it may get moved forward in the process  
536 because of staff recommendations or other considerations.

537

538 Commissioner Lauing: Also, is this the time to talk about applying the principles? I  
539 don't want to move out of order here.

540  
541 Ms. Fiore: Let's hold that again.

542  
543 Commissioner Lauing: You just answered Commissioner Hetterly's question in a way  
544 about applying the principles that I want to come back to.

545  
546 Chair Reckdahl: I want to echo what Ed was saying about the clarity. Some of these are  
547 very vague. Are they intentionally vague? Were you trying to be nebulous? For  
548 example enhancing capacity of sports fields, sometimes people say, "I don't want more  
549 sports fields built. If you want to work on it and remodel it and make it more effective,  
550 we can have quicker turnaround." They may be for one and against the other. Making it  
551 nebulous makes them wonder what are they voting for.

552  
553 Ms. Fiore: That's very helpful.

554  
555 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

556  
557 Commissioner Crommie: This whole idea of expanding parks by acquiring adjacent  
558 land, why is it specified as adjacent? What if we need a park in a new location where  
559 there isn't one? How about something simple like adding more parks? They wouldn't  
560 normally be adjacent, right?

561  
562 Ms. Fiore: That's usually the first thing we look at, if there's available adjacent land that  
563 could be acquired.

564  
565 Commissioner Crommie: On the Mapita, that pointed out some gaps where we don't  
566 have enough parks. That's exactly opposite of saying make something bigger. The  
567 whole point was that we found some gaps in the City. I feel like this bullet point doesn't  
568 accommodate that reality.

569  
570 Ms. Fiore: That's a good point. Thank you.

571  
572 Chair Reckdahl: I don't want to reject "adjacent," because there are some small parks  
573 where adjacent land would make it much more useable. We'd want to look at both.

574  
575 Commissioner Crommie: I live near one of the smallest parks in Palo Alto. I don't know  
576 of adjacent land. Maybe there's some there, but it's a residential neighborhood. Maybe  
577 there's something I don't know about.

578

579 Chair Reckdahl: Mountain View bought those two houses and tore them down for that  
580 new park over on ...

581  
582 Commissioner Crommie: Not to take away from that concept, but I don't want to limit it  
583 to that concept.

584  
585 Chair Reckdahl: I would concur. Commissioner Hetterly.

586  
587 Commissioner Hetterly: I found the generality a little unsettling as well. It seems to me  
588 that you have three different types of areas of focus. You have the mom and apple pie,  
589 everybody's going to want these things. You have 11 of those. Then you have four that  
590 are a little more specific, like adding variety of things to do and diversifying play  
591 experiences, increasing exercise and fitness. Those would lead the discussion towards  
592 more specifics. Then finally you have the three that are particularized interests, like  
593 sports fields, dog parks and community gardens, which are totally different from "yeah,  
594 we want to have more and better parks." I wonder if it wouldn't be useful to separate out  
595 the different kinds of categories and allow people to weigh in on the types as opposed to  
596 having to choose, "I care a lot about dog parks and I want them, but in the big, grand  
597 scheme of things I would much rather have more parks. I would give up my dog parks in  
598 order to have more parks, because maybe later I can get more dog parks." You make  
599 false choices ...

600  
601 Ms. Fiore: Right. They're not all comparable.

602  
603 Commissioner Hetterly: ... when they're presented altogether as the same thing. As for  
604 the diversifying play experiences for all ages and abilities, I'm reluctant to change that to  
605 be more inclusive and accessible. I read that to mean diversifying play experiences for  
606 everybody, coming up with more variety of play experiences, not necessarily just around  
607 inclusion and accessibility. To capture both of those ideas would be helpful. Integrating  
608 nature into all Palo Alto parks. You have to be clearer about that. As you know, we've  
609 had a lot of confusion just on this panel about what exactly that means. Are we talking  
610 about natural materials? Are we talking about opening up creeks? (crosstalk) specifics  
611 about that.

612  
613 Commissioner Crommie: I read it to be like butterfly habitat. That's how I interpreted it.

614  
615 Commissioner Hetterly: I absolutely agree that community gathering interaction is  
616 something that should be added to the list. Sorry I'm jumping all over the list here.  
617 Enhancing capacity for sports fields, I'd say sports facilities. We got a lot of input about  
618 aquatic facilities as well as fields as well as gyms. I think that should be broader. Finally  
619 encouraging active transportation to and from parks. I like the idea of addressing public  
620 transportation, but I wonder why we would address the transportation at all. Maybe we

621 just say "encouraging and facilitating safe access to and from parks and recreation  
622 activities." Just as a general comment, if I were on the stakeholder group and this was  
623 presented as a prioritization meeting after having had a year's work on a Master Plan, I  
624 would wonder where's the meat. What do you really want from me? This is all  
625 generalities. We already told you all this stuff.

626  
627 Ms. Fiore: Are you speaking specifically for the stakeholder advisory group or the  
628 community workshop or both?

629  
630 Commissioner Hetterly: Both, but more for the stakeholder group, because they've been  
631 following the process. They do have a lot more information than your general member of  
632 the public who's just checking in for the first time.

633  
634 Chair Reckdahl: Rob, do you have a comment?

635  
636 Mr. de Geus: The thing I was going to say is that was really good feedback. The  
637 workshop is not just a voting exercise. What MIG needs to do is take this and try to  
638 create and develop a two- or three-hour dialog with the community with this as topics  
639 that will be discussed. It's not just going to be a voting of this list of 17 things, but  
640 breaking it up in a sensible way and having some conversation around these. Ultimately,  
641 there may be some voting. It's not just going to be a straight voting on each of these.

642  
643 Commissioner Hetterly: It's important to give some context. Maybe you don't go  
644 through the matrix, but you give them a summary of what kinds of information is  
645 presented there and what kinds of tradeoffs. A lot of us heard after the visual preference  
646 survey that that did not feel like a meaty enough use of people's time.

647  
648 Chair Reckdahl: One more comment that I have about the clarity. Indoor spaces, that's  
649 really vague. It could be a gym. It could be recreation facilities inside where you have  
650 yoga. It could be classrooms. There's a lot of different indoor facilities. You need to be  
651 more clear about that for less confusion. Commissioner Crommie.

652  
653 Commissioner Crommie: I liked what Commissioner Hetterly was saying about  
654 grouping things into categories by making it more of a choice, if you can do that, so  
655 people can think more deeply about a topic where a lot of similar things can fall under  
656 one topic. You have this bullet point of integrating nature into all Palo Alto parks. Last  
657 time I brought up the point about do you want to have logs for kids to play on. Is that  
658 considered nature? Do you want to have a butterfly garden or habitat for birds? That's  
659 all very different. Certainly the habitat is something that I care about. How would  
660 someone express that? What would people be meaning when they check off that bullet  
661 point? It's not at all clear.



663 Commissioner Hetterly: One more thing I would add. In providing context to your  
664 public groups, I would give them the context of we're working on these areas of focus,  
665 but there's a process. People are going to look at costs and time and maintenance. You  
666 have to treat them like they know something, because they do know something. They're  
667 going to have questions about that kind of stuff.  
668

669 Chair Reckdahl: You can move on now.  
670

671 Ms. Fiore: Thank you. Maybe we could get to Commissioner Lauing's question about  
672 applying the principles.  
673

674 Commissioner Lauing: There were two areas. One was on page 4 of the bigger sheet  
675 dated 6/17, plan framework, with a list. The question is how are these things going to be  
676 applied practically. I believe you answered Commissioner Hetterly by saying that all of  
677 these principles have to be active and obvious in order to prioritize a program or a focus  
678 area, or whatever we're going to call them. I don't know how that's possible, and I don't  
679 know why that's necessary. The goal I don't think is to quantify. It says it has to have  
680 100 percent or six of the eight things; otherwise, we can't do it in the City. Somewhere in  
681 the system, it just has to include these things and maybe not some other things. Right?  
682

683 Ms. Fiore: Right.  
684

685 Commissioner Lauing: I don't understand how you take this and make it into a goal for  
686 the prioritization.  
687

688 Ms. Fiore: I may have misspoken. It's not quite that rigid of a process. Not every  
689 recommendation is going to tick off all seven boxes. We are using this as a tool to help  
690 us find ones that do meet more than one, for example. We are also using it as a filtering  
691 process when there are choices to be made. The recommendation that ticks off more  
692 boxes and that is sustainable and healthy and promotes active transportation will be  
693 prioritized over something that just does one of those in isolation.  
694

695 Commissioner Lauing: For that reason?  
696

697 Ms. Fiore: Mm-hmm.  
698

699 Commissioner Lauing: That it hits seven out of nine, or whatever this thing is?  
700

701 Ms. Fiore: Yeah. We're not going to say it has to hit four or it's out. There's two parallel  
702 goals. One is that the collective set of recommendations creates a system that is  
703 described by all of these words. Two is that these are used as we're looking at the  
704 different recommendations to filter those and develop them. As we're writing

705 recommendations, it encourages us to think more creatively and how can we create a  
706 recommendation that does more than just address natural systems; one that addresses  
707 natural systems and community health and accessibility all at once.

708  
709 Commissioner Lauing: To take another slice of comment from the Commission. Part of  
710 what we're trying to do is create lots of options for everybody. What I like to do in the  
711 park system may not be what someone else likes to do. That doesn't mean we should  
712 take a middle ground and then neither one of us gets what we want to do. If I want to  
713 climb mountains and some people can't do that, I don't think we should just rule it out, it  
714 can't be done in Palo Alto. It's unclear to me how we're going to apply this in a way that  
715 draws the line, so that one's out because it doesn't meet it.

716  
717 Ms. Fiore: What might be helpful is looking at this other graphic that we put in your  
718 packet that's a funnel shape in the back of that framework.

719  
720 Mr. Jensen: (inaudible)

721  
722 Ms. Fiore: You should have an 11x17 hopefully. This is more of the tool that the staff  
723 will use to create and review these recommendations or actions. What we're looking at  
724 here is, starting from the top, all of the data we collected over the last year and a half and  
725 analyzed. The system components and the summary of opportunity, those are things that  
726 come straight out of the matrix. We pulled a few examples forward here to get a good  
727 range of the types of components in the system and the range of options. At the staff  
728 level, when we're generating these recommendations, that's generating from our  
729 professional development and also pulling forward from you, from the community  
730 workshops, from the stakeholder advisory groups, all of those sources. You're going to  
731 create this big list. Again, we need to shape and refine those, and that's where the  
732 principles come in. As an example, if I could walk you through for a second. The first  
733 bullet under essential activity access in the first column is additional play experiences to  
734 fill gaps in geographic access. What we've identified here is more close to home play  
735 options for kids essentially. In the second column we have integration of natural  
736 processes and features in parks and parks with potential to support this where appropriate.  
737 Those are coming from two different rows of the matrix. If you zoom down to the  
738 recommended actions, that last bullet there, the recommendation is to fill gaps in access  
739 to play areas with nature play facilities and to include nature play features in all  
740 playground redesigns. This is an example of how you can tick those multiple boxes,  
741 meet multiple objectives, address multiple principles with one recommendation in the  
742 Plan. Does that help at all or have I just confused it more?

743  
744 Commissioner Lauing: I guess.

745  
746 Vice Chair Markevitch: I don't see the public following this at all.

747  
748 Ms. Fiore: This is for the staff. This is the other side of the coin of the areas of focus.  
749

750 Mr. de Geus: Can I just add to that? This model is for staff and the Commission as well,  
751 or those that are closest to this Plan. It's like the critical thinking of all of this data. How  
752 do we do that? We need some type of process. What Ellie was walking through was  
753 looking at the different elements of the Plan, facilities and parks and programs, and  
754 seeing what were we hearing as a theme that was a thread through that, and using this  
755 model to think about those threads, defining them and using a set of principles which also  
756 come from the public feedback. That's where it comes from. In fact, it ought to be  
757 shared at the workshops, the principles, because they came from the public and our  
758 dialog. We should talk about that. Given these themes across these different elements of  
759 the parks and recreation system, some recommended actions start to emerge. That's what  
760 gets defined in that box. Finally, we have to prioritize those recommended actions with  
761 some criteria that is still being developed. That was in that packet too, wasn't it? At least  
762 a starting point for criteria. We don't want to get too far ahead, but that's where we are at.  
763 I want to give you everything we have. It's a process. There's a lot of data to work  
764 through.  
765

766 Commissioner Hetterly: I found this funnel diagram a little bit confusing. I wasn't able  
767 to distinguish what happened in the shaping recommended actions with the principles. I  
768 hear what you're saying about how you can integrate items from several categories into a  
769 single item. I do appreciate that. I'm not seeing how the principles are going to winnow  
770 down the millions of recommendations in the summary of needs. Can you explain that  
771 some more?  
772

773 Ms. Fiore: Part of the answer is that we haven't completed that exercise yet. This is a  
774 preview of what the outputs might look like.  
775

776 Commissioner Hetterly: Okay. All we're supposed to get from this is what you just said?  
777

778 Ms. Fiore: This is the process.  
779

780 Mr. de Geus: I'll have a little shot at that, Jenny, if you don't mind. There's a lot of  
781 information in that larger box. That is the summary of opportunities. It's big; there's a lot  
782 there. How do we start to winnow down to something that's more manageable and start  
783 to define actions, action plans? The idea is that's where the principles come in. That's  
784 another filter to look at all of this data. Looking through that filter of principles, and  
785 starting to use that to define some specific actions that might fall out.  
786

787 Commissioner Hetterly: The sample provided of the recommended actions. That's  
788 obviously not final, but is that an example of if we were looking at all of these things in

789 this top column and filtered them through the principles, we could narrow them to only  
790 these four things and we would throw out some of the other things? Did they get thrown  
791 out in the process or are these just some examples of how you can combine (crosstalk)  
792 purposes?  
793

794 Ms. Fiore: It's the latter.  
795

796 Commissioner Ashlund: I have a couple of questions about this funnel. In the left-most  
797 column under essential activity, access for play for children, the third bullet down, more  
798 diversified play experiences that provide high play value and contextual design response.  
799 Does that just mean play experiences that are appropriate for the context? Is that what  
800 the contextual design response is referring to?  
801

802 Ms. Fiore: I don't know. That came directly out of the matrix. Out of context, I'm not  
803 sure.  
804

805 Commissioner Ashlund: Maybe we could follow up on that.  
806

807 Ms. Fiore: Yes, I will.  
808

809 Commissioner Ashlund: In the third column, special purpose buildings and parks. It  
810 begins with no need for additional facilities expressed or observed. I believe in the data  
811 we did hear additional facilities needed such as a pool on the south side of Palo Alto and  
812 for sure the dog parks. Oh, this is special purpose buildings.  
813

814 Ms. Fiore: Yeah, it's a more narrow set.  
815

816 Commissioner Ashlund: Additional buildings, okay. Underneath that one, the second  
817 bullet, facilities are needed to connect people to nature, but current facilities are not  
818 meeting expectations. What does that mean? What kind of facilities are needed? Is that  
819 like interpretive centers or what does that mean?  
820

821 Ms. Fiore: That's a question to be answered. Our interpretation of the data and the  
822 community input, we're talking about the structures that exist in the Baylands and in the  
823 Foothills, some of them are outdated and people aren't using those as resources. What is  
824 a different way to utilize those spaces that meets the goals that we identified about nature  
825 interpretation and education? How can we re-imagine those spaces without building new  
826 ones?  
827

828 Commissioner Ashlund: Lastly, when the funnel goes down to where the four bullets are  
829 in the middle of the page, the second bullet there is very specific about identifying  
830 partners to build natural treasure hunt apps. Why is such a specific thing in there?

831  
832 Ms. Fiore: I don't know; I didn't write that. I had the same reaction when I first read it.  
833 It's an example and it ticks off several different goals. It's using technology to get kids to  
834 interact with nature. It teaches again with the interpretation and the ecological setting, so  
835 it could be all of the above.

836  
837 Commissioner Ashlund: It's very interesting. I have two teenagers who hate to hike, and  
838 I cannot bribe them enough to hike. I've been thinking about this idea for a long time. If  
839 there was a treasure hunt aspect to it, they would do it. You almost have to distract them  
840 to convince them to do something that, as adults, we appreciate. There is an interesting  
841 idea there. I was just wondering how it was ...

842  
843 Ms. Fiore: More specific than the others?

844  
845 Commissioner Ashlund: So specific was pulled out of here. Yeah.

846  
847 Commissioner Crommie: I just wanted to bring up this point that Commissioner Ashlund  
848 was drawing some attention to which was under the special purpose buildings and parks,  
849 the second bullet point about facilities are needed to connect people to nature. If you  
850 look at the Lucy Evans Interpretive Center, one of the main problems there is it's not  
851 staffed, it's not open. How does that relate? That's not a building problem; that's a  
852 staffing problem. Are we going to address that? We can have the best buildings in the  
853 world and not anyone in them opening the door.

854  
855 Mr. de Geus: That's an interesting example as to how the principles might relate. If the  
856 buildings are important, we think about those nature centers and that they add value.  
857 That came through in the data that we collected. Then we think about the principles.  
858 One of our principles is accessibility. That means it needs to be open, we need to be able  
859 to get inside. It might then relate to a recommendation that isn't about enhancing the  
860 building, but is about providing greater access to get into the building. A staffing  
861 recommendation or something like that, having a partner occupy that interpretive center  
862 or something so that people can have more access. That's a good example.

863  
864 Chair Reckdahl: Either that or change the design of the building to have the exhibits  
865 pointing outward so you don't have to have a staff. Right now we have a building design  
866 that assumes it's being staffed and staffing that doesn't support that.

867  
868 Mr. de Geus: That's correct.

869  
870 Chair Reckdahl: When I look at all these different principles and criteria, when I look at  
871 each individual one, they seem reasonable. When I look at the whole set, it seems a little  
872 overwhelming. If you have no criteria, you're making an arbitrary decision. When you

873 start adding criteria, if you add too much, it almost gets to be you can support anything.  
874 An infinite number of criteria is the same as no criteria. In both cases, you're making  
875 arbitrary decisions. I would want to look back here and say, "Do we really need all these  
876 criteria?" If you have too many scaling or grading changes, you're not going to create  
877 clarity. You're going to create confusion.

878  
879 Ms. Fiore: When you say all these criteria, are you referring to ...

880  
881 Chair Reckdahl: I'm looking at page 4 of applying the principles of playful, healthy,  
882 sustainable, inclusive. That's a lot of different aspects. Which do we weight the most? If  
883 one person weights accessibility the highest, they're going to have a totally different  
884 answer than if someone has playful the highest, and so forth. You get so many criteria,  
885 that you end up with arbitrary decisions. It may be painful to trim this down, but it may  
886 help the decision making process to have a more focused set of criteria. What are we  
887 really trying to do? We can't please everyone. There will be good aspects that we aren't  
888 grading, but we are going to look at the whole thing. That's my two cents.

889  
890 Mr. de Geus: It's good feedback, but there are principles and there are criteria in the  
891 model. They're different. The principles that you're referring to, the playful, healthy,  
892 sustainable, the list can be pretty long within there. There's still another filter that we  
893 need to go through, and that's a set of criteria that talks about reality and cost and some  
894 other things. We have some examples; do you have one up here?

895  
896 Ms. Fiore: Mm-hmm.

897  
898 Mr. de Geus: We need your feedback on this too. We're not sure if this is the right  
899 criteria. These are some that we think make sense, that staff and MIG have considered  
900 and other cities have used. This is the criteria that would start to prioritize ...

901  
902 Chair Reckdahl: How do the principles dovetail with this or feed into this?

903  
904 Ms. Fiore: They precede it essentially. The principles are used here between the needs  
905 and what the actions are. We use the framework to define those actions. We come up  
906 with our list of recommendations, then we apply the criteria to prioritize those  
907 recommendations which gives us our draft Plan.

908  
909 Chair Reckdahl: You're using the principles to whittle down the list, is that what you're  
910 saying?

911  
912 Mr. de Geus: Mm-hmm.

914 Ms. Fiore: The list of the entire universe of ways we could potentially address the  
915 community needs and improvements that we identified in that matrix; we're not going to  
916 be able to do it all.

917  
918 Chair Reckdahl: I'm just saying whittling down is going to be harder. The more  
919 principles you have, the more arbitrary your decision is going to be.

920  
921 Mr. de Geus: I would say that the principles are used not just to whittle down the list.  
922 It's more to define the list in a more actionable way, more specific recommendations that  
923 we can take action on. Even then the number of those recommendations is probably  
924 going to be larger than we can do in 20 years, so then we use the other filter or a set of  
925 criteria that says, "What is really actionable in the near-term, mid-term and long-term?"  
926 That is the essential action plan of the Master Plan. All of this other stuff remains in the  
927 Master Plan. This is going to be a very extensive volume of this book.

928  
929 Commissioner Hetterly: I'm sorry I keep coming back to what are the principles. It  
930 sounds maybe like they're more of a conceptual shaping of a list of options as opposed to  
931 a scaling or a weighting of options against the principles.

932  
933 Ms. Fiore: Yes, that's fair.

934  
935 Commissioner Hetterly: There's not a scoring process involved with the principles, so it  
936 wouldn't matter how many principles you had unless you had Principle Number 1 gets  
937 three points, Principle Number 2 gets four points. They're more to do what you did in the  
938 funnel, to reword what you have up here into more concise statements that are consistent  
939 with those principles. The winnowing down, the filtering out happens with the criteria?

940  
941 Ms. Fiore: Correct.

942  
943 Chair Reckdahl: (inaudible)

944  
945 Ms. Fiore: This one?

946  
947 Chair Reckdahl: Yeah. On Slide 22 there, the framework and actions, you're using the  
948 principles at that point to winnow down the list. Is that not the case? I thought that's  
949 what you said.

950  
951 Ms. Fiore: To winnow down the entire universe of recommendations to help us shape  
952 and define the ones we think are most appropriate for Palo Alto. That's a winnowing  
953 from motherhood and apple pie. Once we get those that meet as many of the principles  
954 as possible, the criteria funnel those down into a shorter set.

955

956 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, that's right. I would add that it's more than winnowing. It's a  
957 redefining of what's on the upper list that's more actionable, that reads more like a  
958 recommendation, that we could say, "We should fund something like that." Whereas,  
959 these upper concepts and ideas, they're not written that way. They're more raw from the  
960 public feedback and synthesizing that public feedback. Does that help?  
961

962 Ms. Fiore: Yeah. One more example that might be illustrative. Back on the filtering  
963 diagram, the first bullet in the narrow section says create walking paths in all parks with a  
964 preference for loops and connect them to the pedestrian and cycling network. That could  
965 have been two recommendations. One that said create more walking paths in parks, and  
966 one that said connect parks to the pedestrian and biking system. The bigger picture that  
967 addresses more of the principles is that you're creating an integrated system within the  
968 parks, so you've got that safe access, you've got active transportation and you've got  
969 opportunities for exercise and fitness in the parks.  
970

971 Female: (inaudible)  
972

973 Ms. Fiore: Sure. This is just our first pass at them. We wanted to introduce these,  
974 because it helps answer the question of where do we go next. We'll be revisiting these.  
975 If you've brought comments, we definitely want them.  
976

977 Commissioner Hetterly: The first bullet, time to completion, projects can be done  
978 quickly. Let me back up. It seems like in applying the criteria you want to consider  
979 things like cost and funding as well as community preference as well as timeline. There  
980 are three different types of things that you're trying to consider as you're coming up with  
981 a shorter list. The timeline seems to me very different from cost and funding and  
982 community preference conceivably. Time to completion, if that's a criteria for whether a  
983 recommendation should be on the list, it doesn't seem like it should be. It seems like it's a  
984 criteria for whether an item should be on the short list, the medium list or the long list  
985 rather than ruling it out altogether. Surely there are things that are long-term projects that  
986 we may well feel strongly about considering.  
987

988 Ms. Fiore: That's a good point.  
989

990 Commissioner Hetterly: The fourth bullet, community priority highly ranked category of  
991 projects. We've stumbled on this often. In saying community priority, things that are  
992 highly ranked, is that referring to things that are over capacity, that have a high expressed  
993 need, that have a high projected demand, that came up in whatever outreach or some  
994 combination of all those things?  
995



996 Ms. Fiore: As it's written, it's intended to be the results of that prioritization exercise with  
997 the areas of focus that we were talking about earlier. That whole process will become  
998 one of your criteria.  
999

1000 Commissioner Hetterly: That's not really projects at all. It's more ...  
1001

1002 Ms. Fiore: Category of projects. Highly ranked areas of focus would tie them together  
1003 more accurately.  
1004

1005 Commissioner Hetterly: I wondered if it wouldn't be helpful to add another bullet, I don't  
1006 know how to phrase it, getting at the idea of whether a certain project is new or  
1007 duplicative, balanced, flexible. That principle would apply as a criteria as well. If we  
1008 have a list of recommendations that includes a community garden, that's not a good  
1009 example but I'll use it anyway. We would want to then put it through the filter of criteria  
1010 to say, "Do we already have lots of community gardens or do we already have lots of  
1011 playgrounds?" Like that. Should we give higher priority to something that's new or  
1012 different or especially needed in that part of town? That's all I have.  
1013

1014 Commissioner Lauing: I'd love to tag team on that. This is where I had my biggest  
1015 exclamation point of the entire packet. I feel like this needs a lot of work. Starting with  
1016 the first bullet, because that is a good kickoff point. Time to completion with projects  
1017 that can be done quickly shouldn't be on this list. If there's something that's substantive  
1018 and a big deal, we have the Baylands created acreage out there. If that's going to take ten  
1019 years to build and it's going to be absolutely magnificent, you never say damn the costs.  
1020 That always has to be considered. Over a ten-year period, that might be exactly what we  
1021 should be doing. This thing of doing things that are quick because they're low-hanging  
1022 fruit, that's just absolutely incorrect. I'm not understanding why the cost and the funding  
1023 come up here. Then you've got partner funding. There's all these cost and funding  
1024 issues. We need to prioritize what we want to do in the next 25 years. When it comes up  
1025 and we say, "We thought that was going to be \$2 million. Sorry, it's \$20 million," we  
1026 might lower that priority. We have to prioritize, and I don't know that the wording is  
1027 correct yet, that it's a community priority. It's somehow within this process with staff and  
1028 the Commission and the stakeholder group to come up with the right priorities for that.  
1029 This preliminary criteria section needs a lot of work. I'll just leave it there.  
1030

1031 Mr. de Geus: Given the feedback on the criteria specifically, maybe Commissioners have  
1032 a suggestion on this. To get that feedback by next month, how would we do that? Do  
1033 you want to give us your comments today? It sounds like there's a lot of thoughts about  
1034 how this criteria should be shaped.  
1035

1036 Commissioner Lauing: It's a big deal.  
1037

1038 Mr. de Geus: It is a big deal, yeah.

1039  
1040 Commissioner Lauing; Maybe this is an ad hoc that has to get together and work hard in  
1041 the next month.

1042  
1043 Mr. Jensen: That was the idea of introducing it this evening. We do have the opportunity  
1044 over the next couple of months to keep talking about this. It is a major part of this and  
1045 how our final recommendations are going to be filtered out. We wanted to start that  
1046 dialog. We can start looking at these, because there are a lot of questions, there are a lot  
1047 of enhancement that can happen to this list. I do want to start thinking about that, I want  
1048 you to start thinking about that. This is not something that we're going to come back next  
1049 month and say we've got to have it finalized. We want to talk about it again next month;  
1050 we'll probably talk about it again in September. Hopefully in October/November we're  
1051 going to be looking around to finalize the criteria list. This is a longer-scale thing, and  
1052 that's why we wanted to introduce it early. It is an early draft to get ideas to think about.

1053  
1054 Commissioner Crommie: What's missing here Is anything about geography within the  
1055 City.

1056  
1057 Vice Chair Markevitch: Could you elaborate?

1058  
1059 Commissioner Crommie: That's what's behind some of the interests in dog parks. Dog  
1060 parks tend to be clustered in the south of our City. Community gardens tend to be  
1061 clustered in the north of our City. Some people are sensitive in the City about certain  
1062 services not being available throughout the City. It's come up in surveying, and it's come  
1063 up in various reports that have come before us, like the Urban Tree Master Plan, that kind  
1064 of thing.

1065  
1066 Commissioner Ashlund: I had the same reaction which is that the fourth, fifth and last  
1067 bullets are the three most important. The priority, the reach and the urgency are very, this  
1068 list is not parallel. Those three are very different than the time and the cost and the  
1069 maintenance impact. Also, the sixth bullet about partner or funding availability and the  
1070 second bullet about cost to build. Cost is cost. If cost is an issue, that doesn't need to be  
1071 on there as two different criteria. It feels like one criteria to me as well.

1072  
1073 Ms. Fiore: To wrap up, we wanted to outline a little more clearly our next steps. Peter  
1074 referenced several of these. What we'll do at your July meeting, assuming you're not  
1075 taking any break this summer before August, is to bring back the revised areas of focus  
1076 based on your input tonight and see if we can't better hit the right level of detail and  
1077 structure them meaningfully in a way that lends itself to a prioritization exercise. We'll  
1078 also at that point have the design of those exercises, both for the workshop and online, for  
1079 you to look at. As I mentioned, once we pin those down, we will launch the online

1080 version at the end of July ideally, and it'll run through probably early September. Have  
1081 the workshop when school is back in session, and then bring that more detailed  
1082 prioritization exercise to this group and to the stakeholders advisory committee which  
1083 will then roll out into draft recommendations. In the fall, refining these criteria, and  
1084 developing the draft Plan over the winter. This is a big picture look ahead.  
1085

1086 Vice Chair Markevitch: School starts August 18th, and the first three weeks are insane. I  
1087 would possibly move that community meeting to mid-September. It gets tight, but you're  
1088 not going to get the feedback that you are expecting.  
1089

1090 Ms. Fiore: That's good to know. I appreciate that.  
1091

1092 Chair Reckdahl: I want to go back; we've beat on this already. Refine criteria seems  
1093 very late in that I still don't quite understand the whole process. We have a whole bunch  
1094 of ideas and we're going to reduce them down to a small number of ideas that we  
1095 implement. Some of it includes the principles. Some of it includes the areas of focus.  
1096 Some includes the criteria. That process seems really vague right now. If criteria is the  
1097 final decision, it seems strange that we're doing that after we're doing the areas of focus.  
1098 We're having these stakeholders meetings and we still don't have our criteria set. You'd  
1099 think you would have the cart behind the horse.  
1100

1101 Mr. de Geus: The criteria is going to set priority, what gets done in the near, mid and  
1102 long-term. The one reason it gets refined is we will do a check-in with the City Council  
1103 and get their input. No doubt we'll have some adjustments there when we meet with  
1104 them. That's one of the reasons. Just getting back to the earlier comment about an ad  
1105 hoc. That would be a really good idea, because this is where the rubber meets the road on  
1106 the Plan. The criteria and these principles and how we flow all this information into an  
1107 actual action plan that tells us what we're going to do and in what order and why. It  
1108 would be helpful for staff, if there's an interest on the Commission, to work on that. The  
1109 criteria need a lot of work also.  
1110

1111 Chair Reckdahl: Originally we talked about an ad hoc for the Master Plan, and we came  
1112 to the conclusion that so many people have interest in the Master Plan that an ad hoc  
1113 would leave some people on the outside looking in.  
1114

1115 Mr. de Geus: Right. We ended up having ad hoc committees on specific topics,  
1116 stakeholder outreach and survey work and some other things. This may be another one of  
1117 those where if there are Commissioners that are particularly interested in how the criteria  
1118 work and how that flow chart works, how we synthesize all of this information. What I  
1119 want to avoid is coming back in a month and having another draft that is missing the  
1120 mark of where you all are at. It's helpful to have a check-in with a couple of  
1121 Commissioners to see what you're thinking in terms of how we're progressing.

1122  
1123 Vice Chair Markevitch: Since Ed brought it up, he probably wants to be on it. Just ask  
1124 for a show of hands of who would like to help him with that. That probably answers your  
1125 question.

1126  
1127 Chair Reckdahl: If everybody wants to do it, then we want to avoid it. If only a subset is  
1128 interested in the ad hoc, then ...

1129  
1130 Mr. de Geus: Even if everybody wants to do it, that's what will happen. It'll come back  
1131 maybe just with that additional thought and perspective of residents that really care about  
1132 this topic. Then you've got MIG, staff and a couple of your fellow Commissioners that  
1133 have had a chance to think it through before the next meeting. It can be helpful.

1134  
1135 Commissioner Hetterly: This is not an ad hoc that would recommend approving this plan  
1136 as presented by the group. It's just an additional layer of input that then we would have a  
1137 full discussion.

1138  
1139 Mr. de Geus: It may come back with a number of options. There may be a lot of  
1140 consensus around certain criteria, but others not so much. There may be differences of  
1141 opinion there that can be shared, and then the Commission can grapple with that.

1142  
1143 Chair Reckdahl: Do we want to talk about how we'd run that? Who would be on it? Is  
1144 that something we'd do offline?

1145  
1146 Mr. de Geus: This would be the time to do it. If there's a couple of Commissioners who  
1147 would be willing to have a couple of additional meetings at your convenience to work on  
1148 this particular topic, to help us get to a second draft.

1149  
1150 Chair Reckdahl: Do we have interest? A show of hands.

1151  
1152 Commissioner Lauing: First we should get consensus that we should do this. In other  
1153 words, just get some discussion that yea or nay, we go ahead with this before we decide  
1154 who should be on it.

1155  
1156 Chair Reckdahl: What's the number of an ad hoc? Three?

1157  
1158 Commissioner Lauing: Yeah.

1159  
1160 Mr. de Geus: Yes.

1161  
1162 Commissioner Hetterly: It makes a lot of sense. We ought to have an ad hoc if we can  
1163 come up with an appropriate group to do it. There you go.

1164  
1165 Commissioner Crommie: I agree.  
1166

1167 Commissioner Ashlund: I also think it makes a lot of sense. I'd be glad to be on it. If it  
1168 requires in-person participation, I'll be gone for two weeks in the middle of July. If  
1169 timing precludes that, I'm okay if I'm not on it as well.  
1170

1171 Chair Reckdahl: What do you think, Ed?  
1172

1173 Commissioner Lauing: This has got so far to go and it's so important to the whole  
1174 process and to this Commission as advisory to Council on it, that we should put some  
1175 cycles in to help get it right.  
1176

1177 Chair Reckdahl: The other option would be to have a mid-month meeting of the whole  
1178 Commission or whoever from the Commission wants to. If there's not an interest, people  
1179 can always skip meetings. Do you think that's going to be too many cooks spoiling the  
1180 broth?  
1181

1182 Mr. de Geus: These meetings don't work well as working meetings. This is a working  
1183 exercise of doing some thinking in advance and a little more informal as we start to work  
1184 through the criteria. My preference would be an ad hoc committee over that option.  
1185

1186 Chair Reckdahl: Who has interest in being on the ad hoc?  
1187

1188 Commissioner Lauing: I can be recruited, but I'm not going to campaign for it. I'm  
1189 happy to work on it.  
1190

1191 Commissioner Hetterly: I feel the same. I'm willing to do it, but I'm happy to let  
1192 anybody else do it.  
1193

1194 Chair Reckdahl: Do you have interest?  
1195

1196 Commissioner Ashlund: I have interest.  
1197

1198 Commissioner Lauing: You've got a time constraint this month.  
1199

1200 Commissioner Ashlund: Right. I just can't do in-person. I could do work on it and  
1201 phone calls. I just can't do it in-person.  
1202

1203 Commissioner Crommie: You still have a couple of weeks.  
1204

1205 Commissioner Ashlund: It depends on the timing.

1206  
1207 Chair Reckdahl: What would you envision the timing would be?  
1208

1209 Mr. de Geus: I don't have any vacation planned unfortunately this summer. Peter and ...  
1210

1211 Ms. Fiore: We want to bring a refined list of criteria back in July, correct?  
1212

1213 Mr. de Geus: Yeah. We would need a little bit of time to pull together an agenda for the  
1214 meeting and maybe even a little more work on the staff end, so we're not starting from  
1215 just this. We'd actually integrate the feedback we've heard already, so we can start a little  
1216 further along with the ad hoc committee. We'd probably meet at the earliest next week.  
1217 Next week is July 1st. We have a big event to put on that Saturday.  
1218

1219 Commissioner Lauing: Let's just meet at the cook-off.  
1220

1221 Mr. de Geus: We could. Are you going to be a judge? That'd be great. I'll be there.  
1222 We'll work around the schedule of the Commissioners. If you're willing to volunteer and  
1223 support this, then we'll work to make it work for you.  
1224

1225 Chair Reckdahl: We should do it then, if there's support on the Commission and support  
1226 on the staff. I'm interested. Commissioner Lauing and Commissioner Hetterly were  
1227 interested and Stacey also, Commissioner Ashlund was also interested.  
1228

1229 Commissioner Ashlund: I'm fine to give my feedback and let you guys do it as well. I  
1230 do not have to be everywhere all the time. I'm totally fine with that.  
1231

1232 Mr. de Geus: I'm trying to check myself. It would be after July 4th given what staff are  
1233 working on with summer programs and that event. Realistically, at least for me to  
1234 participate, it would be after July 4th.  
1235

1236 Commissioner Markevitch: Do we need to vote?  
1237

1238 Commissioner Lauing: Yeah, probably.  
1239

1240 Mr. de Geus: It would be good to vote. It's appropriate, yes.  
1241

1242 Vice Chair Markevitch: I move that we create an ad hoc committee comprised of  
1243 Commissioner Lauing, Commissioner Reckdahl, and Commissioner Hetterly to address  
1244 the prioritization.  
1245

1246 Commissioner Crommie: (inaudible)  
1247

1248 Vice Chair Markevitch: That's a quorum. You can't do it.

1249  
1250 Commissioner Lauing: Second.

1251  
1252 Vice Chair Markevitch: It has to stay at three.

1253  
1254 Commissioner Crommie: I don't think she should be eliminated so quickly if she  
1255 expressed an interest in it.

1256  
1257 Vice Chair Markevitch: It's a quorum.

1258  
1259 Commissioner Crommie: Pardon me?

1260  
1261 Commissioner Ashlund: I'm fine giving my input to these guys.

1262  
1263 Vice Chair Markevitch: Can you give the input when they bring it back to the  
1264 Commission?

1265  
1266 Commissioner Ashlund: No, I'd prefer to give it prior to. Otherwise, they're going to go  
1267 away and do work without it. I would rather we give it beforehand.

1268  
1269 Commissioner Hetterly: I'll pass.

1270  
1271 Vice Chair Markevitch: Okay. I'll take Hetterly off there and put Ashlund on there.

1272  
1273 Mr. de Geus: It needs to be three, no more than three. Commissioner Ashlund, if you  
1274 weren't on the ad hoc committee, then you wouldn't be able to comment on it until it  
1275 came back at the next Commission meeting. It sounds like you would prefer to give  
1276 comment and work earlier.

1277  
1278 Commissioner Ashlund: If we are giving our comments here in this meeting and they're  
1279 taking it away, then I'm fine with that as well.

1280  
1281 Mr. de Geus: It's up to you all.

1282  
1283 Commissioner Crommie: What do you think Commissioner Ashlund, if you can't  
1284 physically attend? We just have to decide whether we think you can make a significant  
1285 contribution without being there physically. That's a choice.

1286  
1287 Commissioner Ashlund: It's fine. Commissioner Lauing and Commissioner Hetterly  
1288 have already made substantive comments tonight that I agree with, that echo my  
1289 concerns. That's a great ad hoc, those three, including Commissioner Reckdahl.

1290 Vice Chair Markevitch: I remove the amendment and go back to my original motion.

1291  
1292 Commissioner Hetterly: Shall we move on?

1293  
1294 Vice Chair Markevitch: We have to vote.

1295  
1296 Commissioner Knopper: I don't know what I'm voting for. Say it again.

1297  
1298 Chair Reckdahl: On the table is the ad hoc ...

1299  
1300 Vice Chair Markevitch: An ad hoc comprised of Commissioners Reckdahl, Hetterly and  
1301 Lauing to go over the prioritization of the criteria. They will come back to us and we will  
1302 be able to discuss it at the July meeting. Do I have a second?

1303  
1304 Commissioner Lauing: Yes.

1305  
1306 **MOTION:** Vice Chair Markevitch moved, seconded by Commissioner Lauing, to form  
1307 an ad hoc committee comprised of Commissioners Reckdahl, Hetterly and Lauing to go  
1308 over the prioritization of the criteria. The full Commission will discuss prioritization of  
1309 the criteria with the ad hoc committee's input at the July 2015 meeting.

1310  
1311 Chair Reckdahl: We have a second.

1312  
1313 **MOTION PASSED: 7-0**

1314  
1315 Commissioner Hetterly: I have one more thing to say about this topic before we move on  
1316 to the next agenda item. Are we done with this topic other than that?

1317  
1318 Chair Reckdahl: Did Ellie want to talk through the next steps?

1319  
1320 Commissioner Hetterly: She did already.

1321  
1322 Chair Reckdahl: Okay. No more content?

1323  
1324 Ms. Fiore: Nope.

1325  
1326 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Hetterly.

1327  
1328 Commissioner Hetterly: My only comment is the City Council long ago expressed an  
1329 interest in hearing the feedback from public outreach on this Plan before we get far down  
1330 the line. I wonder if it wouldn't make sense to do a briefing for them before you do your  
1331



1332 prioritization outreach. If I were on Council, Council Member Filseth can weigh in if  
1333 he'd like, I would want to be able to know what you're going to do in your final  
1334 prioritization outreach before it has already happened. The question, Eric, is about  
1335 timing, when Council would like to hear an update on the Master Plan, whether you want  
1336 it before we go to the public for prioritization or not.  
1337

1338 Council Member Filseth: I suspect the Council would like to hear something like that.  
1339 Probably less important for me because I trust you guys, but I suspect the Council would  
1340 like to hear something.  
1341

1342 Commissioner Hetterly: The tricky thing being their schedule. You guys are gone for a  
1343 long time.  
1344

1345 Council Member Filseth: That's true.  
1346

1347 Commissioner Hetterly: When are you gone?  
1348

1349 Council Member Filseth: We are gone the month of July and the first couple of weeks of  
1350 August. We're back in mid-August I think.  
1351

1352 Mr. de Geus: I had exactly the same thought. You had emailed something similar,  
1353 Commissioner Hetterly, to try and get on Council agenda early on if not in August. I  
1354 asked that of the Clerk's Office on this topic. We're on like the last Monday in August for  
1355 a study session. It's tentatively planned. That could work, could be in advance of the  
1356 community meeting if we're going to mid-September or something like that, to get their  
1357 input.  
1358

1359 Commissioner Hetterly: That would be wise to do. I would encourage it.  
1360

1361 Mr. de Geus: I agree.  
1362

1363 Council Member Filseth: Didn't we decide to postpone the study session with the Parks  
1364 and Recreation Commission until the fall anyway? This could be it.  
1365

1366 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, we did.  
1367

1368 Mr. Jensen: Thank you.  
1369

1370 Mr. de Geus: Thank you, Ellie, Peter.  
1371

1372 Commissioner Lauing: Thanks, Peter.  
1373

1374 Ms. Fiore: Thanks everyone.  
1375

1376 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.  
1377

1378 Mr. de Geus: Council Member Filseth, that actually might be two different things that  
1379 you just talked about there. There's a study session with the full Commission which  
1380 would include the Master Plan and other areas of interest. The study session I was  
1381 referencing is specific to the Master Plan, where we are. That'll happen at the end of  
1382 August. There'll be a subsequent study session with the Commission probably later in the  
1383 fall.  
1384

1385 Council Member Filseth: Most of the study sessions that I've seen so far have been at  
1386 least an hour. In many cases substantially more than that. What you're talking about  
1387 here, I'm tempted to say you might be able to be time efficient, although I don't know.  
1388 Once it gets in front of the Council, maybe it's going to expand. You're envisioning an  
1389 hour or an hour and a half or something like that?  
1390

1391 Mr. de Geus: The Library Commission is coming forward with their strategic plan as  
1392 well. I was talking to Monique about that, so we were looking at combining those two  
1393 next to one another because they relate to one another. Maybe we can do them both in an  
1394 hour and a half or something like that to save Council a little bit of time.  
1395

1396 Council Member Filseth: That might be a good thing.  
1397

1398 **4. Update on the Field Use Policy.**  
1399

1400 Rob de Geus: We have Adam Howard here. He's been waiting patiently in the audience  
1401 with all the members of the public. I'll just introduce Adam. You haven't seen Adam for  
1402 a while. Adam is at Cubberley Community Center; he's the manager, oversees that  
1403 campus. Many, many things happening there. He also does a lot work with our field  
1404 users and oversees all of the brokering of not only the City parks and athletic fields, but  
1405 the school district elementary and middle schools. He works very closely with the sports  
1406 organizations. A few years ago we updated the Policy. You saw Adam a lot at that time.  
1407 We're back to give you an update on how it's going. We just went through full brokering.  
1408 We don't have a PowerPoint or anything; Adam's going to give you a little background  
1409 and feedback on how it's going.  
1410

1411 Adam Howard: Thank you, Rob. Good evening. Adam Howard, Community Services  
1412 Manager overseeing field brokering and Cubberley Community Center. I'm going to give  
1413 you a brief update on how we're doing with regards to the Field Policy. I'll start with a  
1414 real quick background. In 2009, the Parks and Rec Commission, staff and users drafted a  
1415 policy for reservations of the fields. That was ultimately adopted by City Council. After

1416 three years of use in 2012, with some urging from some of the field users and some of the  
1417 staff, an ad hoc committee, which Commissioner Crommie was involved with, got  
1418 together to review how the Policy was working. Working with staff, field users and the  
1419 general public, we had numerous meetings with users, with the public, with the staff.  
1420 Ultimately we came up with some things that we thought needed to be changed. In  
1421 February 2013, those changes were brought to the Commission and approved. In May  
1422 2013, those were approved by the City Council. Some of the key changes that took place  
1423 at that time, most of which met with very little resistance, were a cancellation policy  
1424 which allowed people to state when they were going to return and how they would do  
1425 that. We put a definition of game slots and practice slots in there. Again, a little  
1426 resistance to that. It was things that we were already doing, but we wanted to make sure  
1427 they were spelled out in the Policy. We put some information about how people could  
1428 run tournaments. We put definitions in there about adult slots and game slots and what  
1429 fields they would have specific times with. We also switched the field allocations so that  
1430 fields were brokered by size, small, medium, large, and by age group, so that we didn't  
1431 have groups of younger kids possibly brokering a Mayfield turf slot which is obviously  
1432 very highly sought. We want to make sure the right age group is using the right fields.  
1433 The last little part of this that changed and that had the most resistance, I'll say, was in the  
1434 original Policy we had a separate priority level for groups that were above 75 percent  
1435 residency and had a no tryout policy, basically anyone that signed up played. Only  
1436 AYSO fit in that priority level. The rest of our resident groups fell below them. What we  
1437 were hearing was that separate priority wasn't fair. We were separating out our residents  
1438 based on their needs. What we were hearing was that it wasn't right for someone that  
1439 wanted to be competitive to have a lower priority than someone that didn't. They were  
1440 residents, and we should all have the same priority over the fields. The basic change was  
1441 that any youth group nonprofit that was above 51 percent residency would fall in the  
1442 same priority category. Effectively taking away that top notch priority level and putting  
1443 them all in the same category. AYSO was the most concerned about that. They were the  
1444 group that was in that top priority. For the three years that the priority was in existence,  
1445 they got to choose any field they wanted, leaving the rest of the groups to scramble,  
1446 giving those residents a little bit of a disadvantage. We have been with that new Policy  
1447 for two years now. I'm happy to say things have been working a lot smoother now. The  
1448 brokering meetings which used to run well into the night and be very nerve wracking and  
1449 stressful and have a lot of animosity at the end have become a lot easier. The  
1450 relationships are the best that I have seen them in my time here. People are working  
1451 together now. There's a lot more flexibility. If something does go wrong on a field, they  
1452 work together to correct those issues, rather than having staff do it. There's been a lot  
1453 more flexibility in those things. Again, the relationships have been the best. Now we do  
1454 a brokering meeting in about an hour, because we go off the last year's fall brokering or  
1455 whichever season we're in. We make minor adjustments based off fields or agreements  
1456 that they have amongst themselves. It gets done quickly. I've been seeing a great  
1457 improvement on that. All those changes have been for the positive. The small issues that



1458 aren't the result of the Policy, but are things that are coming to my attention that the  
1459 Policy puts them in a certain category. It's important for you guys to hear that the amount  
1460 of requests I'm getting from private schools that are opening or in Palo Alto that don't  
1461 necessarily have their own field space but have decided to start leagues and have been  
1462 coming pretty heavily to us to try to find them space. Most of the time, the best I can do  
1463 is find them some slots to provide games. I very rarely can provide practice slots. I can  
1464 explain the Policy to them, and they understand. It's just something that I've been hearing  
1465 a lot more of in the past year. The other thing that is maybe in our Policy but not so  
1466 much of a reality is we broker two practice slots per team per week. The reality is that all  
1467 these clubs become more competitive. To say that a team is only going to practice twice  
1468 a week isn't much of a reality. What they means is they seem to be putting more teams  
1469 on their slots, which goes back to field conditions being the highest thing that we talk  
1470 about regularly. If all the fields were at highest quality, then there would be very little  
1471 conversation about their field needs. There's some fields that they try to avoid, because  
1472 they're not as high quality, which has mostly resulted from they were never meant to play  
1473 half as much play on them as they are. They're putting more than one team on each slot  
1474 to accommodate teams having multiple practices. I don't think we could accommodate  
1475 each team practicing five days a week, so I don't think that's necessarily something we  
1476 want to change. We are putting more pressure on the fields in terms of condition.  
1477 Ultimately, it's going really well. It's been very smooth. Everyone's pretty happy with  
1478 these changes. Everyone's relationships are a lot better now. I can open it up to  
1479 questions.

1480  
1481 Vice Chair Markevitch: Have you ever considered the first Saturday in May when we do  
1482 the May Fete Parade to have all the fields dark so the kids can participate in the parade as  
1483 opposed to being on a field?  
1484

1485 Mr. Howard: That is something that we could do. I always inform all of the users of the  
1486 parade and encourage them to participate. At this point I can't necessarily tell them they  
1487 can't practice on a certain day unless we're going to give a policy to shut down the fields  
1488 on that day. I always encourage them to participate. That and chili cook-off.  
1489

1490 Chair Reckdahl: Does staff have the capability to shut down or is that outside of Policy  
1491 right now?  
1492

1493 Mr. de Geus: That's outside the Policy right now. We looked at the Policy for how we  
1494 use the fields. As you may remember, the Policy includes a gradation of fields. Not all  
1495 fields are equal. Some fields that have a lot of parking, have a bathroom, don't have  
1496 residents in close proximity, have synthetic turf, Grade A. We broker that many more  
1497 hours than a field that is closer to residents or doesn't have a bathroom. I think it goes  
1498 "A" to "E." It doesn't say anything about the City staff having the authority to make a

1499 decision like making all parks unavailable for a particular Saturday. We would get a lot  
1500 of unhappy people if we were to do that.

1501 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Lauing.

1502 Commissioner Lauing: Thanks, Adam. Your tough job got a little bit easier with that  
1503 new Policy. Kudos to the committee that worked on that. Three questions. One's just a  
1504 clarification. When you said people are practicing twice a week and then they put on  
1505 more teams, which puts more usage on. I didn't quite understand what you meant by that.  
1506  
1507  
1508

1509 Mr. Howard: When we broker, we allocate two practice slots per team. That's how we  
1510 define the amount of slots people get. Almost every organization now, even the less  
1511 competitive ones, practices four or five days a week. What they do is put more teams on  
1512 a slot. Rather than one team on a ...  
1513

1514 Commissioner Lauing: Two teams on the same field?  
1515

1516 Mr. Howard: Right. Rather than having one team on half a slot, they put two teams on  
1517 half a slot.  
1518

1519 Commissioner Lauing: That's what I thought it meant. When we talked a while back,  
1520 before I had that little meeting with little league and you were looking at the impact to the  
1521 field and so on, there was always more insatiable demand, but you were pretty  
1522 comfortable that you could accommodate the needs. Is that generally still how you're  
1523 feeling?  
1524

1525 Mr. Howard: Yeah, definitely. Like I said, the needs that I haven't necessarily fully been  
1526 able to fit are these schools that come in and want to run a full league off of one of our  
1527 fields. We have a lot more capacity for the "I just need two days a month from now on."  
1528 We're able to accommodate those now. We are not being able to accommodate "I need a  
1529 large field every day of the week," and it's not someone that's in our top priority.  
1530

1531 Commissioner Lauing: The follow-on question there is we're putting more lights on  
1532 fields, like El Camino. In fact as El Camino is coming back online, do you have a feel of  
1533 a percentage increase that you'd be able to accommodate with that?  
1534

1535 Mr. Howard: I would be guessing. What it's going to accommodate a little bit better are  
1536 the growing sports such as lacrosse. They will be able to not have a bunch of teams on  
1537 one slot. They'll be able to spread out a little bit more. I would guess probably 20  
1538 percent more capacity just by adding a field with lights, especially turf and multiuse.  
1539

1540 Commissioner Lauing: Twenty percent more on that field, not system wide?

1541 Mr. Howard: Right.

1542  
1543  
1544 Commissioner Lauing: That's great. What about pricing of the fields and reaction from  
1545 leagues to that? Early on we got a lot of "we're going to go out of business" as a team, as  
1546 a league. How are you gauging that right now?

1547  
1548 Mr. Howard: It's been pretty minimal. Some of that reaction was how far are you going  
1549 to go. We've been at \$7 an hour for the past year and a half. That's where we're going to  
1550 go until we get some stuff about cost recovery. We feel pretty comfortable at \$7, and so  
1551 far the organizations seem pretty comfortable with \$7.

1552  
1553 Commissioner Lauing: Plus we made that accommodation where you can return fields  
1554 and put them back into there, so you get a return privilege like going back to a store  
1555 (crosstalk).

1556  
1557 Mr. Howard: Right, exactly. We want to encourage that they do return their fields.  
1558 They do so a lot better now than they had in the past. They have almost a month and a  
1559 half to create their schedule and then return unused fields to make sure they're not using  
1560 something or paying for something that they didn't need.

1561  
1562 Commissioner Lauing: Your job and the whole job here is field capacity, not total square  
1563 acres. It's always important for all of us in the community to keep that in mind as we're  
1564 trying to make plans around do we need more fields, which is always the big question.  
1565 The capacity issue is the key one. To the extent that we can put in lights and have fields  
1566 that don't wear out and have to be shut down for six months so that we lose that time,  
1567 we're better off. Thank you.

1568  
1569 Mr. de Geus: I was just going to add that Adam mentioned the \$7 an hour per field. That  
1570 only relates to Palo Alto youth-based sports programs. It's not for all leagues, adult  
1571 leagues and others. They pay quite a bit more than that.

1572  
1573 Commissioner Hetterly: I had a question. You said that teams are practicing more often,  
1574 so that's why they're doubling up, because we're not giving them more in order to  
1575 accommodate. Are you finding any conflicts between sports now that so many youth  
1576 sports have gone to year-round programs? Are you having conflicts between soccer and  
1577 baseball or football, whatever the overlaps are?

1578  
1579 Mr. Howard: There is a little bit of that between predominantly baseball, softball and  
1580 soccer. Each sport has its priority seasons. If it's not your priority, you're going to get  
1581 squeezed. If it's baseball's priority and soccer needs that space, they are the ones that  
1582 have to go way out by the fence line and make sure that they don't interrupt the baseball

1583 users. They all have pretty good relationships at this point, so the conflicts have been  
1584 minimal, especially the ones that they don't work out themselves.

1585  
1586 Mr. de Geus: Maybe you'll know this answer. The Policy says that for one thing, so  
1587 that's very helpful for Adam as he tries to deal with some of these conflicts. Is that a little  
1588 reciprocal because they know the next season they're going to need to be asking? Soccer  
1589 wants to play in the spring, so they're going to be asking ...

1590  
1591 Mr. Howard. Right. They know that if they are not flexible, then the following season  
1592 the different sport could do the same. They know they need each other to be able to go  
1593 year-round. They're very good with that.

1594  
1595 Commissioner Hetterly: They're working it out, and they each get a favored season. You  
1596 don't anticipate they're going to come back and say, "This is crazy. We're all year-round.  
1597 We should have equal brokering access all year."

1598  
1599 Mr. Howard: I don't perceive that to happen, predominantly because, for now anyway,  
1600 baseball's off season, they're just not as big as they are during their spring session. For  
1601 baseball to grow in fall ball, soccer would need to decrease its size. They're the same  
1602 kids playing both sports. I don't see that being a problem any time soon.

1603  
1604 Commissioner Hetterly: How about the tournament functioning? I know that was  
1605 another change we made in the Policy. I think it was one tournament a season for each  
1606 league. Is that going smoothly?

1607  
1608 Mr. Howard: Yep. Each priority organization gets one priority tournament a calendar  
1609 year. They need to give me those dates prior to field brokering. The leagues get most of  
1610 the time about three months notice before they even get a permit that there's a tournament  
1611 weekend. There's been very little conflict.

1612  
1613 Commissioner Crommie: Great job, Adam. Thanks for all the work that you've put into  
1614 this to make it run smoothly. It's an art form to get this to work. I'm glad that there's  
1615 more cooperation. That's a wonderful outcome. I had a couple of questions. First of all,  
1616 I wanted to make a comment. You haven't worked with full capacity since the new  
1617 Policy, because El Camino Park has been offline the entire time. That will be interesting  
1618 information when you have everything available. You brought up the field maintenance  
1619 question. Is there anything we can do as a Commission to help with this? Do you feel  
1620 like you're getting enough resources for the field maintenance?

1621  
1622 Mr. Howard: I would say yeah. Daren's not here. He might be a better person to answer  
1623 that question, because they are the ones ultimately that take care of it. it's a double-edged  
1624 sword. There probably are not enough resources, but it's also difficult, unless you get the

1625 highest quality, it's just not going to take the kind of wear and tear that we have on the  
1626 fields. The bonus to that is, especially with the new brokering system and teams having  
1627 their section of fields that they're primarily on, they're going a lot further to help maintain  
1628 the fields, whether that be spreading some seed before each game to help the grass grow  
1629 or being super communicative of "this field seems to be getting a little wet or a little dry."  
1630 We catch problems a lot quicker than we used to, because of that communication and  
1631 their interest in keeping their little corner at the highest quality possible. That's gone a  
1632 long way too.

1633  
1634 Commissioner Crommie: That's great to hear. I know from sitting on that ad hoc that the  
1635 clubs and the recreational players wanted to help. I'm glad that's working well. How do  
1636 you feel the drought has impacted the fields?

1637  
1638 Mr. Howard: At this point, there hasn't been a big impact. It's just now starting to get  
1639 warm, and that's when we'll know if any reduction in watering is going to have a big  
1640 impact on the fields. Right now, we're brokering as usual. They understand that we  
1641 could have some issues with fields. They also understand if one of our major fields gets  
1642 shut down,, that burden will get spread amongst them all. They will reconfigure as  
1643 needed.

1644  
1645 Commissioner Crommie: Just two more questions. How are the adults doing? We did  
1646 reconfigure some space for them on the artificial turf. Has that been helping with their  
1647 needs?

1648  
1649 Mr. Howard. That reconfiguration was more of defining what was going on on the fields.  
1650 They haven't lost or gained anything. They feel a little bit more secure that it's spelled  
1651 out in the policy and they're not worried if they're going to lose it. They know that this  
1652 time's designated and not too many groups are going to be able to come in and take that.  
1653 They've been good. They have a lot of interest in having a couple more night slots at El  
1654 Camino when it opens.

1655  
1656 Commissioner Crommie: Last question. One outcome of our Master Planning that's  
1657 going on here is this notion of having more periods of time for free play on the fields;  
1658 ultimate Frisbee, pickup games. We've always grappled with that on the Commission.  
1659 How do you see this fitting into the brokering process?

1660  
1661 Mr. Howard: The key there is probably the Policy around releases. I get more releases in  
1662 a more timely fashion, especially around the parks. There's just more time for people to  
1663 go out and play that we know about. The space might have been there in the past, but  
1664 they didn't officially release it. There was no way for me to know that they weren't out in  
1665 these individual parks. If someone called and said, "I need free space Tuesday to go play  
1666 catch," I could find a field and say, "This is empty. Have fun."



1667  
1668 Commissioner Crommie: That's really great. You think there might be some capacity  
1669 there for that and that it comes from creating this line of communication. That's the kind  
1670 of thing we're going to have to develop to make that concept integrate with you. Right  
1671 now there's no real way someone goes online to figure this out. The online system is  
1672 complicated, so I don't think some youth group is going to be able to navigate that.  
1673 Thinking toward the future, maybe we'd try to create some interface for that even through  
1674 webpages.

1675  
1676 Mr. Howard. Yeah. That really is the next step to streamlining this Policy even further.  
1677 The more the neighbors can go on and say, "There's an open slot. We can go play there,"  
1678 is great. Then people don't have to just say, "What do you have available?" They can  
1679 say, "Tuesday at this time, I see this is available. We'd like to do that." We are looking  
1680 at that, because that's an important factor.

1681  
1682 Vice Chair Markevitch: Regarding the private schools, do they meet the residency  
1683 criteria? If they don't, too bad. Is there a way to have proof of residency on these teams?  
1684

1685 Mr. Howard: The majority of them don't reach the 51 percent. That's why it's easy to  
1686 respond to that. I think I was bringing that up because it seems to be a growing issue.  
1687 Every time they hear the Policy, it's like, "Who can we talk to to change that?" At some  
1688 point it might be coming to you.

1689  
1690 Chair Reckdahl: Do schools in Palo Alto pay tax in Palo Alto?

1691  
1692 Vice Chair Markevitch: What was that?

1693  
1694 Chair Reckdahl: Do schools who operate in Palo Alto pay taxes to the City?

1695  
1696 Mr. de Geus: Do you mean the private schools?

1697  
1698 Chair Reckdahl: Private schools, yeah.

1699  
1700 Mr. de Geus: I assume they pay property taxes for their school. At least some portion  
1701 goes to the City.

1702  
1703 Vice Chair Markevitch: If they're renting space like Garland, that probably goes to the  
1704 school district, because it's school property. They don't own it; they're renting directly to  
1705 the school district.

1706  
1707 Chair Reckdahl: The school district does not pay taxes on their ...  
1708

1709 Vice Chair Markevitch: I don't have that answer. If they're in just a building and it's just  
1710 a regular building, then they're probably paying taxes.

1711  
1712 Chair Reckdahl: I'm just wondering. If someone is running a school in Palo Alto and  
1713 paying taxes to Palo Alto, maybe we should consider that they would have some place in  
1714 the pecking order. I would think they'd be higher priority than some Mountain View  
1715 resident who wants to use it with no affiliation.

1716  
1717 Mr. Howard: They do have a spot on the priority list and they would be above a  
1718 nonresident. The problem is their demands are so high, because they're trying to run a  
1719 league and there's just not that much beyond our top priority groups.

1720  
1721 Chair Reckdahl: What is the biggest demand? The turf fields? The artificial turf.

1722  
1723 Mr. Howard. Basically full-size soccer fields. Most of them are trying to run soccer  
1724 teams. The newest is someone trying to run a baseball team at a high school level which  
1725 we only have one field. Baylands baseball is the only one big enough, so they're out of  
1726 luck. They already have a team, so I don't know what they're going to do.

1727  
1728 Chair Reckdahl: When El Camino Park comes on, we'll get another full-size turf field.

1729  
1730 Mr. Howard: Right.

1731  
1732 Chair Reckdahl: At that point, do you think you'll have more than enough turf fields or is  
1733 there still demand for artificial turf fields?

1734  
1735 Mr. Howard: A lot of the users would probably trade in their grass for artificial turf,  
1736 because they can play on it rain or shine. The demand for turf might continue to grow. If  
1737 that were to happen, there would be more open grass slots.

1738  
1739 Chair Reckdahl: For adults, what are the most popular times for those big turf fields?

1740  
1741 Mr. Howard: Sunday mornings, 8:00 to 1:00 and evenings after 7:00.

1742  
1743 Chair Reckdahl: How late do we go in the evenings?

1744  
1745 Mr. Howard: 10:00.

1746  
1747 Chair Reckdahl: 10:00. Is there any reason we couldn't go to 11:00, say over at Mayfield  
1748 if there's no neighbors there?

1749  
1750 Mr. Howard: That's a policy decision.

1751 Chair Reckdahl: Who sets the hours?  
1752

1753  
1754 Mr. de Geus: I think there's a City ordinance that says what time parks are closed. I can  
1755 look into that. I'll confirm that.  
1756

1757 Chair Reckdahl: If we opened up an 11:00 slot at Mayfield, would that be in demand?  
1758

1759 Mr. de Geus: There are residents that see those lights across from El Camino. There's  
1760 some housing there. I'll get the answer to what is the legal authority that says you can't  
1761 go past 10:00 or is it an internal policy. I think it's in the City ordinances. I want to say  
1762 it's 10:00 or 10:30. I'll find out.  
1763

1764 Chair Reckdahl: How about pickup leagues? There's a lot of cell phone leagues where  
1765 people just drive around, find an open field and they call. Do we have any conflict with  
1766 those users and our fields?  
1767

1768 Mr. Howard: Yeah. We get those phone calls. If a field is not being scheduled for any  
1769 given amount of time, it ends up that there's some kind of cell phone league that shows  
1770 up. Ultimately, I end up going out there on a Sunday to make contact and talk to them  
1771 about what they can and cannot do. Jordan on Sundays is a big one.  
1772

1773 Chair Reckdahl: The rule is that you can't have more than ten people, is it?  
1774

1775 Mr. Howard: Can't have a group bigger than 24 or be pre-advertised.  
1776

1777 Chair Reckdahl: If you had 16 people come in with a cell phone league, they're happy to  
1778 plop down on any field and use it?  
1779

1780 Mr. Howard: There'd be nothing against policy for them to do that.  
1781

1782 Chair Reckdahl: That's it. Thank you. Any other comments or questions? Thank you,  
1783 Adam. I should note that I talked to someone who used the brokering, and they were  
1784 quite impressed with you. They were quite happy with the whole situation.  
1785

1786 Mr. de Geus: Thank you, Adam. Appreciate that.  
1787

1788 **5. Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates.**  
1789

1790 Chair Reckdahl: Any comments, updates from ad hocs?  
1791

1792 Commissioner Hetterly: I'll give a quite update on the dog parks. We had been waiting  
1793 to coordinate a meeting with the Keys School. They use Hoover Park quite a bit. We  
1794 haven't been able to get on their schedule. Daren is going ahead to set up the bigger  
1795 public outreach meeting for the whole community. He's got a plan to contact all of the  
1796 neighbors around Hoover Park and Greer Park as well as the stakeholders group. He's  
1797 working with Claudia Keith in the public relations office to figure out the best way to  
1798 disseminate the most notice of that meeting. As soon as we have a date, we'll let you all  
1799 know when that is.

1800  
1801 Commissioner Crommie: I didn't quite understand how the Keys School fits in. Can you  
1802 explain that a little bit?

1803  
1804 Commissioner Hetterly: We had wanted to consult with them as a stakeholder for that  
1805 particular site, because we know the school uses the field at Hoover Park. Hoover was  
1806 one of the options we were considering for a shared use. We had met previously with  
1807 dog owners' group and the field users' groups. Keys School was the other immediate  
1808 impacted user group that we wanted to consult with.

1809  
1810 Commissioner Crommie: That brings up the question of how much do we work around a  
1811 private school. I don't quite get why they're ...

1812  
1813 Commissioner Hetterly: We weren't asking them what we should do about the policy.  
1814 We were explaining what the options were and trying to understand what their concerns  
1815 and issues might be. We haven't met with them.

1816  
1817 Chair Reckdahl: The only thing I should note is that Deirdre and I went up to Byxbee  
1818 this weekend. They've opened up that new spot that's been open a month or two. Now  
1819 about three-quarters of Byxbee is open. The newer stuff doesn't have the wildflowers on  
1820 it. Some of the wildflowers in the other areas are looking pretty long in the tooth with  
1821 lack of rain. It's getting there. It's looking more like a park. I'm optimistic that next  
1822 spring it'll be looking very nice.

1823  
1824 **V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1825  
1826 Rob de Geus: I had a couple that I wanted to share with the Commission. We had World  
1827 Music Day over the weekend. I don't know if anyone attended. We were debriefing the  
1828 event. The Palo Alto Recreation Foundation supports and helps put that on with our  
1829 Police Department and City, because we shut down University. If you do have feedback  
1830 or hear of something good, bad or ugly, it'd be great to know. We're in the sixth year of  
1831 that now. The chili cook-off, another event coming up Saturday, July 4th. How many  
1832 people are going to be judges? Eric, maybe.



1834 Council Member Filseth: (inaudible)  
1835

1836 Mr. de Geus: You should come. It's really fun. If you are by chance here and it's last  
1837 minute, just let me know and we'll make sure you can be a judge and have some fun that  
1838 day. I mentioned the drought plans. Take a look at that information report that I already  
1839 sent. It'll be very interesting to see how this year comes along. Phil Bobel, who's  
1840 Assistant Director of Public Works, said this could be the worst drought in a 1,000 years.  
1841 It's really serious in terms of the water restrictions. We'll be talking more about that I  
1842 expect in the year ahead. Even with all of the work that Daren's been doing to cut back  
1843 irrigation, we'll be checking it month to month to see if we're meeting the target that is  
1844 expected. We may have to reduce further, and then there'll be further impacts on our  
1845 parks and fields and people that use them. We'll be coming back on that topic. If you  
1846 have questions, certainly call. Other big news is the Community Services budget was  
1847 approved by the City Council. Thank you, Council Member Filseth, who sits on the  
1848 Finance Committee. That's quite a slog for a lot of people including the Council and  
1849 particularly the Finance Committee that takes a lot of time with the budget and considers  
1850 the different requests and tradeoffs. Not an easy job by any stretch. For our department,  
1851 at least we're not in budget reduction times. We've had many years of that. In fact, we  
1852 were able to put some things into the budget that will help the department function much  
1853 better in the future. The biggest of which is an additional position, a Superintendent of  
1854 Recreation Services, very much needed. I talked to the Commission about this before,  
1855 but that was ultimately approved. Also the Council was very interested in seeing more  
1856 focus and resources towards special events and events that bring the community together.  
1857 They added some additional funding to our contract dollars for events. That's exciting.  
1858 We'll have to figure out how exactly we're going to spend that money. It'll be fun to  
1859 work on that. We're likely to bring back the Black and White Ball and a couple of other  
1860 things. Foothills Fire Management Plan, the Commission was very interested in that.  
1861 Got a lot of support from Finance Committee and the Council on supporting the funding  
1862 for that.  
1863

1864 Chair Reckdahl: That memo is being distributed to Council?  
1865

1866 Mr. de Geus: I'll have to check with Daren. Daren's the lead on the memo getting  
1867 distributed. In any case, the funding was approved in the operating budget.  
1868

1869 Chair Reckdahl: All three buckets?  
1870

1871 Mr. de Geus: Correct.  
1872

1873 Commissioner Lauing: We don't know if they got our memo and our recommendation?  
1874

1875 Mr. de Geus: I know that we verbally brought that along when we talked about it at  
1876 Finance Committee. It didn't come up a lot. I think the Finance Committee and the  
1877 Council had the same reaction that this Commission had, that we need to fund this and it's  
1878 the right thing to do. I don't know if the memo actually got in their hands. Eric, do you  
1879 know?  
1880

1881 Council Member Filseth: (inaudible) I don't recall a lot of discussion.  
1882

1883 Mr. de Geus: It may have been. There was a lot of memos that went to the Finance  
1884 Committee. I suspect it was in one of those. I certainly hope it was.  
1885

1886 Commissioner Lauing: It was just a lot of work if they didn't even read it.  
1887

1888 Mr. de Geus: I don't know. I'll find out, make sure that it got there. If it didn't, we can  
1889 forward it. The memo was not just about one year. It was about ...  
1890

1891 Chair Reckdahl: A commitment.  
1892

1893 Mr. de Geus: ... a commitment, ongoing. It's still relevant even if it didn't. We'll make  
1894 sure if it didn't get there, it will.  
1895

1896 Chair Reckdahl: The City has placeholders for the next year's budget? Like, the CIPs  
1897 have this five-year outlook. The budget also has some placeholders so you can say, "I'm  
1898 going to need this money ongoing"?"  
1899

1900 Mr. de Geus: The operating budget is an annual budget. Every year we go through it  
1901 again, justify what we're doing and why we're doing it. Another addition I thought the  
1902 Commission might be interested in was additional funding for Mitchell Park Community  
1903 Center, specifically for teen programs for later evening hours for high school teens in  
1904 particular to be there after 8:00 on Fridays and weekends. We didn't have the staffing  
1905 capacity to be able to open the center for that. We got some money added for that. That's  
1906 also very good. A lot of positive things included in the budget. Another topic of interest  
1907 for the Council was Project Safety Net and the future of the collaborative for youth well-  
1908 being and suicide prevention. Probably a topic we should put on the agenda, because it's  
1909 a complicated one. It's something the Commission has been interested in for a long time.  
1910 We're positioned to go in a very positive direction with that community collaborative.  
1911 Some additional funding was added to that effort by the Council. We can report back to  
1912 you on that in the months ahead. That's all I have.  
1913

1914 Chair Reckdahl: Anything new on the golf course?  
1915

1916 Mr. de Geus: I knew you were going to say that. I had it here on my list and I thought,  
1917 "Should I mention it?" There isn't enough new news for it to be really news. We have in  
1918 the budget that we're going to keep the golf course open to generate as much revenue as  
1919 we can while we can. It's open until January, the first six months of the year. It seems  
1920 like every couple of weeks we make a little bit of progress, but it's like step 74 of I don't  
1921 know how many. It's just so slow and out of our hands, certainly out of my hands. It's a  
1922 Public Works project at this point who are the lead on trying to get these permits.  
1923 Community Services was more regarding the design of the course and working with the  
1924 community through that process. Of course, we finished that long ago and are ready to  
1925 start, but we can't start until these permits are in place. The Joint Powers Authority  
1926 working on the creek project doesn't yet have their permits either. They do have their  
1927 Water Board permit. That's one step. They're still waiting for their Army Corps of  
1928 Engineers permit. Making progress, but it's slow.

1929  
1930 Chair Reckdahl: Why is it slow?

1931  
1932 Mr. de Geus: There are different opinions about that. Some are not thrilled about the  
1933 creek project and the alignment of the new design. They think there may be a better  
1934 alignment of where the levees will be in the design. The Joint Powers Authority has  
1935 provided an abundance of evidence why it is the best plan and has repeatedly provided  
1936 the evidence. That seems to continue to come back to slow things down. There's many  
1937 regulatory agencies involved, the Army Corps, the Water Board, the Fish and Wildlife.  
1938 With the Joint Powers Authority on the creek project, they also have the marine fisheries  
1939 agency that needs to consult. It's just taking too long.

1940  
1941 Chair Reckdahl: What's the status on the Comprehensive Plan?

1942  
1943 Mr. de Geus: We've had this Our Palo Alto effort going on for over a year. It's  
1944 intentional outreach to the community. A very successful summit occurred at Mitchell  
1945 Park. Commissioner Hetterly was there. Who else did I see there? That's the latest thing  
1946 that happened, which was a very positive event. I was there with Peter; we had a booth  
1947 on the Master Plan to get additional feedback. It was an opportunity to talk to folks about  
1948 what we're doing. There was probably about 350 people attending. The planning staff  
1949 did a very nice job and the City Manager in putting the context of what the  
1950 Comprehensive Plan is and why it's such an important plan. It was these dialog tables  
1951 with residents talking to one another about the biggest of topics that face our community  
1952 like traffic and development and other things. That was the latest. I'm not sure if we've  
1953 had a summary of the summit come out yet. It was pretty recent, within the last month.

1954  
1955 Chair Reckdahl: Isn't there an ad hoc in here?

1956  
1957 Mr. de Geus: Following that?

1958  
1959 Chair Reckdahl: Yeah. Don't we have a Comprehensive Plan ...  
1960

1961 Commissioner Hetterly: We used to for the Natural Environment Element and the  
1962 Community Services..  
1963

1964 Chair Reckdahl: We have disbanded that?  
1965

1966 Commissioner Hetterly: We did that. Today was the Public Art Commission's Art Boot  
1967 Camp for staff and Commissions and Board Members. Stacey and I were both there as  
1968 well as Daren Anderson and Peter Jensen. I wanted to thank them for participating. For  
1969 those of you who didn't participate, if you have thoughts or ideas about public art in Palo  
1970 Alto, where you'd like to see it, what kinds of partnerships you think would be useful or  
1971 productive, what role public art ought to play in the work that we do, please do contact  
1972 Elise DeMarzo directly. She's the Director of the Public Art Program. They are trying to  
1973 gather as much input as they can from as many different perspectives as they can. They  
1974 would surely appreciate it. Thanks.  
1975

1976 **VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR JULY 28, 2015 MEETING**  
1977

1978 Chair Reckdahl: Agenda items for next month. I thought John Aiken was going to be  
1979 here this month.  
1980

1981 Rob de Geus: The Junior Museum and Zoo would very much like to come back to the  
1982 Commission in July for further discussion about their plans and fundraising and how  
1983 that's going. We've several times reiterated the concerns that the Commission has had  
1984 about the park and the impact to Rinconada Park related to the zoo. They're working  
1985 very hard on trying to think through that feedback and if there are alternatives that would  
1986 have less of an impact. They're struggling with that. I can tell you that they're thinking  
1987 very hard about it and want to come back with that thinking to this Commission. If we  
1988 meet in July and it sounds like we are, which is good because there's a lot to do, that  
1989 would be something to put on the agenda. Plus the Parks Master Plan, of course.  
1990

1991 Chair Reckdahl: What is their timeline, when do they want to start construction?  
1992

1993 Mr. de Geus: They have to raise some \$30 million. They've raised almost \$20 million, I  
1994 think. That is not raised really, but pledged. If the City and a variety of folks, mainly the  
1995 City and City Council, approve the project. There's a lot of support behind it. That's  
1996 certainly the case. It would be at least two years out before they would start building.  
1997

1998 Chair Reckdahl: We do have some time.  
1999



2000 Mr. de Geus: Yeah.

2001  
2002 Commissioner Crommie: Do you think that's a little too soon? Wasn't he just speaking  
2003 to us a couple of months ago? If he's coming, I'd rather have him speak on the Lucy  
2004 Evans Interpretive Center CIP for the signs.

2005  
2006 Mr. de Geus: We might be able to do both if he's here for the ...

2007  
2008 Commissioner Crommie: He also wears that hat. We haven't heard him speak on that  
2009 yet. We have heard him speak on the Junior Museum.

2010  
2011 Mr. de Geus: We could have him come back and talk about the Lucy Evans Center and  
2012 the signage. I'm not sure how much progress has been made on it, so I'll check with him  
2013 on that.

2014  
2015 Commissioner Crommie: He told Commissioner Ashlund and I in an ad hoc committee  
2016 with him, we have a Lucy Evans Interpretive Center ad hoc. He said the CIP didn't have  
2017 enough money to properly do the signs. He wanted to talk to us about integrating some  
2018 kind of larger plan for the Baylands Open Space. Some kind of integrated signage, which  
2019 was a very interesting concept especially with all the work going on at Byxbee Park  
2020 where we need signs. That's a thought that John Aiken had, that maybe we should look at  
2021 that whole area educationally.

2022  
2023 Mr. de Geus: Ultimately that's absolutely the right way to do it. We did in the capital  
2024 budget get approved a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Baylands which  
2025 includes the new Byxbee Park. I think it's 2017 when we begin that. Plus, we need to get  
2026 this Master Plan done, and there's that work. That would be the right way to do it. It's all  
2027 connected; the signage and interpretive programs are connected in that way. We'll see if  
2028 John has new information ready to share. The reason that the Junior Museum and Zoo  
2029 project comes back, certainly the Friends of the Junior Museum is anxious to move this  
2030 forward. Concurrently staff and the Friends of the Junior Museum are working on a  
2031 potential governance agreement of the new building if they are able to raise the money  
2032 and the Council wants to go forward with this partnership. We are hoping to get back to  
2033 Council by the end of the calendar year on those negotiations. They're also in the process  
2034 of meeting with the Planning Commission and doing some study sessions with them.  
2035 They heard the concerns of this Commission, so they're anxious to get back to the table  
2036 on your concerns. They don't want to wait too long.

2037  
2038 Chair Reckdahl: For next month, we have the Junior Zoo and Museum and Master Plan.

2039  
2040 Commissioner Knopper: May I interrupt? Were we going to discuss whether we are  
2041 having a July meeting? We talked about that, and Rob's mentioned it a few times.

2042  
2043 Mr. de Geus: Our preference on the staff side is that we do. If anything, August is a little  
2044 lighter in terms of the need to move along with the Parks Master Plan. The criteria  
2045 discussion is very important, particularly if we can get to the City Council by the end of  
2046 August. If we were to wait until August to have that conversation, it would be right there  
2047 when we have the study session, too late to have the feedback incorporated. We should  
2048 meet in July if there's enough Commissioners here and willing.

2049  
2050 Commissioner Crommie: Should we have a show of hands at this point on how many  
2051 people will be here?

2052  
2053 Mr. de Geus: July 28th.

2054  
2055 Chair Reckdahl: Let's close this by email, so we can check with our spouses and make  
2056 sure that we don't commit for something that we can't. We'll pencil it in, and see if we  
2057 will have a sufficient turnout. If not, we can ...

2058  
2059 Mr. de Geus: We're open to, if it doesn't work, changing the date. It doesn't have to be  
2060 on the fourth Tuesday. Maybe we can send something out to see who's available on the  
2061 28th. If there's enough, we'll go with that. If not, we can look at some other dates. That  
2062 still gives us a chance to talk about the Parks Master Plan in particular before we would  
2063 go to Council.

2064  
2065 Commissioner Crommie: A backup could be to meet the first week of August and the  
2066 last week of August as well, if we don't get a quorum.

2067  
2068 Chair Reckdahl: You also sent out the Cost of Services Study. There's some meat there  
2069 that I would like to talk about. It doesn't have to be this month or next month. I don't  
2070 think it's urgent; it's been sitting on the shelf for quite a while. There are some issues I  
2071 would like to talk about. Is there other consensus for bringing that back sometime?

2072  
2073 Commissioner Crommie: I would second that. I read the study, and it'd be really good to  
2074 come to us.

2075  
2076 Commissioner Hetterly: I always like to talk about the Cost of Services Study.

2077  
2078 Chair Reckdahl: Some of it is beyond the cost of services. I'm still concerned about the  
2079 vacancy rate in our rental property and are we pricing it properly and should we be off  
2080 hours cutting price to get more people in and do our rental facilities meet the needs,  
2081 whether it be video conferencing or whatever the business community would want or the  
2082 potential renters would want. There's a lot of meat to chew on there. I would rather put it  
2083 off and get a thoughtful presentation, than just rehash what we went through last time.

2084  
2085 Mr. de Geus: We can do that. We can have a member of the Office of Management and  
2086 Budget come who led that report. In that report, it talks about the fee-based cost of  
2087 services policy, I'm not sure that's exactly what it's called, for Community Services,  
2088 which exists and dovetails with what the City adopted as a policy. It calls that out  
2089 specifically and says that it ought to be reviewed to make sure that it's still relevant.  
2090 That's very specific to Community Services and Recreation Services. That'll come to the  
2091 Commission in a very direct way for you to look at that policy. I can send that out. Was  
2092 it included? I'll check. If I didn't include it in the last email, I'll send it along.

2093  
2094 Chair Reckdahl: I don't think we should have that for next month, but we should put that  
2095 on the medium-term items to work towards.

2096  
2097 Commissioner Hetterly: Certainly before we make any final cut at the Master Plan.

2098  
2099 Chair Reckdahl: For next month we have the Junior Museum, and we have the Master  
2100 Plan. Is there anything else?

2101  
2102 Commissioner Crommie: Did you add on Byxbee for that? I mean the Lucy Evans  
2103 Interpretive Center, Byxbee Park signage.

2104  
2105 Mr. de Geus: It might be helpful to have a report. I'll ask John if there's something to  
2106 report. There's three different CIPs related to that center. Maybe we talk about the status  
2107 of all those. Daren talked a little bit about them tonight.

2108  
2109 Commissioner Crommie: I'm not sure we need to go over the status of all three of them.  
2110 It's more the third one.

2111  
2112 Mr. de Geus: The signage, the \$56,000?

2113  
2114 Commissioner Crommie: That's the one that's not underway yet.

2115  
2116 Mr. de Geus: Right.

2117  
2118 Commissioner Crommie: The other ones are done deals. Commissioner Ashlund and I  
2119 weighed in on them, but they're already out to bid. They're already in process. The other  
2120 one is where we could weigh in a lot.

2121  
2122 **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

2123  
2124 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Hetterly and second by Commissioner  
2125 Lauing at 9:24 p.m.