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**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
March 22, 2016
CITY HALL
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California**

13 **Commissioners Present:** Jim Cowie, Jennifer Hetterly, Abbie Knopper, Ed Lauing, David
14 Moss, Keith Reckdahl

15 **Commissioners Absent:** Anne Cribbs

16 **Others Present:** Eric Filseth

17 **Staff Present:** Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus, Peter Jensen, Kristen
18 O'Kane

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

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21 **II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**
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25 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**
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28

29 **IV. BUSINESS:**
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31 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the January 5, 2016 Parks and Recreation**
32 **Commission Retreat.**
33

34 Approval of the draft January 5, 2016 Minutes as submitted was moved by Commissioner
35 Hetterly and seconded by Vice Chair Knopper. Passed 7-0
36



1 **2. Approval of Draft Minutes from the February 23, 2016 Regular Meeting..**

2
3 Approval of the amended February 23, 2016 Minutes as corrected was moved by
4 Commissioner Hetterly and seconded by Vice Chair Knopper. Passed 7-0

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6 **3. Update on the Status of the Baylands Boardwalk Feasibility Study.**

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8 Chair Lauing: The next item of business is an update on the status of the Baylands
9 Boardwalk Facility Study. I want to make sure who I have the speaker card here for.
10 That's a later one. Thank you. For the Baylands Boardwalk Feasibility Study, there's a
11 discussion targeted for about 40 minutes. Who's going to lead that?

12
13 Daren Anderson: I'd like to introduce Megha Bansal and Hung Nguyen, both engineers
14 with Public Works Engineering. They'll give you a briefing on the Baylands Boardwalk.

15
16 Chair Lauing: Thank you.

17
18 Megha Bansal: Good evening. I'm Megha Bansal, engineer, Public Works. In October
19 2015, we presented preliminary findings from the Baylands Boardwalk Feasibility Study
20 to the Commission. The Study is now complete, and today we would like to provide an
21 update on the Study, its findings and discuss the next steps. The agenda for today's
22 meeting includes project overview. We will present findings from structural and site
23 conditions assessment of the Study, improvement options identified in the Feasibility
24 Study, and recommendations will be discussed. A high-level schedule with key
25 milestones will be presented. Also we would like to get your feedback as we move
26 forward and discuss any questions you may have. Starting with the overview. As
27 presented in previous meetings, the existing Boardwalk is deteriorated. It was closed in
28 2014 due to structural deficiencies and safety concerns. The City then hired Biggs
29 Cardosa Associates to conduct the Feasibility Study and provide to us its current
30 condition and provide recommendations for short-term and long-term improvements to
31 the Boardwalk. The Feasibility Study includes the repair, rehabilitation and replacement
32 options. Also based on preliminary findings of the Study, minor repair was performed to
33 a 200-foot segment of the Boardwalk. That includes a section from Nature Center to the
34 first overlook of the Boardwalk. That was the only portion that had fair to satisfactory
35 condition. This portion of the Boardwalk is now open to the public. The last of the
36 structure is in poor condition, and I will discuss that next in the structural assessment. As
37 I just mentioned, the Boardwalk is structurally unsound. The structure includes a
38 superstructure and a substructure. The superstructure is basically the deck and railing of
39 the Boardwalk. The substructure includes foundation and supports, posts and bracings.
40 All these structural components exhibit heavy weathering and excessive corrosion. Some
41 of the structural components are missing; some sections are broken. Especially damage
42 to the foundation has led to the segment of the structure. That is why the Boardwalk is



1 undulating and uneven at certain areas. The Study also looked at several site constraints
2 including environmental conditions, subsurface conditions, hydraulic conditions and
3 access and ADA compliance issues. Environmental conditions. The project is located in
4 an environmentally sensitive area that has several endangered species such as salt marsh
5 harvest mouse and Ridgway rails. Implement any major improvements to the Boardwalk
6 would require assessment of the environmental impacts, constraints, mitigations and also
7 approval from various permitting agencies. Subsurface conditions. The existing project
8 site consists of highly compressible and plastic clay soil that also contributes to the
9 settlement of the structure as well as it cannot support heavy loads. Also, there is shallow
10 groundwater in the area. Due to the close proximity to the Bay, the soil and water in the
11 area is expected to be corrosive in nature. Next is hydraulic conditions. The Feasibility
12 Study includes analysis of the tidal effects, storm surges and sea level rise. Based on the
13 current projections, the existing Boardwalk would be flooded at 100-year still water level.
14 In other words, there is 1 percent annual chance of flooding of the existing Boardwalk at
15 current condition. By 2030, there is 10 percent annual chance of flooding of the existing
16 structure. That means with time the probability of flooding increases. Considering 50-
17 plus years of design life of the proposed Boardwalk and considering moderate climate
18 change effects, the existing Boardwalk deck would need to be raised to reduce frequent
19 flooding. The next item that was investigated was access and ADA compliance issues.
20 The existing Boardwalk has many ADA compliance issues partly due to the original
21 design and also due to the structural damage and settlement issues. Some of the key
22 issues are noncompliant slopes, handrails, guardrails, cross-slopes, passing spaces and
23 resting areas, etc. Now, I would like Hung Nguyen to provide an overview of the
24 improvement options identified in the Study and also the recommendations.

25
26 Hung Nguyen: Good evening. The Study provide for option for us to consider two rehab
27 option and two replacement option. The two rehab option will involve salvage of most of
28 the material out there, as much as we can. The width of the Boardwalk will stay at 4 feet;
29 nothing change. We will have ADA compliant challenge due to the settlement of the
30 Boardwalk. We can make it a little bit better, but there no way we can make the slope in
31 compliance. We will provide for new railing. Although, railing will be in compliance,
32 the sloping we cannot solve that issue. The design life of most of this rehab option ran
33 from 25 to 50 year for the first option and 30 to 60 year for the second option. The
34 reason that it have a little bit longer duration design life because we're going to move
35 some of the foundation out from the ravine that create underneath the Boardwalk
36 currently. It will provide a little bit more better (inaudible) for that. In term of cost, most
37 of the option will cost around \$1.4 to \$1.7 million to rehab, both of the option. There are
38 two replacement option. Both of the option will have 5-foot wide Boardwalk that will
39 provide ADA compliance. We have an opportunity to replace the decking foundation.
40 The proposal from the Feasibility Study is we move the foundation out more to prevent
41 the channel right in the middle of (inaudible) the foundation in the future. The
42 Replacement Option 1 similar to what we have right now in term of how the decking



1 layout. We will have longitudinal timber decking, about 2x8 and 16-feet long laying on
2 longitudinal. The design life for both these option is about 50 to 75 year, and the cost are
3 pretty much the same. The foundation, we are entertaining two option; one a helical
4 screw which we will have to investigate on corrosive nature of the Baylands. We have to
5 do study before we can find out how much corrosive we have to treat the foundation.
6 The second option is timber post. The second option has more element. It still have
7 timber decking but lay on a transverse option. It provide a smaller construction material
8 which in turn will be cheaper to construct and easier to transfer in and out of the project
9 site. The second option also will require less heavy equipment in terms of (inaudible)
10 and install the Boardwalk. The Study recommend us to choose Option 2 to go further in
11 design. Staff have Study, and we concur to that option. Like I mentioned before, the
12 foundation (inaudible) we still have to investigate further to determine which option we
13 will go to. In terms of schedule, we hope to go to Council by the end of April to have
14 Council approve the Study and provide funding and approve the design contract with
15 Biggs Cardosa to move on Phase 2 design. We will return to the Commission in summer
16 of 2016 to provide an outline of the conceptual design and seek feedback from the
17 Commissioner to further design to the conceptual design. By 4/2017, we expect the
18 design development will be completed. This will be when we will go into a site and
19 design review process, go to ARB, Planning and Transportation Commission and the
20 Park and Rec Commission also for recommendation. As mentioned before by Megha, we
21 will have to do extensive environmental assessment and the CEQA clearance. This
22 process, right now, we expect to last about a year. It's all depending on what type of
23 permit we have to get from the agency. Hopefully it'll be less than a year, but right now
24 we expect the worst case. If everything go on schedule, we expect to start construction
25 next fall. The construction duration limited to the breeding season of the bird (inaudible)
26 generally from September 1st to January 31st. We are thinking a 5-month construction
27 period probably enough for the type of project. If you see my schedule, I have the second
28 phase. In case we have any unexpected delay during the design process, we might have
29 to go to a second phase which will happen the following fall which will be fall 2018.
30 With that, I will end our presentation. If you have any comment or question, we can
31 answer that.

32
33 Chair Lauing: That's it for the presentation? Commissioners have any questions or
34 comments? Yes, David.

35
36 Commissioner Moss: I've been to a number of the public meetings. I really was hoping
37 that one of the rehab options would be cheaper and faster, but this iteration shows how
38 quickly we could get Replacement Option 2 and for about the same price. I am strongly
39 in favor of that Replacement Phase 2. We could get something in the fall of 2017—I
40 mean, starting construction fall of 2017. I hope that, if you can't get it all done in that fall
41 and winter, Phase 1 still gives us something to walk out another 100 feet or 200 feet, and
42 you save the far, far end as opposed to only putting in the substrate all the way through



1 and leaving us for another year with nothing. The other thing is that I want to make sure
2 that when you raise the elevation, I want it to flood at least once a year at the king tide,
3 because that is spectacular to see. When you raise the level, it should be with the idea
4 that it's going to flood once a year. Not many times a year, but once a year. It sounds
5 like the Replacement Option 2 differs from Option 1 just because of the transverse versus
6 longitudinal. If that's easier to maintain and easier to do, go for it. That's all I have.

7
8 Chair Lauing: Keith. Commissioner Reckdahl.

9
10 Commissioner Reckdahl: Overall, I'm happy. I'm not happy with waiting a year and a
11 half for the Boardwalk. I really wish we could go in on this. It's been over a year since
12 it's not been used, and it's going to be another year and a half. I understand that the—is
13 there any way that we could get a partial okay to start doing part of it? Break it up into
14 two pieces instead of one big bite.

15
16 Mr. Anderson: It's unlikely. Our experience with the regulatory agencies would
17 certainly not indicate that's possible. We'll certainly pursue and request the quickest path
18 possible. That may include phasing as an option be part of the discussion. To be really
19 frank, it's highly unlikely.

20
21 Commissioner Reckdahl: I understand.

22
23 Mr. Anderson: Just to point out, we do have the first 200 feet open right now that was
24 repaired. There is some access (crosstalk).

25
26 Commissioner Reckdahl: That was actually done a while ago.

27
28 Mr. Anderson: Yes.

29
30 Commissioner Reckdahl: I appreciate the City was very reactive about that. Looking at
31 the schedule there, when is the screw versus timber decision going to be made? Is that at
32 the 35 percent or is that at the 100 percent?

33
34 Mr. Nguyen: We will expect that to be resolved at 35 percent.

35
36 Commissioner Reckdahl: Do we have any evidence—they were going to give us
37 examples of where these screws are being used in mud. Have they given us any
38 examples that we can go inspect?

39
40 Mr. Nguyen: Yes, we will require that.

41
42 Commissioner Reckdahl: We have gotten them?

1
2 Mr. Nguyen: We have done investigation. We have provided example to the
3 Commission back in October. We can follow up that information again to you, if you
4 want.

5
6 Commissioner Reckdahl: We've looked at the screws. How long have they been in the
7 mud?

8
9 Mr. Nguyen: The historical data, we don't have that at that point. We can certainly take
10 a look at it.

11
12 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm very nervous that we're going to put these screws in.
13 Daren's been under there and seen the bolts. That's a very bad environment. Between the
14 mud and the saltwater, it'll eat away at stuff. My understanding is that if we go the
15 timber route, we still have some adjustment also on the timbers. Is that true?

16
17 Mr. Nguyen: At this point, that's something that consultants say that we can do in the
18 future. It could be challenge. I can say that. In term of bracing the deck up with ...

19
20 Commissioner Reckdahl: With timbers? I thought they were going to have timbers in
21 the mud and then have some type of metallic screw that could be adjusted on top of the
22 timbers between the timbers and the (crosstalk).

23
24 Mr. Nguyen: That's something I haven't heard from them, but we can check with them.

25
26 Commissioner Reckdahl: For the metallic screws, how much play do they have? If we
27 wanted to raise it, how much additional height could we get out of each screw?

28
29 Mr. Nguyen: We couldn't get an answer from them last time, but they say it could go as
30 high as 12 inches.

31
32 Commissioner Reckdahl: How many inches?

33
34 Mr. Nguyen: 12 inches.

35
36 Commissioner Reckdahl: 12 inches. That 12 inches can be done along the whole path?
37 If we wanted to even it, we could do that. If we wanted to grossly raise the whole
38 platform by 12 inches, could we do that by adjusting each screw or is there some support
39 halfway down that won't have those adjustments?

1 Mr. Nguyen: We don't have the exact answer for that. We have asked them for case
2 study, but we haven't gotten anything yet. That's something we will look into when we
3 continue the design process.

4
5 Commissioner Reckdahl: They also mentioned about—what was the term? Composite
6 decking. They said recycled materials. What does that mean, composite? What material
7 is that?

8
9 Mr. Nguyen: Composite can be any recycled material out on the market now. A fill
10 which I don't have it on top of my head at this point. We certainly will entertain that
11 option.

12
13 Commissioner Reckdahl: Is it plastic or is it ...

14
15 Mr. Nguyen: I hope we don't use plastic, but that's one of the product considered
16 composite.

17
18 Commissioner Reckdahl: It's open for consideration, what we could use? We could use
19 almost anything.

20
21 Mr. Nguyen: Yes, right.

22
23 Commissioner Reckdahl: That's it. Thank you.

24
25 Chair Lauing: Commissioner Knopper.

26
27 Vice Chair Knopper: Hi. The CIP was funded for the Feasibility Study, but there is no
28 current CIP for the actual 1.4 to 1.8 price. Correct?

29
30 Mr. Nguyen: That's correct.

31
32 Vice Chair Knopper: When I'm looking at this schedule, it just seems really aggressive
33 based on how many agencies have to approve this because of the endangered species out
34 there. I was just wondering if you—obviously you guys are confident that this is the
35 schedule. Just based on being on this Commission, I can't possibly imagine that—it just
36 feels very fast, I guess is what I wanted to say. The other issue that I wanted to talk about
37 was the sea level rise statistics that you have in this report. I've seen a map of Palo Alto
38 with NOAA's sea level rise. They have it at 3 feet. There's a very specific red line as to
39 what's going to be impacted. It's really far into Palo Alto. The timing is a little more
40 aggressive as far as it happening sooner, I guess is what I'm saying. I was just wondering
41 if the moderate climate change sea level rise, you're confident on those numbers?
42

1 Ms. Bansal: The numbers are basically predictions based on, like you mentioned, NOAA
2 and moderate climate change effects. What we have in the Study is basically 3 feet in
3 2100. Since we are considering the design life to be 50 to 75 years, what we have in the
4 report is based on 2075; that's approximate end of useful life of the proposed Boardwalk.
5 The sea level rise is interpolated, and that is about 2 feet.
6

7 Vice Chair Knopper: I guess the one thing—thank you for that. The thing that I'm
8 thinking about is I know with a budgetary perspective as to what the City—all of the
9 different projects we have, and that we know that this is a flood basin. It's just going to
10 increasingly be one. We have so many projects and park things to do. Is this a lot of
11 money for this? I guess that's my question. Is this a lot of money for a project that we
12 know we have endangered species, we've got six regulatory agencies we have to deal
13 with. Is it the right project for this amount of money? I guess is my question.
14

15 Mr. Anderson: Maybe I can help with this one. It's a challenging one. You're right, it's a
16 high-ticket item. We're looking at \$1 million, a very lengthy, staff-intensive process to
17 get it through the regulatory process. It's expensive in terms of staff time and the funding
18 for the construction itself. You're right, the CIP money is tight. I would say this is our—
19 within the City of Palo Alto, this is probably the most popular piece of trail there is. That
20 includes all our parks. Maybe the Magical Bridge a close second. It's right up there. I'd
21 say it's high profile. It's part of taking care of our infrastructure. It's important, but I
22 think that's really kind of a Commission/Council decision if it's the right one. It'll go
23 through that regular process like all the projects do. It's just politically sensitive. I think
24 it's likely to be funded, but it's really out of my hands I'm sorry to say definitively.
25

26 Vice Chair Knopper: Thank you.
27

28 Chair Lauing: On that issue, it might also be more of a "because it's part of our heritage
29 and infrastructure" as opposed to if someone came and said, "Let's build a Boardwalk."
30 That might get a different reception than it's been here for whatever it's been, 60 years of
31 history or something like that.
32

33 Vice Chair Knopper: One of the things that I was thinking about is a lot of the Baylands
34 needs conservation and habitat rehab. We're constantly low on money to do something
35 like that. My thinking or questioning is does it make sense to take this large amount of
36 money and provide the public the opportunity to enjoy the Baylands without the
37 structural, where we're providing more environmental impact for the habitat versus
38 putting in a physical structure that we know is short term as far as City timing is
39 concerned.
40

41 Chair Lauing: Other comments? Commissioner Hetterly.
42

1 Commissioner Hetterly: Most of my questions were already covered, but I had two more.
2 One was the rehab option includes salvage of materials. Are there any materials that can
3 be salvaged for other use under the replacement options?
4

5 Mr. Nguyen: We prefer not to use any product from the old Boardwalk for the
6 replacement option. Option for us to salvage the material and then use it on different
7 project, we can either give the material away or donate to some agency or city who have
8 the use of the product.
9

10 Commissioner Hetterly: I'd like to see that as part of the plan. I think that you said that
11 Replacement Option 2 involves a wider foundation than Replacement Option 1. Is that
12 right?
13

14 Mr. Nguyen: Option 1 will have the current footprint right now which is 4-feet wide.
15 The replacement will have a 5-foot wide Boardwalk to be ADA compliant. That's why
16 we have to provide a field study for the agency to see the effect of widening the footprint
17 another foot or so.
18

19 Commissioner Hetterly: That's what I thought you said. I was just wondering if you
20 anticipated increased impacts in your CEQA analysis as a result of that wider (crosstalk).
21

22 Mr. Nguyen: We have met with the interagency back in December of last year in San
23 Francisco. We have proposed this option. They have concern but not something that we
24 cannot overcome. They request us to do some study, which we have in the contract at
25 this point, for them to review.
26

27 Commissioner Hetterly: Thank you.
28

29 Chair Lauing: I just wanted to make one comment. I think a lot of the citizens are going
30 to look at this and say, "We're basically just building a deck, and the construction takes 5
31 months, and this is going to take 2 1/2 years." We know why. You say it's going way
32 too fast. I think most people are going to say it's going way too slow. The only reason I
33 raise that is because we just want to be sensitive as this moves along to communicate it
34 well to the citizens, obviously to the Council as well, so they're patient that it has to be
35 done right and there are all these mitigating factors out there like the salt water and the
36 environment and the critters and so on.
37

38 Commissioner Reckdahl: (inaudible) comment?
39

40 Chair Lauing: Sure, go ahead, a follow-up.
41

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: The only thing I wanted to add is that we're constrained to start
2 construction in the fall. As a result, since we can't hit this next fall, we have more time
3 the following fall. I don't think we should just slow roll it. We've seen before how things
4 can pop up and slow it down. If we're going to slow roll it, I think we have plenty of time
5 to 2017. We may miss that date, and now all of a sudden we have another full year that
6 we have to wait. I would want to get as much design done upfront. If we sit on the
7 design for 6 months, that's fine. I'd rather sit on the completed design that's been
8 approved than find out at the last minute that we're not going to hit our target.

9
10 Mr. Nguyen: That's in our minds. We create the schedule with that in mind. We going
11 to have another meeting with the agency at the 15 percent design level to gauge their
12 comment at an early stage so we can proceed on design at full speed. Hopefully we can
13 wrap it up by the time that they issue the permit for us to go out for construction.

14
15 Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you.

16
17 Chair Lauing: Commissioner Moss.

18
19 Commissioner Moss: (crosstalk) said, if there's any way that we can start the
20 environmental clearance and permitting early in summer and finish—maybe not have 100
21 percent construction document to start the process so that we could even start the
22 construction early in fall 2017, that means end of August instead of end of October.

23
24 Mr. Nguyen: That's something that we definitely try for. We will push the consultant to
25 provide some of the study that agency require as soon as possible. We can present that
26 along with the 15 percent at the meeting.

27
28 Chair Lauing: Thank you.

29
30 Mr. Nguyen: Thank you.

31
32 **4. Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.**
33 **Revised Policy Definition**
34 **Revised Policies**
35 **Draft Dog Park Policy**
36 **Draft Park Restroom Policy**

37
38 Chair Lauing: The next item on the agenda is what we call the Master Plan, the Parks,
39 Open Space, Trails and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. We have one speaker on that.
40 If Mr. Lewis would like to speak. Mr. Lewis, we're going to do 3 minutes. Thank you.

1 Gabriel Lewis: Good evening, Chair Lauing and Parks Commissioners. My name is
2 Gabriel Lewis. I'm an intern speaking for the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club and
3 the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. I'm also a Palo Alto resident, and I spent a lot
4 of my childhood playing in the parks and open spaces that you oversee. Your work
5 matters very much to me personally. I want to thank you for doing it. The Parks, Open
6 Space, Trails and Recreation Facilities Master Plan has already improved greatly thanks
7 to your efforts. I appreciate your receptiveness to our comments and recommendations. I
8 find it encouraging, inspiring even, that my City strives to take care of its natural
9 ecosystems. On that note, I wanted to talk about the recent joint letter that the Audubon
10 Society and the Sierra Club sent to the Commission. It contains a number of specific
11 edits and additions that you can see in front of you, but the ideas behind it are as simple.
12 The aim is to create more space for nature, for native trees and vegetation, for birds, for
13 wildlife in Palo Alto's parks and open spaces. This has been our aim for Palo Alto's
14 Urban Forest Master Plan as well which we have also been involved in writing. What
15 gives me hope for achieving this aim and what makes it so tremendously important to me
16 is that more space for nature does not mean less space for humans. On the contrary, it is
17 in these places with thriving natural ecosystems that we can learn and relearn the qualities
18 that we call human, a sense of play, of wonderment, of beauty. Our City needs these
19 qualities. My generation—I graduated from Gunn in 2009 when Palo Alto's mental
20 health crisis began—needs these things most of all. I hope you will adopt this letter's
21 recommendations as you've so graciously done in the past. Thank you.

22
23 Chair Lauing: Thank you very much. I have two other cards that are specifically around
24 dog parks. You're welcome to speak now. We have a number of things to go through
25 that are relative to general policies, and then we're picking up dog parks as one of the
26 policies. It might be more appropriate for you to come when we get to that. I'll leave it
27 at your option. Let me identify you please. This is Barbara Millen specifically speaking
28 about dog parks. Barbara Millen, and then we'll get to the next speaker as well.

29
30 Barbara Millen: The report that was sent out today or yesterday was a culmination of
31 almost a decade of work by the community, the dog park owners, people on the Parks and
32 Rec Commission and a variety of other people. I guess you can hear me, right? Do I
33 need this?

34
35 Chair Lauing: It's being recorded, so that's better.

36
37 Ms. Millen: I was just recognizing the decade, at least a decade, of work of people in the
38 community and on the Commission who have been working toward a more dog-friendly
39 community. After reading the report over in the policy that's being suggested, I was very
40 pleased. I think it's not everything that we all wanted. I had a couple of greyhounds, and
41 they would have loved several acres to run around. For the most part, I think it's going to
42 meet the needs of most dog owners in the community who want to stay local and meet



1 their other neighbors at a fairly local park, where a lot of conversation goes on and a lot
2 of support goes on. The fact that we're planning, I guess, six should, I would hope, make
3 it so that the local neighbors won't have too much objection because there shouldn't be a
4 lot of traffic going to any particular place, I hope. Anyway, I just found it very
5 reasonable and well presented. I want to thank all those who are responsible and hope we
6 can get it done.

7
8 Chair Lauing: Thank you. Come back more often with those kinds of comments. Our
9 second speaker on dog parks is Herb Borock. About 3 minutes.

10
11 Herb Borock: Thank you, Chair Lauing and Commissioners. Thank you for giving us
12 the opportunity to speak now. I support the staff recommendation and the ad hoc
13 committee's recommendation. There are just two minor points I'll start off with. In
14 Attachment B, the aerial of Mitchell Park doesn't include the number of feet of fencing.
15 It's left off the number and just says linear feet. Also at the top of page 2 of the staff
16 report, the relative sizes of the Hoover Park and Greer Park current dog parks don't seem
17 correct to me. My recollection is that the Hoover Park one was larger than Greer Park
18 before Hoover Park was expanded. You might want to go back and look at the plans or
19 look at those. In regard to the fact that you considered off-leash areas separate from the
20 dog parks, you can't do that because the Municipal Code requires dogs on leash. That
21 was adopted by the voters. From an initiative petition; it can only be changed by the
22 voters. The existing dog parks came after that. I guess if someone took the City to court
23 about those, it would be the open texture of the law. Nobody considered dog parks when
24 that initiative measure was adopted. Eleanor Pardee Park was previously considered for a
25 dog park and met with neighborhood opposition. That was some time ago. The
26 population has changed in terms of number of dog owners, so there might be a different
27 response from the community. However, one thing I've noticed. We do have bathrooms
28 at the district parks of Rinconada Park and El Camino Park, but nowhere north of Oregon
29 Expressway are there bathrooms in any neighborhood parks. There are no dog parks
30 north of Oregon Expressway. That's been due to neighborhood opposition in the north. I
31 think it's perfectly okay to go on the other side of Oregon Expressway for that. For El
32 Camino Park, the area that's been identified, I believe, is a good area and should be used
33 and pursued. For a long time, it's been a considered a possibility of extending Quarry
34 Road there, so that buses from the bus island can make left turns going south on El
35 Camino. The ones coming from the north would not be able to make a left turn cut in
36 there. You previously considered on the other side of an extension of Palo Alto Avenue.
37 The way it was presented was will Stanford oppose it because of near the creek. You
38 need to separate those two. Palo Alto has a lease for another 17 years in El Camino Park.
39 The terms of the lease are that Palo Alto has site control, so it's only if somebody wanted
40 to make a legal challenge for that one due to nearness to the creek. Stanford by itself
41 could not have stopped the use. The change of areas which you're not considering
42 immediately such as the Hoover Park area for alternative, I think the tragedy of the



1 commons, that is I've seen small numbers of people and small numbers of dogs get along
2 quite well there, but I don't know what would happen if it became a legal area. The
3 reason why it's small is because it's against the law. While you have equity, which I think
4 is good, we already have one in Mitchell Park. You're already starting with one in the
5 south, and Mitchell Park without expansion is big enough to meet the criteria. If you
6 recalculate the Hoover Park, it may become close. Thank you for your time.

7
8 Chair Lauing: Thank you for the comments. That's the speakers on that. Now we'll have
9 a presentation on the status of the Master Plan and what we're going to cover tonight.
10 Kristen.

11
12 Kristen O'Kane: Peter Jensen from Public Works Department is here to present on the
13 Master Plan.

14
15 Peter Jensen: Good evening, Commissioners. Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect for the
16 City of Palo Alto, continuing our ongoing discussion of the Palo Alto Parks Master Plan.
17 Tonight we're going to delve into some of the policy questions that we still have for the
18 discussion with the Commission. As we do that, we're going to dovetail Daren's
19 presentations in, because they go along with some of those specific policies. When we
20 get to a specific policy that starts to talk about walkshed or the dog off-leash policy, then
21 Daren will do his presentation specific to that policy as well. It'll be not as we normally
22 do where they'll each have their own headings as an agenda item, but they will just be
23 incorporated into this presentation itself. To start off with that, I don't know if Rob or
24 Daren had anything to add with that. Let's then go forward. First of all, we just wanted
25 to start the conversation. There had been further conversation with the ad hoc group
26 about the definition of a policy. That was part of the staff report, so we wanted to throw
27 that out there now. The updated definition that we're using—we can discuss it further—
28 is the value-based framework that provides clear direction and guidelines and action or
29 actions towards achieving a goal. That's basically our current definition that we're
30 working with as far as the policies go. We can have a brief discussion about that if
31 anyone has any questions about it or we can move on and have our further discussions
32 about the specific policies that we want to talk about.

33
34 Chair Lauing: Are there any questions about that? We can just go with that as the
35 definition then?

36
37 Mr. Jensen: Sure. As part of the package that you got, the updated policies, you have a
38 clean version, a redlined version that had quite a few redlines on there. You can see the
39 extent of work that went into it. A spreadsheet summary that gave an idea of what the
40 comments were per the Commissioners and how they related. That spreadsheet also
41 signified some of the policies that still need further discussion. That's what we're going
42 to go through here tonight. That first one, which staff continues to discuss with ourselves

1 and we'd like to bring you into that, is the Policy 1.B which deals with the 5 acres per
2 1,000 residents. I think how we'd like to proceed with that tonight and what our
3 discussion is, is recommending to follow basically what the Comprehensive Plan is now
4 using which is the National Park standard that gives a lot more flexibility to the
5 requirements of parkland and gets away from the specific Quimby Act which was the
6 5 acres per 1,000. I don't know if you want to have ... That's a current policy in the
7 Comprehensive Plan, the National Recreation and Park Association standard guidelines
8 for locating and developing new parks, recognizing these are representing long-term
9 aspirational targets. What they do is they basically break it down into two different park
10 types. A neighborhood park, which are parks less than 2 acres and having 2 acres of
11 neighborhood parkland should be provided for each 1,000 people. District parks, which
12 are larger park areas above 5 acres, also the same requirement, though, 2 acres of district
13 parkland should be provided for each 1,000 people. There was then some question on
14 what are current parkland and what we have and how we're meeting that now per this
15 policy. For the smaller neighborhood parks, we are currently 88 acres deficient. For the
16 larger-scaled district parks, we are 2.87 acres deficient. Not too far there off from that.
17 That's basically staff's recommendation, to keep following that, but we do want further
18 input from the Commission on maintaining that as the policy. I will open it for
19 discussion on that unless Rob or Kristen have anything they want to add for that.

20
21 Chair Lauing: Just a format question. Do you want to take each one of these and delve
22 into discussion or do you want to go over all of the ones that you think are on the table
23 for discussion? At some point, we need to ask the Commission if there are any other
24 ones that need further discussion.

25
26 Mr. Jensen: I think we have five main ones that we want to talk about. I think we should
27 have the discussion after the presentation of each. At the end of the five, we can have
28 more discussion about other policies that Commissioners have questions on.

29
30 Rob de Geus: I would agree with that because some of these topics are a little complex.
31 As you've read Daren's staff report, he's done a lot of thorough research. I think it's good
32 to hear the presentation on the particular policy item and then discuss it, if that works for
33 the Commission.

34
35 Chair Lauing: Yeah.

36
37 Mr. de Geus: Specific to this one, we've honestly struggled with this policy. Should we
38 keep the policy? Should we amend the policy? It's clearly a very ambitious policy, if we
39 were to keep it, 88 acres short. It is the standard that the National Recreation and Parks
40 Association has. It's an old standard, but they haven't updated it. That's the one we have.
41 We have gone back and forth on what we think would be appropriate here. It was in the
42 Comprehensive Plan initially from 1998 and served, I think, the Plan well. As we have

1 batted it around, we think keeping it is probably the best course of action. Then have a
2 set of sub-projects, programs that actually are more actionable specific to how we're
3 going to actually add parkland, which I know we have some ideas about. That's where
4 staff landed on this, but we're very curious what the Commission thinks.
5

6 Chair Lauing: Comments?
7

8 Council Member Filseth: (inaudible) data. The City of San Francisco, which is one of
9 the most dense urban areas in the nation, actually meets the standard of 4 acres per 1,000
10 residents of in-town park space.
11

12 Chair Lauing: Was that all? Okay. Commissioner Hetterly.
13

14 Commissioner Hetterly: You all know I already think—I certainly think we should keep
15 the standard. I think it'd be a huge mistake to give it up. I don't believe that the current
16 Comp Plan includes this final clause, recognizing that these represent long-term
17 aspirational targets. I think that's floating around in the update process. I don't think that
18 we should consider them long-term aspirational targets. I think the reason that we're at
19 this deficit—10 years ago our deficit was significantly smaller. What we've done is add
20 more population without adding more parks. I don't think that just because we failed to
21 follow our adopted policy and add parks as we added population that we should say, "We
22 didn't do it, so let's make it easier." I am strongly opposed to reducing the targets. We
23 absolutely need to keep them in. I like the idea of developing programs to sort of
24 prioritize where and how we're going to make some forward progress towards meeting
25 them.
26

27 Chair Lauing: Others? Commissioner Moss.
28

29 Commissioner Moss: You're saying that having just 2 acres per 1,000, we're 88 acres
30 deficit. Our policy says 5 acres per 1,000; we're five times that much. Is that what you're
31 saying?
32

33 Mr. de Geus: There's two different standards that are used. One is related to the Quimby
34 Act which is 5 acres of parkland per 5,000 population. It's not developed parkland; it's
35 just parkland. That would include all of our open space land as well. In fact, we would
36 meet that standard if we were to use that as the standard. We had written it a little
37 differently in the staff report which is not actually the current standard. It talked about
38 developed parkland. The National Recreation and Parks Association standard is
39 different. It talks about neighborhood parks which are 2-5 acres and district parks which
40 are 5 acres and above. It says essentially that we need, what is it? 2 acres per 1,000 for
41 both of those.
42

1 Commissioner Moss: If we're 88 acres deficit now ...

2
3 Mr. de Geus: For neighborhood parks.

4
5 Commissioner Moss: ... for neighborhood parks and our population is growing, I don't
6 understand why you just keep it to residents. We're growing with the number of
7 employees and the number of customers coming to our businesses. That's growing even
8 faster than the number of residents. The fact that you would not include them in your
9 calculation, the bottom line is that the ratio what we have now in our policy is just
10 impossible. Even this is going to be impossible, to come up with 88 acres and growing. I
11 don't know why we would put something in that's really impossible.

12
13 Mr. de Geus: That's a good question. We struggled with some of the same questions.
14 The reason we landed on keeping it is because it does come from somewhere. It comes
15 from the National Recreation and Parks Association which is sort of the recognized body
16 for parks and recreation and how to grow programs and parkland. If we were to create
17 something new and different that's unique to Palo Alto, we think maybe it loses
18 something, it loses some credibility. To the point about how we get there, I'm not sure
19 how we get there, but that's the challenge. That's what we need to try and figure out.
20 Maybe we don't get there. I think we all agree that we want to be ambitious and try as
21 best we can to add parkland. I think your point about workers in Palo Alto, the
22 population doubles every day, I understand. That's only further exacerbating the need for
23 additional parkland. I totally agree.

24
25 Chair Lauing: Commissioner Cowie.

26
27 Commissioner Cowie: Could you all help me with the math a little bit here? 88 acres
28 would be enough parks for what, 44,000 people? Did I do the math right? Right? Are
29 we really that far off? The population of Palo Alto is 70 maybe now. We have only
30 enough neighborhood parks for 25,000, 26,000 people today?

31
32 Mr. de Geus: Using this standard. People will have different opinions about whether the
33 standard is really the right standard.

34
35 Commissioner Cowie: Does that jive though with the number of acres of neighborhood
36 parks that we have today? It seems like the statement of the problem seems high to me.

37
38 Mr. de Geus: I have to pull up the math here. Maybe take another question, and we can
39 come back.

40
41 Commissioner Cowie: The other thing that I think we ought to consider in assessing how
42 we're doing—I mean, this is a pretty harsh scorecard—is the environment that surrounds

1 the City of Palo Alto. Certainly there is a lot of open space that is not within the
2 incorporated city limits of Palo Alto, but I'm not sure that counting that at zero is the
3 appropriate way to look at it. I'm not making these points to suggest that we should not
4 be aggressively seeking to expand our parks by any means. I wonder whether the
5 scorecard is harsher than it should be.

6
7 Chair Lauing: Did you mean by the surrounding area outside of Palo Alto city limits?

8
9 Commissioner Cowie: Yes.

10
11 Vice Chair Knopper: You're not including in this calculation either Foothills Park or
12 Baylands, none of even the Palo Alto open spaces in this calculation either. You don't
13 even have to go outside Palo Alto for the calculation.

14
15 Commissioner Cowie: I'm assuming that Foothills and Baylands are incorporated in the
16 second category of the district parks.

17
18 Vice Chair Knopper: Right.

19
20 Chair Lauing: They're not, right?

21
22 Vice Chair Knopper: No.

23
24 Chair Lauing: That's separate; that's open space.

25
26 Vice Chair Knopper: It's open space, so it's not even in the calculation at all. If you did
27 put it in the calculation—correct me again if I'm wrong, because I am often. If you did
28 utilize the open space, we wouldn't have the deficit of 88.1. We would be fine per our
29 67,000 residents approximately. However, this is for neighborhood parks.

30
31 Commissioner Cowie: Right. I guess what I'm saying is I'm not sure the standard really
32 takes into account our facts and circumstances. I'd hate to set a standard that there's no
33 way we're going to meet, at least not within anyone here's lifetime. I'd rather set a goal
34 for something that we can actually achieve. An aggressive goal, mind you. That's, I
35 guess, the way I'd look at it.

36
37 Chair Lauing: Are you back, Rob?

38
39 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, for feedback. We have 174 acres of developed parkland. We have
40 44 acres of parkland that is below 5 acres, I think. We have 130 acres that is above 5
41 acres. With the district parks above 5 acres, we get close to the standard which would be
42 132 acres. With neighborhood parks, we're not even close. 44 acres, the standard is 2

1 acres per 1,000; that's 132 acres. That's the deficit. I think your point is a really good
2 one. If we were just to look at that standard, it's looks pretty negative. There's a whole
3 suite of policies in a park system that we need to think about and the context of all of that.
4 The quality of our parks, the accessibility of our parks, the magnificent and abundant
5 open space we've set aside are all important contextual points. Yes, this looks bad, but
6 there are a lot of good things as well. Should we still add urban parkland? We should
7 because we are below this standard. Are we likely to get to this standard? Likely not.
8 Does that help?

9
10 Commissioner Cowie: Yes.

11
12 Mr. Jensen: One of the things that Rob was touching on before is that, I think, everyone
13 is in agreement that we need to add parkland by this calculation, by the simple fact of it.
14 Whatever the policy is that aligns us with our goal, I think that the programs underneath
15 it can actually be the items that have the most impact, because that's actually how we're
16 going to be doing those things. I think there can be good work done in that, even though
17 maybe the goal is not as attainable. At least we can set out a pathway to try to get there
18 as best as possible. I think the other key aspect is Rob saying this is set up on something
19 that is adopted nationwide, that most cities have, because it is a recognized figure. To go
20 outside of that and create a policy is not something that is done a lot, because there is no
21 then backup out there to do so. Those are some things to consider.

22
23 Commissioner Hetterly: I'd also throw out there that I think it would be a terrible mistake
24 if we started trying to count our open space acreage as somehow meeting these targets,
25 because the function of a neighborhood park is really completely different from the
26 community benefits and uses of open space. Also, I think the fact that we're behind by 88
27 acres for neighborhood parks just highlights even more the importance of focusing our
28 efforts in that particular area.

29
30 Chair Lauing: Are you saying you would support what's being proposed here? Leave it
31 at 88 and do something about it, recognizing that that's going to take decades.

32
33 Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah, I support keeping the current policy.

34
35 Chair Lauing: Commissioner Reckdahl.

36
37 Commissioner Reckdahl: I agree. I support the current policy also. We're not going to
38 get there tomorrow. We know that. We should be working towards it. We haven't added
39 parkland for a long time. Heritage Park is the last park that I can think of that we added.
40 The Friends of Palo Alto Parks helped a lot with that. I'm just afraid that if we don't have
41 this policy, we won't add any more parks on our own. We really need to keep our feet to
42 the fire. It's a quality of life issue. You saw with dog parks how hard it was to find spots

1 for dog parks. There's so many competing uses; it's only going to get worse. We need to
2 start adding some land sooner rather than later.

3
4 Mr. de Geus: Once we have self-driving cars, who knows what we're going to be able to
5 do.

6
7 Chair Lauing: Eric.

8
9 Council Member Filseth: I shouldn't be part of this discussion, because I'm an observer.
10 I think I would note that this is the group that certainly the Council and the rest of the
11 City is going to look to, to lead thought on policy in this area. If you say we should do X,
12 then the Finance Committee and the Policy and Services Committee and other groups in
13 the City aren't going to challenge that. What we do here, this group, has a huge impact,
14 so decide carefully. The other thing is bear in mind that there is a lot of stuff that we
15 don't know. For example, this came up in the Council meeting last night briefly. The
16 Fry's site is, just as an example—there's likely to be a big change there one of these days.
17 People are already arguing about what we're going to do with it and who's going to get
18 how much of it and so forth. There's steps that we can't see deterministically but that
19 may happen. That's why you have policies.

20
21 Chair Lauing: As I see some of the discussion here on the risk side, it's sort of like if we
22 have 88 acres deficit and it's totally impractical for the next X decades, will Council or
23 others just throw up their hands and say we shouldn't do anything because we can't get
24 there? I think that's the concern that you're hearing voiced on the side of do we change
25 that or not.

26
27 Council Member Filseth: I think Council will look to this group.

28
29 Chair Lauing: Pardon?

30
31 Council Member Filseth: I think Council will look to this group as to what to do.

32
33 Chair Lauing: Any other comments on this? Do we feel like we've thought about it
34 enough? Do you want an actual vote on each policy that's under discussion here?

35
36 Mr. de Geus: I don't think that's necessary, no.

37
38 Mr. Jensen: We'll move to the second one, which is 1.C now and was 1.D in the previous
39 draft. This talks about the walkshed and the nearest park or preserve to be a half mile or
40 quarter mile preferred from residents. The previous policy had recommendations of
41 specific elements. Those elements have been removed. They included restrooms, dog
42 parks, things of that nature. The recommendation now is to simplify the policy just to

1 call out parks being in the walkshed with those other removed. I'll open it up for
2 discussion.

3
4 Chair Lauing: Anyone? Commissioner Knopper.

5
6 Vice Chair Knopper: I agree with the change.

7
8 Chair Lauing: The deletion or the ...

9
10 Vice Chair Knopper: Taking out the specific elements and using the revised language.

11
12 Chair Lauing: Any others? Commissioner Reckdahl.

13
14 Commissioner Reckdahl: I agree with the change. I thought it was a little
15 micromanaging having all those details in it. The only thing is "ensure." Is that too
16 strong of a statement? Should we say a standard? We were talking about how many
17 acres per person; that was called a standard. This sounds more mandatory. If we are
18 going to make it mandatory, then we should make it mandatory. Right now, this is, I
19 think, meant to be a goal and not meant to be "thou shalt by the end by the calendar year
20 ensure that everyone in the City is within a half mile." I just want to make that more
21 clear about what's the ramifications of "ensure."

22
23 Mr. Jensen: To go along further with this, one of the aspects that was removed was the
24 restrooms. We'll now go into the restroom. I'll let Daren do his presentation, and then
25 we'll have further discussion on that specific policy.

26
27 Chair Lauing: We're going to do that before we go through these other ones, synthetic
28 turf and staff?

29
30 Mr. Jensen: Yes.

31
32 Daren Anderson: In our February Commission meeting, we reviewed MIG's first draft
33 on the park restroom policy which called for providing a restroom in every park unless
34 there was an adjacent public restroom available or the site was under 1 acre in size.
35 Some Commissioners explained that they needed more information to make a
36 recommendation on a policy like this. In response, I created this spreadsheet, Attachment
37 A in the staff report, Park Restrooms. In that spreadsheet, it talks about the size of each
38 park, if it has an existing restroom, if it would require a restroom under the MIG policy,
39 and then lastly if staff recommends a restroom for that particular park. The spreadsheet
40 illustrates that we have 14 parks with restrooms. MIG's policy would result in adding 13
41 more parks that currently don't have restrooms. As I analyzed these 13 parks and walked
42 them, envisioning how a restroom would fit, six of them did not seem appropriate to me.

1 The criteria used to determine if a restroom was appropriate was the size of the park, the
2 number of amenities that would draw someone to stay in that park, and the amount of use
3 we typically observe. The revised policy that staff is proposing is to add restrooms in
4 parks that are approximately 2 acres in size or larger, have amenities that encourage
5 visitors to stay in the park and have relatively high levels of use and where there aren't
6 nearby public restrooms. There were seven parks that fit that criteria. In the staff report,
7 I included the program to support it and suggested adding restrooms to those potential
8 seven sites, Bol Park, Bowden, Eleanor Pardee, Johnson Park, Ramos Park, Robles and
9 Terman. If you would like, we can get into the details for the six that I do not
10 recommend and why, but it's in the staff report. I'll leave that to any questions you may
11 have. That concludes the presentation on the restrooms.

12
13 Chair Lauing: Questions on those? I just wanted to echo one that a speaker talked about
14 which is that Eleanor Pardee, (a) was just renovated, and (b) the neighborhood said no
15 thanks. Just so we're aware of that, and we would of course have to do public outreach,
16 but we're likely to get the same answer. I take it that we're willing to go out and kind of
17 resurvey just to see based on the Master Plan findings.

18
19 Commissioner Reckdahl: How do we envision these being implemented? Are we just
20 putting these on the shelf, and the next time that park gets renovated we'll put a bathroom
21 in? Are we going into parks and renovating them right now?

22
23 Mr. Anderson: The recommendation would be to re-fund the previously funded CIP for
24 park restrooms where every other year a park restroom was installed.

25
26 Commissioner Reckdahl: We'll go through every other year and add one.

27
28 Mr. Anderson: Unassociated unless it happened to match up neatly with a restoration,
29 but it would be unaffiliated with any like whole renovation of Pardee or any other park.

30
31 Commissioner Reckdahl: Also, I have some questions about how that works. What are
32 the hours for restrooms?

33
34 Mr. Anderson: Typically they follow the regular hours of the park. It's sunrise to 10:30
35 for the urban parks. Different for open space where it's cyclical with the sunset.

36
37 Commissioner Reckdahl: Who opens them? Do we have ...

38
39 Mr. Anderson: It varies. We're increasingly going to auto locks, so they auto unlock in
40 the morning and auto lock in the evening.

41
42 Commissioner Reckdahl: What about cleaning? How often are they cleaned?

1
2 Mr. Anderson: They're cleaned every weeknight, I believe, by—this is handled through
3 Public Works, and they have a contractor that does it. I believe it's every weeknight.

4
5 Commissioner Reckdahl: Every weeknight. Do we have any problems with broken
6 items, the sinks or toilets, in the restrooms at all?

7
8 Mr. Anderson: We occasionally have issues with graffiti and some vandalism, for sure.

9
10 Commissioner Reckdahl: Is this going to be a big hit to the maintenance or is this going
11 to be a small, just drop in the bucket, for the parks?

12
13 Mr. Anderson: We're pretty close in our relationship with Public Works who manage
14 that aspect of the operation, the cleaning, the replacements and issues relating to that. I
15 know their perspective is we need to build into the request additional funding for their
16 contractor and long-term replacement and issues that pertain to their maintenance
17 operation. Concurrent with kind of the—I think associated with the CIP submittal will be
18 something to buttress and fulfill their maintenance budget requirements.

19
20 Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you.

21
22 Chair Lauing: Commissioner Moss.

23
24 Commissioner Moss: There have been complaint in the past from near neighbors that
25 say, "If you have these bathrooms in there, you're going to get homeless people or you're
26 going to get drug activity, things like that." Is there some provision in there to have
27 additional funding for public safety?

28
29 Mr. Anderson: I think that could possibly be achieved through elements like lighting and
30 through engineering to a degree so that it's situated in such a way that it doesn't lend itself
31 to camping and hiding out. The auto locks is one thing that's helped in the past to
32 improve certain areas. I can tell you that historically El Camino Park was heavily
33 inundated with people camping out in that restroom adjacent to it. Part of the problems
34 were again engineered. There were access to electrical outlets which we know
35 exacerbates that problem. We resolved that through design to no longer make that
36 available, and it's changed the use to some degree at least so far in El Camino. We've
37 seen the same in other recent park restroom additions. Hopefully we could do the same
38 for these new ones we're proposing.

39
40 Commissioner Moss: Security cameras if necessary?

41
42 Mr. Anderson: It's possible. I think that's possible.

1
2 Commissioner Moss: The last question is are there groups of stakeholders who are
3 specifically asking for these bathrooms or is this more of a "we should have bathrooms
4 because it's the right thing to do"?

5
6 Mr. Anderson: When we did the outreach for the Parks Master Plan, when people were
7 writing in on parks what they wanted, much like dog parks almost every park came up
8 with "we'd like a restroom, we'd like a restroom."

9
10 Chair Lauing: I do think that's a fair question about is there going to be more security or
11 police. I think we should go into this knowing that there's not going to be, presuming that
12 there's not going to be.

13
14 Mr. Jensen: I would encourage the Commission, if you would like to see a sample of a
15 newer bathroom, the Juana Briones bathroom is a good one to look at. It's a prefabricated
16 structure. It is very well built and stout and has good lighting and the locks on the doors.
17 It has all the features that make a current bathroom and removes those things that we
18 think about with the old park bathrooms. It's much more secure.

19
20 Chair Lauing: Other comments? Commissioner Hetterly.

21
22 Commissioner Hetterly: I like the recommendation. I wonder if there's any prioritization
23 among those parks or you would just do outreach to all of them and prioritize based on
24 that or based on cost?

25
26 Mr. Anderson: That's a good question. They have not been prioritized yet. Maybe some
27 of the outreach, we'll have to check with MIG to see if some of the outreach, maybe the
28 number of requests for restrooms as people wrote it in the bubble, if that will help inform
29 where our priorities should be. We could also use some staff observation. Eleanor
30 Pardee, for example, really jumps out at us because we get so many complaints about
31 people urinating in public there. That's one that pops out, but it doesn't necessarily have
32 to be the first. I think a little more research to determine what the priorities should be.

33
34 Commissioner Hetterly: Another possible criteria would be the age of users. If you have
35 a park that's used heavily by young children, that might be one that moves up on the
36 priority list.

37
38 Mr. Anderson: Good suggestion.

39
40 Commissioner Hetterly: Thanks.

41
42 Chair Lauing: Definitely. Anything else? Sounds like we're good to go.

1
2 Mr. Anderson: Thank you.
3

4 Mr. Jensen: The third policy to review tonight was 2.C. This one talks about the
5 synthetic turf and natural turf. staff has submitted a recommendation in the staff report
6 for maintaining the synthetic turf fields that we have. Reviewing the process are the
7 development of synthetic turf in the future to make determination if we want to expand
8 that as well as also increasing and enhancing the natural turf fields that we have to
9 increase capacity on those. I'll open it up to discussion for that specific policy.
10

11 Vice Chair Knopper: Can I ask a—I'm sorry.
12

13 Chair Lauing: I was going to say comments. Go ahead.
14

15 Vice Chair Knopper: One of your points is synthetic turf fields should be striped for
16 multiple sports to maximize use. Is there a reason not to?
17

18 Mr. Anderson: That's a good question. When we recently looked at how we're going to
19 stripe Stanford-Palo Alto, we were debating because there were some standards for
20 lacrosse. As we started to spec out what it would look like, it could get really confusing
21 with the amount of lines. You do have to be thoughtful for how you're doing this because
22 it can get convoluted so quickly. We looked at the El Camino example, walked it with
23 the manufacturer of the turf itself and some of the folks that participate in lacrosse, and
24 came to an agreement on the style that's reasonable, that you can definitely still
25 differentiate between the two sports, but it's not so overwhelming that you can't figure out
26 what's going on. I think there is a reason to be cautious, and maybe three or four sports
27 might be overkill and soon be difficult. If there were a third or fourth sport, then we'd
28 have different striping.
29

30 Vice Chair Knopper: I was just going to ask besides soccer and lacrosse is there a third?
31 Football? Do we stripe for football?
32

33 Mr. Anderson: So far we haven't had that issue come up, but it could. It'd be something
34 we'd have to be careful and cautious about and proceed with thought and care.
35

36 Commissioner Reckdahl: Are there only two colored lines at El Camino? I thought they
37 had three colors.
38

39 Mr. Anderson: I couldn't tell you off the top of my head. I'm not sure.
40

41 Chair Lauing: I think this idea of at this point staying up to speed on what the current
42 trends are, which are going to change, is kind of the only thing you can do. It's been so

1 controversial, but there's been so many scientific advances or not depending on your view
2 of it that it strikes me that at this point saying, "Stay up to speed on it," is probably good
3 until such time as you can make more of a definitive decision. Any other comments on
4 this one? Commissioner Hetterly.

5
6 Commissioner Hetterly: I have a question. Are you proposing to retain the first part of
7 the original recommendation 2.C, to design and maintain high quality turf fields with
8 adequate time for resting to support maximum use in parks, blah, blah, blah, or is that
9 being replaced by a separate policy for synthetic turf and a separate policy for natural
10 grass?

11
12 Mr. Anderson: I would recommend keeping that first one as well as this additional
13 caveat in this recommendation you see before you that says we should hire a sports turf
14 consultant to do a full analysis. I would do both.

15
16 Commissioner Hetterly: I agree with that.

17
18 Chair Lauing: That sports turf consultant, they're specialized? They either do grass or
19 synthetic?

20
21 Mr. Anderson: I just came back from a seminar a week or so ago. While he has some
22 knowledge of the synthetic, it's really natural turf that they'll specialize in, and that's what
23 we'd hire him for. The care of the synthetic turf is so much easier, you don't need a
24 professional consultant to tell you how to care for it. The natural grass, there's so much
25 that goes into it, it's a real challenge.

26
27 Commissioner Hetterly: These bulleted proposed recommendations, they're basically
28 programs that would go under that (crosstalk) 2.C?

29
30 Mr. Anderson: Correct.

31
32 Commissioner Hetterly: Thanks.

33
34 Chair Lauing: Just to clarify that. They wouldn't actually be listed in the policies, this
35 big policy document? That's just suggestions of program implementation?

36
37 Mr. Anderson: Correct.

38
39 Chair Lauing: We had this debate a lot at the ad hoc, so I was just seeing what we've got
40 here, if this is part of the policy. Next up.

41

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: What is the policy (inaudible)? Will this be the full policy or
2 is it ...

3
4 Commissioner Hetterly: Just the first sentence.

5
6 Commissioner Reckdahl: Just the first sentence. Commissioner Moss had to leave. His
7 comments were that he supports the recommendation. He thinks that it's not a simple
8 decision to get rid of synthetic turf, and it should be a case-by-case basis basically.

9
10 Mr. Jensen: That'll bring us to 2.E which was 2.D in last month's policy. This one's
11 talking about the on-leash or require dogs to be on leash policy. We're going to look at
12 Daren's presentation on dog parks as part of that.

13
14 Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Peter; appreciate it. As you know, we've discussed ways to
15 increase dog off-leash opportunities for quite some time. It's with great pleasure that I'm
16 able to share with you tonight a staff and PARC ad hoc committee recommendation
17 regarding this policy and program for dog parks that can be included into our Parks
18 Master Plan. During the process of developing this recommendation, we explored other
19 models such as the fenced and unfenced shared-use model and learned from other cities
20 who have experimented with these alternatives to dedicated sites. We've also learned
21 from community outreach and from stakeholders from the dog owner community, athletic
22 field users, open space and nature advocates as well as people who just aren't fans of
23 having dogs off-leash in parks. After listening and learning and conducting a
24 comprehensive analysis of our entire park system, we came to the conclusion that Palo
25 Alto's policy should be to actively pursue adding dedicated, fenced dog parks in multiple
26 neighborhoods, equitably distributed between north and south Palo Alto. While the size
27 of the dog parks are going to vary, we recommend that we should strive to have them be
28 at least a quarter acre in size, and the dog parks should not be placed in open space
29 preserves. The associated program to support this policy calls for at least six dedicated,
30 fenced dog parks from a list of 12 potential locations. I should note that the
31 recommendation acknowledges both Hoover and Greer's current dog parks are inadequate
32 in terms of their size, and that they should not be counted in their configuration towards
33 our minimum target of six dog parks. After the staff report was written, I met with
34 Stanford University staff and learned their concerns for one of these 12 sites; that's El
35 Camino Park. They've got two main concerns. One is that a dog park in the undeveloped
36 portion, that's the southern portion of El Camino that we've been proposed, would
37 interfere with future transit improvements for that area. Though the plans are uncertain
38 and the timelines aren't developed, they feel strongly that transit improvement will
39 happen. It's extremely important to Stanford, and they feel having a dog park there
40 would be an added complication because the dog owners would be reluctant to give it up
41 if and when this transit improvement ends up happening. Secondly, they're concerned
42 that dog park users would be driving to this site and using Stanford's two parking lots.

1 That's the one for the Red Cross building adjacent to where we're proposing a dog park,
2 and then the nearby MacArthur Park restaurant's. Those are both owned by Stanford and
3 leased out. They are small parking lots, and the fear is that if you had a dog park there,
4 because it's in closer proximity to their two parking lots than it is to El Camino Park
5 parking lot and there are no residences in the immediate vicinity—it's a half mile
6 distance—that people would most likely be driving. It's very likely that they'd be
7 impacting negatively their existing parking lots. As we discussed this with Stanford,
8 there were a few other cons or negatives to consider regarding their input and that site in
9 general. One is that the future transit improvements are also important to the City. We
10 do know as staff and I'm sure the Commission's aware that takeaways can be difficult.
11 When you've allocated for something and a couple of years pass, removing that use
12 whether it's a dog park or a community garden or anything else can be challenging. It
13 could slow or cause impediment to something important like a transit improvement
14 project. The other thing to note is all the other proposed sites that we're looking at, the
15 other 11, are all within walking distance of a neighborhood; whereas, that's not true for
16 this particular one. It is most likely going to be a driving site predominantly, being that
17 it's a half mile distance from the very closest residence. Since we have so many other
18 options in north Palo Alto with this list of 11 to spend our limited resources on, it makes
19 less sense to invest it at a site where there's a good possibility we might be removing
20 those amenities and fences sometime soon. Because of these reasons, staff is proposing
21 that we remove El Camino from our list of 12 potential sites and focus on the 11 sites
22 instead. In selecting these locations, we looked for sites with at least a quarter acre of
23 space, that are not currently used for active or programmed recreation. Seven of these
24 locations are in north Palo Alto, that is, north of Oregon Expressway, and five are in the
25 south. Three of these locations have existing dog parks. That's Mitchell Park, which
26 would be expanded, Hoover and Greer, which would be relocated to larger areas within
27 those parks. This map of Palo Alto shows all the potential sites circled in red. I included
28 the nearest neighboring Menlo Park and City of Mountain View parks in blue just to
29 show that some of the periphery borders of our City could also be using some of these
30 other cities' dog parks as well. Two of these 11 sites, Eleanor Pardee Park and Bowden
31 Park, are recommended to be implemented in the nearer term. There's funding in existing
32 Capital Improvement Projects that could be used to add the fencing, water for dogs and a
33 few small amenities like benches to create very simple dog parks in these areas. Both
34 these parks are in the northern portion of Palo Alto, which doesn't currently have any dog
35 parks. I'm going to quickly walk you through this example of the aerial photograph you
36 see of Eleanor Pardee. This is in the north. It's .41 acres. It's scheduled to happen in the
37 nearer term. With all these sites—it might be a little bit difficult to see the cursor. I'm
38 trying to outline the nether area of turf we looked at. With every single park site, we
39 broke it down and looked at all the possibilities and configurations that could be used.
40 The one you see outlined in blue is that .41 acre. It ultimately settled to the top of our
41 selection process. There was another .22 acre piece right here that had possibilities too.
42 As we weighed the pros and cons with the ad hoc committee, we ultimately felt that the



1 one you see before you is the best option. Different sites had multiple options. Some of
2 them had three. We picked the best. Some of them had just clearly one that stood out,
3 and some just were not suitable at all. There is another couple of reasons why we chose
4 Eleanor Pardee as a nearer-term. I'm just going to go through it really quickly. It's
5 centralized location in northern Palo Alto. It's walkable access from multiple
6 neighborhoods. It's large at 9.6 acres. It's got a pretty sizeable, unprogrammed, passive
7 use area which allows us to put in a dedicated, large dog park with minimal impacts to
8 other users. It's got a buffer space between the nearest residents, although not as large as
9 some place like El Camino, which was one of its pros. It's still sizeable. The second one
10 I want to walk you through is Bowden, also recommended for a nearer term. It's in the
11 north, .37 acres. While this park is not large—it's only a 2-acre park—it has an
12 unprogrammed, passive area that you see outlined in blue, that has very, very little use.
13 We feel this would have minimal impact on other park users or nearby residences. It's
14 accessible by multiple neighborhoods as you come through the Cal. Ave. underpass.
15 There's a Capital Improvement Project underway—at least it's done with the design—and
16 we should be starting that in the next few months. There might be a possibility, if we
17 move through the process quickly, that we can have it happen concurrent with the
18 restoration of the rest of Bowden Park. The process and timeline for adding these nearer-
19 term dog parks, it's difficult to give you a definitive schedule. Each process seems to
20 have its own timeline. Whenever we go out to the public and things—they just have their
21 own timelines. The process would be, if you agreed with this recommendation, we could
22 proceed right away with this process. It would start with a public outreach meeting.
23 Again, this is a prioritized list, so we'd probably start at the top of the list. That would be
24 Pardee. We'd host that public meeting, collect feedback on this proposed dog park site,
25 bring the recommendation and seek approval from the Commission for a Park
26 Improvement Ordinance which would then go to the Council for approval. Then we'd get
27 a contract in place, go out to bids and install the fencing, the benches and the other
28 amenities. In summary, staff and the ad hoc committee believe this recommendation
29 reaches a good compromise between all the competing demands for this limited park
30 space that we have. It addresses our north/south Palo Alto dog park disparity, and it
31 presents a solid plan of action going forward to address Palo Alto's dog park needs now
32 and in the future. I'll defer to the ad hoc committee if there's anything you guys would
33 like to add to that presentation.

34
35 Commissioner Hetterly: I think you covered it.

36
37 Chair Lauing: I just wanted to say that this is a superlative report that was put together
38 by the collective ad hoc and staff. Just a terrific example of serious, serious work that
39 came into something that is now a very specific, comprehensive, actionable plan. Thanks
40 to our ad hoc and our staff for getting us there.

1 Commissioner Hetterly: I would just add extra kudos to Daren. I think you just went
2 above and beyond the call of duty in helping drive this and putting in so much legwork to
3 pull out all the maps and give it some really thoughtful consideration. I want to thank
4 you for that.

5
6 Vice Chair Knopper: I concur. He and his staff worked so hard on this. It's truly a
7 remarkable document. Thank you.

8
9 Chair Lauing: Very clear, very visual, very easy to understand. Go ahead.

10
11 Commissioner Reckdahl: I agree. Very good, very thorough, very thoughtful. I
12 appreciate it. I will go back on my soapbox about El Camino. I think if you put a sign up
13 that said, "this is temporary," and just put a fence and did nothing else, there'd be use out
14 of it. It's really not that far from anywhere University north. If you look at the map ...

15
16 Female: (inaudible)

17
18 Commissioner Reckdahl: Yes. Anyway, we're getting two. I'm happy with that. I
19 would be more happy with three, if we could have got that El Camino. That is, I think, a
20 missed opportunity, but at least we have two.

21
22 Chair Lauing: What's the process that you'd like from us to get this thing moving?

23
24 Mr. Anderson: I think I've got my marching orders. We'll get going on the public
25 outreach next. I'll consult with my boss first. If he concurs, we'll get going on the public
26 outreach for Pardee.

27
28 Chair Lauing: The process before it comes back to us is that you have public outreach
29 for an appropriate amount of time and other kinds of considerations, and then we go
30 straight to a PIO?

31
32 Mr. Anderson: Given this one's gotten so much feedback, I guess it depends on the
33 outreach feedback. It's been so well vetted, the idea. If there's general support in our
34 public outreach, yeah, I think I would probably try to go for a PIO.

35
36 Chair Lauing: Once that's calendared here, speakers can still come in and speak for or
37 against the PIO. Yeah, Rob.

38
39 Mr. de Geus: I'd like to talk with the City Manager a little bit about next steps on this. I
40 think it's really good direction and good staff work. Big kudos to Daren and the ad hoc
41 committee. I expect there will be some resistance once we get out there. It's dedicated
42 spaces in parkland for dog parks. I think we should ...

1
2 Chair Lauing: There will, yeah.
3

4 Mr. de Geus: ... check-in with the City Council on this, particularly if it's in advance of
5 the full Master Plan coming forward, which will have a whole set of policies and
6 recommendations. We should do a check-in with the Council. I'm not sure exactly how
7 the City Manager would want to do that, but I'd be concerned if we just moved ahead and
8 started the public outreach and moved towards implementing these dog parks without a
9 check-in.
10

11 Chair Lauing: Right now, you have a study session planned for mid-May ...
12

13 Mr. de Geus: That'd be good timing.
14

15 Chair Lauing: ... for Council which would be ...
16

17 Mr. de Geus: Good timing.
18

19 Mr. Anderson: Sorry about that; I jumped the gun.
20

21 Chair Lauing: Not that I was reading your calendar or anything.
22

23 Mr. Anderson: I also wanted to acknowledge the ad hoc committee. Thank you so
24 much. This one's been weighing heavy on my shoulders for about 5 years. Just so
25 grateful for the great work the ad hoc committee did, really thoughtful analysis and
26 feedback and got this one across the line. Thank you. Good job.
27

28 Chair Lauing: That was a lot of parks to study.
29

30 Commissioner Hetterly: I just have one more question. In terms of moving forward once
31 we get clearance to move forward, which I hope will be fast—I want just to finish the
32 question before I forget it. I wonder if we could go out for the outreach and the PIO
33 process for both Pardee and Bowden simultaneously as opposed to sequentially.
34

35 Mr. Anderson: Good question. I'll have to look into that a little bit more, but possible.
36

37 Chair Lauing: Those are the ones that you had called out as needing further discussion?
38

39 Mr. Jensen: Yes. I will open it up for the Commission if they have any other questions
40 on the other revised policies.
41

1 Chair Lauing: A couple of comments from the ad hoc, and other ad hoc members can
2 join in. Most importantly, we wanted to make sure that we didn't—I'm talking about the
3 whole policy document and not just ones we need further discussion on. We wanted to
4 make sure that it's all here; that everything is covered at least as a policy or a goal or a
5 program, to make sure we haven't missed anything. Secondly, if there are some that any
6 of you want to discuss at length, like we just did, or we think that we absolutely have to
7 hold on it because we need more research, then we should call that out as well. On the ad
8 hoc, we spent hours and hours and hours on this. I think it's quite fair to say that the
9 combination of staff and Commissioners couldn't come to a unanimous agreement on
10 each of these items that are set here for policy. Some of us think that they aren't all
11 policies, that they're programs. Some of us think that there's a lot of motherhood and
12 apple pie in some of the statements. Some of us think that some of the policies as stated
13 are actually ways to cooperate with your colleagues in other departments and all that. It's
14 all good stuff. What we, as an ad hoc, would like to get to tonight is if there are ones to
15 be called out for further discussion, that's fine. If there are ones that we've missed, that's
16 fine. Otherwise, we think we should hand it back to staff with all that input, and they
17 should just take it from here, and we just don't have to agree on all these policies and
18 programs as long as everything is there. If Jennifer or Keith want to add to that.

19
20 Commissioner Reckdahl: I concur.

21
22 Chair Lauing: With that, we'll go back to the other two agenda items. Are there specific
23 policies that we think need more chewing or that we've missed as long as we're looking
24 through them?

25
26 Commissioner Hetterly: I think there were two more that were highlighted in the packet.
27 One was Foothills Park and whether or not to expand access for nonresidents. There was
28 one about ...

29
30 Chair Lauing: I did see that one pop up again.

31
32 Commissioner Hetterly: ...designating park-like spaces as public spaces. I'm not sure I
33 quite understand what that's getting at. I'd like to understand that a little more before we
34 sign off on it counting as a policy.

35
36 Chair Lauing: Let's take that in order. You're on page 2 at the bottom, 1.J. That's been
37 moved to 1.J, explore options to expand access to Foothill Park for nonresidents. As an
38 ad hoc member, I asked for that to be taken off before, and it's back on here. I think that's
39 a project or an investigation. I don't see it as a policy to go look into something. I don't
40 see it as being appropriate. Other comments?

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: I concur. I think it's a program. Certainly we can encourage
2 it; we can discourage it. I don't think it rises to the level of being a policy.

3
4 Commissioner Hetterly: I think whether it's a policy—whatever you call it, we shouldn't
5 do it.

6
7 Chair Lauing: You're sort of saying as a policy we shouldn't do it, is what you're saying.

8
9 Ms. O'Kane: Commissioner Hetterly, is it even with the language that leaves it to a
10 future decision, you're not comfortable with that because it says explore?

11
12 Commissioner Hetterly: I think it encourages moving in that direction, and I don't think
13 that's a direction that we've discussed as favorable. I certainly don't support that
14 direction. I don't know how everybody else feels about it.

15
16 Chair Lauing: That could come up as a separate agenda item for discussion at some
17 future Commission meeting. We could explore the pros and cons, and then it'd be
18 incorporated later as a policy recommendation or not. Is that what you're saying? I'm
19 just trying to summarize.

20
21 Commissioner Hetterly: I'm saying if staff wants to include something like this in the
22 Master Plan, then we should have a full discussion about whether we think that's the
23 direction we should go. If you don't, then the current policy is not to have a policy
24 encouraging that. We would just leave things as they are, and that would be fine with
25 me.

26
27 Chair Lauing: What was the other one that you noted?

28
29 Commissioner Hetterly: Designate park-like spaces at public facilities such as King
30 Plaza, City Hall, Secrete Garden, as public spaces to recognize their role in providing
31 space for recreation programming, informal park activities, and enhancements to public
32 health.

33
34 Chair Lauing: Where is that on the written document? I can't find it quickly.

35
36 Commissioner Hetterly: It's on the giant matrix.

37
38 Chair Lauing: No, no, on this.

39
40 Commissioner Hetterly: I don't have that. Yes, I do. It's Number 5.C. No, it's number—
41 yeah it was the old Number 5. I don't know what number it is. It's on page 5; it's the

1 third item down on page 5. It was once 5.A; it was once 5.C. I don't know what it
2 currently is.

3
4 Chair Lauing: It's deleted.

5
6 Commissioner Hetterly: Why is it on the ... I'm confused then, because it was on the
7 chart.

8
9 Chair Lauing: Is it in pink on the chart?

10
11 Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah.

12
13 Ms. O'Kane: This is one that staff—we had a lot of discussions on this as well and went
14 back and forth on it. I think what happened is in the document we deleted it and then we
15 continued to have the conversation and decided we needed to talk about it even more.
16 Peter, can you explain what this is getting at, this policy?

17
18 Mr. Jensen: The policy itself was to basically cite those open spaces that the City does
19 have, that are not currently parkland, and cite them that they are open space, and they are
20 used as parks. I think the debate that staff was having is that if we do denote these spaces
21 as parkland, any type of then renovation to them, especially for King Plaza which is
22 basically a green roof, would then require a Park Improvement Ordinance to reconstruct
23 it or whatever it was going to be in the future. Each of these spaces have a very specific
24 use already. They don't need to technically be deemed as parkland. They are going to be
25 mostly kept as they are. staff eliminated that to eliminate the future conflict of having to
26 have these as parkland and having to have a Park Improvement Ordinance then to
27 renovate them should things change in the future. They are (crosstalk).

28
29 Chair Lauing: Are you saying you're comfortable that it's deleted?

30
31 Mr. Jensen: Yes.

32
33 Chair Lauing: I think we are as well. I think a lot of our feedback was that as well.

34
35 Mr. Jensen: Staff is recommending that we do delete that.

36
37 Commissioner Hetterly: Thank you.

38
39 Commissioner Reckdahl: I don't want to go off on a tangent here, because we had
40 discussions about definitions of policies and stuff like this. Now, we're considering
41 programs. Are we looking at programs that are satisfying the goals or looking at
42 programs that are satisfying the policies or looking at programs that satisfy either one?

1
2 Ms. O'Kane: Programs would satisfy the policy. The hierarchy is the goal, and then a
3 policy, and then you could have a project or a program under the policy.
4

5 Commissioner Reckdahl: The reason I ask is—for example, on Goal 3, it says create
6 environments that encourage active and passive activities for health, wellness and social
7 connections. None of the policies address social connections at all. The areas of focus
8 talk about enhancing comfort and making parks more welcoming. None of the policies
9 address those. If that's the case, if the hierarchy is that everything from the goal flows
10 into the policies, then we need additional policies under that goal.
11

12 Mr. de Geus: Projects and programs should support both policies and goals is the way I
13 see it.
14

15 Commissioner Reckdahl: If that's the point, we can design the programs to satisfy the
16 goals and/or the policies. The policies are just there to give us more flavor on what the
17 goal has. I have no problem with that. If we only are looking at the policies when we're
18 choosing programs, then we need to add more.
19

20 Mr. de Geus: I think the way to think about it is that we have goals, and we address those
21 goals by having specific policies and by having specific projects and programs that move
22 the goal.
23

24 Commissioner Reckdahl: As long as we're free to pick programs that satisfy the goal but
25 no policy, I'm happy. I have another comment about Goal 4. Is this good ...
26

27 Chair Lauing: Yeah, because we're doing anything that's missing. We're going to be
28 done with policies as of tonight.
29

30 Commissioner Reckdahl: This is really for Peter and Daren. Goal 4 which talks about
31 natural habitat, we don't have anything there about native plants. When we were doing
32 the Bol Park planting, Peter had a nice discussion about the importance of native plants,
33 because we have bugs and birds and all that need these native plants. If all we're worried
34 about is water consumption, we have all these nonnative, low-water plants. That may not
35 be consistent with the bugs and the animals around. That seemed to be a very compelling
36 reason to at least have a preference, not necessarily mandatory, but a preference for
37 native species. I think that would be worthwhile to put as a policy. We're not making it
38 mandatory; you can plant nonnative because we have a lot of competing issues in parks.
39 We should have a preference for native species. That's one thing. Do Peter and Daren
40 concur with that.
41



1 Mr. Anderson: I do agree. I think that almost always the native plant typically is water
2 tolerant, drought tolerant. It's often the preferred one for that rationale too. Plus in all
3 our nurseries, the Acterra and Baylands one, that's all we grow, native plants. I
4 absolutely encourage the use of those as a preference.

5
6 Commissioner Reckdahl: The second one—Peter, do you want anything? Are you
7 happy? Also on Goal 4, we don't talk about wildlife at all. Wildlife is very important in
8 the parks and especially in the open space. I think we should have a policy on there. It
9 doesn't have to be anything great, but something that says we need to take care of the
10 wildlife or encourage wildlife or take care of the wildlife. (inaudible) That's the only
11 other issues. I'm done.

12
13 Chair Lauing: Go ahead.

14
15 Commissioner Cowie: I think actually both points that Keith raised here are noted in the
16 letter we got tonight. I think there's some other interesting points raised in here as well. I
17 thought they addressed both of those issues pretty well. Something to consider.

18
19 Chair Lauing; Did you have others, Keith?

20
21 Commissioner Reckdahl: No.

22
23 Commissioner Hetterly: I agree. I think that letter from the Sierra Club and the Audubon
24 Society—I support all of their recommended revisions. I think we ought to incorporate
25 those. Also, as I was thinking about this earlier for dog parks and for this, it made me
26 look back at the—I mean, for park acreage and for this—at that memo we wrote back in
27 September 2014 about the impacts of growth and development, the letter the Commission
28 sent to Council. I was looking back at the recommendations we had included that we
29 wanted them to consider as they were considering any plan for growth, that they were
30 committed to these types of things. They include not only increasing park fees and
31 building inventory and pursuing opportunities to build inventory, but also reliable and
32 sustainable mechanisms to address a growing gap in maintenance funding. I don't know
33 if we have anything—it seemed like our plan ought to do what we told them that they
34 should do. I'd like to look back at those and see if we can construct some policies that
35 achieve those goals. I can read them out loud for folks who probably don't have them in
36 front of them. That was one. Another was quality measures to monitor the health of our
37 parks and recreation facilities in the face of growing demand and use and to evaluate
38 services to rapidly growing and changing demographic groups. I think we do have—it
39 might have the latter in here, but I'm not sure if we had the first, how we keep track of
40 wear and tear. Maybe that's built into the maintenance piece.

41
42 Chair Lauing: I think it is.

1
2 Commissioner Hetterly: The last one was quality measures to monitor impacts on habitat
3 and ecosystems and conservation plans to preserve and protect them. We've got the
4 conservation plans in there, but I don't know that we've come up with any quality
5 measures to monitor impacts or if that's something that we could do in the context of this
6 Master Plan. I'd like staff's thoughts about it, and the Commission's as well.

7
8 Vice Chair Knopper: With regard to the conservation, I do agree with you that the
9 language—I just received the letter tonight from the Sierra Club and Audubon Society. I
10 do agree with including their language and their edits. I think any opportunity we have to
11 be extremely clear on that. What was the first point? I agreed with it, but I can't—there
12 were some ...

13
14 Commissioner Hetterly: Reliable and sustainable mechanisms to address gaps in
15 maintenance funding.

16
17 Vice Chair Knopper: Right. Thank you. That's nowhere in here, correct?

18
19 Chair Lauing: 6.C comes a little bit close to that. Review and update existing guidance
20 for development, ops and maintenance of parks.

21
22 Commissioner Hetterly: Which one—I see.

23
24 Chair Lauing: It doesn't say dollars, but that's implied.

25
26 Commissioner Hetterly: I'm not sure dollars is implied there at all. These are ...

27
28 Chair Lauing: That's what I said. No, I said it's not there.

29
30 Commissioner Hetterly: (crosstalk) I don't think they're even implied. I don't think they
31 come into play at all in 6.C.

32
33 Chair Lauing: If you're updating guidance for how to do maintenance in the parks and it
34 costs more, then I figured that was implied.

35
36 Commissioner Hetterly: I don't think that's implied.

37
38 Vice Chair Knopper: It says efficiently, so I suppose that implies that you would make
39 the appropriate cost decisions with regard to that particular point.

40
41 Commissioner Hetterly: I guess what I would look for then is staff's thinking on whether
42 there is something we could put in this plan that would make it easier for you to secure

1 the funding necessary to keep up the maintenance necessary to meet the growing needs.
2 If there is, I would love for the Commission to be able to support it by putting it in the
3 Plan.
4

5 Ms. O'Kane: We can certainly take a look at it and come up with some language that
6 might satisfy the previous recommendation. The one on evaluating demographics, we
7 did add Policy 1.I that says periodically collect and evaluate data on the changing needs
8 of the community and adjust programs and plans accordingly.
9

10 Commissioner Hetterly: I think that does it.
11

12 Ms. O'Kane: For the measures to monitor impacts to wildlife and habitat, I don't
13 remember the exact language. I think the conservation plans, like you said, will help
14 achieve that. We'd have to really look at that. I'm not sure how we would collect that
15 data as part of the Master Plan, but we can talk about it and see if it's going to be
16 addressed in the conservation plans or if it's something that could be addressed here.
17

18 Commissioner Hetterly: Okay.
19

20 Ms. O'Kane: What was the other one? It was measuring something else.
21

22 Commissioner Hetterly: It was quality measures to monitor the health of our parks and
23 recreation facilities in the face of growing demand and use. I think what we had in mind
24 then was sort of keeping track over time are we wearing things out faster because of
25 greater use. It was figuring out how to measure that, so that we could tie it to cause and
26 effect.
27

28 Ms. O'Kane: We'll take a look at those.
29

30 Chair Lauing: Anything else on policies? One more.
31

32 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm looking through—Commissioner Moss left me his notes.
33 I'm looking through it. He does note that Policies 5.E and 5.I are identical. We should
34 just delete one of them. Also, he was saying again this discussion of policies versus
35 programs. 6.I, he thought those would be programs and that we should have a higher
36 level policy that says we should cooperate with our neighbors and other people. These
37 would be programs under that. That's it.
38

39 Chair Lauing: I think it's a wrap. That was some collective work. Thank you, Peter.
40

41 Mr. Jensen: Thank you very much.
42

1 Chair Lauing: Daren, Kristen.
2

3 **V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**
4

5 Chair Lauing: The next item on the agenda is Comments and Announcements. I think
6 all you Commissioners have been getting comments. I just wanted to reinforce that the
7 financial disclosure is due on April 1st. For you new Commissioners, have a lot of fun
8 with that. For us old Commissioners, have a lot of fun with that. It's kind of a pain but
9 essential, and we all signed up for it.
10

11 Commissioner Hetterly: There's an ethics training coming up in April, the annual ethics
12 training.
13

14 Chair Lauing: One got postponed.
15

16 Commissioner Hetterly: That's the one. It was in March; it got postponed. (inaudible)
17

18 Chair Lauing: Yes, Council Member Filseth.
19

20 Council Member Filseth: I actually have one. It happens I'm also the Council liaison to
21 the Friends of the Junior Museum and Zoo. They want to make sure that everybody
22 knows that everybody here is invited to their launch tomorrow at 5:30. You must have
23 been deluged with emails by this already (inaudible).
24

25 Commissioner Hetterly: Could you speak up a little?
26

27 Council Member Filseth: The Friends of the Junior Museum and Zoo is having their
28 launch party for their proposed project tomorrow at 5:30. They want to make sure that
29 everybody on the Parks and Rec Commission is invited.
30

31 Chair Lauing: Other announcements from staff?
32

33 Rob de Geus: Just on that topic of the Junior Museum and Zoo and the Friends, we got a
34 staff review of the redesigned plans today actually. It moves considerably off the park
35 which, I think, you'll be very pleased to see. I hope you will be. They plan to come back
36 to the Commission next month. Excited to show you the updated plans. I think they've
37 done some really hard thinking about that.
38

39 Chair Lauing: On the next item of agendas, that was my first item, are they going to be
40 ready to come back next month.
41

42 Mr. de Geus: They are. They'll be ready.



1
2 Council Member Filseth: My understanding is that they're going to have posters about
3 that tomorrow.
4

5 Mr. de Geus: I also wanted to mention we had the Cubberley Community Day over the
6 weekend. Staff put a lot of work into it. I want to thank Commissioner Hetterly for
7 being there and participating and helping staff out with some visioning of the future of
8 Cubberley. Thank you. It was a very, very nice event.
9

10 Kristen O'Kane: Did you want to give an update on the golf course?
11

12 Mr. de Geus: You could probably do it better than I, to some extent. The golf course, we
13 do have some good news. It's starting to move along both on the flood control project
14 and the golf course. The flood control project has its permits. There's a meeting with
15 PG&E on the 24th, this week. The first step will be to move the PG&E line away from
16 where the new levee will be built. That will have further impacts to the golf course. The
17 golf course permits are moving along rapidly now. We've got some good news from Fish
18 and Wildlife and the Army Corps. We don't have our permits yet, but we're much, much
19 closer than we've ever been. There is even a possibility that we could be ready in the
20 summer to actually begin.
21

22 Chair Lauing: I've never heard you use those two words in one sentence, "golf course"
23 and "rapidly." The whole time we've been on this project.
24

25 Mr. de Geus: I hope I don't regret it.
26

27 Ms. O'Kane: I just have one announcement. For those of you who have teens in your
28 life, we are hiring for multiple summer positions, counselors, assistant site directors and a
29 site director and also some lifeguards. If anyone knows of any teens looking for a
30 summer job, they can go to cityofpaloalto.org and click on job opportunities.
31

32 Chair Lauing: What's the age range for that?
33

34 Ms. O'Kane: Fifteen and up.
35

36 Chair Lauing: Up to 19 because that's teens or ...
37

38 Mr. de Geus: We hire a lot of young adults too, if you're in college.
39

40 Chair Lauing: Peter.
41

1 Peter Jensen: The community garden project is moving along very rapidly. By the end
2 of the week hopefully, we're done with 90 percent of the project. By the end of next
3 week, we'll be done with that. I did have discussion today. Megha, who presented earlier
4 for the Boardwalk, is also project manager for Bowden Park. She's helping me with that.
5 That should kick off at the end of next month, renovations to Bowden.
6

7 Commissioner Hetterly: I'd like to just make a quick comment unrelated. There was a
8 great article in the *Weekly* last week, I think, about the Bryant Street Garage Fund that the
9 City runs to fund grants to local teens, whatever idea they have, to promote a project. I
10 thought it was really phenomenal coverage and reflected fabulously on the City and
11 (inaudible).
12

13 Commissioner Reckdahl: Can we back up to the community gardens? We're retrofitting
14 which gardens?
15

16 Mr. Jensen: We retrofitted all three of the gardens actually, the Rinconada, Eleanor and
17 Johnson Park. Rinconada and Eleanor are completed except for some mulch in the
18 pathways that needs to be done. They are working on Johnson Park this week. We did
19 find that whoever did Johnson Park in the past did a very good job and plumbed it all
20 very well. I won't tell you how it's plumbed, because I don't want to incite people who
21 want to go out there and dig it all up. We're going to maintain it like it is. We did change
22 out all the hose bibs. We are going to update how the system is connected to the main
23 water source and add some more backflow protection, that and better drinking fountains
24 to offset basically the savings that we had to make that system better. All three of them
25 got upgraded. They're engineered now so if there's two or three people with water on,
26 then that person in the back corner should also be able to get water at the same time,
27 which is definitely a big bonus for that project.
28

29 Commissioner Reckdahl: What is the status of the community gardens down at—what's
30 the community center? Ventura. We are organizing that or they're still organizing that?
31

32 Daren Anderson: They're still managing and organizing it; however, they did adopt our
33 policies regarding community gardens.
34

35 Commissioner Reckdahl: Going forward, they're going to still do the management, but
36 they're just going to be following our policies?
37

38 Mr. Anderson: Yeah.
39

40 Chair Lauing: No other announcements? Let's move on to the tentative agenda for
41 April 26th.
42

1 **VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR APRIL 26, 2016 MEETING**

2
3 Chair Lauing: The zoo was first up. That's probable. Do we think we'll have any dog
4 park action coming back? That's only 4 weeks out.

5
6 Vice Chair Knopper: No. Leave Daren alone. Leave him alone.

7
8 Chair Lauing: Good point. I retract that question. Have a good night's sleep, Daren. I
9 just want to point out to the Commission that a number of you are signed up for various
10 ad hoc committees. If there's action to be done, please initiate that in your respective
11 committees. Let us know in advance if you want a specific report out in any subsequent,
12 upcoming meeting. Looks like dog parks might be done, for the two of you. Hooray.
13 Other agenda items so far?

14
15 Commissioner Hetterly: I think we'll be ready with website for next month.

16
17 Chair Lauing: Website, okay.

18
19 Commissioner Hetterly: As long as Catherine gets healthy soon.

20
21 Chair Lauing: Do you know of any other things?

22
23 Kristen O'Kane: We'll give an update on the Parks Master Plan, but we won't go into any
24 detailed discussion.

25
26 Chair Lauing: I think that's it, unless people have other things.

27
28 **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

29
30 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Hetterly and second by Vice Chair
31 Knopper at 9:58 p.m.