



**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

January 28, 2020

CITY HALL

250 Hamilton Avenue

Palo Alto, California

Commissioners Present: Anne Cribbs, Jeff Greenfield, Jeff LaMere, Ryan McCauley, David Moss, Jackie Olson, and Keith Reckdahl

Commissioners Absent: None

Others Present: Council Member Kou

Staff Present: Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin

I. ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Greenfield: I want to welcome a couple of new faces to the dais. First, Commissioner Olson is joining us. We've had three consecutive years with the same Commission members, so we welcome some new blood on the Commission. I've met with you personally and really am impressed and look forward to you contributing to our Commission and our community. Thank you. Also, our new staff liaison this year will be Council Member Kou. I've known you for many years and look forward to the guidance and passion that you can offer the Commission and welcome you to join us as often as you're able to.

Council Member Kou: Thank you. I'm very excited.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Also, I'd be remiss not to say one more word of thanks for former Chair Don McDougall, who has moved on. We'll miss his guidance and his passion for parks and recreation and everything therein contained. I hope we can do him justice this year in continuing his work and keeping it going. Thank you.

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS

Vice Chair Greenfield: Are there any comments, changes or requests, deletions regarding the agenda? If not, then next up is Oral Communications.



1 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

2 Vice Chair Greenfield: Do we have any speaker cards from the public to comment on
3 items not on the agenda? First speaker will be Shani Kleinhaus followed by Mark Weiss.

4 Shani Kleinhaus: Good evening. I'm Shani Kleinhaus with the Santa Clara Valley
5 Audubon Society and a resident of Palo Alto. I'm going to be a bit of a broken record this
6 evening. I want to talk about native plants and pollinator gardens and pollinator pathways
7 in the City. Everyone of your items has something to do with that. I've been working
8 through Audubon to look at how to enhance habitat for birds in the urban areas. We've
9 worked with Google a lot. We've worked with Facebook on the roof. If anybody wants to
10 visit, let me know. We can take you there. What we learn is that it's really, really important
11 to start moving away from planting—even if it's a species that is easy to maintain and
12 doesn't require a lot of water, if it's not native, it doesn't provide the ecological services that
13 the wildlife, starting with the bugs and ending with the birds, need. I would like to speak
14 to you, but I know you have a presentation about some of the wonderful gardens that we
15 already have. I think every park should have them. Every place where you have some
16 kind of corridor, whether it's a street or a creek, should be enhanced with native plants
17 because that's how you can create that. It's actually in the Parks Master Plan. I know
18 because I worked on that when I was part of that task force. I'll come back and talk about
19 some of those in more detail. One other thing I wanted to let you know is on the 12th of
20 March there will be a symposium in Mountain View about green streets, and their view of
21 green streets is inclusive of ecological infrastructure. It's not only looking at how do we
22 get people to move through, cars to move through, bicycles, pedestrians, but it's also
23 looking at how do the birds and the bugs move through and how does water infrastructure
24 fit in and how the underground system fits in. They're trying to have a very, very
25 comprehensive view. I will send something to Daren, and he can distribute it to you. I
26 hope you actually take part in that symposium. The City of Palo Alto is supporting it. Just
27 so you know. Thank you.

28 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Mark Weiss.

29 Mark Weiss: Good evening, Board Members, Commissioners. My name is Mark Weiss.
30 I actually have two things to talk about in three minutes. If I don't get to both of them or
31 all the points, I'll send a letter to Council or to you all. I seem to have two threads going
32 with various Commissioners or groups of Commissioners. One is about basketball, and
33 one is about music. I was going to talk about music in my three minutes, but there were
34 some emergent things this week with basketball. The Palo Alto Historical Association had
35 a presentation this weekend with Dave Newhouse, former sportswriter who grew up in
36 Menlo Park. It wasn't on topic of his event, but a famous Palo Alto basketball player named
37 Jim Loscutoff, who was a world champion for the Boston Celtics and Paly Class of '48.
38 He would be turning 90 years old next week, February 4th. I thought we should remember



1 him. I actually had proposed years ago when Yiaway Yeh was the Mayor in 2011—he
2 actually discussed this with Ron Wyden, another famous Palo Alto basketball player from
3 Paly High, who is a U.S. Senator. The idea is something to do with naming the basketball
4 courts of our parks in honor of famous Palo Alto basketball players. At the time in 2011,
5 it had to do with the renovations of Seale Park, the former Stockton Park, the former De
6 Anza School yard. There's an article you can find, I wrote in 2011, on my blog called
7 Plastic Alto, which is a jazz reference. It was called the Lockhart Loo Proposal. It's a little
8 bit off topic, but it did generate some of the same ideas. Kent Lockhart was a famous
9 basketball player from Palo Alto. They used to say that there were three Ls who were the
10 top players, Kent Lockhart, Jeremy Lin, and Jim Loscutoff. Jeremy Lin has risen above
11 them. I'd like to maybe talk about that sometime. I'm really here to talk about music in
12 that I've been running a concert series at Mitchell Park Community Center in the relatively
13 new building, celebrating its fifth anniversary. The people of Palo Alto authorized a \$41
14 million bond initiative a few years back, if you recall. As a private company called Earth
15 Weiss Productions, I've produced ten events at Mitchell Park, and I have about another ten
16 on sale right now. It's my idea of a—it's not quite a public-private partnership. As a private
17 citizen, I'd just like to leverage our public support for the arts. I had been a consultant years
18 ago to some of the music in the park events, for example Mitchell Park bowl is a good idea
19 for doing events. We still do a little bit. I think it's less than we did a few years ago with
20 the Twilight Series and the Cogswell Plaza Brown Bag Series. It's not the exact purview
21 of this department. It's almost more of an Arts Commission topic, but at least one
22 Commissioner said it was of interest to him. The general topic of how can we use our
23 parks to cross-pollinate, if it were, with the arts community. By the way, I'm going to stay
24 to hear about Juanita Salisbury. I think she's doing a great job. Good luck this year,
25 Commissioners. Thank you for your service, and Council Member. I look forward to
26 talking with you all about either basketball or music. Thanks.

27 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. We'll move on to the next item, which is the
28 Department Report.

29 **IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

30 Daren Anderson: Good evening. Daren Anderson with Community Services Department.
31 I just would like to reiterate that warm welcome to our new council liaison, Council
32 Member Lydia Kou. Thanks so much for being here. To our new Parks and Recreation
33 Commissioner, Jackie Olson, we're very glad to have you. If there's anything I can do to
34 support either of you and your roles here, please let me know. Staff strives to support and
35 provide good service to this Commission. I wanted to let you know about a community
36 meeting coming up at Ramos Park. It's scheduled for tomorrow evening from 7:00 p.m. to
37 8:30 p.m. at the Cubberley Community Center, Room A-6. I wanted to let you know about
38 a structure at the Baylands called the tide gate. This structure was built in 1956, and its
39 function was to separate the Bay water from this flood basin area because water was



1 backing up. When high tides met heavy rainfalls, it would flood certain portions. It did in
2 1955, and they built this structure. The structure is near the end of its life now, and Santa
3 Clara Valley Water District is responsible for replacing it. They've been thinking about
4 the design and working on a capital project to replace it. It's coming soon. They're working
5 on, I think, the 30-percent design now. I explained to them in a recent meeting that this
6 would have to come to the Parks and Recreation Commission. It would need a Park
7 Improvement Ordinance, which is required when you make a substantive change in a park
8 or preserve. They understand that. They'll be coming soon to explain more details about
9 it. The next step I think they're planning is a community meeting in March 2020. I'll share
10 that with the Commission and, of course, our other Baylands stakeholders as soon as I get
11 it. It'll be noticed by the Water District. I imagine shortly thereafter they'd be coming to
12 the Commission to discuss it, explain it in more detail and collect your feedback. Shortly
13 after that, I assume it would be a request for your recommendation on a Park Improvement
14 Ordinance that would go to Council for their approval.

15 Commissioner Reckdahl: Can I ask for a clarification?

16 Mr. Anderson: Sure.

17 Commissioner Reckdahl: What was flooding? Parts of the Baylands or ...

18 Mr. Anderson: This is 1955 that the flooding happened. The high tides came in with the
19 rain, and it flooded areas of the residences, not the Baylands itself but ... The confluence
20 of three creeks go into this flood basin, a 622-acre flood basin. You have Matadero, Barron,
21 and Adobe that all come into this same basin. At the time, there was nothing to stop the
22 Bay water from coming in as well. As you had that high tide and heavy rainfall, there was
23 no place for the rain to go.

24 Commissioner Reckdahl: This is just past Byxbee?

25 Commissioner Reckdahl: Yes, that's correct. When we come back, I'll have a full map,
26 and I can walk you through all of it. The Water District will as well. I just wanted to
27 apprise you it's coming. The Pedestrian Bicycle Bridge across 101 project started on
28 January 14. That was the notice to proceed. I don't believe you'll see any construction
29 activity just yet, but it'll be coming soon. Right now, they're working on the behind-the-
30 scenes preparation, and that'll go through July 2021 for that project. The Council Retreat
31 is scheduled for Saturday, February 1, 9:00 a.m. in the El Palo Alto Room at Mitchell Park
32 Community Center. Each year, the City Council reviews its priorities for the year at its
33 annual Council Retreat. A Council priority is defined as a topic that's going to receive
34 significant attention during that year, and typically priorities have a three-year time limit.
35 Although, certain priorities continue beyond that time period.

36 Commissioner Moss: When is that?

1 Mr. Anderson: That is Saturday, February 1st, at 9:00 a.m. at Mitchell Park Community
2 Center in the El Palo Alto Room. I wanted to apprise everyone that the 24th annual Palo
3 Alto Mayor's Tree Planting and Canopy Awards Ceremony is coming up. This is
4 Thursday, January 30th, at 5:15 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This is also at the Mitchell Park
5 Community Center. Each year, Canopy and friends host a party in honor of the Palo Alto
6 new Mayor to kick off the new year, and they plant a tree as well. Everyone's invited. You
7 can RSVP or go online at info@canopy.org to learn more about that. There was an email
8 that came out a little earlier from my colleague, Catherine Bourquin, notifying the
9 Commission that the City Clerk's Office and the City Attorney's Office are working on
10 setting up a Brown Act training. That'll be coming soon. Catherine's email also had
11 information on the Brown Act, good reminders that we're all obliged to follow. Also, your
12 PRC handbook has more information on that as well. That concludes the Department
13 Report.

14 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you.

15 **V. BUSINESS**

16 **1. Election of New Chair and Vice Chair.**

17 Vice Chair Greenfield: The first order of business is to elect a new Chair and Vice Chair.
18 Normally, the previous Chair would be reviewing the Chairperson's role, and staff would
19 be commenting on the procedures for electing the Chair. As the Vice Chair, I will give a
20 quick overview of the Chair's role. The primary role is presiding at meetings and being in
21 charge of applying the rules of conduct of the meeting. The Chair shall call or cancel
22 meetings, coordinate the setting of the agenda with the staff liaison, ensure timely start and
23 end of meetings, work to keep agenda items moving, ensure that public testimony is
24 received but not allowed to disrupt the meeting, and set an acceptable time limit for public
25 input if necessary. The Chair should clarify ideas as they are discussed and repeat motions
26 made in order that all members understand the motion they'll be voting on, responsible for
27 ensuring that actions are properly moved, seconded, and voted upon, and work to see that
28 the Commission maintains focus on the issues before them and doesn't discuss or act upon
29 items not listed on the agenda as prohibited by the Brown Act. The Chair serves as a
30 spokesman for the Commission, representing the views and opinions of the Commission
31 as a whole when speaking on its behalf. The time commitment in general can be similar
32 to other Commission roles, depending on how active Commissioners may be with the ad
33 hoc committees. Certainly some of the ad hoc committees get very deep in the time
34 commitment and are extensive roles similar in commitment to the Chair and/or Vice Chair.
35 Daren, would you like to give us an overview on the procedure?

36 Mr. Anderson: Yes. Thank you. The protocol for the election of the new Chair and Vice
37 Chair. These are both one-year terms. The process is that the Chair would open the floor
38 to nominations for the Chair position. Commissioners would nominate one Commissioner



1 at a time, and the person nominated must be present. A Commissioner may enter their own
2 name in nomination. The person offering the nomination can explain why they've
3 nominated that person, why they feel they'd be appropriate for the position. The Chair will
4 ask the nominated person if they're willing to accept the nomination. The Commission
5 would continue to nominate additional candidates, and with each nomination the Chair
6 again asks the person if they're willing to accept the nomination. When there are no further
7 nominations from the floor, the Chair will ask for a motion to close nominations. Staff's
8 secretary will distribute a single paper ballot to each Commissioner. The names of the
9 nominees are repeated by the staff secretary in the order in which they were nominated.
10 Each Commissioner writes in one name, the person they wish to vote for, and returns that
11 completed ballot to the staff secretary. Staff's secretary will count the votes and read them
12 out loud. The elected Chair assumes responsibility for chairing the remaining portion of
13 the meeting. We'll repeat that same process for the Vice Chair.

14 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Does anyone have any questions? If not, then I'll open
15 the floor for nominations for Chairman.

16 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'd like to nominate Jeff Greenfield for Chair.

17 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Would you like to speak to the nomination?

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: You've been Vice Chair for two years. I think you've done well.
19 You've trained under Don, and it's time for you to move up.

20 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I accept the nomination. Are there any other
21 nominations?

22 Commissioner Cribbs: Could I speak to support the nomination at this point?

23 Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes.

24 Commissioner Cribbs: I agree with Commissioner Reckdahl. You've served well as the
25 Vice Chair. I know you're certainly committed to Palo Alto and to the community, and
26 you spend a ton of time on a lot of issues. I've been very impressed with that. I believe
27 you will serve the whole Commission and present the views of the Commission to other
28 people as you serve as the face of the Parks and Recreation Commission. I would certainly
29 support the motion.

30 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you for your kind words. A last call for additional
31 nominations. I would ask for a motion to close nominations.

32 **Motion to close nominations**

33 Commissioner Reckdahl: I so move.

1 Vice Chair Greenfield: Second?

2 Commissioner Moss: Second.

3 Vice Chair Greenfield: I guess the staff secretary should—do you have any further
4 instructions? Do you need to read the names of the people nominated?

5 Catherine Bourquin: (inaudible)

6 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you.

7 Ms. Bourquin: One for Greenfield from Commissioner Olson. One for Greenfield from
8 LaMere. One from McCauley for Greenfield. One from Commissioner Greenfield for
9 Greenfield. One from Commissioner Reckdahl for Greenfield. One from Commissioner
10 Cribbs for Greenfield. One from Commissioner Moss for Greenfield. Seven for
11 Commissioner Greenfield.

12 **Commissioner Greenfield elected unanimously as Chair.**

13 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I know this is what we were instructed to do, but it seems
14 like there must be a more efficient approach. I appreciate your confidence and look forward
15 to serving the community and the Commission and being a conduit for all the issues that
16 we'd like to discuss. I'm passionate about this work and look forward to working with you.
17 It's really a team effort. I think we've also prided ourselves as being a very flat Commission
18 and really spreading out the work and the credit to all the members. I look forward to
19 continuing working with all of you in a similar vein. We'll now open the nominations for
20 the Vice Chair after I review the roles of the Vice Chair. The general role of the Vice Chair
21 is to assist the Chairperson in responsibilities serving the Commission. This includes
22 serving as the acting Chair when the Chair is not available, whether that be at regular Parks
23 and Recreation Commission meetings or other community events. Also assisting with
24 other tasks as requested by the Chair. In the past, this has included working with staff and
25 the Chair on planning meeting agendas and other matters. This is a practice that I would
26 certainly like to continue as the Chair. Also, providing guidance to the Chair and the
27 Commission as needed, which may also include sitting next to the Chair during meetings
28 and discretely bumping elbows and offering guidance or helping keep me on track as
29 needed. Are there any questions regarding the role of Vice Chair? With that, I'll open the
30 floor to nominations for Vice Chair.

31 Commissioner Reckdahl: I hope she's interested. I'd like to nominate Anne Cribbs. She's
32 been on the Commission for quite a while. You're well thought of on the Commission and
33 the community. I think you'd be a real asset, and I hope that we can do some arm-twisting
34 here.

1 Commissioner Cribbs: Thank you very much. However, I would like to put in a
2 nomination for another person on the Commission. What do we do?

3 Chair Greenfield: The first order is do you accept the nomination?

4 Commissioner Cribbs: I did do that.

5 Chair Greenfield: You have accepted the nomination?

6 Commissioner Cribbs: Yes, I did.

7 Chair Greenfield: The floor's still open for additional nominations.

8 Commissioner Cribbs: I would like to nominate Commissioner McCauley. I have worked
9 with him on several committees, and he has been always just very thoughtful, very
10 inclusive. I think he has a great future in Palo Alto. He always appreciates all the sides of
11 the issues and makes people feel like they're being listened to. I think he would be a great
12 Vice Chair.

13 Chair Greenfield: Commissioner McCauley, do you accept the nomination?

14 Commissioner McCauley: That's very kind of you to say, Anne. Thank you.

15 Commissioner Cribbs: It's all true.

16 Commissioner McCauley: There are not enough good things to say about Anne Cribbs.
17 Will I accept the nomination? I'm inclined, frankly, not to because I would love to see
18 Anne serve as the Vice Chair. I'd also like to see Jeff LaMere serve as the Vice Chair.
19 Anne, I don't know if you'd like to flip a coin or what. I will reluctantly accept, but I
20 wonder if we might be able to take a 30-second break.

21 Chair Greenfield: You're asking to recess for 30 seconds, a brief recess?

22 Commissioner McCauley: Yes.

23 Chair Greenfield: I think we need to vote to agree to recess. If there is any further
24 discussion at this moment, all in favor of a recess? Anyone opposed? We are now in
25 recess.

26 The Commission took a break from 7:24 p.m. to 7:25 p.m.

27 Chair Greenfield: I will now call the meeting back into order. Do we have any further
28 comments from Commissioners regarding the nominations for Vice Chair?

29 Commissioner McCauley: Please. I would like to decline the nomination.

1 Chair Greenfield: Very well. As it stands, we have one nomination for Vice Chair for
2 Anne Cribbs. Do we have any other nominations for Vice Chair? If not, then I'll ask for a
3 motion to close the nomination process.

4 **Motion to close nominations**

5 Commissioner Reckdahl: I so move.

6 Chair Greenfield: A second?

7 Commissioner Moss: I second.

8 Chair Greenfield: We now have closed the nomination process for Vice Chair. We go to
9 our ballots. Daren, with only one nomination, is it necessary to read all the ballots or is it
10 ...

11 Mr. Anderson: I think we should. We'll just go through it quickly.

12 Ms. Bourquin: One for Cribbs from Olson. One for Cribbs from LaMere. One for Cribbs
13 from McCauley. One for Cribbs from Greenfield. One for Cribbs from Reckdahl. One
14 for Cribbs from Cribbs. One from Moss for Cribbs. Seven unanimous.

15 **Commissioner Cribbs elected unanimously as Vice Chair.**

16 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, and congratulations Vice Chair Cribbs.

17 Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you. I look forward to working with you and all the
18 Commissioners. I think we'll have a very good year.

19 Chair Greenfield: Let's move on. The next item is the approval of draft minutes from the
20 December 10, 2019 special Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

21 **2. Approval of Draft Minutes from the December 10, 2019 Special Parks and**
22 **Recreation Commission meeting**

23 Approval of the draft December 10, 2019 Minutes was moved by Commissioner McCauley
24 and seconded by Commissioner LaMere. Passed 6-0 with Commissioner Olson abstaining

25 **3. Presentation on Pollinator Gardens in Palo Alto**

26 Chair Greenfield: We have the next item, which is the presentation on pollinator gardens
27 in Palo Alto.

28 Mr. Anderson: Chair, would you like to introduce our guest or shall I?



1 Chair Greenfield: Please, go ahead.

2 Mr. Anderson: It's my pleasure to introduce Dr. Juanita Salisbury. As background, Juanita
3 has a Ph.D. in biopsychology from the University of Florida as well as a Bachelor of
4 Science in landscape architecture from West Virginia University. In 2009, she established
5 the Juanita Salisbury Landscape Architecture Firm after working for commercial and
6 residential design firms. Recently, she's turned her focus to California native pollinator
7 habits and in 2016 established the Primrose Way Pollinator Garden, the first of five
8 pollinator gardens here in Palo Alto. Her focus is to research and educate about these
9 habitats as well as exploring opportunities to install more of them. I personally would like
10 to acknowledge Dr. Salisbury. She donates a tremendous amount of time to designing and
11 building and maintaining these pollinator gardens. She's incredibly generous with her time
12 and expertise and a true asset to our community and our Department. I'm really grateful
13 for you being here.

14 Juanita Salisbury: Thank you, Daren, for inviting me to come and speak to the Commission
15 tonight. It's a pleasure, really, to do these gardens. It's a real privilege to be able to do
16 them and to talk about them, which I do quite a bit. Without further ado, let's go right into
17 the presentation. Here we have on the first slide our name and a little bit about me. I
18 wanted to also mention that in my area of psychology, I started to study ingestive behavior,
19 the biology and physiology of eating and drinking, and then I moved on to landscape
20 architecture. For many years, I wondered what one had to do with the other. Now that I
21 design and install pollination habitats, pollination is really at the base of the food chain.
22 I'm still studying ingestive behavior, just for insects basically at this point. We also have
23 a social media presence, so we like to keep everybody informed on Facebook and
24 Instagram. Most of those posts are of my microphotography. I go out several times a week
25 to categorize and look at the various insects that are in the gardens. I have years of research
26 of these weekly observations. We have five gardens right now. Our first garden was the
27 Primrose Way Pollinator Garden, which is located very close to my house. This is how I
28 became interested in this space. It was just there waiting for a garden. The second is the
29 Arcadia Place Pollinator Garden, which is located off of Newell Road and Arcadia. The
30 third garden is the Island Drive Pollinator Garden, and that's between Hamilton and
31 Edgewood on Island Drive. The fourth garden is the Guinda Street Pollinator Garden,
32 which is on Embarcadero right across the street from Rinconada Park. The one that we
33 just finished installing is the Hopkins Avenue Pollinator Garden, which is adjacent to the
34 tennis courts behind the new fire station. If you Google pollinator garden palo alto, the
35 gardens pop up on Google Maps, and you can take virtual tours. That's been very helpful
36 to get people to visit the gardens. This is what it looked like back in 2016. This is the
37 Primrose Way site beforehand. As you can see, there are some cherry trees on the left and
38 camphor trees on the right with the sidewalk, Embarcadero Road off to the right, a very
39 busy, noisy street. That space wasn't really doing much of anything. It was just sitting
40 there, and I saw this as an opportunity to really get into planting more native plants and to

1 research some of the effects that native plants have on biological resiliency and habitat
2 function. I approached the Parks and Open Space people and said, "Can I do this? I'm a
3 licensed landscape architect. I will do everything. I will do the fundraising, the
4 maintenance, the site prep, the volunteer coordination, the design." The response was so
5 great and so supportive. They were like, "Show us your design." I did, and they were
6 good. Without further ado, we got started. I set up a Go Fund Me site because I'm not a
7 nonprofit. I'm just an individual. Raising money can be difficult in these days. Go Fund
8 Me is a great way to raise money for an individual. A Palo Alto Know Your Neighbor
9 grant also provided some funding along with some donated mulch and logs from the City
10 as well as an in-kind donation from a local building supply company of boulders. The
11 entire neighborhood where I live came out to plant over a course of several weekends.
12 Now, I know all of my neighbors. I know every last one. Before I was kind of faceless
13 and anonymous in the neighborhood. I would see people, but there was no reason for me
14 to talk to them. Now, people run when they see me coming with plants. The City also
15 added some signage to each of the gardens. This was the first sign, wonderfully designed
16 by a good volunteer that we have. Each of these signs includes more information for
17 people, so they can do some research on their own as well as featuring some photographs
18 of the various insects that we see in the gardens. This is what the Primrose Way Garden
19 looked like in the spring. This garden has over 50 native plant species. It has more annual
20 species than the other four gardens, so it has a different flavor. It's really magical in April,
21 May, and June when these flowers are blooming like crazy. I would encourage the
22 Commission—if you all want a tour of the gardens, I'd be happy to arrange that. They're
23 always open, but it would be nice to take you around and show you the gardens during the
24 height of bloom. I think you'd really like that. That was pretty spectacular, and it was
25 noticed by a lot of people. There's another view looking west, again spring 2019. That
26 was what I called our super bloom last year. Another picture. This garden was also
27 featured on the Going Native garden tour that the California Native Plant Society organizes
28 every year. We had 150 people show up to that. It was just wonderful and really busy the
29 entire day. Everybody loved it. They're always looking for more Palo Alto gardens, so we
30 have some now for them. The City liked the Primrose Way Garden so much that Mark
31 Ribeiro came to me and said, "We just finished doing some maintenance on Arcadia Place,
32 which is a cul-de-sac. Will you design something for us?" I'm like, "Sure, okay." The
33 City provided plantings, and the same year in December we went out and planted it up
34 during a gigantic rainstorm. Beforehand, we did community outreach. I put together a
35 flyer that tells the surrounding houses what we're doing, what the design looks like, and
36 how they can get in touch with me if they have any comments or questions. We didn't
37 really get any feedback, so we took that for approval and went ahead and planted the
38 garden. The picture on the lower right is what it looked like during the spring. There's a
39 mix of annuals and perennials in there and about a dozen different species. Even in that
40 small area, you can really fit in a lot of natives. The third garden, Island Drive, is a spot I
41 had my eye on. After doing the first garden, I started scouting locations, and this one
42 looked particularly juicy. As you can see, the before shot in 2017, about 4,000 square feet



1 of ivy and a nonnative cedar tree. I asked for permission to design something for that.
2 Mark Ribeiro actually said, "You can apply for a grant from the Happy Hollow
3 Foundation's progress for pollinator's grant program." We got the first grant that they ever
4 awarded. The City was very kind in removing the ivy for us and providing mulch, which
5 I'm forever grateful for the ivy removal and to enhance the irrigation there as well. Again,
6 we did the community outreach. We distributed flyers to the surrounding houses, and again
7 not really very much response. When we were out planting with our volunteers, the
8 neighborhood came out. People were walking by, and the great comment was, "I've always
9 wanted this to be a garden." We transformed it for them again all by volunteers. We also
10 maintain that garden. These are some pictures of how the garden has developed over time.
11 The upper right was last spring, just really coming into its own. A little later in the year on
12 the lower left. This garden has more native plant species than all the other gardens. We
13 have over 70 plant species there. Another picture of this garden last spring and summer. I
14 like to go there in the late afternoon, what I call the golden hour, and see what's going on.
15 It's a wonderful, quiet, nice spot. You can also see there's a Happy Hollow sign. They like
16 to promote their pollinator program. The fourth garden, the Guinda Street Garden, is
17 further down. Daren asked me about this, if I was interested. Of course, I said yes. This
18 was a little pie-wedge of ivy across from Rinconada on Embarcadero Road. This spot,
19 according to one of the neighbors, was ivy for over 60 years. We transformed it in a couple
20 of weeks with over 20 native plant species. Again, we did our community outreach and
21 then got a Happy Hollow Foundation grant again. We went out and planted it up. You can
22 see some of the happy volunteers there. This is what it looked like this last spring. Again,
23 the wonderful signage provided by the City of Palo Alto. We've started to line the pathways
24 with these branches to keep people from stepping on plants. This garden's wonderful. The
25 neighborhood actually has come out to me and told me how much they liked it. People are
26 very supportive of this particular garden. They just love it. The last garden, the one that
27 we just installed, is the Hopkins Avenue Pollinator Garden. This garden came about
28 because the woman who lives next to the tennis courts is very interested in transforming
29 this space. I was brought in to see what I could do. Of course, I was very happy to do
30 something. I designed up another planting scheme for this. We did our outreach again to
31 the neighborhood. Still no negative kickback, which was really nice. The City again
32 supplied mulch and was very kind to enhance the irrigation here. I like to irrigate maybe
33 the first year or so. All of the other gardens right now, because it is the rainy season, we've
34 turned off the irrigation. This one will get a little bit more water while it's establishing.
35 Again, we had a bunch of really great volunteers come out and plant this garden. This is
36 what it looks like after, right now. You can't see very much, but there's about 175 plants
37 in here with over 20 different species. Again, a nice quiet spot. Those are our five gardens.
38 I do a lot of public speaking about these gardens now. I speak for the Bay Area Water
39 Supply and Conservation Agency, and I'm happy to always bring photos of the plants and
40 the insect species that I see in our gardens and talk about those. This is a slide that I actually
41 use. Why California native plants? California, as most of you probably know, is a
42 biodiversity hotspot. We have in California one-quarter of all plant species in the United



1 States. That's a lot, almost 8,000 species. Many of them are found nowhere else on the
2 planet. They only occur in California. We have a lot of native pollinators here, about 1,600
3 species of native bees, again more than any other state in the United States, which has about
4 4,000 all total. We have such a huge number of both native plant species and native
5 pollinators because of the diverse ecosystems that we have here in California as well as our
6 number of native bee species. These gardens are super important because pollinator
7 species are declining worldwide, and other insect species are as well. Native plants are one
8 way to combat some of those issues. Again, this is a slide I use in some of my presentations.
9 I like to call this one my photons to protein slide. Plants, as I always say, are the beginning
10 of everything. They are the primary producers of food and the base of the food chain.
11 Energy from the sun is converted by plants into food that is then eaten by insects and other
12 animals. In that middle picture, you can see there's a big fat juicy caterpillar there. That is
13 on a Grendelia camporum at our Arcadia garden. I was very happy to find that caterpillar.
14 Those caterpillars are preferred food for baby birds. They're super easy for the baby birds
15 to swallow because they're soft and juicy. I like to refer to them as bird sausages. Insects
16 provide food for baby birds and other animals. What research is showing us is that gardens
17 with at least 70-percent native plants are required to sustain populations of birds such as
18 chickadees. The reason for that is because native plants are largely eaten by native insects.
19 Nonnative plants are not eaten by our native insects. Any nonnative plant is not going to
20 efficiently and optimally provide food for insects. It becomes an ecological dead end. This
21 is how everything else in the food chain can access the sun's energy through plants. Native
22 plants really solve a number of different issues aside from ecological issues. What I've
23 noticed is that these native plant gardens really enhance and create community around
24 them. Because these gardens change the way that these spaces look, it communicates
25 something about these spaces, that they're engaged carrying people in this environment,
26 which is something that is critically important these days. We care that we live here. We
27 care to see beautiful things. Besides strengthening ecosystem resilience, there's health
28 benefits. There are many opportunities that these gardens provide. They enhance
29 neighborhoods. They become neighborhood amenities. One of the neighbors who lives in
30 the Island Drive neighborhood said he felt like he was in Tahoe by walking through our
31 garden. That was a wonderful compliment. Lots of engagement, lots of educational
32 opportunities. Doing these gardens has increased the proportion of my time that I speak
33 and educate now. I'm moving away from designing for residential things and doing more
34 educational opportunities. I've spoken to a lot of different groups. We do outreach here in
35 the City through the open house that we do here every year. I've spoken to high schools.
36 I also like to provide each neighborhood that has a garden a newsletter, which you all have
37 a copy of that, the first issue of the Pollinator Post, which tells people what we're doing.
38 These things do not occur magically. There are people that are doing this. You can ask us
39 questions, come out and talk to us, explore the other gardens, that kind of thing. I have had
40 so many positive comments from people who live around these gardens. One woman who
41 lives by the Primrose Garden takes her grandson there almost every single day because he
42 wants to see the bugs. It's kind of a wild place for him, and he loves it. He has to go. In



1 this picture, we have the volunteers, me speaking in the lower right corner. I've distributed
2 many seeds that we've collected in these gardens. So many opportunities. There's this
3 large ripple effect that these gardens have in terms of what they provide, what they say,
4 and what they do. I never stop thinking about where is the next garden going to be. Across
5 the street from the Primrose Garden, the people at the First Congregational Church like
6 that garden so much that they installed their own pollinator garden. That strip of land
7 between Embarcadero Road and the sidewalk is about 10 feet wide, filled with ivy. They
8 are very interested in transforming it. After many talks and organizing a couple of different
9 groups, we're working with Grassroots Ecology to get some funding to get rid of the ivy
10 and maybe even some of the concrete to increase the size of that space. That's almost 1,000
11 square feet. That's a lot of land. It would be a simple thing to plant with native plants once
12 the ivy is gone. There is always another space. The gardens also help fulfill the pollinator
13 pathways part of the Master Plan that we have for the City. I'm happy to provide these
14 nodes as well. They enhance so many things. I see so many different species in these
15 gardens that I know they're working. The things that are communicated through our
16 gardens is that not only do we have a lot of species richness, but we have a lot of abundance.
17 That's something that we can leverage to showcase all of the talent that we have in Palo
18 Alto. We have so much talent, and it's an easy task really to plant these gardens. They
19 eventually start taking care of themselves. We go out a few times a week to take a look at
20 them. I like to go out and take a lot of photographs. They're fun plants to me, but they just
21 transform these areas, these neighborhoods in ways that I didn't anticipate. They've all
22 been really great, and I'm so grateful to have the opportunity to take these public pieces of
23 land and make them into something that's beautiful and abundant and full of life. That's
24 my presentation.

25 Chair Greenfield: Thank you for joining us this evening and sharing your success story
26 with us. As you say, it is very much in line with our Master Plan objective of pollinator
27 pathways. It's really an inspiring story of how someone can take the initiative and really
28 work with the community, both with staff and neighbors, and build up neighbors with
29 support. Thank you. We have a couple of comments from the public. Before that, do any
30 Commissioners have any clarifying questions? You'll get a chance to comment afterwards.

31 Vice Chair Cribbs: I would like to say thank you. This is incredible. When I read through
32 the packet today, it just made me smile, made me happy. It's beautiful. Thank you.

33 Ms. Salisbury: It's really a pleasure.

34 Male: (inaudible)

35 Chair Greenfield: The Commissioners will have an opportunity to comment after the
36 public speakers. Mark Weiss followed by Shani Kleinhaus. Three minutes.

1 Mr. Weiss: I just wanted to say I thank Ms. Salisbury for all she did. It's a good example
2 of individuals taking the initiative and trying to either work with local leadership or set a
3 high standard for involvement. We've talked by phone but never met. Thanks for all you
4 do.

5 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Shani.

6 Ms. Kleinhaus: Thank you. Shani Kleinhaus with Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
7 and resident of Palo Alto. Congratulations, Chair Greenfield and Vice Chair Cribbs. This
8 is a beautiful, beautiful work. It's amazing and the most amazing thing is that it serves both
9 the community, bringing people together, and the ecological system that we're losing.
10 They're talking about the insect apocalypse. The birds have crashed by 50 percent in 30
11 years. We know what the result is of interfering so heavily. People prefer often to plant
12 something that doesn't have bug bites. The leaves look pretty. There's no bites in them.
13 When there's no bites in the leaves, that means there's no caterpillars. If there are no
14 caterpillars, there's no food for the birds, and there's no butterflies. We really need to think
15 about the entire food chain, not only the pollinators that are attracted to the mature forms.
16 They're actually looking at how to sustain the pollen and the nectar from the flowers. We
17 really need to look at the entire system including the little caterpillars that were called
18 sausages. I was on the citizen advisory committee for the General Plan Update a couple of
19 years ago. The Sierra Club and Audubon together suggested the idea of pollinator
20 corridors, which is implemented beautifully. I'm really glad to see that there is a start. I
21 was disappointed to see in Ross Road when they did all these updates, they put almost
22 entirely nonnative plants and almost no native plants. If there's any way to change that and
23 make those little islands—they have all sorts of plants there that are like, "Was that the
24 cheapest they could get?" They seem to get cheaper the further south you get on the road.
25 I don't know if there's a way that could still be corrected. The other thing that I wanted to
26 mention is that tomorrow, as staff mentioned, there is a discussion of what to do at Ramos
27 Park, and that is a place that is close to my house. For a long, long time, I was hoping to
28 see a native plant garden there. There's a lot of ivy. There are areas with some other
29 nonnatives that could be replaced. That would be really wonderful if that could be a
30 component. I'd be happy to help in the neighborhood. I think our neighborhood really
31 needs something to bring it together. It's a very diffuse neighborhood, and this would be
32 something that people could aggregate around and feel some kind of identity that is
33 missing. Right now, the thing that puts people together is running the dogs off-leash in the
34 evening, which is okay, but this would be an added value. Maybe you can consider that.
35 Thank you. Thank you for what you do. It's just absolutely wonderful.

36 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Would Commissioners like to comment? We'll start on this
37 end with Commissioner Moss.

1 Commissioner Moss: The last slide that you have, which shows the map, we did that for
2 the Master Plan. Can you show us, when you talk about a pollinator pathway, on the map
3 a grand plan for a pathway? In our parks, do we intend to put some pollinator gardens in
4 corners of existing parks so that there is a pathway?

5 Ms. Salisbury: I looked at this map, and I'm not exactly sure what the—I was not part of
6 how this was developed. What I think would work really well would be to take the parking
7 strips along the streets between the sidewalks and the roads and transform those into
8 habitat. Right now, you see a lot of dead grass, ivy, nonnative plants. The way that we
9 know that pollinators move through the environment—they don't go very far, especially
10 the smaller bees can only travel about 150 feet. You're looking for ways to connect these
11 areas. You're looking for ways that are not separated by 150 feet. If we can do something
12 that's linear in nature, like a parkway strip, that's a good corridor. We have a few of those
13 in town. Not every street has one, but the streets that do have them are perfect candidates
14 for this kind of work and this kind of enhancement. Daren has requested some design input
15 on some places in Rinconada Park, and I'm happy to do those as well. I'm working on a
16 couple of different places in that park right now to design up some native habitat that would
17 work in the Magic Forest area. Also along the chain link fence by the school, there's an
18 area that we've already designed up and has a pollinator habitat already. We're on it.

19 Commissioner Moss: I'm an absolute firm believer in this, and I really appreciate your
20 efforts. I know just on Alma there's a huge strip between the sidewalk and the road. It
21 used to have some plantings. In some places, they're are still there, just north of San
22 Antonio for instance. I hope that we can continue that. I'm a firm believer because for the
23 past 15 years, we've counted birds in the winter. We have a native plant garden with maybe
24 30 species or 40 species. There are birds that come down from the Foothills and birds that
25 come in from the Baylands in the winter and use ours. I'm sure if there were 20 or 30 or
26 40 more gardens like that, it would be a big success.

27 Commissioner Reckdahl: Marvelous. Thank you for all your work. This is really an asset
28 to the community. How much labor is involved? Once they're established, do you have to
29 go in and weed and replant or do you pretty much plant them and they're native and they
30 succeed by themselves?

31 Ms. Salisbury: It really depends on the particular garden and how determined the ivy is to
32 come back. That decreases over time. What we have found in most of the gardens is most
33 of the plants survive very well. There is some initial weeding that takes place, but we do
34 mulch pretty heavily so the weeds come out fairly easily. For example, the Primrose
35 Garden, which has been in place now for almost four years, I go out there maybe once a
36 month with a group of volunteers, and we go after the weeds there. That garden is very
37 wild, and it's mostly an annual plant garden. The Island Drive Garden is also very low
38 maintenance. We try to do a lot of best practices kinds of things. For example, we really

1 try to hold back on pruning and deadheading. Most people say do it during the winter when
2 activity is low, but now we like to wait until the overwintering insects have already
3 emerged, and then we prune. There isn't a ton of work to do in these gardens because I
4 really look at them as habitat gardens, which means hands off except to remove the weeds.
5 Not a ton, but it can add up over time.

6 Commissioner Reckdahl: Which is also good in the sense that if you can do that, then that
7 scales much better. If it's labor intensive, then you're really limited to how far you can
8 spread. Do you usually have annuals that reseed or do you have perennials or what do you
9 usually plant?

10 Ms. Salisbury: The Primrose Garden is the experimental annual spot. Annuals can be
11 unruly children because they like to go everywhere. To try to keep some form and
12 structure, I don't have many annuals in the other gardens. It's mostly perennials, shrubs,
13 and small trees.

14 Commissioner Reckdahl: You mentioned irrigation. What happens if there are some spots,
15 like in the traffic circles, where you don't have irrigation? Do you hand water for that first
16 year or what do you do?

17 Ms. Salisbury: All of these gardens have existing spray irrigation, which is very handy.
18 We try to plant during the rainy season, which is the best time to plant during the year. It
19 is easier to dig holes, and the ground is moist, and the plants establish better. We initially
20 start with some irrigation to get the gardens established, and then we slowly cut it way,
21 way, way, way back.

22 Commissioner Reckdahl: If you found some locations without irrigation, would you have
23 to put irrigation in?

24 Ms. Salisbury: That would be helpful.

25 Commissioner Reckdahl: Like I said, very wonderful. If you're looking for more land,
26 have you been to Byxbee Park? There's a lot of land you could use. We do have some
27 native species there, but there's a lot of open area. Baylands especially, along those walking
28 paths there's so much nonnative there. Around town is probably the biggest bang for the
29 buck. Thanks again. Wonderful.

30 Commissioner McCauley: Dr. Salisbury, thank you very much. This is awesome. I'm not
31 sure whether you intended when you set out—I think the answer is you probably didn't
32 intent when you set out to create such a great community around this, but I view that as
33 probably one of the shining outcomes of this, the way you've built community around it.
34 I'm going to channel Don McDougall for just one second. Anyone who has their ear bent

1 by Don has heard about the idea of physical, social, and natural infrastructure. You hit all
2 three of them with these projects. It's awesome. Well done and please keep it up.

3 Commissioner LaMere: I want to echo the sentiments of my other Commission members.
4 Thank you for doing this. I also compliment the City for allowing this to happen and to
5 happen in a timely fashion. We preach often that we need to find more public-private
6 partnerships. To see something like this happen is great. Hopefully we can get down into
7 south Palo Alto at some point. I know the canopy there is a little bit as well. To be able to
8 get south Palo Alto and have some of these plantings would be wonderful. I would also
9 comment that if—I don't know if there are resources available that you have or can guide
10 people for private property owners that would want to participate in becoming more savvy
11 to the native planting and if that's something as easy as finding the Native Plant Society. I
12 would be interested in your comments about that. I have one question for Daren.

13 Ms. Salisbury: For homeowners who are interested in transforming their backyards and
14 front yards into more habitat-friendly gardens, I do speak for the Bay Area Water Supply
15 and Conservation Agency just on these topics especially. I will be giving a talk later this
16 year. I believe it's in April at Mitchell Park Library on these topics. We'll be talking about
17 rebates for transforming your lawn as well. That's certainly one way to go. One of the
18 really great resources that we have here is the California Native Plant Society. They're a
19 group of such dedicated professionals who are always advancing the cause and the science
20 of these things. Those are a couple of places to start certainly.

21 Commissioner LaMere: Thank you so much. Daren, in terms of when we do plantings,
22 we had a speaker mention the Ross Road and the nonnative plants planted there. What's
23 our process of choosing what to plant and how much do we consider that we need native
24 plants here? Is there a thought with that?

25 Mr. Anderson: It's a good question. I think it's evolving. When we look at open space and
26 park areas, it leans very, very heavily, in some areas 100 percent, native plants. Four our
27 4,000 acres of open space, nothing gets planted but native plants. They're grown in our
28 own nurseries both by Save the Bay down at the Baylands and Grassroots Ecology up at
29 Foothills Park. In the urban park areas, it's a mix. We do have some that aren't native, but
30 none that are invasive. For other projects led by either Transportation, sometimes it's a
31 little less leaning towards those native varieties. I think we're working to change that.
32 Maybe Peter Jensen can speak to this a little bit later during his presentation, just a little bit
33 about new documents that are coming out to give more guidance on what should be planted.
34 Certainly, native plants are going to be the dominant one we lean on. The same for our
35 tree species, always dominant with the native oaks.

36 Commissioner Olson: Dr. Salisbury, thank you for your labor of love. This is clearly
37 something coming from your heart. It's so beautifully done. I'm really grateful for that.
38 Piggybacking on the last Commissioner's comment, when you design the gardens here, are

1 the designs then open sourced on the park site or somewhere where the public can access
2 them? If they have a similarly shaped plot of land, they can take advantage of your design
3 to put in their own homes?

4 Ms. Salisbury: All of the gardens are open all the time. We try to get as many labels as
5 possible on the plants so that people can try to replicate what we do. I'm always looking
6 for ways to educate people on how to do this. It's really not that difficult a process. We
7 know how to enhance resources for pollinators. We know what the best practices are to
8 protect insects. I'm always looking for ways to encourage people to look at the science. I
9 do post quite frequently science on our social media so that people can follow us there.
10 There's still nothing like the physical garden to go and see. I'm happy to give people tours
11 all the time and talk to them about how to do that. It's become my mission in life.

12 Commissioner Olson: Thank you again. It really is something that's not just practical and
13 fixes a problem; it's also beautiful. Thank you again.

14 Chair Greenfield: Building on some of the comments of fellow Commissioners, I really
15 think this is a great example of a local grassroots effort to both build community and
16 transfer the community at the same time. It's really inspiring. One of the first things I
17 thought about as well as others was the potential synergy with the bulb-outs from some of
18 the traffic calming measures. It is disconcerting to hear that there weren't natives put in
19 there. Hopefully we can work more towards that. Daren, is that more under the Urban
20 Forestry Department and could some of potential synergies between the Commission and
21 the Urban Forestry Department assist in this effort?

22 Mr. Anderson: I think there's an element of that where it has specific programs. We also
23 have it in the Parks Master Plan. We'll have it in the Baylands Comprehensive
24 Conservation Plan. We've got the plans there. I think it's getting the message through to
25 the contracted design firms and architects that we want native species.

26 Chair Greenfield: It sounds like we're really trying to transform our culture a bit. I
27 appreciate the comments to look to build more towards south Palo Alto as well. I know the
28 planting strips are a perfect avenue. Unfortunately, we don't have planting strips typically
29 in south Palo Alto. I'm wondering what other potential conduits you may be able to suggest
30 for neighborhoods that don't have the planting strips.

31 Ms. Salisbury: What we have found are any sort of scrap pieces of land work. Parking
32 lots where there are perhaps some islands planted with nonnative plants are one thing. Cul-
33 de-sac islands are another avenue as well. Any sort of small strip of land can be planted
34 with some kind of native plant. There's always a plant that will fit. With 8,000 to choose
35 from, there's always a plant that will work.

1 Chair Greenfield: Is there anything that the Commission can do specifically to assist this
2 effort?

3 Ms. Salisbury: If there are other areas that are lying fallow and that could be enhanced,
4 I'm happy to apply my design expertise. One of the things that really could be a very easy
5 thing to do is to remove as much ivy as possible. It's not so much the planting that's hard;
6 it's site preparation. Once the ivy is gone, planting becomes the icing on the cake. It's
7 pretty easy.

8 Chair Greenfield: Thank you again for your efforts. Council Member Kou, do you have
9 any comments?

10 Council Member Kou: Thank you very much. It was a beautiful presentation. I think the
11 bugs were really great to see. I wanted to ask Daren if you happen to know—like in Barron
12 Park, where we have Matadero Creek, parts of it belong maybe to the County or to Santa
13 Clara Valley Water. Do we have any understanding with them in using those pieces of
14 land? It's filled with ivy. It's crawling up the trees. It would be lovely to have a nature
15 garden over there.

16 Mr. Anderson: That's an excellent suggestion.

17 Council Member Kou: I don't know if we have any coordination with them.

18 Mr. Anderson: What we've done in the past, not on such a grand scale but rather small
19 sections of creek areas, not specifically in that spot but along San Francisquito Creek and
20 a few other areas, Grassroots Ecology has said, "We'd love to come in, and we'd like to
21 restore this." We've got some success stories that looked really good. Now, it's just a
22 matter of scaling it. A key piece that Dr. Salisbury is underselling is her incredible
23 perseverance and gift to the City of sustaining it. I've been part of a lot of native plantings
24 from groups that come in. You can restore an area. In about a year, unless you don't do
25 anything to it, unless you keep coming back and taking care of it, it'll quickly revert to
26 invasive weeds. I've seen that for the last 20 years here in Palo Alto. It takes that sustained
27 effort from really caring volunteers. The way Dr. Salisbury is building this, where a
28 neighborhood adopts it, that's the same methodology we try to do in open space when we
29 restore it. That's the same thing I'd recommend when we do those creeks, that we engage
30 the community to say, "This is your patch of the creek. You have to come year after year
31 and care for it and love it."

32 Council Member Kou: That sounds great. Thank you so much for your service. Some of
33 the neighborhood associations might be the way to go in getting them to participate and to
34 take over the maintenance of it. Thank you again.

35 Chair Greenfield: Thank you again. Commissioner Moss.

1 Commissioner Moss: The signage that you put out is so important for what Commissioners
2 LaMere and Olson said about being able to see what plants you could bring home to your
3 own house and also how they were arranged in a nice design. Some are bigger, and you
4 don't want them up close. Signage is really important in the places that you do it. I'm so
5 glad that you're doing that kind of thing. Just keep it up. A lot of these native plants have
6 their own weed suppression chemicals so that you have a lot of maintenance, but not as
7 much as with nonnatives. It's really important to let people know maybe with signage that
8 it is a great way to do something without as many weeds as otherwise. There are many
9 churches in the neighborhood, like the Unitarian Church on Charleston has a native plant
10 garden. Now that you're telling me about this, I noticed in my mind that they've got a nice
11 garden. If all the churches in the City had a patch, that would be great. Going back to what
12 Councilwoman Kou said, if you can get the churches to own their plots, that's a great
13 community-builder.

14 Chair Greenfield: We'll now move on to our next item, which is the North Ventura
15 Coordinated Area Plan and Matadero Creek Study Update. Daren, I'll let you introduce
16 our speakers

17 **4. North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan and Matadero Creek Study Update**

18 Mr. Anderson: It's my pleasure to introduce Rachel Tanner, Assistant Director for Planning
19 and Community Environment. With her is her consultant, Ben, from WRA.

20 Rachel Tanner: Good evening, members of the Park and Rec Commission. It's great to be
21 before you this evening to talk about the North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan. As Daren
22 said, I am the Assistant Director of the Planning and Development Services Department.
23 Due to some staff departures, I'm also project managing the North Ventura Coordinated
24 Area Plan. It's a pleasure to be here tonight and to share with you an update, maybe an
25 introduction for some of you. If you haven't been tracking the planning process, that's
26 okay. I'll provide an overview of where we are right now, a little bit about what we have
27 planned for open space in the plan area. Ben's going to provide more detail about Matadero
28 Creek and how we've been researching what might be able to happen with the creek
29 resources. This is a map of the project area, where the NVCAP is taking place. It's bounded
30 by Page Mill, El Camino Real, Park Boulevard/Caltrain, and then also Lambert Avenue.
31 Just outside of the boundaries of this particular 60-acre area are Boulware Park and the
32 newly purchased AT&T parcel, as we call it. Sarah Wallis Park is about an 8-minute walk
33 away from the plan area. Peers Park is about 25 minutes walking, and Hoover Park is about
34 30 minutes because you have to get over the Caltrain track. If we were birds, we could get
35 there a little quicker, but we can't. Of course, the Research Park is southwest of the plan
36 area, and Cal. Ave. is just a few blocks away, an area that many are familiar with and
37 perhaps most famously known for the former Fry's building. Fry's, of course, closed at the
38 end of last year, another well-known landmark there. Background on the North Ventura



1 Coordinated Area planning process. This process began in November of 2017 when the
2 Council adopted a resolution expressing commitment to this project, and we pursued grant
3 funds to support the project, a Caltrans grant that's supported by the Federal Highway
4 Administration. We were successful in achieving and being awarded those grant funds. In
5 March 2018, the City Council approved goals, objectives, milestones, and plan boundaries
6 and formed a working group. We have a 14-member working group that is seated by
7 members of the community, includes a member from the Architectural Review Board, a
8 member from the Planning and Transportation Commission. Keith Reckdahl serves on it
9 from your Commission. We're very glad to have him participating in the discussions as
10 well as folks who live in the plan area, folks who own property and are a small and a larger
11 developer. Really trying to get a diverse section of people who together can envision the
12 area but also folks who have a real stake in the future of the area. That group has been
13 meeting since April 2018, when they were formed and appointed by the Council. In June
14 2018, we selected our consultant, Perkins + Will, who had the lead on helping design the
15 plan. In October 2018, we kicked off the project and have had a variety of stakeholder
16 meetings, a community workshop, a joint Town Hall with City Council, and in total 11
17 working group meetings from October 2018 until January 2020. These are the project
18 goals. There are seven of them that Council adopted when they accepted that we were
19 going to do this plan, formed the plan boundaries, and charged us to go ahead and look at
20 contracting with a consultant. They include housing and mixed use, transit, pedestrian and
21 bicycle connections in the plan area, connecting the street grid, ensuring that we have
22 community facilities and infrastructure in the new plan area, that we balance the different
23 community interests in the plan area. We consider urban design, design guidelines, and
24 the neighborhood fabric as well as sustainability and the environment. They also adopted
25 project objectives. In the interest of time, I won't read them all, but we'll ensure that you
26 all have access if that's something you'd like to go deeper into. We have our consultant,
27 Perkins + Will. At the end of December, they presented us with three project alternatives.
28 Just a little insight into how we're seeing this process unfold. We want to create three draft
29 plan alternatives that each look at different aspects of what could the future of this
30 neighborhood look like as it unfolds over the next 10, 20 years. We plan to study these
31 three alternatives so we can compare them against one another. What are the benefits of
32 approach 1 versus approach 2 versus approach 3? We can refine them with the hope being
33 that we get to one preferred alternative that we can present to City Council, have their
34 feedback and ultimately buy-in in saying, "This is the preferred alternative that we'd like
35 to move forward with," and then draft an area plan that brings that preferred alternative
36 into our City's Planning Code. Part of the planning process includes ensuring that we are
37 planning for adequate open space and really abundant open space. One of the things that
38 has emerged from the working group that I think is a strongly held and widely shared value
39 is the value of open space, having access to it, making sure that as more neighbors and
40 more residents are accommodated there is adequate open space, and not just for the folks
41 who live there but maybe folks in the neighborhood who are going to be coming to the
42 open spaces here, visitors, workers, people commuting through, that there are gathering



1 spaces as well as active and passive recreational spaces. The consultants have
2 recommended three types of open space. One is called centralized, which is essentially
3 what you might think of as a typical park, a larger open space that's gathered together,
4 providing more ample room to move around. Green ways, which I'm very glad I was here
5 for Dr. Salisbury's presentation, ways that we're connecting so that we don't just have
6 sidewalks that are nice but really are providing connection to open space, connection to
7 nature as we're walking through the neighborhood. Lastly, green roofs and courtyards.
8 Ensuring that if there may be privately owned but publicly accessibly open space, maybe
9 there are plazas that have some green amenities. Maybe they're rooftop gardens. Some of
10 those may be open to the public. Some of those may be open only to the residents there,
11 but again ensuring that balance and mix of private open space for residents and publicly
12 accessible open space. These diagrams show the open space throughout the three proposed
13 alternatives, the draft alternatives. As the development is increasing, the amount of open
14 space is also increasing for each alternative. You can see the green popping up on rooftops.
15 A lot of it is centered around the creek, which is one of the reasons we have a creek study
16 going on. We see that as an asset and how can we turn Matadero Creek into an asset for
17 the neighborhood, for the entire City of Palo Alto. Right now, it's channelized, it's forced
18 out of its natural pattern, and what can we do to restore some of the natural creek elements.
19 The Matadero Creek study, we have gotten a lot of interest from City Council as well as
20 from the working group in studying it, which led us to consult with WRA to study creek
21 naturalization. The analysis that they're performing, we understand it to be answering the
22 question, what will it take to naturalize the creek under three levels of intensity. One would
23 be a full naturalization. If we were going to roll back the development and say, "Let's take
24 the creek back to how it naturally wants to flow," what would that look like? What if we
25 were able to do it partially? What would some partial naturalization look like? What would
26 that take? Finally, if we were going to stay within the easement area that surrounds the
27 creek, what would that take? That's the minimal naturalization scenario. Ben is going to
28 talk about all three of these scenarios tonight. One thing that's important to say is that there
29 are certainly many folks who would like to see the creek become fully naturalized. Ben is
30 researching what that would take from an engineering perspective. What are the technical
31 specifications that are required? And giving us some high-level cost estimates for
32 construction. That doesn't include permitting, and that doesn't include the cost for design
33 and some other elements that would be pretty costly as well. There are other costs, the
34 opportunity costs of naturalizing the creek. If we were, for example, to choose the most
35 fully natural option, that would limit the ability to have housing on what's currently 340
36 Portage, the Fry's site, because a lot of what's currently the parking lot would become the
37 creek. Likewise, if naturalization were to occur on parts of the park, that could basically
38 take away all the parkland or even what's conceived as open space in some of the diagrams.
39 The space for passive or active recreation gets traded off for the naturalization of the creek.
40 Furthermore, the Santa Clara Valley Water District has an easement for the creek, but they
41 don't actually own the land through which the creek flows. This creek is crisscrossing
42 privately held land and also crisscrossing through Boulware Park and the soon-to-be-added



1 extension of Boulware Park, which is publicly owned land. Again, that tradeoff. These
2 are things that we have to consider, that it would take not just money and not just effort,
3 but it would take the purchase of private land. It would take negotiating those purchases,
4 and it would take us saying we believe we want to naturalize versus maybe pursue some
5 of the other opportunities that these parcels present. Those are things that we're hoping to
6 get your feedback on this evening, how you see some of those tradeoffs, questions you
7 might have regarding the creek as well as comments on the open space, where you see
8 opportunities to do something innovative with the open space in the plan area, both along
9 the creek and in other parts of it. With that, I'm going to turn it over to Ben Snyder from
10 WRA. He is our engineer and project manager. He has 15 years of experience working
11 on projects like these. He's worked in neighboring communities like Hillsboro. He even
12 did a project here in Palo Alto on our own San Francisquito Creek and has also worked in
13 Corte Madera and Concord. Lots of experience in the Bay Area.

14 Ben Snyder: Thanks, Rachel. Again, my name's Ben Snyder. I'm grateful to have the
15 opportunity to speak with you today and tell you about the work we've been doing on
16 studying Matadero Creek and looking at what's possible in this short reach of the creek,
17 mostly downstream of El Camino Real and upstream of Park Boulevard. In my brief
18 presentation this evening, I'll give you a brief update on what we've done since November
19 and a little bit of discussion about the outcomes of our planning process. We've held two
20 working group meetings with the NVCAP working group as well as a charette to get input
21 from the public and from the NVCAP working group on what the public really wants to
22 see done with Matadero Creek so we can focus our efforts on developing these conceptual
23 designs. I'll give you a discussion of the different alternatives that we've developed and
24 provide you with some of the results of our hydraulic modeling and finally our cost
25 estimates. We're making pretty good progress on our project and our study now. The
26 planning is about 100 percent complete. We have a really good definition of what the
27 problems, opportunities, objectives, and constraints are for Matadero Creek, at least for
28 this little reach. We visited the site and performed a site assessment using data that was
29 provided by the City of Palo Alto and by Valley Water related to Matadero Creek, including
30 as-built drawings of the creek and a hydraulic model developed for the Federal Emergency
31 Management Agency to define the 100-year floodplain. We've defined the alternatives
32 now. We've developed an alternative that was basically a no-option alternative, an
33 alternative that has a minimum amount of footprint, and then two middle-of-the-road
34 alternatives, and then finally the full naturalization, which I'll go over in a minute. We've
35 been performing hydraulic modeling of each one of these concepts to evaluate what the
36 impact on the 100-year flood would be by changing the geometry of the channel and
37 introducing native vegetation and these things that make a creek natural but also make it
38 very rough and make it not as good of a conveyance for flood flows because we want to
39 balance these competing interests of naturalization and habitat value with the need for flood
40 risk management. We're in the process of incorporating feedback from the City on the
41 designs into conceptual drawings. Finally, we're documenting the work we've done with

1 an analysis and costs to have a memo to provide to the City. Alternative 1 is the minimum
2 extent project with still having some re-naturalization effort. This would work within the
3 boundaries of the current Santa Clara Valley Water District easement, which is roughly 60
4 feet wide. This would extend from Lambert Bridge to the Park Boulevard Bridge. Here
5 you have a plan view of this section of the creek. This is rotated 90 degrees from north.
6 This would have a channel that's widened from 30 feet to 60 feet. The concrete walls would
7 be replaced with a sheet pile wall. The extra width would allow planting of native
8 vegetation and incorporation of recreational access. We could have walking paths through
9 this reach of the creek. There will be a considerable improvement in the value of this reach
10 of the creek from the existing condition, which is simply a rectangular concrete channel.
11 We could at least re-naturalize the bed of Matadero Creek and create a connection between
12 the community and the creek for this reach. Here's a section view of alternative 1. The
13 existing section is shown in a dashed line. The proposed view is overlaid on top of that.
14 As you can see, we're essentially doubling the width and increasing the amount of space
15 available for planting native vegetation and allowing public access. Flood walls would be
16 required on the top of the cross-section. Flood walls higher than the existing top of bank
17 would need to be constructed to mitigate impacts to flood risk by incorporating these
18 additional roughness elements of trees and shrubs and their vegetation. Alternative 2
19 would work in the reach of creek from Lambert Bridge to Park Boulevard through the 340
20 Portage property. This would widen the bed the same amount, but then also lay back the
21 left bank if you're facing downstream at a 3:1 horizontal to vertical slope. This would add
22 additional space for planting and beautification of the space and allow for greater public
23 access. Alternative 2, you can see the plan view here, essentially the same footprint as
24 alternative 1 but with additional real estate being taken on the left bank to allow for the
25 additional slope, where it's laid back. There would still be access for maintenance vehicles.
26 One of the things that we learned from communicating with Valley Water was some of the
27 requirements that they would have if we were to do any kind of project here. All of these
28 alternatives would be meeting the requirements of Valley Water. One of those is continued
29 access for maintenance to the creek. Another is no increase in flood risk and no increased
30 cost to Valley Water for maintenance. Here's a section view of alternative 2. You can see
31 it's similar to alternative 1 but with additional space with the left bank being laid back.
32 Alternative 2A would be essentially the same as concept 2 but would also include an
33 additional reach upstream in Boulware Park. What we're doing is expanding the re-
34 naturalized creek into the park with essentially the same cross-section geometry as
35 downstream in 340 Portage but an additional approximately 500 feet of creek adjacent to
36 the park. People in the park could then walk down into the creek corridor underneath
37 Lambert Bridge and down to the 340 Portage site and connect over to Park Boulevard.
38 There would be a recreational corridor that connects the park to the other part of the City.
39 Alternative 3 is the full re-naturalization or at least as fully re-naturalized as can be in the
40 urban-constrained site that Matadero Creek currently is in. We think this is probably the
41 maximum amount of ecological value that could be provided to the corridor by taking this
42 approach. This would also have vertical walls to maximize the amount of space available



1 for a natural creek function and vegetation. It'd be roughly 3.5 times the existing width, a
2 little over 100 feet wide. This would have a meandering low-flow channel going from
3 bank to bank within this corridor. A large part of the undertaking with alternative 3 would
4 be replacing the Lambert Bridge with a completely new span that would allow the creek to
5 meander through the bridge and not be constrained by the relatively narrow, roughly 30-
6 foot width. This would require a significant investment in real estate because this would
7 be well outside the easement that Valley Water currently has. Here's a plan view for
8 alternative 3, showing the additional footprint of re-naturalization area. Here's a section
9 view. It's kind of similar in geometry to alternative 1, but now it's much wider. We're
10 giving the creek lots of room to meander back and forth within this corridor and function
11 the way that creeks function. This is a longitudinal profile view of model output showing
12 the difference in 100-year backwater profile for existing conditions compared to the design
13 conditions. The filled-in blue area is existing, and the line above it between Park Boulevard
14 and Lambert Avenue is the design condition. You can see that the water surface elevation
15 is higher. This is the increase in water surface elevation that would be mitigated with
16 raising the flood walls. This would be required as far upstream as El Camino Real, along
17 that reach, for any one of the alternatives.

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: Can you say that again? What's required up to El Camino?

19 Mr. Snyder: Flood walls on top of the channel bank, approximately 2 feet in height. These
20 flood walls could be somewhat recreational in form and function, meaning they could be a
21 place for people to sit in addition to providing this flood risk mitigation. I don't want you
22 to picture a 10-foot-high border wall.

23 Commissioner Reckdahl: When you go west of the park, isn't that a culvert? At the Boston
24 Market, doesn't it go under the parking lot? Upstream of the park.

25 Mr. Snyder: Yes. It's essentially a long box culvert upstream.

26 Commissioner Reckdahl: Would that have to be touched at all or just everything up to that
27 point?

28 Mr. Snyder: Up to that point. Based on each one of these designs, we've gone through line
29 by line and looked at what the costs for implementation would be, starting with an analysis
30 of the quantities of work materials required for each one of them, demolishing the existing
31 channel, hauling off concrete, doing earthwork to widen the channel, and then installing
32 the new project elements, in order to come up with what these totals would be. Alternative
33 1 is the least expensive because it has the least amount of earthwork and requires no real
34 estate acquisition. We estimate this could be done for under \$4 million. Alternative 2
35 would require acquisition of part of the 340 Portage parcel and with real estate in this area
36 valued at \$10 million an acre, that adds significantly to the cost of this project as well as
37 the additional earthwork of laying back the left bank. The alternative 2 estimate is about

1 \$7.4 million. Alternative 2A with the same approach but with an additional 500 feet
2 through the park upstream would be about \$10 million. Alternative 3 including the rather
3 expensive improvement and widening of the Lambert Avenue Bridge would be in the
4 vicinity of \$45 million. As Rachel mentioned, these costs don't include design, permitting
5 or construction management, but they do include a 25-percent contingency.

6 Ms. Tanner: That is the conclusion of our presentation. Next steps are we're hoping to get
7 feedback from this Commission this evening. We'll also be having a community workshop
8 on February 27, 2020 around the overall NVCAP plan. We hope to begin public hearings,
9 taking it to the Planning and Transportation Commission, the Architectural Review Board
10 and then also to the City Council this spring. We're available for questions.

11 Chair Greenfield: Thank you for your presentation. We have a couple of public speakers.
12 Do any Commissioners have any clarifying questions before we go to the public
13 comments? I do have one question. The construction costs which you were just itemizing
14 for us, do those not include land purchase costs as well? If it's necessary to purchase
15 property, that is not included in the construction cost estimate?

16 Mr. Snyder: These do include real estate acquisition.

17 Chair Greenfield: They do include real estate acquisition.

18 Mr. Snyder: That was assuming \$10 million an acre.

19 Chair Greenfield: Our first speaker will be Shani Kleinhaus followed by Ken Joye.

20 Ms. Kleinhaus: Good evening. Shani Kleinhaus from Audubon again. I did not participate
21 in the meeting, but some of our members did. I can see the results. They did a good job.
22 In Cupertino, Stevens Creek in the area of Blackberry Farm and what they call the
23 Stocklmeir property was in a similar condition. Some of it was very urban; some of it was
24 still orchards. They did a beautiful restoration project there, which is the gem of Cupertino.
25 That project was paid for primarily from Prop 68 and the Water District. Don't let the
26 numbers scare you. The money is available for things like this. It really is. Go for the
27 maximum you can get here. Do the restoration. It will serve people. We get buildings
28 that will be a little higher to provide a little more space. I think the City will be open to
29 that. If we want more housing, maybe we do another story and provide some really good
30 ecological value to the community. Sports fields and things can even go on the roof. There
31 are things we can put that don't require the land. You can't put a creek somewhere else.
32 Go for the max. Look at what they've done to Blackberry Farm, and it'll give you an idea
33 of what can be done here. Maybe it is a little less restricted there. Any lengthy place that
34 creates that continuity should be the continuity for the pollinators, for the birds. Even if
35 you have a flood wall, plant the trees behind the flood wall. Make sure we have continuity

1 for the birds and the bugs everywhere that we can create it. Always try to think, "Where
2 can I put a few oak trees, some native plant gardens?" Nature trumps everything else.

3 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Ken Joye.

4 Ken Joye: Thank you for coming tonight. I have a couple of questions. I picked up a
5 handout on the table that's dated December 5, NVCAP working group meeting that is
6 similar to the slide you showed but not exactly the same. There's a page in this that shows
7 the various cross-sections next to each other, which is very useful. I don't know where on
8 the map those cross-sections would be shown. It would be great if you could give people
9 an idea of where that cross-section appears on the map. The numbers you gave on your
10 construction cost estimates, you talked about how many dollars it would be. You didn't
11 specifically say how many acres of land would be taken under each of those scenarios.
12 When I look at alternative 3, I see that there's land on both sides of the creek. How many
13 property owners are affected and what proportion of each of their parcels is affected by
14 eminent domain for alternative 3? I agree it's very attractive to consider that. What's the
15 real implication there?

16 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Comments from Commissioners.

17 Commissioner Olson: I have various thoughts. On designs 2, 2A and 3 where that
18 widening looks like the first drawing, but there's this angled area. Is that the difference?
19 It's not a walking path; it's more a slope.

20 Mr. Snyder: Yes, and that slope will have a path that goes up from the creek to allow
21 recreational access into the creek and ornamental plantings along the slope.

22 Commissioner Olson: Before and after this project, there's no going along the creek. You
23 literally can come down and out. How long is that stretch when you're coming down and
24 then going back out? I'm trying to get a sense is this a 2-minute or a 15-minute stroll.

25 Mr. Snyder: I think it's about 1,000 feet.

26 Ms. Tanner: Is that within the project area and the park stretch? If you start at the park
27 and end at Park Boulevard, do you know approximately how long that walk would be in
28 feet?

29 Mr. Snyder: I believe total that would be roughly a third of a mile, 10 minutes or
30 something.

31 Ms. Tanner: It is a relatively small stretch of creek that we would be addressing.

1 Commissioner LaMere: Is there creek restoration built in? Do we need to restore the creek
2 as we're doing this and that is built into the price as well? When we looked at Buckeye
3 Creek, for example, the cost to restore it is very expensive.

4 Mr. Snyder: That's included in the price.

5 Commissioner LaMere: Do we have funding sources already identified with this project
6 or how do we go about that?

7 Ms. Tanner: We are certainly open to looking at grant sources. The particular intent of
8 this project was to see what's feasible and to include some level of creek restoration in the
9 project plan. It could be that this becomes a community benefit. As developers build
10 housing or other uses in the area, there may be an impact fee or something that could go
11 towards restoration. There has been discussion of maybe we could do some type of benefit
12 district so that there are funds generated within the district that go into this particular use.
13 As the speaker said and as we know from other creek projects, there are funds available
14 that we could be competitive for if we did go from a conceptual design to a more refined
15 design. That could be funded hopefully with some grant dollars.

16 Commissioner LaMere: With projects such as these, what are some of the maintenance
17 costs or maintenance that needs to be done?

18 Mr. Snyder: Each year, some of the vegetation would likely need to be cut and thinned so
19 that it doesn't completely reduce the flood conveyance capacity of the channel. That's
20 probably a hand crew working for maybe a week once a year.

21 Commissioner LaMere: In terms of properties that are taken, how many residential
22 properties are impacted and what other properties are impacted with it?

23 Mr. Snyder: The property is upstream of Lambert. It's all City-owned property, the park
24 and the newly acquired parcel. Downstream of Lambert is primarily the 340 Portage
25 parking lot. There are some other parcels on the right bank that are commercial properties.
26 There's one right downstream of Lambert Avenue on the left bank, if you're facing
27 downstream. I don't know the disposition of that property. It may be a small office
28 building. That could be avoided by shifting over to the right side and maintain that same
29 corridor width but avoid that one parcel.

30 Commissioner McCauley: Thanks very much for the presentation. You have a bunch of
31 different and difficult tradeoffs to think about. Your job is not easy here. Rachel, maybe
32 you could speak to the broader planning process for the North Ventura area and whether
33 or not any of these creek restoration projects are necessarily coupled with the broader
34 planning process or if there is the opportunity for this to happen even if some of the other
35 goals for NVCAP don't happen.

1 Ms. Tanner: They're parallel projects. They don't necessarily need to be coupled. The
2 nature of the long-range plan is to set out our vision for how this area might develop over
3 the next decade or two. It is by nature a slow-moving, "to become enacted." This creek
4 project, due to the relatively short stretch of creek and if funds were available, perhaps
5 could happen at a different time. There's a strong connection around how any kind of
6 proposed plan we might choose would impact the private properties and what can happen
7 on those. Where we see these projects dovetailing is deciding what level of restoration
8 would we want to pursue. Funds could be raised for that level restoration, and other parts
9 of the plan could settle around it. The way open space has been developing in the vision
10 for this plan is centered around the creek as being this asset that we want to connect people
11 to. An idea has come to try to have more small-scale retail along Portage, almost like a
12 small main street of the area that leads to this creek and park. That's been important to the
13 working group and something that we have consensus around. Alternative 1, although
14 modest in its ecological benefits, uses the available easement that will be maintained and
15 helps to balance those tradeoffs.

16 Commissioner McCauley: Did you want to receive some feedback from us this evening
17 on the different alternatives?

18 Ms. Tanner: That would be great, yes. We want to understand what your perspectives,
19 questions or concerns might be.

20 Commissioner McCauley: All of these alternatives, 1-3 including 2A, provide pedestrian
21 and bike access, which is really important. Further naturalization of the space as well as
22 having that pedestrian/bike path is critical. As I look at the other alternatives, it would be
23 wonderful to have the added elements that each alternative provides, but I'm not sure that
24 the marginal gain is worth it. Going from 60 to 85 feet is a pretty significant addition.
25 Certainly the costs and other issues you've identified with alternative 3 would seem to make
26 it very difficult. It doesn't seem like it would be the most pragmatic alternative from my
27 perspective. I would love it if we could do that, but I don't know that we would be able to.
28 2A would be very cool if it were feasible. 2A is extending this naturalization of the creek
29 up to Boulware Park. I'd be interested in hearing from Peter about how that would impact
30 the park and the amenities and resources within the park. That would seem to be the most
31 natural way to make it a cohesive, continuous space that is longer than a football field.
32 Having that third-mile connection that continues through the park would be the preferred
33 alternative from my perspective. That would be 2A. To clarify slightly, 2A but perhaps
34 you would consider alternative 1 all the way through the park.

35 Ms. Tanner: I believe there is a way to extend alternative 1 through the park, which takes
36 recreation space but has a connection to the creek. I think we looked at that earlier.

37 Commissioner Olson: If that were the case, would there be any eminent domain of people's
38 homes?

1 Ms. Tanner: I think we would cross over Lambert and the park, so we wouldn't need to
2 take any real estate from any of the private properties if we were to extend alternative 1A
3 through Boulware Park and the extension of Boulware Park. That's staying within the
4 current easement of the creek for alternative 1.

5 Commissioner Moss: The two examples that I know of in the neighborhood are Stevens
6 Creek between El Camino and 101. That is quite an extensive path down at the river level.
7 I don't know how they close it at high water, but we'll have the same situation. Do we let
8 people in there when there's high water? How do we keep people out? How do we prevent
9 people from getting washed under Alma? What do we think about that?

10 Ms. Tanner: It's certainly an issue. I'm not sure if you're familiar with other ways that the
11 Water District handles access at challenging times, if we'd close access with a fence or
12 gate.

13 Ms. Snyder: An example comes to mind from the Valley Water portfolio, and that's the
14 Guadalupe River Trail, which runs through San Jose. There are several places along there
15 where it passes underneath overcrossings that would be inundated during a flood event. I
16 don't recall seeing any signage in those areas even during flood events. I don't know that
17 there is an existing Valley Water protocol for addressing public access. It could be part of
18 the operations and maintenance plan for this project, should it go forward, to have signage
19 displayed at least during storm events and potentially year-round letting people know of
20 the dangers.

21 Commissioner Moss: The second place is between Wilkie and Mountain View and
22 Monroe. There is a pedestrian and bike bridge cantilevered over the top of the channel. Is
23 that what you're proposing we could do without buying land on either side?

24 Ms. Tanner: I don't believe any of these propose cantilevering at this point. However, that
25 has come up. What might be most desirable? Providing access for people to get close to
26 the water and experience nature is of great value. Would we want to cantilever something
27 over, or would we want to have it at the grade of the creek? We do need to provide them
28 maintenance access, so there's some thought, since we're already building a path for cars
29 in the creek, of building a path that people can walk on in the creek. Maybe there are
30 walking paths above and below. These proposals don't include cantilevering at this point.

31 Commissioner Moss: I would love to walk at the creek level 99 percent of the time. If
32 that's at all possible even within the current confines of the creek bed, that would be
33 wonderful. I would prefer to start with the Boulware Park section because that's public
34 land on one side, giving you a cheaper solution, and then extending below the Lambert
35 Bridge as far as you could pay for it.

1 Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you very much for all of this. Could you go back to the costs?
2 To confirm, what's the percentage you factor in for design and permitting and all that? Did
3 I understand you to say 25 percent or was that the contingency?

4 Mr. Snyder: That was the contingency. Design and permitting hasn't been factored into
5 this.

6 Vice Chair Cribbs: Isn't there a rule of thumb about what costs you can crank into that?

7 Mr. Snyder: The rule of thumb I use for design is roughly 10 percent of the implementation
8 cost. Permitting, maybe 5-10 also.

9 Vice Chair Cribbs: The construction management?

10 Mr. Snyder: Maybe another 5. Maybe another 25 percent on top of what this is.

11 Vice Chair Cribbs: These are in today's dollars, right?

12 Mr. Snyder: Correct.

13 Vice Chair Cribbs: How long do you think until this project is ended? Could you even
14 think about that? What's the estimated time?

15 Ms. Tanner: The time that it would take to construct the project if construction were to
16 begin ...

17 Vice Chair Cribbs: Yeah, and you're starting to construct.

18 Mr. Snyder: Alternative 1 could be implemented in a single dry season, so over the course
19 of a summer. Probably a phased approach would be good to do the upstream portion first
20 and then 340 Portage the following year. If we were to start right now, we could probably
21 expect to implement in the next five years.

22 Vice Chair Cribbs: Are you getting a sense yet of the community and what restoration plan
23 they prefer? Has that come up yet?

24 Ms. Tanner: It has. We presented the three alternatives to the working group, but we didn't
25 have the cost estimates at that time. I would look to Commissioner Reckdahl to add his
26 sense of the working group. There's a mix of folks from the working group and the public
27 who want to see full restoration. The majority of folks want to balance the interests of
28 restoration with other plans. We were pleasantly surprised and happy to hear about a soft-
29 bottom restoration project with the Water District in Mountain View right now, that this is
30 modeled after. That gave us hope of feasibility and encouragement for alternative 1. I
31 wouldn't want to say I could speak on behalf of all members of the community.

1 Vice Chair Cribbs: At what point, when the Water District comes in and says yes or no,
2 do they say their final say?

3 Ms. Tanner: As Ben prepares his final report, we want to make sure we get their buy-in to
4 the degree that we can. If the plans can conceptually meet the needs laid out by the Water
5 District, hopefully that will be satisfactory for them. If we were to go from concept to
6 schematic design, I imagine they would be involved in the engineering.

7 Mr. Tanner: They've been really helpful in communicating with us throughout our process.
8 One of the questions we had for them was whether or not us increasing water surface
9 elevations during a design event would be a non-starter. The indication was they would
10 consider supporting the design and construction of increased flood walls upstream of our
11 project. It's not a non-starter. That was encouraging. Having clarity about their comments
12 from the beginning of this effort has been helpful in directing the process. I would imagine
13 they would review the memo I develop. If the City were to choose to move forward, we
14 could continue to have periodic check-ins with them. Review of a draft 30-percent plan
15 set would be standard at the same time of engaging other resource agencies. I would
16 probably invite Valley Water to be a part of that panel of resource agencies that would have
17 CDFW, the Corps of Engineers, and other stakeholders.

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: I would concur with Rachel's assessment. There is big support
19 in the neighborhood for naturalizing. We had an early survey where this was the number
20 one thing they wanted, more than parks and developments. When we showed these three
21 alternatives, overall people liked alternative 3 the best. There was some concern that we're
22 losing a lot of parkland, so we'd have to trade that off. People will have to see what they
23 get from that. Alternatives 2 and 3 were probably the most popular. We have Buckeye
24 Creek up in Foothills Park that needs a lot of work. We're getting a lot of erosion up there.
25 That's on the order of \$10 million, and we just can't find any place to pay for that.
26 Alternative 2A, which I love, I don't know how we're going to swallow that. Maybe we're
27 going to be stuck with alternative 1A, one that goes through but also includes a park. That
28 would probably be the best thing. We can see if we can get some grants to do alternative
29 2A. That'd be wonderful. On all these options, you showed pictures of the man on the
30 side. No one was in the water. There will be public access all the way down into the water,
31 if kids want to go into the water and play?

32 Mr. Snyder: That's correct.

33 Commissioner Reckdahl: You showed that cross-section of the stream. On the far right,
34 that's El Camino. It really looks steep there. After it crosses El Camino, it really dives.
35 Does the flow have a lot of velocity there? Are we going to get a scouring if we don't have
36 concrete on the bottom? If we just have soil there, will we be eroding away the soil?

1 Mr. Snyder: There will be significant velocity and sheer stress, which would have sediment
2 transport capacity. The bottom would likely be engineered with a mixture of gravel and
3 cobble that would be resistant to erosion but would still allow for colonization by native
4 vegetation.

5 Commissioner Reckdahl: We would be planting native vegetation in the creek bed?

6 Mr. Snyder: Correct. I suspect willow and other riparian plants would occur naturally,
7 pretty quickly as well.

8 Commissioner Reckdahl: If we do go into the park and sacrifice some parkland to
9 naturalize that, do we get some wetland credits for that?

10 Mr. Anderson: I would think you probably would. The area that they're looking at is
11 mainly passive turf.

12 Mr. Snyder: My expectation is that you would be able to get wetland credit for that.

13 Commissioner Reckdahl: That would be worth something. Do you know how much
14 wetland credit? Is it \$1 million an acre?

15 Mr. Anderson: I'm not sure.

16 Commissioner Reckdahl: I think this would be wonderful. I don't know if our pocketbook
17 is big enough, but we should push forward and try to go for the big one. If we can't, we
18 scale it back.

19 Vice Chair Cribbs: (inaudible)

20 Mr. Anderson: I can't speak to this project. The question was about who would pursue
21 grants for this project. Rachel will probably address that. For the Buckeye Creek project,
22 it would be a combination of CSD and Public Works Engineering pursuing that if we don't
23 hire a grant writer to do it for us.

24 Mr. Snyder: As someone from the public mentioned earlier, Prop 68 and Prop 1 grants
25 might be a good source of funding for this. Also, depending on the age of the Lambert
26 Avenue Bridge, there could be grant funding for replacing that; although, I think I saw a
27 date on it of 1990. It may be a little too young for an infrastructure grant, but that might
28 be worth looking into.

29 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Rachel and Ben, for your presentation and for all of your
30 efforts. This is a very exciting concept plan. It's an opportunity to restore riparian
31 environment, which we don't get very often. As Keith referenced, it does echo a similar
32 plan we've had at Buckeye Creek in Foothills Park to restore a riparian environment, but

1 that's not going anywhere. It really is a concern. Hearing that there's community support
2 broadly for the creek in this area is also very exciting and heartening. I also appreciate that
3 you clarified the creek access would be included for the plan. That's something a lot of
4 families will really appreciate. It's also going to be a concern for environmentalists in that
5 walking and access into the creek is going to decrease the habitat value. That's something
6 we're going to have to sort out. My biggest concern is the overall timeline with the NVCAP
7 project, the complexity of the project with so many disparate landowners and trying to tie
8 this plan with so much unknown. I appreciate that you're looking at a parallel process. We
9 have some information for how to move forward, but it's very difficult to assess tradeoffs,
10 as you've asked us to, at this very early stage. Yes, we're all very excited about the plan;
11 we're all very concerned about funding. The low-hanging fruit seems to be to develop the
12 creek in Boulware Park where we already own the land. That makes a lot of sense and
13 seems like something we should focus on and redirect some of our efforts to consider. That
14 seems like something that we can move forward. If that section of the creek were restored,
15 there could be broader support and potential funding opportunities to work on the rest of
16 the project. It might sync with the timeline we're talking about.

17 Commissioner Olson: I'd like a little bit more information. Eminent domain just buys
18 someone out at fair market value for their home. It doesn't necessarily help them find a
19 new home at the tax base they're in. Correct?

20 Ms. Tanner: We don't have to purchase any homes for either of these plans. They're all
21 commercial buildings. I'm not a lawyer or an eminent domain expert. You may purchase
22 at fair market value, but would they be able to buy a similar property? Unknown. If they're
23 a tenant business, would they be able to find a similarly priced space for lease in the City?
24 That would not be known and may be difficult. Determining the fair market value and
25 litigation would make it more difficult.

26 Commissioner Olson: Is there any enhanced ecological value of going wider in the creek
27 than going longer? I'm trying to think about the tradeoffs between what we're calling 1A.
28 Does that have as much ecological value as taking that shorter strip and making it wider?

29 Mr. Snyder: One of the things we're constrained with is the road and rail crossings. That's
30 one of the reasons we haven't gone further longitudinally. We're looking to create as much
31 riparian and wetland acreage as we can. I'm not sure quite how to address your question.
32 A wider corridor gives the creek more of an opportunity to have geomorphic function,
33 where it's eroding its own channel and moving back and forth within the corridor. That
34 additional width would allow for that. There is some additional value in length in terms of
35 community value. If we can make it longer, it will provide greater recreational benefit.

36 Commissioner Olson: It doesn't seem like there's a huge benefit going off the ones until
37 you get to that last design where it's the full project. That seems awesome if money's no
38 object and if no one cares that their property is being taken. That's going to be difficult.

1 A1, the longer, skinny project, seems much more feasible and provides benefits that we
2 don't have. It looks like it will be a beautiful path. I really like the idea of doing the long
3 part and the stretch by the park first.

4 Commissioner Reckdahl: Most of the time eminent domain is going in and taking the
5 house. Most of the time there's a deal ahead of time, so it doesn't go to eminent domain.
6 You shouldn't use the term eminent domain; you should be talking about acquisitions. In
7 this case, if you're acquiring the Fry's parking lot, that developer likely would be happy to
8 do that because they have open space requirements whatever redevelopment they have.
9 That would be a credit towards their open space requirements. Some negotiations could
10 be done.

11 Commissioner Moss: If you put a natural bed, and that natural bed starts washing
12 downstream underneath Alma and on down to that next neighborhood, right now it's a
13 culvert. Now, you're going to get dirt flowing through there. Does that mean the culvert
14 is going to have to be raised a foot to compensate?

15 Ms. Tanner: We'd have to do any adjustments as it goes underneath the train tracks. The
16 sediment movement is accommodated in the model.

17 Mr. Snyder: It's my understanding that Valley Water does sediment removal maintenance
18 periodically. I would not anticipate that this reach would generate additional sediment. I
19 would expect there will be greater issues with sedimentation within this reach because the
20 water's going to be high velocity. Having a seal to act as a sediment retention structure
21 could be a really good idea.

22 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. It's getting close to 9:30, and we have another item on the
23 agenda. I wanted to give Council Member Kou an opportunity to offer any Council
24 perspective, if she'd like.

25 Council Member Kou: I'll refrain from commenting. Thank you.

26 **5. Boulware Park Renovation Project Update**

27 Chair Greenfield: The next item on the agenda is the Boulware Park renovation project
28 update. Peter Jensen is joining us. Welcome, Peter.

29 Commissioner McCauley: Peter, with my apologies, I have to depart. My daughter is at
30 home, and her babysitter needs to go home as well. I look forward to reviewing your report.
31 Thank you.

32 Commissioner McCauley departed the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

1 Mr. Anderson: We have some new Commissioners who may not know Peter. Peter
2 Jensen's the City's Landscape Architect with Public Works Engineering and partners very
3 closely with Community Services, in particular the Parks Department.

4 Peter Jensen: Thank you, Daren. As Daren said, Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect for
5 the City of Palo Alto. Good evening, Commissioners. Nice to meet you, Ms. Olson. Nice
6 to have Council Member Kou here as well. I'm going to review the first process of the
7 Boulware and the AT&T site or the Birch property site. We had a community meeting
8 about that just recently to get some feedback, starting at a preliminary level as we build up
9 the design. I'll talk a little bit about the design that was developed to provide cost estimates,
10 to start the discussion about formulating a capital increase in the budget for the whole area,
11 to devise a completed park space. Boulware Park exists in the green highlighted section.
12 It's defined by Ash Street on this side, which segments the new property from the old
13 property. The yellow is the AT&T property. This project was supposed to be a renovation
14 of the existing Boulware Park. Fortuitously, it was postponed for a year due to some budget
15 shortcomings. During that time, the property across the street, the AT&T property, came
16 up for sale. The City finalized that sale just a few months ago. We've been waiting for
17 that to happen to start this process again for the design. We knew once the property was
18 dedicated parkland, which it is now, the neighborhood would want to see the land
19 developed into usable park space. Currently, it is a vacant lot with nonnative weeds and
20 trees. Staff invited the community to a meeting on a Saturday and focused on what
21 facilities the community wants to see in the park. The community selected and prioritized
22 their favorite facilities. Renovation of parks and the construction of new parkland are not
23 cheap. There might be some stages or phases of park development. The priority questions
24 were used to learn what we should implement first if we had to break the project into pieces.
25 The list of facilities was a combination of existing site facilities and facilities called out in
26 the Park Master Plan for every park renovation project, things like shaded seating, loop
27 pathways, adult fitness. In the Ventura area, park space is limited. It is one of the most
28 densely populated areas of Palo Alto. Expanding the parkland in this area is a no-brainer.
29 The City should be congratulated on moving forward with the additional parkland. This
30 slide shows the results of that community survey for facilities and priority of facilities. The
31 number one facility is a restroom. The area along Ash Street has been a concern because
32 of overnight parking. Education and outreach about current bathrooms have helped. A
33 majority of the desired facilities are in that plan. The only thing missing from the initial
34 list is the pickleball court. We added that because there has been a large interest in it
35 recently, finding places and locations for that to happen. You can see that that was on the
36 lower end of what people were looking for or would prioritize as far as in the park. As a
37 way to facilitate more public input, we also started an online survey. It asks the same
38 questions that were asked at the community meeting. From the community meeting, we
39 did allow individuals to write down other facility options that they didn't see on the list that
40 we had. We did add a few to the online survey, like horseshoes and bocce ball, other
41 facilities that people thought would be a good addition to the park. We also asked a couple



1 of questions in there as well. We asked how the park should be constructed. What we see
2 in the online survey is that most people would like to wait a few years and construct it all
3 at the same time instead of breaking the project into multiple years and multiple phases.
4 They're also okay with removing the aspect of Ash Street that separates the park. That is
5 some feedback we wanted to get from them to understand how they felt about closing that
6 off. The votes for the facility selection were very close to the votes taken at the community
7 meeting. This plan was developed to start a cost estimate and to understand the funding
8 that would be needed. The City is underway with setting up the capital improvement
9 budget for the next five years. We wanted to make sure we didn't miss that cycle because
10 the community would like to see this enacted sooner rather than later. Our goal would be
11 to secure funding for fiscal year 2022, but the work would start in June 2021. From now
12 until that time, we're looking at using the original funding for the park to work on design
13 and produce the plans. Hopefully, right before that we'd have our plans and our bid ready
14 and be ready to construct in June 2021. The design looks at removing Ash Street, which
15 runs through this area. Now, you can see the park joins itself. By doing a review of the
16 uses around the park, this side of the park is mostly surrounded by residential units, which
17 tend to lean toward more programming or facilities in the park that take that into
18 consideration so there is not a lot of friction between the park use and the residential use.
19 That's why this side of the park has increased open green space. Boulware Park is not
20 programmed for sports use. There are practices out there, but there are no games
21 coordinated there. It's a quiet, passive turf use and buffers the residential uses from loud
22 activity areas. Those things would include the playground space, redoing the basketball
23 court, adding some dog park area, a picnic area, a restroom, and an adult fitness area.
24 Boulware Park has one basketball court. This will be used to review with the community
25 and get feedback on the areas. I've actually got some feedback already about the
26 playground being too small. Boulware Park is not very large, but it has some very large
27 playgrounds. It has two distinct playgrounds, a standard playground for kids older than
28 five and a tot lot playground for ages two to five. The tot lot has a very large sand area.
29 That's not overly developed because it's mostly sand. We can't get to that size in this design,
30 but there is some desire from the community to maintain the square footage of the
31 playgrounds. The existing AT&T building would remain. The creek remains on this side.
32 It also starts to look at moving the picnic area to a more visible location. That is a concern
33 for the residents, and placing it in an open area would resolve a lot of issues. We didn't do
34 any of that development in this plan. As you can see, the development of the creek is an
35 extensive and costly endeavor. The difficulty of option 3 for restoration of the creek is it
36 takes a large portion of the usable space of the park. This space right here would be
37 dedicated to the creek slope in the third option. There are options of incorporating some
38 of the other ideas of the design to make the creek more naturalized in that area. The
39 residents have brought up to me several times that the creek is used quite a bit for people
40 that are walking from the Fry's area to El Camino. They use it as a cut-through. They also
41 use it to store things, especially bikes that have been stolen. Channelized or not, people
42 will still go down there. That's not a thing you should overly worry about. My goal for



1 tonight is to get some feedback from you on facilities, development of the creek. Planning
2 the green space mostly on this side of the park and against the creek does allow us in the
3 future to renovate that space. We would like to renovate the park a little faster than the
4 creek channelization is going to go, just as far as funding goes. We can build into the park
5 some buffering that in the future would allow such an expansion there. This is our overall
6 timeline of the construction. We're really early in the community input stage. There will
7 be a second community meeting that will look at this design and take feedback. We'll do
8 a third community meeting and hopefully get consensus on the design. That'll bring us
9 back to the Parks and Rec Commission to comment on the plan. Hopefully, after that we'll
10 start to look at doing a Park Improvement Ordinance. Through that time, we will be
11 working on the construction documents, bidding it with the expectation to construct the
12 park in June 2021. With that, I'll open it up to questions and answers.

13 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Peter, for your detail and passion. We have four members
14 of the public to speak. I'm not going to limit you but ask you to be concise in your speaking,
15 particularly if you've already spoken. I want to invite first Ken Joye followed by Shani
16 Kleinhaus.

17 Mr. Joye: Ken Joye. I live in the Ventura neighborhood. My son is going to be 27 this
18 year, and we had his first birthday party at Boulware Park. It's a place that's been important
19 to our family for a long time. Thank you, Peter, for the work you've done to outreach to
20 the community and to bring this preliminary layout. It looks great. This is a regular topic
21 at the Ventura Neighborhood Association meetings, and we're very excited that progress
22 has gone as it has up to this point. I'm particularly excited by the schedule. The thought
23 that this could begin construction in summer of 2021 is really great. Jonathan Brown could
24 not be here tonight but wanted to make sure that the members of our neighborhood came
25 and represented for him.

26 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Shani Kleinhaus followed by Nikki Narang.

27 Ms. Kleinhaus: I told you I'm going to be repeating myself. This is a really nice plan. It's
28 nice to see an opportunity to expand the park. This was a hot topic at the CAC and in the
29 Parks Master Plan stakeholder group. Taking out a street and putting some park in there is
30 great. I'm going to ask to really look at the creek as an opportunity. Even if the creek is
31 concrete, the edges are still serving animals that move there. Plant natives and make it a
32 little wider than you think of right now. Thank you.

33 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Shani. Nikki Narang followed by Herb Borock.

34 Nicky Nrang: Hi. I'm Nikki Narang. I live on Fernando Avenue, been there ten years
35 now. I have a 3.5-year-old and a 5.5-year-old who have grown up in this park. We're just
36 thrilled, absolutely thrilled to see this happen. One of the things that's interesting to ask
37 during community outreach is why is this park not used today. We are there on a daily

1 basis. You don't see other families with young children there on a consistent basis. One of
2 the hypotheses here is this park attracts crowds that tend to loiter throughout the day and
3 into the evenings. I was very surprised to see the restroom be the number one amenity in
4 the community outreach. I'm just questioning are we also going to continue to encourage
5 that behavior, and will people continue to avoid the park. Is the restroom the amenity that's
6 going to encourage park usage in the future or will people still continue to avoid this park?
7 It's depressing to see more of your neighbors at Peers Park or Ventura Park than the park
8 on your street.

9 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Herb Borock.

10 Herb Borock: Chair Greenfield and Commissioners. The staff report mentions the City's
11 purchase finalized the Birch Street property in the fall and has a schedule for a Park
12 Improvement Ordinance. I don't recall a Park Dedication Ordinance for the Birch Street
13 property. If it's already happened, I apologize for my poor memory. If it has not, you need
14 to have a Park Dedication Ordinance before you can have a Park Improvement Ordinance
15 for that property. In addition, you should also have a Park Dedication Ordinance for the
16 right-of-way on Ash Street and the part of the right-of-way of Chestnut Avenue below the
17 proposed cul-de-sac. Those activities need to be included in the schedule, including the
18 Park and Recreation Commission recommendation on those park dedications. That's one
19 of your purposes as a Commission. Adding the discussion of the creek restoration and
20 placing it on the same agenda as this item and placing it before this item makes it an
21 important thing that you have to discuss. I say, "No, don't do that." As you can see, there's
22 a schedule for the park that serves the community. Adding the possibility of treating the
23 reach as an extension of some restoration park in the future is a mistake and delays this
24 project for the park. The creeks in south Palo Alto became concrete-lined drainage
25 channels in 1988 following flooding earlier in that decade. They serve the entire reach of
26 that creek. If you're doing anything that would restrict flow, that affects properties
27 upstream. As a Priority Development Area, which will be adding more impervious surface
28 and additional development in the City, the last thing you want to do is any kind of
29 modification of the creek because it would make the creek less able to handle flood water.

30 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Herb. Commissioner comments?

31 Commissioner Moss: Can we get a soft copy of his presentation and the previous
32 presentation? We didn't get that in our packet. We didn't get the pictures, the diagrams.

33 Chair Greenfield: I think we have requested it. Just make sure the Commission is
34 forwarded all presentations from this evening.

35 Commissioner Moss: As far as pickleball is concerned, I would prefer that it stay in
36 Mitchell Park and not be spread out all over the City because that focal point is very
37 important for their community. Do we have issues from the neighbors regarding parking

1 or lack of parking? How much parking is there now, and will we need more in order to
2 encourage more people?

3 Mr. Jensen: Currently, the parking is along the street. There are no street restrictions to
4 parking in that area. We have started to look at that. Especially in the area along this edge,
5 we could push in there and make some head-in parking. That doesn't show on the design
6 now, but we should discuss that with the community. There is a sensitivity to parking in
7 that area because it has been used for overnight parking. The location next to the AT&T
8 building and surrounded mostly by commercial buildings may be a more acceptable space
9 for parking. We should look at that. The amenities will draw more people to the park.

10 Commissioner Moss: As far as overnight parking, we have issues with that all over the
11 City. Enforcement will need to be beefed up at least initially. One of the speakers talked
12 about naming basketball courts. I don't know if you want to make this a test case. I'm all
13 for it.

14 Mr. Jensen: It doesn't hurt anything. It can be used to promote the facility, which is not a
15 bad opportunity. That is something we could consider.

16 Vice Chair Cribbs: First of all, I was really happy to see the restrooms at the top of the list.
17 That's a great thing. Was there ever a thought of doing a small building that could be used
18 for a community gathering space, like we have at Mitchell next to the bathrooms?

19 Mr. Jensen: That was not brought up by staff or the community. The park is not large, and
20 having a structure using ...

21 Vice Chair Cribbs: Not a good idea.

22 Mr. Jensen: I don't know if it's not a good idea, but it wasn't expressed by the community
23 as something needed. It wasn't brought up as a choice, but it could be considered.

24 Vice Chair Cribbs: It was really good to see the list of all the choices and the neighborhood
25 input. I'm concerned, since this is such a great opportunity—that's a dense neighborhood
26 in Palo Alto. Is there an opportunity to get more input from the community or are you
27 happy with 38?

28 Mr. Jensen: We had a fairly good showing at the community meeting. We had about 26
29 people there. Of course, they come and go during the meeting. As of today, the online
30 survey has accumulated 68 responses, I believe. It's doing a fairly good job. I did extend
31 it to this week because it was supposed to close last Friday. We could extend it another
32 week. The last few times I pushed it out over email to the community group, there have
33 been spikes. We may try that one more time to see if we can get a few more folks. For the
34 community in that area, having 60-80 responses is pretty solid.

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: The playground is right against the creek. If we expand the
2 creek, that would be problematic. Was there any thought about rotating that playground
3 counterclockwise around the cul-de-sac and exchange it with some of the turf area?

4 Mr. Jensen: That is something we can explore.

5 Commissioner Reckdahl: I assume this turf area is big enough for AYSO soccer on it.

6 Mr. Jensen: For tiny kids, yes. Not for adults.

7 Commissioner Reckdahl: Both Seale and Robles have small backstops for the smallest
8 baseball teams. It's not a baseball field. That's pretty unobtrusive, and you get some
9 functionality out of that. Otherwise, it looks beautiful.

10 Commissioner LaMere: I echo Keith's comments about the use of the turf area. There's a
11 space for community garden plots. Is that existing or would that be new?

12 Mr. Jensen: There's a City pump station right here. There's an unused, small turf area.

13 Commissioner LaMere: It's great to look for spaces like that. As far as the turf area goes,
14 what is the size or what's the distance on the top?

15 Mr. Jensen: It's about 25 percent larger or more turf area than what's there now. I can't
16 give you the exact dimensions of it, but I'm going to say it's about 35 by 85 yards. It's
17 broken up by the basketball court and the picnic table. It's open but not conducive to
18 playing anything on it.

19 Commissioner LaMere: I also really like tying the two parks together as far as getting rid
20 of the street, if that's doable and favored by the community. Thanks for all your work.

21 Commissioner Olson: You've really jammed a lot of things in here. This is great. It sounds
22 like you have parking in mind. Is there lighting in the basketball courts in particular or is
23 there any lighting in the park at night?

24 Mr. Jensen: There are a few lights now, mostly older streetlights for security. At the
25 minimum, we would continue to do that. In the basketball area and dog park, brighter
26 lights would be nice for night use. Concentrating those amenities away from houses makes
27 it much easier to put light in. We would pursue adding light. The parks close at 10:00
28 p.m., so lights would be controlled to that time.

29 Commissioner Olson: I thought on the community list the creek overlook was pretty highly
30 ranked. Is that appearing on here somewhere? Were we able to fit that in?

1 Mr. Jensen: This plan was made before the community meeting. I think we're going to
2 add something for a creek outlook. I'm not sure what that means and the form it will take.
3 We are going to work on developing that. It could be something similar to the cantilevered
4 walkway at Wilkie but smaller. It would probably be used more for education about the
5 creek and promotion of naturalizing the creek.

6 Commissioner Olson: I like that you fit the loop walk in, all the way around as well. The
7 only thing I was thinking is it could use some shade for hot days. It's fantastic to be able
8 to do that loop.

9 Mr. Jensen: The plan shows the existing trees. We will plant more. We try to use mostly
10 native plant material, and we would use that here as well. The large area of ivy could be
11 replaced with a pollinator/habitat area. I think we're going to do more of that in Rinconada
12 Park when we renovate it. The Ross Road planting was difficult because there is no
13 irrigation there. Plant material was chosen for Ross Road because no one would give it
14 any love. We incorporated a few California natives in the Ross Road project, and they
15 should do fairly well. Where we can, we should use native plant material. The concept of
16 native plants has changed from California native to local native. Only in the last five years
17 could we find local native plant material.

18 Chair Greenfield: I've been the community garden liaison for the past three years, and I'm
19 all in favor of them. I am potentially questioning this garden spot because it looks small.
20 I'm wondering how it compares in size to Johnson Park, for example. It's a half mile from
21 the Ventura Community Garden. I'm concerned about management.

22 Mr. Jensen: That space is very small. It's probably double the size of this open space in
23 front of us. It would not be large but would provide the opportunity for a garden. If the
24 Commission and the community felt more is needed, the area close to the turf could be
25 used for a community garden or bocce ball or things like that.

26 Chair Greenfield: I'd be interested in some guidance from Daren and Catherine down the
27 road. I was concerned about the noise from the soccer field, but there is a basketball court
28 there now. Maybe that's not a significant concern. Parking questions are exacerbated by
29 talk of renovation projects. Those are discussions we'll need to have down the road. We
30 want to make our parks safe and welcoming to families and everyone. We need to look
31 into issues at the park as we plan for the future infrastructure of the park. Native here is
32 good, but we need to focus on climate-adaptive species. I'm sure we'll add a lot more trees.
33 As we talk about the creek restoration project, it doesn't seem to flow with the beautiful
34 design for the park. I'm wondering if we need to reconsider this design not assuming
35 something definite is going to happen, but a design that would lend itself well to adapting
36 if we did add some creek restoration. I don't want to put this project on hold and wait for
37 something to happen. We need to move forward with something. I'm not sure to what
38 extent the creek restoration idea was floated at the community meeting, but that should be

1 a front-and-center topic in the next presentation and get their feedback and see what comes
2 out of this. We don't have many opportunities to restructure a park in the way we're doing
3 right now, so we want to make sure we do it the right way.

4 Mr. Jensen: The easement from the back of the channel wall is 10 feet. In the design, we
5 maintained a 20-foot setback for future development of the creek and to limit the impact
6 on the usable space of the park. They did a fantastic job of restoring the creek side in the
7 Mission area of San Luis Obispo. They used the channel walls in their design. There are
8 many opportunities to mix those options and come up with a design. It's hard for the
9 Commission to choose one of the three designs, but economics and usability of land focus
10 development of the creek. Within the envelope shown on the plan, we could restore the
11 side of the creek in the park and make it accessible without encroaching into it too much.
12 I think the best of both worlds is in there.

13 Chair Greenfield: We have a park and amenity ad hoc. I don't know if the park design
14 would be within its purview, but it's a decision we can have. Any further very quick
15 comments?

16 Commissioner Moss: As far as getting down to the creek, that area of the open turf, if you
17 had just one path—you don't have to have the entire length go down to the creek. You
18 could have a little path down from there. That would be great rather than trying to put the
19 whole thing sloping down to the creek.

20 Mr. Jensen: Right. I agree with you. There's a mix of things that could happen here. That
21 can be developed and be a lot more naturalized. When we talk about the flow of the water
22 or the building up of sediment, that interface is going to be the most fragile. That's going
23 to happen right in that area. Leaving that area open for future development and laying it
24 back more or developing some type of larger pool down there, it would behoove us to build
25 it into the design. Closer to the road, you could start to use the walls and terrace it down
26 but still get down to the bottom and then naturalize the bottom as well. I can't place a value
27 on that play activity, and it would be nice to recreate that riparian situation in the park.
28 That should be goal for every park over the next 100 years.

29 Council Member Kou: Peter, the park will have electrical outlets, right?

30 Mr. Jensen: It will. In the park, we try to control the amount of electrical plug access
31 because a lot of people use it. This park doesn't have a group gathering area. The picnic
32 areas and bathroom will have some opportunities for power, but we try to control those as
33 much as possible.

34 Council Member Kou: The only reason I ask is because at Barron Park we have movie
35 nights. We have one plug and have to unplug the movie to make popcorn.

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: That is a good point. This turf area would be a great spot for
2 movies.

3 Mr. Jensen: The standards for electrical are a lot higher than they were when most of the
4 parks in Palo Alto were built. In most parks, the infrastructure for that has either gone by
5 the wayside or is barely hanging on. Today, we would use much tougher infrastructure.

6 **6. Other Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates**

7 Chair Greenfield: The next item on the agenda is the ad hoc committee and liaison updates.
8 It's well after 10:00 now, and I know we want to move out of here. The one item I would
9 suggest we want to spend a little time about is tentative agenda planning, not necessarily
10 for our next meeting but for our retreat. If it's okay with everyone, we'll move past the ad
11 hoc updates.

12 **VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 26, 2020 MEETING**

13 Chair Greenfield: If we end up having a retreat between now and the next meeting, then
14 we don't need to worry about the agenda. I can read what Daren has already suggested
15 tentatively for next month. You can email me your comments. One is the 7.7 acres plan.
16 This could be an action depending on what happens between now and then. Non-action
17 updates on the horizontal levee project, community garden guidelines that we've been
18 working on, and the first tee proposal that Anne is helping out with. Typically, we have a
19 retreat, which is really a four-hour meeting, on a weekday. In the past, we've done it
20 between 9:00 and 1:00 p.m. on a Friday morning. Looking at our calendar, last year we
21 had our retreat 2 1/2 weeks after the January meeting. That would put us on February 14,
22 which is Valentine's Day and the Friday of President's weekend, which might not be the
23 best date. I'm going to request that staff send out a poll with some dates for Commissioners
24 to provide input on what days work. I'm going to suggest that we look at days other than
25 Friday. If we move to the next Friday, that's the Friday before our February meeting, which
26 puts an extra burden on staff and Commissioners. I'm guessing that neither of these days
27 is ideal. The previous Friday is probably too soon to pull this off. I'm looking for feedback
28 on what other days of the week would potentially work. I've spoken with Daren already,
29 and he said other days should be open to staff.

30 Commissioner Reckdahl: Monday through Thursday would be pretty hard. I'd prefer
31 Friday. Fridays I have a little more flexibility. Saturday or Sunday, I'm not sure if we want
32 to go there.

33 Commissioner Moss: It would be good to have a doodle.

34 Chair Greenfield: That's what I'm suggesting. I'm trying to see if we can whittle it down
35 a little bit rather than have 20 dates on there.

1 Vice Chair Cribbs: I'm pretty flexible.

2 Commissioner LaMere: I'm fairly flexible, but I would need to see the dates, especially
3 for the morning times. That doesn't narrow it down much, but I have flexibility.

4 Vice Chair Cribbs: What about if we did something in the afternoon and went to early
5 evening instead of doing it in the morning, on another day during the week since Fridays
6 left in February are not so good? Just a thought.

7 Commissioner Olson: I was going to say Fridays are generally easier for me to be flexible
8 as well. Afternoons tend to be easier too. The further out they are, I can block it off and
9 manage my calendar.

10 Chair Greenfield: Do afternoons help you at all, Keith?

11 Commissioner Reckdahl: Do a doodle poll. (inaudible) Wednesday afternoon.

12 Chair Greenfield: That gives me something to work on with staff. We'll work on getting
13 a doodle poll out soon. Does anyone have any further comments or announcements?

14 **VII. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

15 Vice Chair Cribbs: I do, and they're both good. One is that the Palo Alto Masters is doing
16 great. They've signed up about 30 people for this month. They're feeling really good about
17 where they are. I'm excited about that. This is our new Masters team. In addition, Tim is
18 going to start a bridge program between swimming lessons and Palo Alto Swim Club to
19 make some noncompetitive thing. He's excited about that. I went to the Youth Council
20 meeting today, and it was great. We should be very proud of our Youth Council. They are
21 busy doing a panel discussion and community meeting about vaping, complete with a
22 survey. They've picked a date; I think it's the 3rd of April. They were very pleased that
23 we were interested. It would be great, Daren, if we could invite them to come to the
24 Commission like we did a couple of years ago and have them give a report specifically on
25 this vaping.

26 Commissioner Moss: The initial speaker we had talked about music at Mitchell Park, I
27 went to two of his events, and they were fantastic as far as building community. He's got
28 ten more scheduled over this year at the Mitch. I encourage people to notice his ad in the
29 *Palo Alto Weekly* and get people to use our parks more in that way. I'm the GSI liaison,
30 and you got this stormwater plan. We're going to cover this in March or April. If you look
31 at the executive summary, I've been going to see how the parks could fit into this because
32 this covers not only the parks but also all City land and all development on all private
33 property. We want to focus our efforts on how the parks can help.

1 Council Member Kou: Commissioner Olson spoke about eminent domain. If I remember
2 correctly, the grade separation Extended Citizen Advisory Panel mentioned to the Council
3 that they had invited an eminent domain lawyer to speak at one of their meetings. I don't
4 remember the date.

5 Commissioner Reckdahl: It's scheduled right now for February 5. When we confirm that,
6 I'll mail that out to the Commission.

7 Ms. Bourquin: You were asking about the presentations, David. There are links, but I'm
8 not sure everybody is seeing that in the packet. Are you not seeing that? If you hover over
9 the attachments in your document ...

10 Commissioner Moss: What I saw was just written description, no images. When you look
11 at the attachment ...

12 Ms. Bourquin: When you hovered over it and clicked on it, it didn't open up for you?

13 Commissioner Moss: It did, and I saw just description like this.

14 Ms. Bourquin: Within the staff report, down at the bottom of the attachments, if you hover
15 over them, the links are there. The presentations will open up. I wanted to say that in case
16 the public is having the same problem.

17 Chair Greenfield: Sometimes the presentations change between when they're posted in the
18 packet and what's delivered here. It would be good to get updates. In the packets, maybe
19 if you underlined anything that's a link, that might make it easier to recognize or change
20 the font or come up with something.

21 Ms. Bourquin: I'll look at it and see what I can do about that.

22 Chair Greenfield: Everybody has a contact list. If any information on your contact is not
23 correct, please be sure to let staff know.

24 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

25 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Reckdahl at 10:30 p.m.