MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
October 27, 2020
Virtual Conference
Palo Alto, California

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

Commissioners Absent: None

Others Present: Council Member Kou

Staff Present: Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Lam Do

I. ROLL CALL

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS

Chair Greenfield: Anyone looking to change anything on the agenda this evening, or re-order anything? Thank you. I’ll take that as a no.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Greenfield: It looks like we do not have anyone this evening.

IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. I’ll start with just a reminder that we’ve got a joint meeting with the North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan Working Group and the Parks and Recreation Commission scheduled for Thursday, November 5th at 6:00 p.m. At the joint meeting, the City’s consultant will provide a presentation to review the completed Matadero Creek Re-Naturalization Report. There will be an opportunity for both the Working Group and the Parks and Rec members to comment on the details of the report, including the conceptual designs, but due to the time constraints, be forewarned, it will be limited time that we are each allowed, to allow room for everyone to speak, because there are so many. The meeting agenda will be posted on Thursday, October 29th for that joint meeting. Vice Chair Cribbs asked me for a brief update on the condition of the Greer Skatepark. At our previous Commission meeting, there were some concerns raised during

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the public comment period about some trash and other issues, so I’ll give you just a very brief summary. We do come across trash, broken glass and other debris fairly frequently in the skatepark, especially after a busy weekend. Mondays it’s very common to find sometimes large items dumped there, including things like couches that people have brought over, broken glass, graffiti and vandalism. It’s not all the time, but it does happen periodically, and that might have been the case when that person spoke, that that’s what they found. Our staff cleans it up Monday morning and whenever we find those kind of situations. Regarding the condition of the skate bowl itself, there are periodically cracks and chips in the concrete. This is an older structure. It was built in 1990, and our staff does the repairs to those cracks and chips as they find them. At last night’s Commission meeting there was a discussion on the board, commissions and committees with Council. The Council Ad Hoc Committee had created a handbook aimed at addressing inconsistencies in how various boards and commissions function, and to be better aligned with the Commission’s work with the Council’s directions. There’s a really helpful summary I found of the meeting on Palo Alto Online, so if you’re curious of the outcome of that, it’s got a very succinct and helpful summary. I won’t recap the whole meeting, just to share one, I think, key bit of information that concerns the Commission. There was a discussion point on whether to reduce the number of commissioners on this Commission from seven to five. The majority of Council Members generally agreed that, due to the Commission’s broad scope of work and focus, it justifies remaining at the status quo of seven commissioners. I believe the Council intends to adopt that handbook before the end of this calendar year. An update on some projects. We had the Briones basketball court resurfacing project that was completed on October 9th. The project turned out well. We’ve heard positive reviews from people who have used the court. On the topic on playgrounds, I’ve mentioned before in the past that we had opened our playgrounds – 29 of the 30. The one that hasn’t been opened is the Magical Bridge Playground. We’ve been working with the Magical Bridge Foundation to come up with a plan. We’ve got one now for how to safely reopen it. It has to be handled a little differently from all other playgrounds. This playground has approximately 25,000 visitors per month, pre-COVID. It’s really hard to say what that might look like in terms of the demand during this time, but it’s likely to be very, very high. Hence, what’s working in the other playgrounds, probably wouldn’t transfer here. The Magical Bridge Foundation and our staff agree that it does need to be staffed, at least in the beginning, and we’ll see how it goes. So, we’re going to use a combination of City staff and contractors for the weekends, and volunteers to help monitor that playground and allow us to safely open it. We’re targeting November 17th as our opening date, and it would be open Tuesday through Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30, is the tentative plan. We’re still working on the details. They’re subject to what I told you, to minor changes here or there. Once we’ve finalized the plan, I’ll be sure to update you. Some updates about recreation programming. Recreation staff has a really fun, special event called the Jack-O’-Jaunt, which is a jack-o’-lantern stroll planned for this Friday night. Community members are invited to pre-register to bring their carved jack-o’-lanterns downtown to one of the strollable Uplift Local streets to display their carved pumpkins.
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alongside many others in our community for one night only. Other community members
are invited to take the jaunt through the display and enjoy the seasonal fun. Again, the Jack-
O’-Jaunt will take place Friday, October 30th, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Participants are
asked to preregister for the event on the City’s webpage. Several Commissioners have
volunteered to serve as judges to pick the scariest, cutest and most creative pumpkins. A
big thanks to all those Commissioners who are willing to help out. Again, this event will
take place on the 300 block of University Ave., across the street from Bryant, and the 400
block of California Ave., in front of the Bank of the West. You can visit the City’s
webpage, the one that has this particular item on it, you find along with other Halloween
themed events is cityofpaloalto.org/gov/topics/halloween. If it’s helpful, Catherine and I
can email this to the Commission. The Public Art Program has put together a fun scavenger
hunt for people of all ages to wander downtown to find many whimsical Greg Brown
murals. Winners get bragging rights and the opportunity to send us their funny photos in
front of the murals, which we’ll then share with our followers on social media. You can
download and print the scavenger hunt list on the City’s webpage. The Recreation staff are
developing a “Movie in the Park” event. It’s going to be The Nightmare Before Christmas.
It’ll be at Mitchell Park on Friday, November 13th. This will be a free community event,
starting at 5:30 p.m. Preregistrations are required, and that’s at the City’s webpage, again.
Another fun event will be lighting up the holiday tree in Lytton Plaza this year. We’ll start
on Friday, November 20th, but we’re not going to have an onsite event like we typically
would, due to the COVID restrictions. Instead, we invite the community members to come
downtown at their leisure and enjoy the tree. We’ll also invite community members to light
up the season with their own holiday light decorating contest. We’re encouraging
community members to decorate their homes with as much pizzaz as possible. You can
register for the contest and share their address so others can stroll to enjoy it, again, on the
City’s webpage. The final three weeks session of the middle school athletics fall fitness
classes are starting next week, and we still have dozens of other virtual and in-person
activities for children and adults in our Fall Enjoy! Catalog, from the Arts Center, the Junior
Museum and Zoo, the Children’s Theater and Recreation Divisions. Again, you can check
out the website for more information on that. Lastly, a bit of sad news. Jazmin LeBlanc our
CSD’s acting Assistant Director, overseeing Recreation, Arts and Sciences, will be leaving
our department on Friday, November 6th. She and her family are relocating to Santa
Barbara and will be making some big changes. She will be joining the City of Santa
Barbara’s Park and Recreation Department as their new Assistant Director. We’re excited
for her. We’re very sad to lose such a talented and dynamic staff person. The obvious
question I’m sure some of the Commissioners will ask is, do we have plans to fill that
position, and if so, when? I think that’s something we’re still working on. We’ll have to
get back to you on timeframes and now that will work. That concludes the Department
Report.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Daren.
Commissioner Moss: Can I ask one question?

Chair Greenfield: Please.

Commissioner Moss: Do you have an update on the JMZ? Are we on schedule for end of the year?

Mr. Anderson: I’ll send out an email on that, with the latest information. I think it’s dynamic right now. I’ll send out something.

Commissioner Moss: Okay.

Chair Greenfield: Any other Commissioners have follow-up questions for Daren? I actually do have just one quick follow-up. Daren, regarding the Magical Bridge, can you talk about what steps are intended to ensure safe distancing at that very popular playground?

Mr. Anderson: There’s a couple mechanisms we’re using. First and foremost is controlling the total number of people allowed in the playground. Normally, you’ve probably seen it on a busy weekend, you could have more than 100. The COVID restriction to allow social distancing, we’re reducing that to 55, so that will be the maximum occupancy. At least that’s our starting number. We’re going to try to learn and use adaptive management, so as this progresses, if we find 55 is not the right number, we can adjust as necessary. That's the first step. The second is, as people wait in line to get in – and there’s a 30-minute timeframe for once you enter the playground to use it and then you’re supposed to rotate out if people are waiting – we will be marking with six-foot social distancing square marks on the pavement for where people should line up. Another way to work on the social distancing. The third is that we will have volunteers on the interior of the playground. We call them Kindness Ambassadors, and we are seeking getting some assistance from the Magical Bridge Foundation to get those Kindness Ambassadors, along with other volunteers that we recruit that will help ensure people are social distancing around a given piece of playground equipment or elsewhere within the playground itself.

Chair Greenfield: And if people are interested in volunteering or were interested in spreading the word on how people volunteer, what’s the best approach for that?

Mr. Anderson: I’ll be sending information on that to the Commission soon. It’s still a work in progress right now.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Any other Commissioners have questions regarding the Department report or staff related items?

Commissioner Cribbs: Chair, I do, about the Magical Bridge. Daren, is the 30-minute limit a COVID limit, or has that always been?
Mr. Anderson: No, it’s a state requirement due to COVID. It applies to all playgrounds.

Commissioner Cribbs: Okay. So, is that going to be communicated in advance? I think people come from a long way away, so we want to make sure they’re not disappointed, right?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah. Seventy percent of our visitors to that particular playground, the Magical Bridge Playground, are from outside our area, according to the Magical Bridge Foundation, so you’re right. That is important. Luckily, we’ve been in great communication, and Magical Bridge Foundation staff has been really helpful, so they’re going to send out messaging to that effect with all the details. We’ll have it, of course, on our signage and everything else there. It’s still going to be a challenge, though. The 30-minute limit, whether you’re from across the street or from far away, is a tough one, so we’re reliant on really seeking cooperation from the visitors themselves, the volunteers to help remind them as best we can so that they comply and keep cycling through.

Commissioner Cribbs: Are you going to be able to go back and get in line again after you’ve done your 30 minutes?

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Cribbs: Okay. Thank you so much. I appreciate all that information. I’m glad it’s going to be open. I know it’s a lot of things to think about.

Mr. Anderson: Thanks so much.

Chair Greenfield: And if no one is line, do you need to leave in 30 minutes? Is the 30-minute requirement just to allow people to share the facility, or is there some other safety reason?

Mr. Anderson: I believe it’s just to share the facility, so if no one was waiting in line, we would not require them to move through.

Commissioner Moss: And that 70 percent figure of outside the city may be reduced when they open up the Redwood City one this month, I think, and then another one is being built in Sunnyvale that’s going to open soon.

Mr. Anderson: Yes. We’re hopeful that –

Commissioner Moss: It would be nice to have some statistics.

Mr. Anderson: Yes. We’ll be tracking some of the data as much as possible.

Chair Greenfield: The 30-minute limit applies to all playgrounds in the city?
Mr. Anderson: It does.

Chair Greenfield: Is that posted clearly at all the playgrounds?

Mr. Anderson: It is.

Chair Greenfield: Do we have anything back on how that’s going?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. We’ve got staff moving around some of the playgrounds. We have 30, and they are coming by and doing sort of drive-by inspections, pulling over to see if people are wearing masks, if they’re social distancing, if they’re complying with the max limit. What they hadn’t seen, interestingly, was people lined up waiting. That hasn’t been something they’ve observed. I guess I should note, though, our staff is there and school is still in session when they’re usually there, so we’re probably far from the max limits, where maybe on a busier weekend, at say like Johnson or Eleanor Pardee playgrounds – popular ones – it’s possible that there are people waiting in line, but we’re seeing general compliance with both the masks and the social distancing. Sometimes it’s hard to tell which family member is part of the same family household, which is a requirement for social distancing and frankly, it’s a big guess in terms of someone stopping by, unless you asked. There’s also some challenges – and we shouldn’t jump to conclusions about kids who may or may not be wearing masks – sometimes there are medical reasons for why they cannot. At the Magical Bridge in particular, that’s a challenge, where we have so many special needs park visitors using that facility, so we’re going to hand out stickers that say, “I cannot wear a mask,” so they can be identified, which is a good suggestion we got from the Magical Bridge Foundation staff.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Any other Commissioners?

Commissioner Moss: What was the date of the movie night in Mitchell Park? Was it the day before Christmas or something?

Mr. Anderson: It’s November 13th.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Where in Mitchell Park will this be?

Mr. Anderson: I don’t know. I’m not positive. That would be on the City webpage.

Mr. Adam Howard: It’s generally where the judges tent for the chili cookoff is, if that helps you any.

Chair Greenfield: It’s on the grass?

Mr. Howard: Yeah, that is correct.
Chair Greenfield: So, picnic blankets and chairs are encouraged?

Mr. Howard: Correct, and we’re working out the details, but we are hoping to have an on-the-ground section where you are on blankets or a further back section where you are on chairs, to prevent people from blocking one another.

Chair Greenfield: Okay. Last call for questions regarding the Department report.

V. BUSINESS

1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the September 22, 2020 Special Parks and Recreation Commission meeting

Approval of the draft Minutes was moved by Commissioner Olson and seconded by Commissioner Moss. Passed 6-0.

2. Palo Alto Soccer Club Lighting Proposal for Cubberley Community Center Field

Chair Greenfield: Daren, would you like to introduce our speakers, please?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, thanks very much, Chair. Let me introduce Adam Howard, our Senior Community Services Manager. I’ll let Adam introduce the rest of the presenters.

Mr. Howard: Good evening, Commissioners. As Daren said, my name is Adam Howard. I’m a Senior Community Services Manager in the Recreation Department. I also have with me Neal Aronson, who is with the Palo Alto Soccer Club. He will chime in here in just a couple minutes and be available if you have any questions. We are here to talk about the seasonal lighting that takes place on Cubberley turf. A little bit of background for everybody. Daylight savings, when we begin to get darker sooner, we have a really high demand for lit fields. The City of Palo Alto has three lit fields, two at Mayfield Sports Complex, and one turf field at El Camino Field. Those fields are typically booked completely Monday through Friday, 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. That's really year-round, and then during daylight savings time, they are also completely booked, and there is just more participation on those fields. There are more participants on the field, because we lose other slots that have light. In 2017, Palo Alto Soccer worked with the City of Palo Alto to initiate a temporary winter lighting trial at Cubberley turf. This was to create some additional lit slots to ease some of the pressure on the other turf fields and just to provide some additional playing time during these daylight savings times. With that trial, with neighbor feedback, through staff input, Commission input, that trial was deemed successful, so the seasonal lighting at Cubberley was approved to move forward. This year seasonal lighting looks very similar that it has in years past, but there were a couple requested changes that we felt it was important to get Commission feedback and allow public input before we moved
forward with that. This year’s seasonal lighting looks similar. They are looking to run
November 2\textsuperscript{nd} through December 23\textsuperscript{rd}, January 4\textsuperscript{th} through March 15\textsuperscript{th}. The lights would be used sunset to 8:30 p.m., and this year we’re requesting a Monday through Friday use of the lights. This is where it differs from the previous years. In years past, it was only Monday through Thursday. We’ll go into the request for Friday and why we’re doing that shortly, in a couple slides here. The time will only be used for practice. There won’t be any game play, which will decrease noise, whistles, the need for public to be there. We’re also requesting, like we have in years past, that all of the activity at night go through Cubberley Community Center, so no pickup and drop-offs on the Nelson Avenue section. We will again be looking to use four to six temporary lights. These are better lights that are improved from previous years, so again, the attempt is to do the lighting with only four lights, but to go up to six if we need two additional lights in order to well light the entire field. These lights are solar-powered with a battery, so there are no generators on this year’s lights, which will improve some sound issues we’ve had in the past with malfunctioning generators that won’t turn off. That has been a problem, so these don’t have any generators, we will eliminate that additional noise factor that could take place in that past, but not this year. We will look to place lights in a way that reduces impact to the field, to the track and to public use. What you’ll see on this light is our ideal lighting situation. Palo Alto Soccer does have some concerns about these off-track light locations, so they’re going to have another option that they’d like to discuss as well, and they will give you their concerns for some of the off-track locations. The highlighted changes here – one, we understand it’s a new field and a new track, so we are really going to focus on making sure that the lights are delivered and stored safely. The vehicle that delivers them will drive out on plywood. We’ll have to slowly shift the plywood down so that the vehicle stays on that at all times. The light towers will be placed on plywood when they are left in the right locations. We feel strongly that that will protect our asset and make sure that the track and the field stay protected. Then, there’s the request to add Friday. This is really coming down to guidelines around COVID-19. These youth soccer groups have to stay in smaller groups – 12 or less – and even within those groups, they are required to have six-foot social distancing at all times. So, this has really bumped up their need for additional field space. I think it’s important to note, Fridays were not a contentious thing that we left off during our original request. Friday nights were just never a high need. The reason being, a lot of teens will play their games on Saturday and Sunday, so a late Friday night practice was never ideal, but with COVID-19 and everything changing. One is, there’s currently no games allowed, so we just need some additional night space. The request to add Friday seemed to make some sense to us, but we wanted to make sure we got your feedback and had an opportunity for the public to get involved. At this time, I’m going to ask Neal to speak. What you see now is the picture of their ideal light placement. He will talk a little bit about his concerns about the off-track location, and then we'll also discuss the safety protocol that Palo Alto Soccer is following and their need for the additional night. Neal, if you’re on and able to unmute, you can step up.
Mr. Neal Aronson: Members of the Commission, thank you very much for your time. Good to see many of you again. This is the third year we’ve been doing this. As Adam said, it’s been very successful. We’ve been very pleased with the result, and our ability to get out and practice during the winter months. I think most of your probably know of the Palo Alto Soccer Club. We’re one of the oldest clubs, youth organizations, in the city. We’ve been around for about 42 years now. We are primarily focused on practicing at Cubberley, although we do utilize other fields. Cubberley is really our home. We have a clubhouse in the building. I’ll throw this out for good measure – I’m guessing we’re the largest tenant of Cubberley in the city in many respects. We pay about $150,000 a year in field and other rentals, so we’re one if not the largest user of fields in the city, so this an area that’s very important for us to secure additional fields during this time of year. Of course, we’d love additional lighted fields, and this is another project we’ve been working on with the Commission and the City, the Baylands Athletic Development at some point. Today, what I’m focused on particularly is the location of the two middle lights. As Adam mentioned, the lights that we’re using this year are better than the ones we’ve had in the past. As you can imagine, LED technology has come a long way. The bulbs are brighter. They project greater lumens – or lux, I guess is the term they use now – and that allows for greater light penetration across the field. We’re hoping the four lights at the end in yellow that you can see on this map on the end lines will be sufficient for us to light the bulk of the field. What we are holding in reserve and we’d like to get approved today, but we haven’t actually contracted for the lights, are the two middle lights, the ones that are yellow outlined with the white center. In the past we have been six lights. Last year in particular, the Commission asked that we move them off of the track and to the locations that Adam depicted earlier. These were problematic for a couple reasons. The one closest to the far fence line that is adjacent to the residential neighborhood, there wasn’t enough sunlight to charge that battery, so that light actually went dead, and we were unable to use it. Of course, it was an expensive dead battery for us. So that location doesn’t work at all. The other location across the field adjacent to the bleachers is also not ideal because we lose what is 50 or 60 feet of that high density light. It’s great for the joggers and the runners who want to use the track at night, but it really didn’t work for us very well. These particular light structures, if you recall from last year or the year before, these are a lot smaller, the footprint is smaller. The weight is a lot lighter, so we think that they’re more appropriate for the track that we have now. The new track, we know, is being guarded particularly carefully by City staff in order to extend its life so that it doesn’t crack or have any other problems due to vehicles or other trailers being towed on it. We believe we can stick this particular unit off the track on the fields, and I understand the base of the field is the original base, so it’s a stronger base. It’s thicker, so it doesn’t have the weight constraints that the track does. We’re confident we can get these lights off the track, on the field, but outside of the field sidelines, so they’re not actually on the playing field. As Adam mentioned, games are not allowed still. The soccer leagues are not playing. That’s not expected to change probably until spring, so we don’t think there’s any safety risk. That seemed to be the biggest issue in the past is that these devices obviously have sharp edges, and we wouldn’t want somebody running to
catch a ball or to kick a ball and run into it. In the past, we’ve put cones and caution tape
around and even foam padded a couple of the sharp edges. We’re prepared to do that as
well if needed, but our requests, as Adam mentioned, is to have the ability to put the lights
on the field as depicted in that second image. With that, I’ll answer any questions you may
have. Again, we really appreciate the Commission’s support over these years. It’s been a
great program, and we look forward to continuing it.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Neal, and thank you, Adam. In a moment, if there’s any
members of the public who would like to speak to this item, I’ll give you an opportunity if
you raise your hand. Before I do so I’ll ask the Commission if there are any clarifying
questions regarding the information which we’ve just heard. I’m not seeing any hands go
up, so let me just try to frame this first. It sounds like the primary decisions we’re being
asked, the primary areas that we’re looking for input are the addition of Fridays and the
addition of the lights on the new field, and then the location of the lights, whether it be if
they need to go to six lights, would it work having the lights outside the track, or would it
be permitted on the sideline of the actual playing field, but on the turf field? And Adam
and Daren, one question related to that is, just to clarify, ultimately this is a staff decision,
and you’re looking Commission input on this matter. Is this correct?

Mr. Anderson: That is correct.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Okay, it looks like there is no one from the public who is
looking to speak on this, so I’ll start off just by saying that I did meet with Adam and Neal
out at the field to take a look at the plan, and I’ve been working directly working Palo Alto
Soccer Club over the last few years on this plan, and it has been a good working
arrangement. I think we’ve all been talking about how we’re looking to support the
community during COVID and increase recreation opportunities, so it seems like a
reasonable request. I think the bigger question is the details, so I’ll open it up for
Commissioners, if anybody wants to raise your hand and talk first, or I’ll pick someone.
Jackie, would you like to comment?

Commissioner Olson: Sure. I know I saw Anne’s hand up as well, but I’m happy to go first.
I’d love to hear what the staff’s viewpoint is on this. If you’re asking for input, I imagine
there are some downsides to the proposal, so I’d love to hear what those are.

Mr. Howard: Sure. I think with the lights, the most ideal, the very less risk, is to have them
on those off-track locations. However, we do feel safe that we can protect the field and the
track if they are there. I’ve done some measurements. We can basically keep them about a
foot off the track and still three feet from the sideline of the field, where the field play
would actually be. I think in current circumstances, I’m okay with that. My one concern
would be if games are suddenly allowed, and then we’ve impacted the field a little bit. I
mean, three feet is still good on a sideline, because rarely are you running directly sideline
to sideline. That would be my only concern. Otherwise, I feel comfortable that we can
Chair Greenfield: I’ll interject here real quickly, based on my years of soccer experience, I would say that having the lights three feet off the field is not workable if there are games on the field, because when the ball goes out of play on the sidelines, you’re putting the ball back into play from outside the sideline, so I would say if there were games, the lights certainly could not be on the sidelines. I think that Palo Alto Soccer Club would agree with that.

Mr. Aronson: Yes, I would concur with that.

Commissioner Olson: Are there any staff concerns with player safety, or are we really mostly concerned with the integrity of the field itself with the extra weight?

Mr. Howard: I think player safety is always…I don’t want to say that I’m not concerned about that. I think that that can be controlled by Palo Alto Soccer in terms of how they organize their practice and where they put the players, so I feel comfortable that we can keep the players safe. The risk I’m really most worried about is making sure we don’t damage any of our new field or our new track.

Commissioner Olson: Got it. Do these lights get put on at the beginning of the season and they sort of stay there the whole time, or are they coming on and off from week to week?

Mr. Howard: No, once they’re placed, they stay there the duration of the time. There is, I think, a three-week window where they’re not being used, but they’re still out there, because the majority of the trouble and the cost comes from getting them there and taking them away.

Commissioner Olson: Okay, got it. I don’t have any questions at this time, Jeff. Thanks.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Commissioner Moss, your hand is up.

Commissioner Moss: I live right behind Cubberley. [Distortion] especially the ones on the side it’s very important to make sure it’s [distortion].

Chair Greenfield: We’ve lost Commission Moss. I’m sure he will be back soon. Commissioner LaMere, why don’t you go ahead now?

Commissioner LaMere: Thank you. My question is about safety. If we don’t have these padded – or perhaps we will have these padded – what is the City liability if a Palo Alto soccer player runs into it and gets injured, or what if a jogger on the track trips and falls? What is our City liability with the safety of these? And, will we be able to get them padded?
Mr. Aronson: I can speak to that, Adam, just with regard to the insurance. The Club carries insurance for the systems for theft and vandalism and injury. That’s something that we’ve done in the past. It was required originally under the first go-through. That would, I assume, be the first line of defense that would be tapped if somebody actually got injured. I will point out, there have been zero injuries in the three years we have been doing this, or two years, or however long it’s been. They’re fairly large structures, so they’re not hard to see, so people have been aware of them. We’ve also been sensitive to that and used cones and caution tape around them, so that there would obviously be some warning, if you will. Regarding padding, these are new units. We haven’t seen them before. We’ve only seen the brochures, kind of the pictures you saw here. We’re prepared to provide padding if we need to. The ones in the past did require some padding. They had some sharp edges on the solar panels that stuck out well beyond the foundation. My sense is these are smaller and they don’t have those kind of dangerous sharp edges that are head-level and not easy to see. We’ll take a look at them as we roll them out, and if we feel like there’s a need, we’ll provide the appropriate padding. These are our players primarily, and of course other people use the track and so forth, but it’s really our players who are most likely the ones who are going to get hurt by them, so we’re very sensitive to this point.

Commissioner LaMere: I agree that your players do use the field a lot at night, but there’s a lot of other use by other people throughout the day as well. Daren or Adam, would you be able to speak to any City concerns or liability with these?

Mr. Howard: The City ultimately does take the umbrella of liability with these lights. When this originally went, we did talk to our Risk Manager just about if there’s additional concern outside of what our insurance covered and they didn’t have concerns about us placing these out on the shorter term. But you are right, if a jogger gets hit, we may ask for Palo Alto Soccer’s assistance in that, but we are prepared to over that issue if it were to arise.

Commissioner LaMere: Adam, do you feel like it impacts joggers at all, with it being only one foot from the track, or other activities, with the lights?

Mr. Howard: No. I think it’s actually probably impacted the track more in years past, because the units were much larger and we would actually, to be really cautious, we would bump out into the first runner’s lane, just to make sure. We don’t think we’d even have to do that this year, because they’re so much smaller. But it hasn’t been an issue. It’s just been one bump-out on that first lane to make sure joggers didn’t run into it. That hasn’t been a problem, and like I said, I think we’re going to not even need to do that this year. We will if we think it’s still close. But like we said, these units are almost half the size of the units we’ve used in the past.

Commissioner LaMere: Are there any other City-incurred costs that we have with this project?
Mr. Howard: None. No.

Commissioner LaMere: That’s great. I really think this is a great partnership, and anything we can do to increase field use and allow something like this is great. I appreciate all your work with this. Thank you, Chair.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Commissioner Moss?

Commissioner Moss: Let me try that again. Anyway, thank you for the smaller footprint. Dozens and dozens of people use the track, especially the inner lane, so keeping it off the track is essentially. I’m not worried about joggers injured by these, but I am concerned that sometimes the cones that they put out for the kids get knocked down, and I want to make sure that Neal tells the coaches to put them back when they get knocked down, and the caution tape also so quite frequently they get knocked down and left that way, so if he can make a special effort to let the coaches know. I’m so glad that you have a new vendor from last year. I hope that the reliability of these is going to be better. Thank goodness you don’t have the generators because probably, I don’t know, six or seven times we’ll be walking in the morning, and the generators will be going full blast at 6:00 a.m., so not having the generators is a great thing, but that leads to the idea that maybe, just maybe, some of the lights might not stay on when they’re needed. I guess the coaches will just have to move their kids around, but hopefully that won’t be the case this time. We won’t know until we’re a few weeks in, especially on a dark night in early December. One other improvement – you mentioned to me, Adam, that the LEDs are very bright up to a point and won’t be shining so brightly into the neighbors’ windows. Hopefully it will cover the field, though. Do you have statistics on that.

Mr. Howard: Neal might be able to speak to it. The lighting company has shown some diagrams of the fields showing how far the light goes and just staff experience with the LEDs has been that they are much brighter where they are concentrated, but don’t provide as much light pollution, meaning better for the field and better for the neighbors. We’re hopeful to see that trend continue with these newer LEDs.

Commissioner Moss: That’s great. I have one last question for Neal that’s not light-related, but it’s the reason you even have the lights. That is that quite often the kids are not wearing masks or they’re not six feet apart. Are you making extra sure this fall that they follow the COVID regulations?

Mr. Aronson: Yes. It’s a constant challenge, but our coaches and directors and staff are working hard to make sure the kids are staying focused on the mask-wearing and the distancing. Every day the coaches are reminding them all of the time. I think in general we’ve been pretty good about it, but you’re right, there’s always the case where the kid walks off the field without putting on his mask. I appreciate you bringing it to our attention.
Commissioner Moss: Also, because you’re the biggest, or one of the biggest, users of fields, you set an example for others, so you have a lot of power.

Mr. Aronson: Yes, you’re right.

Commissioner Moss: That’s all I have.

Mr. Aronson: We will continue our efforts on that through the fall and as long as it’s required by the County.

Commissioner Moss: Thank you. That’s all I have.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Keith.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I agree with Commissioner LaMere. We should be doing anything we can to increase field usage, so I’m very excited that you’ll be coming back to us again this year. First, if we aren’t playing any games, the sideline is kind of irrelevant, isn’t it? [Distortion] your drills using the sideline, do they?

Mr. Howard: Right. The reality is you have a lot of flexibility to keep your drills away from the sideline, so that’s the ideal situation without having to have games. So yeah, with practices you just move your drills and make sure you’re away from that spot.

Commissioner Reckdahl: So, if we’re worried about people running, why wouldn’t you make it two or three away from the track? Do you think that one foot is more than enough?

Mr. Howard: I think that one foot is enough, but the further we keep it from the field itself, the better. We don’t think we can damage anything, but if there were to be damage, we certainly wouldn’t want it to be on the playing surface.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. I appreciate that, yes. But if the field is 50 yards wide, we shouldn’t dicker about a foot on the edge if you think it’s going to improve track safety.

Mr. Howard: Good point, yes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The second thing is community feedback. Last time when you came, the community by and large was happy with it. There was a few isolated complaints about drop-offs on Nelson, I believe. What’s the feedback in the last 12 months about this?

Mr. Howard: That tends to be a bigger pressure during daylight savings, when we have more nighttime drop-offs, but I think Palo Alto Soccer has always been really good. Any time I get a complaint I will send it to their field person, and it seems to get corrected really quickly. It sometimes takes a reminder once a year, but I actually have that on my calendar,
just to do. But they are very responsive if, like, parents are not picking up in Cubberley, to
correct that issue really quickly.

Mr. Reckdahl: Okay, and I know in past years we’ve had some problems with people
leaving empty bottles and stuff on the field. Any problems last year with that?

Mr. Howard: Last year I believe most of the attention was focused on that generator that
wouldn’t turn off at times, so that’s why we focused on correcting that.

Mr. Reckdahl: Okay, now a question for Neal. How’s the demand this year compared to
last year?

Mr. Aronson: The demand for fields?

Mr. Reckdahl: Yeah. How many kids are you serving this year compared to how many kids
were signed up last year?

Mr. Aronson: All soccer clubs in the area – and I assume sports in general – are down
dramatically. We probably lost 30 percent of our members due to COVID. So, field use is
down, but at the same time, because of the requirements and protocols necessary to
practice, I’d defer to Adam. Actually, I don’t think Adam keeps his finger on this anymore
at that level, but I think our field need is very close to where it was originally.

Mr. Howard: Yes, that’s correct. We don’t have fields sitting empty because we have to
space groups out so much more. Where a team would put five or six teams on a half a field,
we’re seeing two or maybe three, depending on the age, so it’s really reduced the people
that are out there, but with the additional spacing, we still have a high demand on the fields.

Mr. Reckdahl: So the fact that demand is down 30 percent is probably a blessing.

Mr. Howard: Well, yeah. I mean, if we were at full capacity and had the space [crosstalk]

Mr. Aronson: Not from a revenue perspective.

Mr. Howard: It depends on who you’re talking to.

Mr. Reckdahl: From a COVID standpoint, it’s probably a blessing, but from a revenue
standpoint it’s not, I would imagine. Okay. I’m very happy. Good luck. Hopefully, these
are better than last year, but this is a very program. Thank you.

Chair Greenfield: Vice Chair Cribbs.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Chair. First of all, Neal and Adam, I’m really happy that
this program is going forward again this year and you’re asking to add Friday night. I’m
so much in favor of giving the kids all the opportunity we can to get them playing in this
time of crazy stuff for them. I’m glad Keith asked the question about the demand. If you’re
down 30 percent, is that because of fear of COVID in playing, or is it because of finances
and people who have lost their jobs? Or do you know?

Mr. Aronson: No, specifically it may also be due to the fact that the County basically
requires kids to pick which pod they had to be in, so kids who are in tennis or swimming
or playing soccer, they were only allowed to be in one pod. So, we lost a lot of the second
and third teams, or fourth teams, at a particular age group. The ones that were not so serious
about soccer, but it was fun, they played with their friends, but then also did something
else, so they had to make a decision as to which sport they were going to play.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you for that. That’s really good to know. I’ve been following
and telling fellow Commissioners the national stats are saying that youth sports are down
across the board at least 40 percent. Some of it is fear, as much of it is the financial situation
that families find themselves in, making choices and that kind of thing. That makes a lot
of sense. Speaking of COVID, can I ask you – do parents and spectators come in along the
sidelines and watch practice, or is that not allowed?

Mr. Aronson: No, we’ve basically barred that from happening. Parents are supposed to stay
in their cars or just show up at pick-up time, and we’ve actually been pretty good about
patrolling. I guess you could say, fields. As I mentioned earlier, most of our practice
actually happens at Cubberley, some at Mayfield, some at El Camino, but it’s easy to kind
of monitor that. Parents have been very cooperative. Palo Alto, I’d say, is probably one of
the more compliant communities in terms of COVID restrictions than we’ve seen around
the neighborhoods. MVLA or Mountain View, Los Altos is having bigger problems than
we are with this.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Well, thanks for that and for all your attention, and Adam, yours too,
to detail, and hopefully the new lights work out and everything. It sounds a little bit to me
like me should renew our efforts to figure out some more places in Palo Alto for lighted
fields. Does anybody remember the history when – David, maybe you do – when
Cubberley was a football school? Was that field lit or not? Just asking as a random
questions.

Mr. Anderson: I don’t believe so, Vice Chair Cribbs.

Vice Chair Cribbs: It was not lit?

Mr. Anderson: Right.

Commissioner Moss: I’ve never seen lights there, and I showed up about two years after
they closed, but there were no lights down there.
Chair Greenfield: I know that even at Gunn and Paly the lights at the football field are relatively new over the last 20 years or so.

[Crosstalk]

Commissioner Moss: [Inaudible] love to have lights on Cubberley, but I don’t think Commission Moss and others would like it very much.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Just a question looking for a place for lights, because I know you guys are spending a lot of time and energy and placement and all of that. The new lights that are available are so great now, and focus the light where it needs to be and all of that, so just a question. That's all I have, Chair, but thank you guys very much.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Anne, and thank you, Adam and Neal, for the presentation. Again, I think it’s great that we’re finding creative ways to work to increase our recreational opportunities and extend things further during COVID. I do know in talking to Neal that, definitely, the Palo Alto Soccer Club has incentives to make it work with just four lights. These lights are more expensive than they’ve been in the past, so they’ll definitely go with four lights if they can, if that works for them. The biggest question I have is what the likelihood of damage or compromise to our new playing field is, and even on the sidelines. The sidelines are used as part of the game. I have no concerns about the lights in the endzones. I guess the question, Adam, is in the unlikely event that there is damage or compromise to the field, what happens from there?

Mr. Howard: Daren, you probably need to help me out with this. My honest answer is I think it would be very difficult if we damaged the base to replace it, to fix it. But Daren, can you provide any insight into that circumstance?

Mr. Anderson: That’s true. It is challenging. Once you’ve created a rut or some sort of impact to the base, you’re now lifting up the turf, which is labor-intensive to say the least, but not impossible. I think that’s why we’re requiring such herculean efforts of anyone who needs to go anywhere on our track or on that field, to make sure that there is plywood down. When we do the surfacing with far heavier equipment and they come out with plywood to replace light bulbs, for example, at Stanford Palo Alto or El Camino Park, these enormous vehicles come out and they use the – because we watch them and make them do it – they use the plywood, and we have not seen any rutting, so as long as you’re diligent about that – and we will be, we’re going to make sure staff are present when this work takes place and the vehicles are both placed on when lights are placed and removed, because that’s how serious it is. Once you do the damage, fixing it is problematic.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you.
Commissioner Moss: It’s even true off the field. Those ones in the end zone. If you get a hole, a pit, just outside the end zone line and somebody steps into it – so it’s important to have the plywood, even off the field.

Chair Greenfield: And that’s also why the lights beyond the end lines will be placed, what Neal? Ten yards back from the line? Five yards? Adam, Neal? The location of the –

Mr. Howard: Yeah, in years past I think it’s been seven yards from the end zone line. It’s a distance. We don’t keep it close.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. That’s helpful, Daren, and it’s also encouraging to know that much heavier equipment has been brought out onto the fields and the diligent use of plywood has worked well to protect things. One last comment I have – Adam, it’s really a question for you and for Neal, I suppose – there’s no games being played, so the evening night slots that were previously taken by adult soccer teams, particularly some 7:00 slots, but all of the 8:30 slots at Mayfield and El Camino, are those being used by the youth teams now?

Mr. Howard: They are. Any time we…We don’t release everything at once for the adults, just so that if they come back, we still have slots available, but as we release them, they are picked up, so we’re still full until 10:00.

Chair Greenfield: Great. Good to know. In summary, if staff is comfortable with the recommendation, I’m comfortable with it. I think it would help to get some clarity in terms of the process that goes on to decide where the lights are going to go. First they’ll start with four lights and see if it works. Then if they need to add two more, will they be testing them out outside the track first and then going on to the sidelines on the turf third if that doesn’t work? What are you looking to recommend?

Mr. Howard: That would be my recommendation. I would like a little feedback from Neal as to hard it would be to move them once they’re placed. If it absolutely doesn’t work, can we move them to the sideline? That would be the ideal situation to process this out.

Mr. Aronson: I don’t know. We haven’t manipulated these units before. They weigh about 2,500 pounds, so they’re not light. Obviously, our preference would be to put them, if we need the two extra units – and we’re going to start without them, we’re starting with just four. They’re very expensive, too. Each one is about $1,200 a month, so it’s not a small expenses the club is incurring to do this. We’re going to start without the two sideline units, and if we just don’t have the lighting coverage that we were hoping for, we’d like to bring them out, and obviously our preference would be to start on the sideline and if it creates a problem, to move them if needed. The one on the far side is the bigger problem, because if we’re asked to move that one, we’re probably just going to send it back, because it’s not going to work where it was in the past, we know that. So, that would be my request is that
Chair Greenfield: I guess I have a couple questions for staff then. One, is it reasonable to put them on the sideline, and to assess if there’s a problem…I think we’re trying to avoid problems, and if there’s a problem, is this something that’s going to get worse over time, or if there’s a problem, it’s something we have to deal with, and who is financially responsible for taking care of the problem? I guess that’s the second question. The third question is, are you in agreement that the light outside the track, on the neighbor side is not likely to have sufficient solar access for the panels to be charging the unit properly?

Mr. Howard: I think I’ll start with the last question first. I do have concerns that it will work. The light last year didn’t last long. Now, here we are, talking about brand new lights that are much more efficient, so part of me wants to know if it’s going to work in that location, but I also understand how it’s going to be to move them. My honest thing is I think the more we move them, that that’s probably where the greatest risk lies, is the adapting and the moving of them. I think I’m pretty…The only way to assure no damage is not to put them on there, but I feel very comfortable that we won’t damage them, so when I think of problems, I’m concerned about are we impacting the track too much and runners are having to go around? Or, are we seeing that the ball is coming over too much, or a game start, and we don’t want them there any more. That’s where I would see we would need to get them moved. But, the only way to guarantee we don’t do damage is to not put them there. That’s the truth of the matter. The safe route is to put them on the off-track locations, but I do have pretty heavy concerns that, especially the one closest to the neighbors, probably won’t last very long.

Chair Greenfield: And if there is damage, is this the City responsible for this, or does Palo Alto Soccer Club have insurance for this?

Mr. Howard: I think it says Palo Alto Soccer would cover it through their insurance. He’s on the line? Could we have a struggle on our hands? Probably. But that would certainly end this lighting moving forward.

Chair Greenfield: I’d like to open this up to other Commissioners, because I haven’t really heard comments on the sideline location on-field or outside the track. Any commissioners like to comment on that?

Mr. Anderson: Chair, if you wouldn’t mind, Adam, could you pull up the slide where we could see that, the field and the lights, and show them exactly where we’re talking about?
Mr. Howard: So, when we talk about off-track locations, we’re talking about these two yellow squares to the left and the right of the picture. These are cement pads currently, so they would be going on a hard surface. This one over here is now a cement pad, too. The concern over here, as you can see, is that it’s tree-lined, so it doesn’t get as much sun as the rest of these will get. It does get sun, so if these are efficient enough, it’s possible that they would work and that the battery would charge enough to keep it running. So, having new lights puts that back into question. When we talk about putting them on the sidelines, we’re talking about these two squares here. Again, just with measurements, they can be about foot off the track and still three feet from what this sideline is. That’s what we’re talking about here currently.

Chair Greenfield: Would any Commissioners like to comment?

Commissioner LaMere: Is there, when we talk about damage to the field, is there more risk of damage to the field on the sidelines than the corners? Did I miss something about the placement of those?

Mr. Anderson: From my perspective, Commissioner LaMere, the damage is not more likely in any one place. The minute you pull onto the track or any part of that field, the chances are equal, from my perspective.

Mr. Howard: I would say that, too. I think the sidelines are just a little bit more in play in terms of someone playing a game and running full speed. They’re going to come out there a little bit more frequently, so I think the concern would be if there’s damage there’s a little bit more possibility that that damage could impact a game play there, where that could become a safety concern for our game.

Chair Greenfield: That’s my opinion as well. I have very little concern about the impact to the play of the game on the field if there were damage in the areas over the end line. Those areas are really only used for warm-up and even when you’re warming up, you’re not too close to the field, anyway, so kind of a dead area anyway. The areas on the sidelines are regularly used as part of the game. Any other questions or comments from Commissioners? If not, then I will thank Adam and Neal for the presentation. I think you have the support of the Commission that we’re all in favor of adding lights on Fridays and support of the community to increase recreation and play and really trust your judgment on how to handle the agreement moving forward. Thank you very much.

Mr. Howard: Thank you everybody. Appreciate it.
Chair Greenfield: Next up on the agenda is the First Tee of Silicon Valley Proposal for the Baylands Golf Links. I’ll turn it back over to Daren to introduce our speakers.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. Let me start by introducing our Community Services Superintendent, Lam Do, and then he will introduce our colleagues from Silicon Valley First Tee.

Mr. Lam Do: Thank you Daren and thank you to the Commission. This evening I would like to introduce you to representatives from The First Tee of Silicon Valley to present a public/private partnership proposal at the Baylands Golf Links. This evening we have George Maxe, President and CEO of The First Tee of Silicon Valley. We also have Ash Pirayou, advisor to The First Tee of Silicon Valley on partnerships. The City has collaborated with The First Tee since 2009 for youth golf development. This collaboration has led to this evening’s proposal from The First Tee of Silicon Valley for a development partnership and youth partnership proposal. With that, I’d like to turn it over to George Maxe and Ash Pirayou, to be followed with a Q&A as well.

Mr. George Maxe: Thank you, Lam. Thank you, Commissioners. It’s a pleasure to be with you and to share a little bit about us, about our vision for Baylands, and why we have this particular vision. So, just a little bit about us, a little bit about our history. I think you all maybe received this attachment as well. We were created in 1997 nationally by some golf entities. There are 150 First Tee chapters around the country. We are primarily about youth development. Golf is the vehicle. It would not be correct to look at us as purely a junior golf program. In 1999, the first San Jose Sports Authority created The Eagles at Rancho junior golf program in East San Jose. In 2005, that became The First Tee of San Jose. Subsequently, we became The First Tee of Silicon Valley in 2012, but as Lam said, in 2009 we began programming in Palo Alto. In 2013, we separated from and became independent from The San Jose Sports Authority and continued our expansion. We were early in conversations with Rob de Geus, Forrest Richardson and others around the improvement project that was going on there at Baylands. When the actual project got going, we moved over to Moffett Field, became very acquainted with OB Sports, which was the operator there and were delighted when OB was selected to manage Baylands. In 2018, we returned, that summer, right after the grand opening of Baylands. We ceased our programs there at Moffett. The only reason we were really there was because of the renovation project at Baylands. In 2018, we expanded our service area north to Highway 92, which I think is pretty important for our presence at Baylands. We cover from Highway 92 down to Hollister, and then north through San Jose to Milpitas. A little bit about our programs. As I mentioned, our curriculum is about youth development through golf, so we’re teaching life and golf skills. It’s very similar to Scouts in that there’s different tiers in the program. Participants can be in the program from 2nd grade to 12th grade. We have coaches. We have
a staff right now of about 25 coaches who are teaching our classes. You’ll see by my last
bullet here, we’re not only at Baylands. We’re also at Rancho del Pueblo and San Jose, and
then in Gilroy at Gavilan College Golf Course. We welcome all participants. It doesn’t
matter what their background is, and we make a concerted effort through our outreach,
which is in-school, after-school, with schools or with YSOs – Youth Serving Organizations
– to bring in children who wouldn’t otherwise have access to the game. What we’re really
trying to do with the outreach is bring the kids to the golf course and get them acquainted
with the game. You can see here by my third to last bullet, under Programs, that most of
our classes are after school, between the 3:00 to 6:00 block, Tuesday through Friday, and
then Saturdays, as you can imagine, are a very popular day for families. Since 2005, we’ve
reached over 81,000 children. This is a mix of outreach and our golf course classes.
Diversity, it’s about 40 percent girls in the program, and we’re about 85 percent non-white.
We have a very, very diverse participant base. Serving low income participants is very
important to us. That number is right around 30 percent right now. Our goal would be
ultimately for that to be about 50 percent. Lastly – this is a self-reported number – but our
participants and families, when they do their registration, 80 percent say the children get
A’s and B’s in school. We don’t take credit for that as causal, but it’s kind of noteworthy
that we see that. That’s just a little bit about us. I want to pause right there, if you have any
particular questions, if there’s anything I can clarify about what I just said?

Chair Greenfield: Any clarifying questions from the Commission?

Mr. Reckdahl: I guess I have a question about life skills. Do you have in-classroom training
at all? Can you go into more detail about that?

Mr. Maxe: Sure. That’s a great question. All of our classes are an hour-and-a-half long.
Think of it a little bit like a sandwich. We do a 15-minute warmup and introduction of the
life skills of the day. So, we might be talking to them about a core value of judgment and
helping them understand what judgment means, and then we do 60 minutes of golf activity.
They could be at the range. They could be doing short game work. They could be out on
the golf course playing, and we’re trying to help integrate that concept of judgment into
what they’re doing. So, judging a putt, for example, how hard to hit it, where to hit it, things
like that. Then, the last 15 minutes of the class, we’re wrapping up what they did,
reinforcing what they’ve learned, and then we bridge to life. So, we’ll say, “Okay, today
you learned about judgment. How can you show good judgment at school? How can you
show good judgment at home?” It’s pretty much the sandwich approach of 15 minutes, it’s
typically out on the grass there at Baylands. I almost said Palo Alto Muni. It’s right there
by the cart wash. We have a cart wash area fairly close to the parking lot. Then they disperse
for the golf activities, and then they come back to that area. Any other questions? And I can keep moving here. I'm assuming there will be more questions.

Chair Greenfield: Just real quickly, for the last 15 minutes you say they go into the classroom, or they are outside on the grass, or does it depend on weather?

Mr. Maxe: It’s almost always outside, Commissioner. The only time that we might be inside is if it’s an inclement weather day, if it’s raining or something. In that case, at Baylands we’d most likely be on the outside patio. There’s just a little bit of covering there.

Chair Greenfield: Great, thank you. Please proceed if there’s no other questions.

Mr. Maxe: Okay, so our vision is to collaborate with the City, to make some improvements to the range netting and the youth area that was built out in the renovation project but never fully completed. Both for public benefit, but also for First Tee’s use to reach kids. As we have looked at things over time and have had a lot of conversations with Lam and previously with Rob, also with OB Sports, it’s become pretty clear we’re really looking at two potential projects that are decoupled, but I want you to understand that we do think of this larger vision for Baylands. The first project is really our focus of this conversation, or in this presentation. It’s higher netting, and it’s the youth area completion. What we’re initially looking for is a 50-year lease. This is all would be subject to negotiation and once we get your blessing to proceed. The second project would be maybe covering range stalls, adding a training center in this space here along Embarcadero, and some other improvements. But the real focus is this first project, which is right around $4 million, and like I say, it’s to raise the nets around the range. It’s higher netting, and it’s the youth area completion. What we’re

Commissioner Olson: For the lease of the space, are you looking for exclusive use of the space or for certain days and hours?

Mr. Maxe: I think that’s part of the conversation, part of the negotiation, Commissioner. What we are looking for is a commitment, because a commitment allows us to fundraise. It’s a pretty hefty price tag on this to do this. If we don’t have a commitment, then the dollars won’t flow. When you look at our activity, it is never more than maybe, say, 25 percent of the use of the spaces when you consider daylight hours, 365. So, I think there
are other opportunities, say, for OB Sports with their private instruction, to use the area.
What we just, I think, need to be careful about is, say, what I’ve seen at Oakland Metro
Golf Course, where there’s a designated area for short game practice. The public that’s
used it has almost completely destroyed it, because what happens is they’ll chip, they’ll
make divots, and they don’t get repaired, and the area just gets eaten up. So, primarily our
use, but that’s really part of the conversation, part of the negotiation.

Commissioner Olson: And then, do you all run any programs with Parks and Rec programs,
so for example, is that only…?

Chair Greenfield: Excuse me. Before me get too far into questions, I think it would be
better if we finish the presentation and then –

Commissioner Olson: Oh, sure.

Chair Greenfield: And see if anyone in the public would like to speak, and then we can go
into a round of questions.

Commissioner Olson: Sure.

Chair Greenfield: I think we’re just looking for clarifying questions right now.

Commissioner Olson: Got it.

Mr. Maxe: The third slide is, “Why would we want to do this?” Well, in part, back to
Commissioner Olson’s question. Part of it is gives us dedicated space to be able to be in a
space where we’re cordoned off from the public is really golden for us, with what we do,
but also just that corridor there along 101 has such a high population density, it’s really
great for our program to be able to attract children to it, and then there are low income areas
right nearby to be able to really serve those children. Like I say, our goal is, right now I
should say, we’re right around 30 percent low income, and the goal ultimately would be
around 50 percent. Benefits to the kids – we think we can reach 6,000 children with
Baylands as a base for us with this type of facility, so it would be 1,000 unique children a
year. I say unique, because they tend to take two classes a year across the four seasons.
Working with Palo Alto Schools and Ravenswood School District and then other youth
serving organizations, we think we can reach another 5,000 children in school and after
school, and that becomes a type of a pipeline to the golf course program. Generally
speaking, we invest about $500 per unique child, per year. The investment into the
community at 1,000 is about a half-million dollars a year, and then through outreach it’s
about $200 per child. What’s great about the classes is that they are learning golf skills,
they are getting golf-ready. It becomes a type of a pipeline for the high school programs
for Gunn and for Palo Alto High School. In terms of public golfers, raising the nets basically makes that short game hole that’s on the golf course side of the range, it makes it
useable. It’s never been useable in these two-and-a-half years that the golf course is open, because of range balls going over the nets. Lam, I’m sure, can speak more to that. Lastly, we create a customer base, and I think it’s why OB Sports is so excited about this project is that it allows them to increase the customer base there at the facility. Fundraising to date, I’m not sure if you’re familiar the SAGA Foundation. They’re a local foundation. They’ve made a pledge of a half-million dollars for this. They are very eager to see commitment from the City and some kind of an MOU with us, so that they can help us continue the fundraising. One of the entities that we’re partnering with is Wadsworth Golf Charities. Wadsworth did the construction project to build out Baylands, and this is the foundation side for them. We would also ask them to do the buildout of the youth area, so part of our $4.2 million estimate is the quote from Wadsworth to work on that area. There is a desire to have the City involved financially somehow. In large part, because donors are looking for that, but also because the netting all along that short game hole side really has more public benefit than First Tee benefit, but it might as well all be done at the same time. Lastly, like I say, if we have commitment, then it makes it easier for us to get out and do fundraising. One last comment – I’ve mentioned the nets quite a bit, so the current nets are 70 feet high, and Lam and Daren, did you initiate the Tanner study?

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Mr. Maxe: There was a Tanner study, a golf ball trajectory study. It was probably two years ago, three years ago, something like that. They do a full analysis of different types of golf clubs and golf balls, and what they determined is for golf balls to not go over the nets and to fully protect the surrounding areas and make this almost completely safe, that the nets starting right around here need to raise to about 100 feet; through here get as high as 135; at the end of the range be 100; and the same thing on this side. It’s kind of a parabola of the nets, and they’re currently 70 feet. With that, that was pretty much my presentation. I really, really welcome your questions and your input, because to us this is a collaborative process. This is one where we want mutual benefit with the City, between the City and public and our program. So really welcome your questions and your input.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, George for your presentation and Lam, for your support on this.

Mr. Maxe: You’re welcome.

Chair Greenfield: I’ll quickly ask if there are any members of the public who would like to speak on this matter. If so, please raise your hand. Seeing as there is no one who would like to speak, I’ll open it up to Commissioners for comment. Anne, I know that you worked and had a relationship with First Tee for many years. Would you like to start off?

Vice Chair Cribbs: I would love to. Thank you very much. I have had a relationship with The First Tee since the early 2000s or before that, as I was a member of the San Jose Sport
Authority. We incubated, actually, First Tee. First Tee was part of the Sports Authority until they grew so big and so exciting that it was time to let them spin off and do their own thing and become their own 501(c)(3), but through that time I’ve had an opportunity to watch them. I know a lot about The First Tee nationally and what golf does for kids and what kids can do with golf. I think that it’s a really wonderful organization for the City of Palo Alto to be partnered with. I think it would be good for not only the City, but the golf course and also The First Tee for all the reasons that George has enumerated. I have to mention that I’m particularly pleased that the outreach to girls is about 40 percent, and the 40 percent girls participating. That’s really important to me personally as you guys know, and of course, the next really thing after we ask our questions and all of that is really what this lease is going to look like and how long is it going to be, and tell us what needs to be in terms of the exclusivity and the access and all of that, so as they say, the devil is in the details. But, I know that there have been a lot of other successful public/private partnerships, and I have no doubt that the people involved with The First Tee, but also the involved in the City can make this work, really for our community, for our kids and for the future. I’m a huge supporter, but I have to tell you, I’m also prejudiced about it, so thank you, George, for your presentation. I appreciate it, and Lam, thank you for what you’re doing.

Mr. Maxe: You’re welcome, and the girls are the best golfers in our program. No doubt about it.

Vice Chair Cribbs: It’s unnecessary that they’re the best. It’s just that they have the opportunity.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Anne. I think it would be helpful before going to the other Commissioner comments, Daren and Lam, if you could help frame this a little bit for us in terms of the process we’re looking at ultimately for approval. What input are you looking for from the Commission this evening, and where do we go from here as far as the CIP planning and Park Improvement Plan, Council approval and overall process. Can you give us some idea of where we’re headed, please?

Mr. Anderson: Thanks, Chair. I’ll turn it over to my partner, Lam, in just one second. I think the main thing I can contribute is to your question about what we’re asking of the Commission tonight. It’s to ask thoughtful questions that the Commission always thinks of on how this affects the community and the City, what things we should be taking into account. Your general support or concerns are always of interest. I think those are the key things now. Again, this is not an action item, so we’re just looking for feedback. For next steps, I think I’ll turn it over to Lam, but we’ve got some internal discussions as our next key steps. I’ll let Lam elucidate on that.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Daren, Chair Greenfield and Commission. If I could start by saying that in public/private partnerships, none are the same. As you are aware, other ones that the
City has done have been modeled differently, whether it be the Junior Museum and Zoo, whether it be the Magical Bridge Playground, how they’re structured are very different, so I think what we have, in addition to what Daren has highlighted, is in addition to your feedback and your thoughts, but we have steps to work out. There are some preliminary discussions with the Planning Department. There are some discussions with Legal. There are stakeholder involvement as well, both I think collaboratively with us and The First Tee, but also maybe independently, some stakeholder outreach. The First Tee may have some stakeholders that are key and central to them that they may want to seek input from separately, and the City may as well, but those are the processes that we need to iron out. Even more importantly, what George brought up is to work towards a Memorandum of Understanding. That is not just sort of like the handshake, I could say, but it also helps, the key, essentially, part is this is to be a fund-raised project with multiple contributors. That's sort of the ultimate goal of the next steps in the work. It doesn’t necessarily have to be that it’s all done before a Memorandum of Understanding. It could be possibly that a Memorandum of Understanding could be put together and some of the details that are worked out. It just depends on what needs to be in the Memorandum of Understanding that both meets the needs of The First Tee and also meets the needs from the City. I think I’ll also give George an opportunity to speak as well. I don’t want to speak purely on behalf of The First Tee, so I think George, if you have more that you’d like to input, please feel free.

Mr. Maxe: Well, the one thing you brought up, Lam, that I’m especially interested in, is talking to like the Palo Alto Golf Club there at the golf course and getting their input. My guess is they have a great desire to use the short game hole, for example. That somewhat comes out of their desire to have the bunker that was put in in the one spot, the practice bunker. So, they’re just an example of one particular group that I definitely want to speak with, but I’m in general, eager to hear public input into it, because the whole goal is to serve the kids and the public. I’m very eager to do that.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, so I’m hearing the next step that we’re going towards is the MOU, the Memorandum of Understanding. As Anne put it, the devil’s in the details, so
we’re not really clear what the details are, other than the general details that will be acceptable to both First Tee and the City. Is that a fair summary?

Mr. Maxe: Correct.

Mr. Do: That's correct.

Chair Greenfield: Okay, and then once the MOU proposal is in place, this would come back to the Commission as a recommendation action to Council? And Council would have to…?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, the timing or sequencing of a recommendation from the Commission to the Council is yet to be determined exactly when and where that would fall in. We’ll keep you updated on that as we work through that process.

Chair Greenfield: So let me ask this – can the MOU be finalized without Council approving it?

Mr. Anderson: There’s a chance the City Manager could, but I’m almost certain this would go to Council for approval of the MOU.

Chair Greenfield: So, it’s likely that before going to Council for approval, it would go to the Commission for recommendation?

Mr. Anderson: Certainly for a Park Improvement Ordinance – and this is park land, so that for sure – and I’m assuming other elements the Council would be interested in the PRC’s thoughts as well.

Chair Greenfield: To the extent that the MOU affects Park Improvement Ordinance, it would go to Commission?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. And any substantive change on parkland like this would require a Park Improvement Ordinance.

Chair Greenfield: Okay.

Mr. Anderson: And George, just for the clarification, I’m sure I mentioned this to you before, but a Park Improvement Ordinance is a simple process of just saying, “We’re going to make these following changes to a park,” in this case the golf course area, and staff would help shepherd this through. It goes to our Parks and Rec Commission. They would review it, and then they make a recommendation to Council and Council would adopt it.
It’s part of almost all of our capital improvement projects on parkland that’s some element of a Park Improvement Ordinance.

Mr. Maxe: Got you. Great. Thank you.

Chair Greenfield: And then once an MOU is in place at a later date a specific plan proposal would come back that would require an amended Park Improvement Ordinance?

Mr. Anderson: I think the Park Improvement Ordinance wouldn’t come until we’ve got a developed plan. I believe it would be the MOU first and the Park Improvement Ordinance later.

Chair Greenfield: So the PRC may not necessarily be asked to recommend the MOU?

Mr. Anderson: Yet to be determined on that part. We so seldomly do these kind of things – at least for Lam and I – and every one, as he pointed out, is a little bit different. So we’ll be working closely with our Planning Department to understand all of the nuances of different reviews that this would necessitate and certainly keep the PRC involved. I think, to George’s credit and The First Tee, they wanted to do the community outreach, and this is such a good avenue to do that. It just makes sense.

Chair Greenfield: Anne.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Just listening to all of this, and because it’s a little different than some of the other ones that the City has done, is it possible, Daren and Lam, at some point that you can – and not to be cast in stone – but kind of lay out the things that have to be done and the departments that have to be talked to, and kind of a timeline, so that we can understand all of the boxes that need to be checked?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. We’re not there yet, so we don’t have those answers, but yes we can.

Vice Chair Cribbs: I understand, and it’s a lot to be asking right now, but just at some point, so that The First Tee and other people can kind of understand, because this is a really exciting project for our community and our kids, and I think we just want to make sure that we don’t raise expectations too much, but we also create a lot of excitement about what can be done. I just go back to seeing the golfers and the kids who are playing golf. They are so polite and so lovely and so enjoying the game, and it’s what we want for kids all over the place. So, if we have the opportunity to do something like that, it would be great.
to kind of know what the path is to do that, especially because we don’t want it to take ten years, because the kids grow up, right?

Mr. Maxe: Yeah.

Chair Greenfield: Thanks, Anne. I want to echo that I think this is an exiting opportunity. Don’t want to spend too much more time getting stuck into the weeds of understanding the process, but I think it’s important to understand where the road is leading. I’ll now open it up to discussion among the Commissioners. David, I see your hand is up. Would you like to speak?

Commissioner Moss: The Highway 92 to Hollister to Milpitas is a huge, huge area. Are you intending that you’re going to draw youth from all of those areas, or do you have several other facilities that are going to serve those areas, and we are going to concentrate only on a certain portion?

Mr. Maxe: That’s a great question, Commissioner. We have three facilities that we are investing in. One is Baylands. The other is Rancho del Pueblo in East San Jose. It’s right where 280 and 101 intersect. Then, Gavilan College Golf Course in Gilroy. They really are three separate regions. We don’t really see a lot of crossover. I would say that for Baylands you would certainly see a participant base coming from, say, Redwood City from the north. You might see a little bit of San Jose. It would only be because of a scheduling, an inability to be in a class in San Jose, but you really wouldn’t see, I don’t think, much participation beyond, say, Sunnyvale. Part of it is the constraints of 101. This is pre-COVID, right?

Commissioner Moss: Right. Exactly.

Mr. Maxe: And how difficult it is to drive around.

Commissioner Moss: Do you have competition, say, Redwood City north, where if you’re doing a 50-year lease, do you foresee other people drawing from your base soon?

Mr. Maxe: Another great question. Part of the reason that we extended to 92 was because there’s a First Tee in San Francisco. The First Tee network is highly, highly collaborative. We’ve been working on extending our service area north and their service area south for many, many years. We basically drew that line. It was an obvious line of Highway 92, where we would not do any kind of facility effort north of Baylands, and they would not do any facility effort, really, that close to 92, in part so that there’s a buffer. In terms of other competition, there’s a certain amount of competition that we get from youth golf programs, but we’re really different. Our particular approach of youth development
through golf pretty much sets us apart. We don’t really have competition in that particular space.

Commissioner Moss: That’s really great. One of your life skills or life values, talking about nutrition and cardio, because do you do calisthenics or do you talk about nutrition as some of our values?

Mr. Maxe: Yes. We have nine core values that are part of our curriculum. We also have nine healthy habits. The nine healthy habits, there are three that are related to physical habits, and nutrition is definitely part of that. You may have heard of a local nonprofit called Fit Kids, and we partner with Fit Kids specifically for the warmup portion of that first 15 minutes that I was mentioning earlier, so definitely physical health is a big part of things, as is emotional as well.

Commissioner Moss: That’s terrific. I noticed that on the golf course you have the short game hole currently. Is that what you use currently?

Mr. Maxe: No, it’s not. Lam, I can’t remember the number of golf balls that are going the nets.

Mr. Do: It varies depending on the wind pattern of the day, so it could be anywhere from a dozen to 25 and perhaps even 30 or 40, but it’s dependent upon the wind pattern of the day.

Mr. Maxe: Generally speaking – I don’t know what the population is percentage right-hand and left-hand – but my impression is that 90 percent of any balls that do go over the nets go over here, and the other ten percent are kind of in this area. But Commissioner, your particular question was the spaces that we’re using. Right here where the number 3 is, is where we gather the children, where they check in and check out, just off the parking lot, and then we’re using a portion of this green. Sometimes we’ll use a portion of this putting green. We’re typically using the last few range stalls here, and then we’ll have some tee times out on the golf course, which we’re coordinating with the GM. Gunn and Palo Alto High School golf teams have some priority over us to make sure they have their tee times, but we do not go into this area, the short game area or the youth area because of the safety issue of the golf balls over the nets.

Commissioner Moss: Okay. Is most of your classes weekdays after school, or are they weekends? What is that situation?

Mr. Maxe: Sure. That’s this bullet point right here. Our classes are pretty much after school. We don’t program at all on Sundays or Mondays. We haven’t traditionally but Saturdays are the big demand day, so that’s what’s so ideal about this particular youth area and I why
highlight that it’s cordoned off from the public. It allows us to do the Saturday and after
school programs and not interfere with public play.

Commissioner Moss: Okay, great. This $4 million price tag, I guess is that why we go to
the City Council, because they’re going to have to come up with some of that money,
Daren?

Mr. Do: I think, if I could answer on behalf of Daren, multiple reasons. There is a financial
commitment but also the level of the partnership commitment dictates that we won’t likely
need…Our initial thoughts are that we do likely need City Council approval. There could
be a possibility that it’s at the City Manager level, but we’ll need to see. We don’t know
for sure yet. But a big part of it, you are correct, is based on what the financial ask is. I
think that that will have a budgetary impact. As the Commissioners are aware, significant
budgetary impacts do need to be approved by the City Council at minimum for the
budgetary impact, if not also for the partnership impact or agreement.

Commissioner Moss: All right. That’s all the questions I have. Thank you so much.

Mr. Maxe: Thank you, Commissioner. You’re welcome.

Chair Greenfield: Commission Reckdahl.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I was not aware of The First Tee. It sounds like a very good
program. Golf is a very hard sport. Two things I really like about it. One, you can have
diverse skill sets and play with them. You can go with a foursome with people of varying
abilities and still have a very good time. The second thing is that when you make a bad
shot it’s all your fault. There’s no one to point the finger at, so if you’re talking about
fostering responsibility, I think it’s very good. Yeah, again, like we were talking last time
— anything we do to increase the field use, or in this case, increase the use of the golf course,
that would be very good. Daren and Lam, we talked about, or George mentioned, the issue
about if we open this area up, would we have to worry about maintenance? How much
maintenance do we do on the putting green and the [distortion] area right now?

Mr. Anderson: Commission Reckdahl, because the area is closed, it’s not heavily
maintained. We haven’t been able to use it, as George pointed out, since the course opened,
because the golf range balls were going over the nets. Yes, we do pay our contractor to
maintain the area to keep it functional and that we could use it at some point in the future.
We’re not going to let it go, but they are not maintaining it like they would the active course.

Commissioner Reckdahl: We don’t have a chipping area?

Mr. Anderson: We’ve got a de facto one that we’ve created recently. Lam, do you want to tell them just a little bit about the one we added six months to a year ago?

Mr. Do: That’s correct. Thank you, George. George is pulling the description there. Where George is circling there, we have a created a bunker there and also a short chipping area for that. In addition to that, where existing green number one is, by the parking lot, that is also a chipping green, where someone can chip from the edge of the driving range and also from the edge of the parking lot onto that green. Those are the designated chipping areas at present, the tee that was always there, plus the additional bunker that we added to the youth area. The youth area, though, is cordoned off, and it’s limited use. It’s not always open. We did open it for some time. We did have a few issues there, so right now it’s limited use, however.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, and how much maintenance do we have to do on that? Over by the parking lot there?

Mr. Do: The existing putting green, which is labeled green number two, and the existing chipping green labeled green number one, those are maintained on a regular basis as if they were on-course greens. It’s intended for any golfer to come and practice putting or chipping, so the quality of the green, we want it to mimic how our greens on-course play, so the maintenance level is commensurate.

Mr. Maxe: Commissioner Reckdahl, this area here, it’s irrigated, and there’s kind of a foundation for a green here in this chipping area and in here, but it’s rough. It’s not like these greens right now. In my conversation with the general manager at Baylands, he just roughly, back-of-the-envelope, thought $1,500 a month, or $18,000 a year, is probably what it would cost to maintain this area if the greens were like this. There would be a green here and a green over here.

Commissioner Reckdahl: What I’m trying to get at is, to me the perfect situation is you make a very good facility that you can use during your hours, and then the public can use that, either with private lessons or just the general public, when you’re not using it. The only danger with that is, does it get so much use that it’s not useable? What I wanted to get at is, is this feasible for us to open it up and have all these people using the same area without degrading the quality of that? I’m not sure who the question is for. Is this for Lam?

Mr. Do: Well, George brought up an experience – or an observation, I should say – that he has observed over at the Oakland Metropolitan Golf Course, where there is an area that’s
designated for short game practice that’s open to the public. As a result, it was fully built, but it deteriorated over time, and it remains deteriorated. George had expressed that that’s probably not the vision for our youth practice area would be. But I think you’ve brought up a good point. Who else can use it, other than The First Tee? Would it be solely for public use through lessons, or would it be open for public use as a practice area as well? I think that is part of the devil’s in the details that need to be worked out on what The First Tee needs and what the City needs to make use of that area. We want to be able to discuss that with The First Tee as well.

Mr. Anderson: Just to quick chime in on that, Commissioner Reckdahl, to complete that answer for you is the other piece – how do we determine what’s too much? Well certainly, First Tee would be a huge contributor to that conversation, but so would our golf contractor. So we’ve got OB Sports, who are experts in this, and they would help guide the conversation and the options in such a way that we don’t put that area at risk for what you heard described earlier as overused and ruined, essentially, so they would be helping us with their expertise.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, and also I’d want to know, is it just a matter of maintenance? If we can have a high level of maintenance, maybe we can have all that traffic and still have it maintained. That would take more investigation. For the netting, would we be using the existing netting and then just adding to that, or would we be replacing the netting altogether?

Mr. Maxe: Lam, do you want me to address that?

Mr. Do: Yes, please, George.

Mr. Maxe: The quote that we got is to replace all of it. The primary reason is that – I should say, almost all of it. Anything that would need to be over the 70 feet that currently exists, but that 70 feet is really only in this area and in this area. Part of the reason is the height of the new nets, you can’t use the wooden telephone poles that exist there now. They have to be metal poles, which aesthetically they can be a narrower diameter and further apart, because they’re so much stronger. Then, one thought is to, if it’s okay to put netting along
the sidewalk path here to actually reuse some of the poles, to cut down the cost. Reuse some of the telephone poles along here.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. Daren, how would this impact wildlife, particularly birds? We have a very tall net now. Do we have to worry about that?

Mr. Anderson: It would probably be part of our analysis, our environmental analysis when we go through Planning to at least look at that. It’s difficult to say.

Commissioner Reckdahl: How about susceptibility to high winds? If we have net that’s much taller now, if it gets really windy, is there any concern about the net ripping or causing a safety problem?

Mr. Anderson: I don’t believe so. I think they’re engineered to withstand those wind forces and that height. And I should note that the study we had done that George referenced earlier mirrored everything he said about the inability of the wooden poles to be raised. They would have to be swapped out to metal. It’s the same message we had heard from our contractor/consultant.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I could see the metal might be more attractive, but also it’s a taller net, so do you think there will be aesthetic issues? Will some people not like this, or is this just going to be, to the naked eye, just look like it does right now?

Mr. Anderson: The fewer nets, in my perspective, would be more attractive. You’ll be able to see, I guess, a little bit more, unobstructed from the poles to a small degree. The height, I don’t know. I couldn’t tell you.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. This is an improvement. I think it would be very good if we could make it work. But there’s a lot of devils in a lot of details. Okay, thank you.

Mr. Maxe: You’re welcome, Commissioner. Thank you.

Chair Greenfield: Commissioner LaMere.

Commissioner LaMere: I’m very excited about his project. I think anything to increase youth activity and outdoor activity, but also the use of the existing facilities that we do have is a very exciting project. What’s your current relationship? You do classes currently – or maybe not now because of COVID – but what’s your current relationship with the golf course?

Mr. Maxe: Great question, and I appreciated the earlier conversation with Neal about their safety protocols and how they’re dealing with things right now. We cancelled all of our classes in the springtime, in the summertime with all the uncertainty of when can we open? What’s this virus doing and all of that? We didn’t quite know what to do. We played it safe

Approved Minutes 35
at Baylands and held no summer classes, but we’ve re-engaged this fall. We have one day where we have a footprint, and that’s Tuesdays. Then, this winter we’ll be adding in Wednesdays, and we’re following all of the safety protocols. The nice thing about golf, because of swinging golf clubs, there’s some already built in reasons to stay away from each other.

Commissioner LaMere: And then, prior to the golf course renovation, how many kids were involved in your classes per year prior to that?

Mr. Maxe: Sure, great question. It had peaked probably at a little over 150, but then when we moved to Moffett it grew even further. It peaked as we came back to Baylands and began to work with Police Activities League and some of the local schools, etc. It peaked right around 290, almost reached 300. Again, those are unique participants, so they could be taking two classes over the course of the year.

Commissioner LaMere: What do you charge? What’s the normal charge for someone to participate in a class?

Mr. Maxe: Our standard highest price for the eight-week class is $180. If you are free reduced lunch, low income, etc., it can be as low as $20. We want a little bit of skin in the game. What tends to happen is we tend to count on about $105, $110 on average from the participants. Basically, what’s happening is you have three or four out of eight. We think in terms of fours and eights. A class of 16, let’s say – it’s maybe a better way of putting it – which is the maximum capacity – not right now during COVID, it’s 12 because of the cohort rules – but we’ll maybe have six or seven participants who are paying $180, and then you see a little bit of in between, and then probably four or five who are down closer to $20.

Commissioner LaMere: Do use pay a use fee, or a facility fee currently to OB Sports?

Mr. Maxe: Sure. It’s pretty nominal. We pay $1.50 per child, per class day, so if it’s an eight-week class – we meet once a week for eight weeks – it’s $12, and that’s for range balls, a little bit of facilities, etc. If we’re going out and doing anything substantially, a substantial number of holes on the course, then there’s also a green fee. But, typically when we’re out there we only have 60 minutes. We’re only using three to four holes, max. We coordinate that with the GM to help him still continue to serve the Gunn and the Palo Alto
High School golf teams, which are typically going out at the same time on the weekdays, but also, obviously, the public.

Commissioner LaMere: Right, and I take it there are many volunteer opportunities for local youth to help out.

Mr. Maxe: Yes. We actually see a lot of activity from Palo Alto High School and Gunn. With high school students they aren’t necessarily even golfers, but they want to get their service hours for high school by working with us. Kind of the word’s out that it’s a great way to be outside and work with kids and rack up those hours.

Commissioner LaMere: That’s great. Thank you so much for your time and your presentation and obviously anything we can do to get more youth involved is outstanding, and also for our golf course to be seen and used. It’s such a beautiful area, so thank you very much for what you do.

Mr. Maxe: You’re welcome. Thank you.

Chair Greenfield: Commissioner Olson.

Commissioner Olson: Thank you so much. I’m very enthusiastic about taking what is essentially wasted area right now and really putting it to such great use. I went by here with my kids not that long ago, and they were begging me to come back and play in this area. I had to say, “Well, I’m sorry, it’s closed.” It is such a shame to see such a beautiful space going to waste. If we dedicate the space, allow the improvements, etc., is there any reason – and I don’t know if this is for Daren or Lam – is there any reason we couldn’t have golf be part of the recreation programs we offer to our community through the Enjoy! Online, or how does that work with other programs like soccer, where there’s a different entity that’s actually running the soccer classes, etc.?

Mr. Anderson: Lam, would you mind answering this one?

Mr. Do: Sure. The City has different levels of golf involvement through the Recreation division and Recreation programs, such as what you’re referring to through the Enjoy! program. It’s varied between introduction to golf course for both youth and adults to often a summer camp for youth at the course. I think how Recreation program perceived it is also dependent upon what resources we have or what funding we have. Recreation also has to balance their budget versus how many participants they can reach through their channels and their avenues. Sometimes they opt for their other programs, whether it be other sports or other youth special interest classes. That doesn’t necessarily mean that we drop golf. Our other avenue is through the First Tee program. We also, with our prior golf course operator, contracted with that operator to offer summer camps as well when we were not able to offer it through the Recreation division. Our current operator does something...
similar. Unfortunately, actually our current operator does it at a slightly higher level. Now, it didn’t happen this summer because of COVID, but our prior summer we actually had sort of a Junior PGA camp offering as opposed to just a private camp offering through an operator. That got us a little bit more support, so it varies throughout the time. I don’t have an exact, consistent program response for you, but we do manage to get youth involved on a regular basis.

Commissioner Olson: If this program were to come into play here, do you see this as being sort of competitive to programs that we have, or is it sort of complementary?

Mr. Do: I think it is complementary. The ultimate goal is, I think, twofold. What George brought up is life skills through learning golf. That always parleys to a lifelong in the participation in the sport of golf, so I think that’s where everyone benefits. But, we would not be in competition. The structure that George offers is a particular life skills. That’s a key approach to The First Tee. The programs that our Recreation program offers is particular to those who are there for leisure learning of golf, so I think we are not in competition with each other. We’re reaching audiences that have different desires. George, I think you’d probably agree with that?

Mr. Maxe: Yeah, I’d love to add a little bit, and this gets back to Commissioner Moss, your question about competition as well. There are different groups in the junior golf space. Lam just mentioned, for example, the PGA Junior League. That’s administered and run by PGA teaching professionals, and those folks, for example, work for OB Sports, your operator. That’s about competitive junior golf. It’s helping kids learn how to play in a competitive way. It’s a great primer for high school golf, and it’s for children in their early teens. That’s a complete complement to what we do, as Lam was saying. We also don’t look at ourselves as golf instructors. When we have children who really want to refine their golf skills, we want them to go to OB Sports. We want them to go to those instructors. We’d love those instructors to teach our way and help us with our classes as well, so it is very complementary. There are some other groups in the space, but we’re kind of each doing a different thing. There’s a program – I’ll just say this one other – called Youth on Course, which is part of the Northern California Golf Association. Their whole purpose is
discounted golf for children, golf rounds, so that they offer a subsidy to golf courses for
children to go play at a discount, so we kind of all work in concert.

Commissioner Olson: Interesting. Lam, one more question for you, just as a clarifying one.
When we offer a program through the Recreation Department, does the City actually have
to subsidize a portion of the cost? Is that something that we would take into account?

Mr. Do: That’s correct. In general, most Recreation programs for youth are not full cost
recovery, and that’s by established policy that has been presented to the City Council that
the City subsidizes youth programming.

Commissioner Olson: Got it. Okay.

Chair Greenfield: Has that changed of late with the financial COVID-related issues?

Mr. Do: I can’t exactly speak for Recreation, but from a policy procedure, the cost recovery
policy has not changed. Now, how many courses we’re offering, that’s the Recreation
division, so I don’t have the understanding of their revenue stream at this point. But from
a policy perspective, our City Council has not changed the cost recovery policy. [Inaudible]
subsidized youth programming.

Chair Greenfield: Am I misunderstanding that some of the Recreation programs and the
summer camps were changed to full cost recovery this year when they hadn’t been in the
past?

Mr. Do: No, I think that’s probably incorrect. I understand that these were increased, both
fees citywide, not just in Recreation, but fees in other…parking fees, development fees.
That is a citywide increase to address the budget shortfall, but as for Recreation going to a
full 100 percent cost recovery, that did not occur.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you.

Commissioner Olson: A hope in my mind, I guess, is that if we do this partnership and
really are bound by 50 years with somewhat exclusive use, I would love to see the
Recreation programs also benefit in some way, whether it was maybe a program that could
be offered to Palo Alto through Enjoy! if there’s a way to sort of marry that with what
happens, George, in your programs, because I think all those values are ones that are great
for anyone and also that introductory to golf is great, and then people can move on to other programs as possible. I know there are lots of in’s and out’s there.

Chair Greenfield: I think that’s probably something we can explore offline with staff, as far as the applicability of it, I’m not sure if it’s there or not, but that’s my sense.

Commissioner Olson: Yes. Thank you for your work. It’s very important work, and I’m just grateful that you’re thinking of this, and hopefully we’ll find a way to turn that land into something really great.

Mr. Maxe: You’re welcome. What’s very interesting about this is back when Rob was working this, Rob de Geus, in 2010 and 2011, and we were beginning to look at that area, we uncovered some of the original blueprints, some of the original vision for that area, and it was originally thought of as a youth area.

Commissioner Olson: Oh, wow.

Mr. Maxe: It’s amazing that nothing’s ever really happened with it, but that’s going back, what? Sixty-four years?

Chair Greenfield: I have a few questions and comments, but before that, Anne, do you have some follow-up comments or questions? Okay, I’ll take that as a no. Thank you very much for the presentation. It’s been very enlightening to me, as well as many other Commissioners. Anne has made sure that we’ve heard about First Tee in the past for quite some time, but it’s good to get a deeper understanding of what it’s all about. It’s a little bit difficult to grasp in a shorter conversation. My questions are, looking at the Project 1 and 2 and considering the MOU, what is the linkage in terms of the MOU that you were looking for? Is this based simply on Project 1 and Project 2? Is it something to consider for the future, or is there, with the idea if things worked out we’ll talk about it, but how specific an understanding of the details of project 2 would be linked with the MOU?

Mr. Do: I think I’ll attempt to give an answer at this, and then George, correct me if I’m misspeaking, please. The Project 1 and Project 2 from The First Tee’s perspective are two distinct projects. However, the success of Project 1…Excuse me, Project 2 will be dependent on the success of Project 1, so I see that the MOU that we work towards is for Project 1, and perhaps we complete Project 1 and then move on, assess, evaluate, best case scenario everything is successful, then we work towards Project 2 separately. George, I’m glad to see you're nodding. If it’s any different, please step in.

Mr. Maxe: No, I see it very similarly. One of the reasons we decided to look at this as two separate projects is as we started to dig into the weeds a little bit, we realized that the length of time, especially as Lam shared, JMZ and Magical Bridge, etc. and some of the other 3P models with the City, we began to see this timeline for Project 2 and building some kind
of a structure and just saying whoa, whoa, whoa. We don’t want it to take that long. We just think if we separate this, it’s probably a lot wiser. We kind of have the low-hanging fruit of being able to build on the renovation project, piggyback on that, and just complete this work so that the short game hole is useable, the youth area is useable, all of that. Then we begin to build up our program and then it paves the way for Project 2.

Chair Greenfield: Great, thank you. I understand the rationale for looking for funding in partnership with the City for raising the fence. Really, the City needs it for its own success and well being. My question is, is to staff, or to both parties, what is the timeframe we’re looking at, and do we think that funding is realistic? Right now is really a bad time to be talking about adding funding, as we know, and capital projects are going to be under pressure in the next year and perhaps more, with the financial situation that the City is in, so I’m concerned about what kind of commitment would be required from the City within the MOU, in terms of the cost sharing?

Mr. Anderson: My perspective is that that is still to be negotiated, Chair. You’re right. We have to look at our finances. You’re right that our capital budget is in dire straits right now, but we also have to look at the existing infrastructure that we’ve got at that course, and that we have an obligation to make sure that that driving range is safe and functioning, and right now there are elements that are not. The existing turf was scheduled to be replaced years ago, and it kept on getting deferred, for example. I know we haven’t talked about that, but that’s an element of the driving range that needs to be redone. The netting being too short is a problem for the existing course, independent of this project. It’s something we had looked at, as I mentioned, with that study in advance of the proposal from First Tee. So, it’s something the City had been looking into. For the timing of when and how we’d make the commitment, we’re not ready to answer that.

Chair Greenfield: That’s helpful. That clears it up. In trying to understand better the youth area sharing, I understand, First Tee’s, ideally it would be private, exclusively for First Tee use. Is this going to be fenced off and locked and not open to the public on a walk up basis? If it were shared, are you envisioning that it would be shared more with golf clubs or with the high school teams, or would there be a provision for general public use? One concern is this area is right next to the road. It’s clearly visible, and if it’s an open area it looks attractive, yet it’s fenced off and not accessible, that’s a concern.

Mr. Do: I think George expressed the desires of First Tee primary usage very well earlier. You’re absolutely right, Chair. Where does the City see it and where does the public see it? I think that’s still to be negotiated. We don’t have the details of how that shared area will be used. I’ve also spoken with OB Sports, and they have just as much of a desire to use that area as well, and for them it would be not just teaching, but also for public use. So, I think there is still a lot to work out and discuss and negotiate between use and The First
Approved Minutes

Chair Greenfield: Great, thank you. Appreciate that. I’m sure we could all come up with lots more questions to continue with, but we have another item we want to get to this evening. I’ll just ask quickly, Council Member Kou, do you have any question or comments?

Council Member Kou: It’s all very interesting listening to all your questions and answers. Thank you. No questions from me.

Chair Greenfield: Any final comments from the Commission? Well, George, I want to thank you for the presentation, and Lam and Daren, for all of your work. Ash, thank you for joining us as well. This is very interesting and exciting, and I’m sure the Commission looks forward to hearing more about this in the future, moving forward. Thank you very much.

Mr. Maxe: You’re welcome. Thank you so much for having me.


4. Safe Routes, Shared Streets, Summer Streets during COVID Update

Chair Greenfield: Without further delay, let’s move on to Safe Routes, Shared Streets and Summer Streets during COVID. Daren, would you like to introduce our speaker, please?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, my pleasure to introduce Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager. Sylvia, thanks so much for coming to talk to the Commission tonight. We appreciate it greatly.

Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack: Thank you for having me. Good evening, Commissioners and members of the public. Thank you, Chair Greenfield, for inviting me to speak to you tonight. I’ll be sharing some pandemic-related updates about our Safe Routes to School program, our Shared Streets treatments and the Summer Streets program, which is now known as Uplift Local. First, our Safe Routes to School program. This program is a partnership between the City, Palo Alto Unified School District, and the PTA Council, including PTAs at each school. These photos are from our recent Walk and Chalk Welcome Days. You’ll see a few more like this sprinkled through the presentation. The mission of the program is to enhance the partnership, reduce risk to students commuting to school, encourage more families to choose sustainable alternatives to driving and to strengthen community support for the Safe Routes model. Our bike rack counts are the most solid data we have regarding program efficacy for biking. We are multi-model. We don’t just do bikes, but we love bikes. These graphs show the bike counts at the high school and middle
school level since the late 90s. We have a data point in there from 1985, but it’s really the late 90s, early 2000s. As you can see, the program has been working to make biking a norm amongst students. We started last year – so a year ago, in 2019 – with a bang. Our bike rack counts showed increases in biking at both the middle and high school levels, with approximately 1,000 students biking to each of the high schools. That is a thing of beauty to watch 1,000 students bike to school. It doesn’t happen in many places in the United States, but it happens here. Our high school average for the first time exceeded 50 percent. The pandemic threw a wrench into the program as we took on never-before-experienced challenges. Like everyone else, we had budget cuts. We realized we would have cohorts of students who would not receive in-school bicycle safety training, and we lost our PAUSD partner, our Co-Chair of our City School Traffic Safety Committee meeting. We turned some of these obstacles into opportunities, recognizing that throughout the world and in Palo Alto, less vehicle traffic was leading to increases in walking and biking. This translated into us developing more online content and outreach methods. We intensified our relationship with PAUSD as we worked together to figure out how to best support them in this pandemic. Thankfully, we have a new Co-Chair from PAUSD, who is a great partner. I’ll go through the adjustments we’ve made in our education programs, engineering efforts and engagement and equity initiatives. To reach students now in distance learning, the Safe Routes team converted four in-person safety courses to online modules and added a new grade level class, expanding their offerings to more students than before. We didn’t used to have this Lego Bike Safety offering, which I encourage all of you to look at. If you go to our website and you look at our PAUSD curricula, the top right picture is from our Lego-based course. The picture on the lower right is from a digital download storybook for our youngest students. It’s also available in Spanish. We were very pleased that even with distance learning, School Superintendent, Don Austin, confirmed the ongoing presence of our compulsory K-8 Safe Routes to School education programming. We are delivering it all online now to the schools. Additionally, our staff offered one-on-one summer bike safety consultations via Zoom that reached approximately 50 families. One nut we have yet to crack is how best to support a physically distanced third grade bike rodeo option for students this coming spring. We’re playing around with the idea of Pedal Playgrounds, where individual families can learn and practice bike skills in a safe space and physically distanced. We would be interested in your ideas on where we might be able to do such a thing. Alongside education, we’re also looking at supporting inclusive transportation infrastructure so that families won’t necessarily, because of the pandemic, equate cars with personal protective equipment. We work closely with PAUSD partners and with the School Re-Opening Subcommittee developing presentations and conducting school site visits to enhance physical distancing accommodations along school routes and on school campuses. This picture shows our recommendation for moving bike racks at Briones to support students entering school entry points. Fifty-eight percent of PAUSD walk or bike to school. Safe Routes staff supported PAUSD in creating inclusive transportation guidelines and language around physically distanced bike parking, meals or materials pickups once the school year began. We first collaborated with regional Safe
Routes partners to enhance active transportation school re-opening guidance at the county level, because county guidance really was silent on walking and biking to school. Palo Alto led the charge in developing these guidelines, which were then adopted by PAUSD. We’ve seen a number of schools generate more active transportation guidance, as well as encouragement energy, I’ll call it, as exemplified by this photo from Escondido during this year’s Walk and Chalk Welcome Days. PAPD, who are also a partner with us in our Safe Routes efforts, worked with our crossing guard provider to fulfill the 29 regular crossing guard positions that we normally staff. They filled those positions in record time this year, and also regarding equity, our eyes remain on the prize of ensuring that all students have access to low-stress active transportation school commutes. We are in continued conversation with the School District’s Office of Transportation as well as their School and Family Engagement Specialist to set up a pilot program to support student pedestrian and bicycle commutes by providing access to bicycles, bicycle accessories, helmets, bike repair, and we’re potentially looking into volunteer chaperones to support physically distanced school bus commutes and also to provide VTP students with the same access to healthy and active transportation as enjoyed by their Palo Alto peers. Switching gears, I’m going to turn now to our Shared Streets program, which was also a response to the COVID pandemic. The Shared Streets program was initiated to support physical activity by giving more space to those who wanted to practice physical distancing when they were outside. We are currently temporarily limiting vehicle access to local traffic only, on certain streets on the current bicycle network. Those streets are Park, Bryant and Ross Road. This program created more space for residents to walk, bike and run while complying with physical distance requirements. For the most part, the streets chosen already had traffic calming features applied to them, so “No Through Traffic” signage was all that was needed to start the program. The only movements that we restricted were turns onto northbound Bryant at Embarcadero. Otherwise, there was basically full access, but signage that said, “No Through Traffic.” At the start of the pandemic, you may remember that masking was not yet normalized, restaurants and parks were closed, and there were no provisions for gyms to operate outside. Today, masking, outdoor dining, open parks and outdoor gym activities have been accepted or sanctioned. The pressure to use the streets only for physical activity has abated somewhat. We moved very quickly to implement this program. There was inadequate time to seek community feedback as we rushed to make space for people to recreate safely. While some residents welcomed the signage, others were confused and annoyed by it. To gauge community reaction, staff distributed a survey via Survey Monkey. While there was some positive feedback from those who had used the treated streets, this non-scientific survey provided mixed results regarding an improved perception of safety or speeding on those already low traffic streets. It was really kind of evenly distributed. On the open-ended questions, however, residents did request more of this treatment, but did not limit themselves to streets on the bicycle network, which was one of our criteria for choosing streets for this treatment. Looking towards the future, we do not have any plans to remove the signs at present. As I’ve been conducting my own surveillance, I’m noting that people are still walking in the middle of Ross Road, for example, to recreate. People
are still getting off the sidewalk, so we don’t have plans to remove the signs at present. We will likely keep a shared streets treatment as a tool in our toolbox for other uses. For example, for school re-opening, as there might be limited locations where more space for biking or walking is needed near a school to keep student distanced. If we needed extra space, we might use this in some locations, but we have not made any determinations about what those locations would be. Next, I’ll go over Summer Streets/Uplift Local program, which was a more complex response to the pandemic to repurpose public space. This is a picture of Cal Ave. I’m sure you all have seen it. Hope you have enjoyed it. In transportation lingo, the Uplift Local treatments on University and Cal Ave. are known as open streets treatments – opening the streets to people. Our open streets efforts required greatly improved inter-departmental coordination, frequent communication with businesses in the community, a sensitivity to street design and context, and now more complex work to support local businesses. Regarding inter-departmental coordination, there are now weekly coordination meetings between Public Works, Transportation, Planning, Building, Police, Fire and other departments regarding our Open Streets program. This work is led by our Assistant Planning Director, Rachael Tanner. Under her leadership we moved very quickly to develop permitting for businesses to move into public rights-of-way with Parklets and to convert private parking lots for outdoor activity. We recently developed weatherization guidelines to help businesses adapt these outdoor spaces for winter weather. In addition, there are weekly meetings with businesses in these Open Streets areas. We have, I guess I could call them, ambassadors from the County Manager’s Office who are regularly out on the streets talking to businesses. There have been five community check-ins regarding the program – community check-in meetings online regarding the program. Our ongoing surveillance of the Open Streets program includes online surveys, as well as patron counts, mostly handled by the Office of Transportation. The Open Streets program is widely popular amongst residents, from what we gather from the feedback that we’re getting, and we’re observing increasing activity in these spaces when the air quality allows. We needed to be sensitive to the difference between the two business districts when we opened the streets to people, as they’re each designed very differently. The design of California Avenue seemed to be ready-made for COVID. This recent streetscape project has plentiful landscaping, bulb-outs, sidewalks wide enough for social distancing and outdoor dining, so it didn’t require Parklets. It also has a concentration of restaurants that brought a unified voice to Council and made it a relatively easy political choice to convert to an open street. University Avenue has a different design, is bigger in area, has a larger number of non-restaurant businesses. Narrower sidewalks necessitate parklets there. We’ve had to adjust the boundaries of this application of Open Streets a few times to get it right. However, our collaborative mechanisms now allow us to move more quickly, and City staff continues to learn and iterate on this new street treatment as we go. California Avenue and University Avenue demonstrate that context and design impact and open street treatment. More recently, Council has asked staff to look into zoning or other changes to support local businesses further, and Rachael Tanner is leading us in that effort as well as in this effort to help support our businesses and help people get outside.
That's all I have for you. I just wanted to say thank you for your attention and for your service to the community. I’m happy to answer any questions.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you for your presentation, Sylvia. It’s nice to have you back, speaking to the Commission. We have been kind of doing this environmental series the last few months. Last month was Urban Forestry, and the Transportation connection is a very interesting extension of that as well. I think we’re all very appreciative of the work that’s been done by the City and on a quick basis, to respond to our needs in COVID, so thank you for your efforts and all of the staff’s efforts. Especially, it’s encouraging to hear the interdepartmental communication improvements that have occurred as a result of this, and I know when listening to the Green Transportation Summit over the past month-and-a-half or so, that was one of the biggest take-aways for me personally, was understanding the significance of the siloing and the issues that happen within city departments. Anything that we can do to get improvement there is important, and so hopefully this learning exercise will be lasting and have many benefits for the community and for the city. I’ll open things up to Commissioners who would like to comment. Anybody like to go first? Jeff LaMere.

Commissioner LaMere: I just want to applaud your efforts. I think it’s wonderful what you’re doing. I think the more that we can get our young people especially walking and biking places that are even if it’s more than a mile, then all of a sudden they get in that habit. It’s great for our community. It’s certainly great for our environment, and certainly compliment you on the Open Streets and trying to help our businesses. I just think it’s great to see. I am a little bit biased towards walking and biking, as that’s how I get around most, but I think anything that we can continue to do with that is just such an enhancement for our community, so thank you very much.

Chair Greenfield: David.

Commissioner Moss: Jeff, I’m biased toward the biking, and my wife manned the Gunn bike cage for about 10 years, ending in around 2005 or 2006. She is absolutely amazed at the huge increase in the number of kids riding their bikes and that you’re getting greater than 50 percent. It’s just fantastic, so I applaud your outreach and hope it continues. This is fantastic. You mentioned that you’re looking for pedal playgrounds. I live behind Cubberley, and the Cubberley parking lots are just gigantic and unused. The Fry’s parking lot is gigantic and unused, and every elementary school has a playground, and if they could turn it over to the bikes for an hour after school, one section of these asphalt playgrounds or parking lots, especially since the Cubberley parking lot is so close to the fields, that would be terrific. Also, I have the distinct opportunity to visit a guide dog training center. They have all of these amazing props for crosswalks and stoplights and stop signs, and other barriers, that would be fantastic if we could invest in some and use those to train kids.
to stop, and stop signs and things like that. So, I applaud your efforts, and I think it’s just
great. Keep it up. Thanks.

Ms. Star-Lock: Thanks for the suggestions of the location. These are things that exist in
Europe. They have places like this where kids can go practice their bike skills.

Chair Greenfield: Were you looking for something that’s just a temporary setup, or what
kind of a duration?

Ms. Star-Lock: Yeah, I think it would have to be something where we could put down
some striping. It could be temporary, yes. I think we would think it would be temporary,
but it couldn’t be for just an afternoon. I think we’d want it to be up so that we could give
parents, families, the opportunity to have several weeks to go and...so that everyone would
get a chance to go through it. Because I don’t think we’re going to be able to do a bike
rodeo anywhere, so it’s going to be on families. It’ll be on us to maybe create the
opportunity for families to go.

Chair Greenfield: What about an opportunity during Spring Break at one of the school
yards?

Ms. Star-Lock: That's a good...yeah, if we can find a campus that’s willing that’s a great
idea.

Chair Greenfield: Who would like to speak next? Keith.

Mr. Reckdahl: Okay. I’ve noticed recently that there’s been a lot of young bikers. It think
with COVID, along Bol Park Bike Path. There’s just a lot of small bikes going down there.
I have two questions for you about post COVID. The first thing is the Shared Streets.
During the Parks Master Plan, we kept coming across the fact that the public in Golden
Gate Park just loves the Sunday street closure. We thought, is there some way to do that in
Palo Alto for this type of thing, so families, especially with kids, could go and bike together,
or people could try to rollerblade and things like that, where cars don’t get in the way. Have
we done any work of identifying locations where this might be possible?

Ms. Star-Lock: No. We have a Comp Plan policy that says that we should explore an open
streets situation, and that was well before COVID. We’re learning now what it takes to do
open streets, but I don’t believe we’ve really just thought about doing it as a once-a-week
kind of a situation. Maybe we have. It’s an interesting idea, and now that we kind of know
what it takes, we can talk about that. I think there’s going to be a lot of conversations about
what happens to these areas once...if we’re able to get back to busines as usual.
Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, and a similar thing – both Cal Ave and University, I love the outdoor seating and having less cars going through, or no cars. Is that going to survive post COVID, or is that just too hard on the non-restaurant businesses?

Ms. Star-Lock: I don’t know. I haven’t been in on any of those conversations. I’m not sure that those conversations are happening yet, number one. We’re still just kind of trying to get ready for the winter.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, we may be in for COVID for quite a while, yes.

Ms. Star-Lock: Yeah. But it’s definitely something that people are talking about. They want to talk about what happens. Can we keep this? It’s definitely something that I’m hearing amongst residents, wanting to keep it this way.

Commissioner Reckdahl: At least among some residents, right?

Ms. Star-Lock: Right.

Commissioner Reckdahl: A lot of people I’ve talked to really love it, but I don’t think everybody loves it. That’s the tradeoff. If you own a hardware store, you probably don’t want the cars to be three blocks away from your hardware store, but if you have a restaurant and people can walk to the restaurant and dine outside it’s a big win, even without COVID. It’s just so pleasant to be spread out and be outside.

Ms. Star-Lock: It’s definitely a future conversation that this community is going to need to have.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Both David and Jeff mention that they are biased towards walking and biking, and not surprising, so am I. We have a friendly crowd here at the Parks and Rec department. But yes, both those things, if we can evaluate those after COVID I’d be very happy then.

Ms. Star-Lock: So you’re talking specifically, permanent…?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Something like shared streets once a week, have identified someplace, whether it be areas near parks or areas that during the week are used more for commute but could be used for no cars on the weekend.

Ms. Star-Lock: More as a purely recreational space, is what you’re saying?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Exactly.

Ms. Star-Lock: Not necessarily combined with outdoor dining or anything else.
Commissioner Reckdahl: Exactly, purely for recreation.

Ms. Star-Lock: Okay.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The Sunday streets up in San Francisco, they close it off and you see people who are really bad rollerbladers that probably endanger themselves if they were in traffic. And then the second thing being the open streets for restaurants. Okay, thank you.

Chair Greenfield: Council Member Kou, has there been any discussion at a Council level about continuing the closed streets on University or Cal Ave?

Council Member Kou: There is some discussion with Uplift Local when we’re talking to the stakeholders, and I believe this might be coming to Council on the 9th, when we have our COVID-19 update, so there might be more discussions about that, about extending it, so just a discussion, but it’ll be interesting to hear what happens on the 9th.

Chair Greenfield: So, I guess the discussion right now is of immediacy in terms of will we continue to keep this as it is, but as far as considering anything on a permanent basis, has that been considered yet, or we’re busy with other things right now?

Council Member Kou: I don’t think permanency is there yet. They have to evaluate. But definitely there is a conversation about California Avenue. They have to evaluate it a little bit more about University, since it goes straight to Stanford University and it’s used a lot. There is also a survey that the City is pushing forward to have a lot of the business community fill out to see what are some of the things that they would like to see. I think it’s also going out to the rest of the community also, but it was expressed today at the meeting with the California Avenue merchants.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you very much for the update. Helpful. Jackie.

Commissioner Olson: Hi Sylvia. Thank you for coming. I don’t have any questions. I just want to applaud all of your efforts and your ability to pivot and really make things work during this pandemic. Thank you.

Ms. Star-Lock: Thanks. I just want to be clear that Uplift Local was not me. That was a huge team of people, so I am not taking credit for that. That was Rachael. We were all led by Rachael, so kudos to Rachael.

Chair Greenfield: But you’re here now, so we’ll thank you for it. You can pass the word along.

Ms. Star-Lock: I’ll take it.
Chair Greenfield: Anne.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Just to say thanks, Sylvia. Great stuff. Any time we can get all those youth biking to school, that really is reason for applause, so thanks for your presentation. I’d love to see something like Sunday Streets that San Francisco does after we get out of the COVID situation so hopefully we can put that on the list and maybe take a look at it. Maybe, Keith, not every Sunday, but maybe once a month, or something like that. Thanks again, Sylvia.

Ms. Star-Lock: Thank you.

Chair Greenfield: I want to thank you, Sylvia, as well, for everything you’ve done for the city in getting the bike ridership where it is. It’s a great success. The numbers you’re presenting are fantastic. I’ve worked with you over the years, helping out at Gunn, but the Safe Routes program that you’ve been guiding has really matured into something that lots of people are envious of in terms of the success, and I guess one of the natural lead-ins of that is we have Safe Routes to School now, and we’ve talked about extending this to Safe Routes to Parks and Libraries and things like that. Could you talk about what City plans might be for that? I know budget constraints are weighing heavily on that that right now, what is the vision for this?

Ms. Star-Lock: It’s like you’re my plant. You’re asking exactly the right questions. The PABAC, our Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee, is about to begin some conversations about what our future bike and pedestrian plan will look like. They’re going to be considering...you can go to the PABAC page and look at the memo, their packet for this coming November meeting. It is on election night, but you can read the packet, and I think for the next several months they’ll be discussing what that next bike plan will look like. And we’re not sure what it’s going to look like right now. It could have the Safe Routes to School element. It could have Safe Routes to Parks in there. It could have Safe Routes for Older Adults. It could have a Vision Zero component. It could have Green Stormwater Infrastructure, like more complete streets element. There are a lot of things that it could contain, and PABAC is the location where we’re going to be having that discussion, so I encourage interested folks to get involved.

Chair Greenfield: PABAC stands for what?

Ms. Star-Lock: Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Chair Greenfield: Another comment I have is – other Commissioners probably felt the same way – when we hear the word “parklets” our ears perk up, as the Park and Rec Commission, and it doesn’t seem to be a direct tie-in to the PRC. I’m wondering if we’re missing anything, or is there some way that we can be helping with this?
Ms. Star-Lock: You know, it’s interesting. I don’t know if you know the history of parklets, but they evolved out of parking day, where people take over a parking space and turn it into a park. It’s a little bit, it’s a play on words. It’s parking, and it’s a park. Some cities have… I think the way it’s done in San Francisco there’s more of an emphasis on the public nature of the parklets, that anyone can sit there, that it’s not just a commercialized space, so if your ears perk up because of park, it’s both. It’s both parking and it’s a park, it could be a park.

Chair Greenfield: But I think that kind of ties in some ways into Keith’s question about closing down streets for general recreation use on a one-day-a-week basis, or something like that. I don’t know if there would be more playing with the parklet term, or you haven’t come up with another name for that, or for what it is, but there do seem to be some synergies there.

Ms. Star-Lock: Yeah, I’m interested in the Commission’s thoughts on what route you think would make sense for that. As Lydia mentioned, the University actually is a connector. California Avenue just goes to the train station. It would be interesting to think about, if it wasn’t one of those locations, where could we put it that it would tie into a park location or a big trail, or something like that.

Chair Greenfield: I think that would be something interesting to consider, and the Commission may have some thoughts and we can get back to you on that. My last question area is regarding bike racks. You showed something where you had specific recommendations to the schools on where to move bike racks. How does that apply to how the bike racks are set up in the city right now? A lot of the Commission members are bike enthusiasts, and I think we can all appreciate that bike racks aren’t always where we’re looking for them to be, or they aren’t in sufficient quantity. How is City Planning looking to change the nature of how bike racks are used

Ms. Star-Lock: We try to place the racks where we think they’re going to be, where people will need them. If they’re not where you want them, you can let me know, and we can try to place racks. We do place racks in the public right-of-way when we have budget and when people ask us to, if there isn’t something nearby. We have been, as part of our…I don’t know exactly where you’re saying there aren’t enough racks. I’ve done surveys of the Cal Ave area. We’ve been monitoring the University Avenue area, including doing bike rack counts every time we’re out there, and there are always racks available. They might not be exactly where you’re going, but they’re usually on your block somewhere. I’m really interested to know where you’re not finding then. Then, one other thing that I heard this week is that new garage in the Cal Ave area is going to have a lot of bike racks in it as well.

Chair Greenfield: It was really more of a question of expanding the bike parking opportunities as we’re looking to increase ridership and opportunities and how we’re growing the infrastructure within the city.
Ms. Star-Lock: Yes, yes, and recently we also changed part of our parking code, where I believe that you could convert a car parking space into bike spaces, so that’s another thing that, if you're going to be building something here, that we would allow.

Chair Greenfield: That’s great, and I guess if the order of the presentations were different, I could have asked George if he knew where the bike parking was at the golf course, but that’s another issue we won’t get into.

Ms. Star-Lock: Yeah, I mean, if he’s going to have Gunn and Paly students, he’s going to have to have some bike parking, because that’s how they’re going to get there.

Chair Greenfield: There is a small bike rack there.

Mr. Reckdahl: But you have to work to find it.

Ms. Star-Lock: We can work on that.

Chair Greenfield: That’s all I have. Is there anything else that the Commission can do for you and the Transportation Department at this point in time? I know it’s great to keep the channel of communication open, but we are very supportive of the great success you’re having and want to help be a part of it in any way we can.

Ms. Star-Lock: Thanks. I think you’ve given me great feedback already tonight. Thanks to Commissioner Moss for his ideas for where to put a pedal playground. I’ll be talking to you, Daren, about Cubberley pretty soon.

Chair Greenfield: Any other Commissioners? Final comments, follow-up questions? Thank you very much, Sylvia, for hanging out with us late this evening. Keep up the good work.

Ms. Star-Lock: Thank you so much. Thank you for inviting me.

5. Other Commission Ad Hoc and Liaison Updates

Chair Greenfield: Next up on our agenda is the Ad Hoc and Liaison Updates. Does anyone have any comments or updates they’d like to discuss?

Commissioner LaMere: I have a quick one. I had a conversation with Sam Kaplinsky, the young man who spoke about the skate park, and then after a conversation with Chair Greenfield, we will move that into the Recreational Opportunities Ad Hoc, but I will continue to follow up with him and gather different ideas and so forth, but wanted to give you an update about that.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Good, that’s good.
Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Jeff. We were all excited to hear so much enthusiasm about the project. I know there’s a lot of challenges, and it’s a big path to go between talking about the idea and actually having something happen and turn into fruition, but it’s got to start somewhere, and I think starting with the opportunities at Ad Hoc is great. Lots of ideas. The plans need to be developed further and certainly financial considerations will weigh heavily, but thank you. Anyone else with Ad Hoc updates?

Vice Chair Cribbs: Jeff, just a quick fundraising, fund development update. I wanted to thank, through Daren, sent a note out after our last presentation to all the Commissioners asking for particular projects to put on the small, medium, large list for fundraising, and I’ve heard through the Commissioners from everybody, so I appreciate getting the information. Daren, I will send it all to you so that you can do with it what you need to do.

Mr. Anderson: Thanks, Vice Chair.

Vice Chair Cribbs: We will have it for the upcoming meeting with your staff, okay?

Mr. Anderson: Great.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you.

Chair Greenfield: I’ll also comment that the parking facility use policy Ad Hoc met today with Daren to talk about the Magical Bridge Playground opening and how the Commission can be of assistance there. It sounds like things are still in the planning stages, as Daren mentioned, looking for volunteer support. We’ll be hearing more later on that, but the Ad Hoc will continue to work with staff on that and be helpful in any way we can. I’ll also mention, on the Baylands Tide Gate, there was talk of potentially having them come to present to the PRC to request a PIO for the tide gate maintenance work. It’s significant work that will result in a closure for a considerable amount of time. Staff has determined that a CEQA analysis is required before we can issue a PIO, so that’s pushed that item out to the January or February timeframe. Did I miss anything there, Daren?

Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

Commissioner Moss: One other point about the trail closure is you’re going to put some signage up when we decide the date that the trail is going to be closed, you want to give people a heads up, so they know that it’s going to be closed for a significant amount of time.

Chair Greenfield: I think we’re looking to get the signage up just to let them know that there are plans in place and discussion, so that they can be engaged and have an opportunity to speak at the Commission meeting, and they can use a QR code to get a link to the Valley Water site to learn more about the project. Daren, will there be some sort of a notification...
list that people will be able to sign up for with the City, so they can get updated information about meetings on this?

Mr. Anderson: It’s a good question, Chair. We don’t have that right now. Right now we’re having everything go through Valley Water, the project lead. Let me talk to Robert Yamane, the project lead on that, and get his take.

Chair Greenfield: Perhaps if he can just forward the contact list that he gets and share it with the City, would that be sufficient?

Mr. Anderson: Potentially, yeah.

Commissioner Moss: One more comment, and that is that under the GSI section, I met just last week with Pam Boyle Rodriguez, who came to speak with us, and we spent an hour going over all of the items that we talked about in our meeting. She came away with a lot of really good ideas, and she definitely would like people to give feedback on their rebate program for green stormwater to the home. If people can go to their website and comment on the rebate program, that would be great. That’s it.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, David. Anyone else?

IV. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR NOVEMBER 24, 2020 MEETING

Chair Greenfield: We’ll now to move to talk about the tentative agenda for the November 24th Commission meeting. Daren?

Mr. Anderson: We’ve got one for sure and two potentials for November lined up. The solar system interpretive project at Rinconada, John Aikin is available to come and give us a brief update on that interpretive project. We had talked before about could we link that up with the Baylands interpretive update. Unfortunately, not. On the November meeting it would just be the solar system and in December or a future date, he could do the Baylands interpretive one. The two other ones that are potentials still need a little more outreaches. Ramos Park Improvement Ordinance, and the dog off-leash pilot project conversation. Both of those are pending a little more outreach. We’re planning a community meeting on the dog park pilot and still working out how linked the dog park pilot would be to the
Ramos improvement project. There are ties there. I need to iron out if we can separate them and bring one forward while the other continues the community outreach process.

Commissioner Moss: Is the community meeting ready for people to be told when the date is?

Mr. Anderson: It’s not set yet. I’ll notify you as soon as it is.

Commissioner Moss: Okay. When we’re talking about agendas, when is the December meeting? Are we still going to have it on the couple of days before Christmas, the 22\textsuperscript{nd}?

Mr. Anderson: Catherine, can you clarify the dates we selected for the December meeting? The date?

Ms. Bourquin: Yes. Hold on one second.

Mr. Anderson: Thanks.

Commissioner Moss: The November one is still November –

Mr. Anderson: 24\textsuperscript{th}.

Chair Greenfield: Two days before Thanksgiving.

Commissioner Moss: Yeah, the 24\textsuperscript{th}.

Mr. Anderson: And I think we chose December 15\textsuperscript{th} for our –

Ms. Bourquin: The 15\textsuperscript{th}.

Mr. Anderson: December 15\textsuperscript{th} for the December meeting.

Mr. Do: That's correct.

Chair Greenfield: Probably much more popular than December 22\textsuperscript{nd}. Any other questions or suggestions for future agenda items from Commissioners? Thank you. We will continue working to crystalize what we’ll be talking about next month.

**VII. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Greenfield: Now is the opportunity for any comments or announcements from any Commissioners as desired, or Council Members.
VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, everyone, for sticking it out this evening. We had some good conversations, and I’ll look for a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned by motion by Vice Chair Cribbs and second by Commissioner Reckdahl at 10:11p.m.