



**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
September 22, 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: Any agenda changes, requests, or deletions? We will now proceed with oral communications.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Greenfield: I see that we have some hands going up. Catherine, please allow our guests to speak for three minutes.

Lam: If you don't mind, I'll be facilitating the Oral Communications. This evening thus far we have two public speakers for Oral Communications. First, we have Sam Kaplinsky, to be followed by Josh Balogh. Sam, you will have three minutes to speak.

Sam Kaplinsky: Hello, I am a sophomore at Palo Alto High School, and I'm here today to voice my support for a new skate park in Palo Alto. Right now, we only have Greer Skate Park, which is an historical skate park in California. It's great and lots of fun but does not have much variety. We need a newly updated skate park in Palo Alto with a variety of different types of obstacles, so that kids and adults in our community have a safe space to practice their sport and art form. A petition started to show the need for a skate park in Palo Alto has almost 1,600 signatures, with almost 600 of these signatures being Palo Alto residents and the majority of other signatures from surrounding areas such as Menlo Park,

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1 Redwood City and Sunnyvale. We obviously have a need for a new skate park. A common
2 misconception is that skate parks are breeding grounds for illicit behavior. However, the
3 reality is quite the opposite. Skate parks offer a safe area for kids to practice, which prevents
4 them from trespassing or taking to the streets to look for somewhere to skateboard. From
5 all my experience going to different skate parks, they're always filled with kids and adults
6 willing to support each other's growth, whether they are skate boarders, BMX bikers or
7 scooterers. Many of the other cities surrounding Palo Alto have great skate parks that are
8 always filled with people, yet Palo Alto seems to be a step behind all of them. At the
9 moment, the only skate park in Palo Alto is the bowl at Greer Park, which was constructed
10 almost 30 years ago, in 1991. The bowl at Greer Park is a piece of skateboarding history,
11 being only the second cement skateboard constructed in California after the wave of
12 shutdowns in the late 80's. It should not be changed. We need a brand new skatepark
13 offering updated features that can help the large community of skateboarders, BMX bikers
14 and scooters for progress in this sport and art form. Compared to soccer fields, basketball
15 courts, football fields, and even community swimming pools, skateparks get more average
16 visitors per day and cost a fraction of the cost to maintain. Since I've started skateboarding,
17 my personal experience has been that I've found a healthy creative outlet that has kept me
18 happy. I've been better at focusing on school and saw my grades rise. I've made and
19 strengthened many connections with my friends through skateboarding, and I've been
20 spending far less time on my screen, which is a growing problem for our generation. Palo
21 Alto has an abundance of parks with unused land that could be hosting great skateparks. It
22 is my understanding that the City of Palo Alto does not have the funding for this park,
23 which is why we could raise money for [inaudible] use and community fundraising, as
24 many parks across the country have.

25 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Sam. I want to point out that we certainly appreciate
26 comments during Oral Communications, but since this is not an item on the agenda, the
27 Commission will not be commenting directly on your input.

28 Lam: We welcome our next speaker, Josh Balogh. Josh, you have three minutes to speak,
29 and you may speak now, please.

30 Josh Balogh: Good day, everyone. I hope you are doing well and thank you for your time.
31 I've been heavily involved in the Bay Area skate park community for 25 years. I'm a
32 professional skateboarder that has chosen to dedicate my life to helping our youth live their
33 best lives. Skate parks are the new form of recreation. They statistically receive much more
34 use than baseball fields, football fields, basketball courts, and tennis courts, due to their
35 ability to allow more people to use it at once, as well as being open at night with lights
36 during the summer heat. You can drive by the Sunnyvale Skatepark from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00
37 p.m., and it is never empty. Moreover, the popularity of skateboarding is exploding, now
38 that it will be in the next Olympics. It is something healthy people can do to engage their
39 mental flow state, as well as artistic and athletic ability without the rules or judgement from

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referees or coaches. This is a healthy outlet for kids and adults who are battling with the upcoming social media addiction and rise in suicide due to the unrealistic standards advertised by AI algorithms. Unfortunately, this is something Palo Alto is known for, and a skatepark would help poor kids contemplating suicide. Moreover, this also one of the last remaining places that are open to the public during COVID-19. Greer Skatepark is an iconic historical landmark for many skaters and many people, but unfortunately is outdated and unable to attract users due to its lack of current obstacles. A new skatepark would provide these updated obstacles, as well as a free and safe place for kids and adults to exercise, make new friends, which eventually will turn into a community. The City of Milpitas just finished their new skatepark, which will include lights. We are all anticipating the grand opening shortly. We would all look forward to this same announcement from the great city of Palo Alto. Thanks again for your time and consideration. I appreciate it.

Lam: Thank you, Josh. We just had several more hands raised. Our next public speaker is Cecelia.

Hugo Gillenram [phonetic]: I'm the daughter of Cecelia. I live in Palo Alto. I've been to Greer countless times. Last time I was there, there were broken wine bottles. It's just a small, big bowl, which homeless people go to, to sleep and stuff. I usually go skate Menlo Park with my friends, so we have to go to another city in order to skate. I think it would be awesome to have a new skatepark built in Palo Alto. I think it would be a great hangout spot. It's really a great way to socialize with people and meet new people. I actually know Josh Balogh. I met him skating at Sunnyvale. I've made so many relationships with people and friends and everything, I think to skateboarding. I just think it would be such a great way for our community to come together and just have fun. Obviously, its tough now during Corona, but I think if we could come up with a rule for social distancing or something, since skateboarding is not a close sport. I just wanted to say, it would be a great idea. Thank you for your time.

Lam: Thank you. Our next speaker is Dave Kirby, to be followed by Arnold Letsuda [phonetic].

Dave Kirby: Hi. Thanks so much for the opportunity to speak, and thanks to Sam for being such a driver of this initiative. I've recently been to many skateparks with my family. We've got scooterers, skateboarders, as well as bikers that love to use all aspects of Greer Park, although it is quite small. We often find ourselves driving to Sunnyvale or to Menlo Park in order to have a better experience. I think the thing that I really love and see about these skateparks is that it brings all ages of the community together. I think Sam brought up a really interesting idea around public/private partnership. I think there's many ways to fill the funding gaps. We could get creative around how to get the funds needed to support an initiative like this. I think it's really a great opportunity for mentorship of young and old, and so many opportunities to get children off screens and be outside and active, and I

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1 think there's probably a fairly small funding initiative in the grand scheme of things that
2 could last a really, really long time. We really appreciate the opportunity to speak here
3 today, and we hope you really consider this. We'd be happy to contribute to any ideas
4 around funding, if those avenues are open. Thank you.

5 Lam: Thank you, Dave. Our next speaker will be Arnold Letsuda.

6 Arnold Letsuda: Good evening, everyone. I am a resident of Sunnyvale, but I wanted to
7 join this meeting this evening to show my support of a skate park to be built in the City of
8 Palo Alto. I am the parent of a 13-year-old skateboarder, but I also skateboard myself. I
9 have also ridden Greer Park as I was learning to skateboard at the age of 42, but that is a
10 very, very advanced bowl. My family is in support of a skatepark to be built separately or
11 adjacent to the current Greer Park. I feel that a multi-ability park is created it will open it
12 up to the wider community and will be a positive addition, as well as investment into the
13 community of Palo Alto. I think it will bring all people of all ages and abilities to come
14 together for the purpose of skateboarding and also community. I think that the skate park
15 can be seen as an investment into diversity and inclusivity within the community. I think,
16 in a time when there's social and economic divisions, a park being built like this will create
17 an opportunity of all backgrounds to come together for the purpose of riding for something
18 positive, whether it's for skateboard, bicycles or scooters, and engage in action sports with
19 other people as equals as they come to the park. One thing that I would like to have this
20 committee consider is that traditional team sports can only be played by a group of either
21 five or eleven people at any given time. Action sports like this appeal to many kids who
22 don't fit into that team sports mold. I think an expansion like this would create
23 opportunities for kids to engage in that activity and also socialize and feel like they're a
24 part of a group, I am in support of this. You just never know, something like this may create
25 the next athlete, and as Josh Balogh mentioned, skateboarding is an Olympic sport. You
26 never know, the next Olympian out of Palo Alto or the Bay Area may rise out of a new
27 skatepark that has been built in the City of Palo Alto. Thank you very much for your time
28 and consideration.

29 Lam: Thank you, Arnold. Our next speaker is Keshon [phonetic] [inaudible], to be
30 followed by Veronica.

31 Keshon: I've been skateboarding for three years, and when I was first starting, I
32 skateboarded at Greer. I fell so many times, and I did not think it appealed to beginners at
33 all. It deterred me a little, because it was such a big bowl, and it was scary, but I just kept
34 skating and went through with it. I started going to Burgess, and that just pushed me to
35 keep skating. I think it would be good to have a skatepark, because if we had a skatepark
36 in Palo Alto it would get more kids into skating and would encourage them more to skate.
37 Also, I've met so many people through skateboarding. Basically, all of my friends now,
38 I've met through skateboarding. I think it would just be a really good thing to have a

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skatepark in Palo Alto. It would build a better sense of community. More people would start coming to Palo Alto and using it, and also during the virus times, it's a single person sport, so it's a non-contact sport, so you don't have to touch anyone, so you can social distance while doing it. I just think it would build a better community in Palo Alto. It would help the kids out here, because then they would get off their screens and go outside. Otherwise, they would have to go all the way to Menlo Park, which is pretty far. I think it would just help out the community and help kids get outside and stuff. Thank you.

Lam: Thank you, Keshon. Our next speaker is Veronica.

Veronica Saleh, Palo Alto: I am a Palo Alto resident, a Palo Alto parent, and also a youth psychiatrist. I am just going to list ten reasons why I support a skatepark in Palo Alto. Number one, for community and collaboration. Number two, for inclusivity. When I go by these skateparks, I often see all ages, all genders. There is no cost. It is a place where anybody could just show up at whatever level and participate. Number three, it's an opportunity for free, unstructured play, as recommended by Challenge Success, who has provided evidence-based research that kids need more opportunities where they can just play. Play should not stop for the younger ages. It should continue, even into adulthood. Number four, creativity. Number five, fitness, health and mental health. Number six, it's an opportunity for a youth-driven activity. Most of our sports opportunities are structured, adult-driven, adult-organized, refereed by adults, no opportunity for kids to set their own levels, go at their own pace, consult with each other, ask for feedback on their own. This would provide that. Number seven, the kids often go to neighboring skateparks, and they're pretty packed. It would be really wonderful to be able to have one in Palo Alto, where we could also host our neighboring residents from other towns. Number eight, possible opportunity for the City to run camps or lessons. Number nine, we need a park that caters to different levels, and number ten, safety. We get less skaters off the streets, out of parking lots, and in confined safe space. Thank you for your time.

Lam: Thank you, Veronica. Our next speaker is James Pauly [phonetic], to be followed by a resident named Zoom User.

James Pauly: I reside in Atherton at the moment. I just think that a skate park in Palo Alto is such a beneficial thing. It's helped me build so many diverse connections, and I think it would just help out the community a lot. It's also a very healthy activity to be doing. People can stay distanced, and it keeps people off their screens. It just keeps them healthy and builds diverse connections and community. I have so many friends that I've met through skateboarding, and I just think it's such a meaningful thing in so many peoples' lives, and it would create these connections in other people that want to be encouraged. Thank you. So much for your time.

Mr. Anderson: Lam, before we introduce the next speaker, let's close Public Comment after this one, so no additional hands after Zoom User speaks.

Lam: Our next speaker is registered under Zoom User.

Collin: I live in San Diego, but I used to reside in Palo Alto. I ride BMX. First of all, I think it's really important for kids to have a skatepark that's close to home that they can access safely and have a place to hang out with their friends and be safe. You don't want your kids inside all day or outside playing on the streets. You want a place where they can meet up and feel like they have a spot in Palo Alto that they can stay at all day. I think that's super important. It's also a good place where they can social distance and stay safe during this COVID-19 time, because that's super important, as well as skateparks are a great place for our kids to meet other people and to just get exercise. I think that's super important. That's pretty much everything I have to say. I appreciate you letting me talk. Thank you.

Lam: Thank you. Chair Greenwood, that concludes the speakers for Oral Communications.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you very much, Lam, and thank you to all the speakers who commented this evening. We appreciate hearing from you. I also want to note that we did receive an email with information about the petition. This is information that has been passed on to the Commission, so we thank you for that as well.

IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. I have a brief report for you tonight. First off, I'd like to let you know, we're working on the dog off leash pilot program at Ramos Park. This was brought up in some of the earlier community meetings relative to that improvement project and seemed to be receptive with the community members that participated. On September 10th, we had a productive meeting with the ad hoc and some stakeholders that are interested in that program. We identified some next steps, mainly that we would connect with Howard Hoffman's dog group and see if we can build some champions amongst that organization to help make this pilot successful and to hold a community meeting to ensure we've got support from the community, from the stakeholders and from athletic field users, who also utilize that park. I want to let you know that Briones Park basketball court resurfacing project starts next week. It will be about a five-day project where we resurface that court. I wanted to update you on Foothills Park. I've been working with the City Manager's Office to create some pilot program options that meet Council's direction. Staff will be discussing these options and the recent lawsuit with Council at a closed session this coming Monday. The guidance we received from Council at that closed session will help inform staff on what options to bring to Council in late October/early November, when this issue comes to the Council for discussion. Staff may also receive guidance from Council on whether or not this issue should come back to this Commission. When I have more information, I'll be sure to brief you. I should note that I can't speak about the lawsuit. More information will come, I think, when we discuss this with Council on that issue. I want to let you know that the City is going to continue to monitor the weather forecast and air quality and open the cooling centers at Mitchell Park Community Center as necessary for relief from the

1 heat and from the poor air quality. You'll be seeing updates from the City when and if we
2 need to open them again. A brief update on the COVID-19 health guidelines as they pertain
3 to playgrounds. It's a real challenging issue with the playgrounds. The County guidelines
4 allow playgrounds to be open now under certain conditions, and the State guidelines
5 require them to be closed. Ours are currently closed because of that; however, we are in
6 good communication with multiple other agencies, and we've learned that several are now
7 opening their playgrounds. We're understanding how they're doing it. They've got a
8 different interpretation of the guidelines that their Attorney's Office makes for them. Ours
9 has interpreted it differently, but we're working now on reevaluating whether we should
10 be open and how we should do so, and we're in close communication, as I mentioned, with
11 some of our surrounding agencies to see how they're doing it and if we legally can. I hope
12 to have more information on that issue for you soon, probably by email before our next
13 Commission meeting. That wraps up the Department Report.

14 Chair Greenfield: Do any Commissioners have follow-up questions for Daren? Regarding
15 the last item, the opening of the parks, as we've talked about before, If the Commission –
16 and perhaps the park facility ad hoc could be of assistance when you're looking at the how
17 to open up the playgrounds, if there is anything we can do to assist staff, please reach out.

18 Mr. Anderson: Thanks so much, Chair.

19 Chair Greenfield: That will conclude the Department Report. We will now move on to our
20 Business items.

21 **V. BUSINESS**

22 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the August 25, 2020 Special Parks and**
23 **Recreation Commission meeting**

24 Approval of the draft Minutes was moved by Commissioner Reckdahl and seconded by
25 Commissioner Moss. Passed 6-0.
26

27 **2. Approval of Cameron Park Improvement Ordinance**

28 Chair Greenfield: We are ready to move on to our next business item, which is the Cameron
29 Park PIO discussion. This is an Action, so Daren, would like to introduce Peter, please?

30 Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. Yes, I'd like to introduce Public Works landscape
31 architect, Peter Jensen. He's been working on this project and will present on our Park
32 Improvement Ordinance.

33 Peter Jensen: Tonight, we will be recommending a vote on the Park Improvement
34 Ordinance for Cameron Park. We've gone through a community outreach and have been

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1 to the Commission a few times to review what the proposed plan is. I'm just going to go
2 over a quick presentation of the Cameron Park stuff, and then we can move on to the
3 recommendation. Just a reminder, this is a capital improvement project for \$200,000 for
4 this fiscal year, focusing mostly on the replacement of the playground, accessibility to the
5 playground and through the park, as well as replacement of site furnishings, benches,
6 drinking fountains, things of that nature. Here are some existing photos of what the park
7 looks like today with the tot lot playground, the existing pathway that dead ends at the
8 table, and then the overall majority of the park being an open turf area. As we discussed
9 prior, our proposed renovations are replacing the playground, which includes adding play
10 equipment for children above the age of five. Currently it is a tot lot for two to five-year-
11 olds. The new playground is larger and does provide other play equipment for older
12 children. The connection walkway through the park to connect one side to another for ADA
13 access purposes, especially to the playground, the addition of some defined picnic areas
14 underneath and adjacent to the trees that are adjacent to the playground itself. Then, the
15 replacement of park amenities – the benches, the drinking fountain, the trash receptacle
16 that's out there. Reconfiguring the irrigation in this location and planting a tree to help also
17 shade the playground itself. We looked at these images last time as well as proposed
18 playground equipment goes. I think the main thing that we got in here that was comments
19 from the Commission and from the community was the shade in the playground. We were
20 able to work with a playground equipment provider to provide a swing structure that
21 actually has a built-in shade over it, which is nice for the playground to get day-one shade
22 out there. Eventually the tree will do it, but until then, we do have some shade. Just looking
23 at the side amenities, what we're working now for are proposed trash enclosure, the
24 drinking fountain, the table to match the existing table out there, and the benches as well.
25 Just a reminder of the schedule of the project, once we get past our approval with the Park
26 Improvement Ordinance, it will go out to bid, and then start construction on it. Hopefully
27 we can start, probably around the beginning of the new year is when I would say that we
28 would start work. There is a project webpage if anyone is interested from the Commission
29 or the community, they can go to the webpage at cityofpaloalto.org/cameronpark and see
30 all the community meeting information and presentations, as well as the Parks and Rec
31 Commission presentations that can bring it up to speed on the project status. If there are
32 any questions or comments now, we can take them. If not, we can move to the Park
33 Improvement Ordinance and consider that.

34 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Peter. First, I think we should give the public an opportunity
35 to speak on the item if they'd like to. It looks like we don't have anybody to speak on this
36 item. As Peter suggested, are there any Commission who have any questions about the plan
37 before moving on to the PIO?

38 Commissioner Reckdahl: In the attachment, they talk about the bocce and also the
39 community garden, if we have enough money. Is there a priority which one, the

neighborhood or the staff thinks is a higher priority between the bocci and the community garden?

Mr. Jensen: I think that if we have enough money, the bocci court had more support, as far as votes go, from the community survey. The community garden aspect takes more action by the actual community to get out there and actually start to do some of the physical aspects of it. I have not heard from any community members that seem interested in building a community garden at that location, so if we did have extra funding, it would start to look at adding that other amenity, which we looked at as being the bocci court.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The price would be similar between the two, or is one more expensive than the other?

Mr. Jensen: It's just dependent upon the size, I guess, of the community garden. The bocci court is probably a smaller defined space and doesn't require the utility, as far as water goes, to provide at each garden spot like we do for other gardens. I would say, if you developed the whole garden, it would be more expensive than developing the bocci court, which is a stand-alone thing.

Commissioner Moss: Can you remind me, on the playground, are any of these new features sort of Magical Bridge friendly features?

Mr. Jensen: As far as the surfacing, it's all rubberized surfacing, so the full playground is accessible. Right now, it is, I believe, sand or mulch. I'm not sure. It's sand right now, so it would definitely be a lot more accessible than it is now. One of the swings is called out as being an accessible swing there. The playhouse is fully accessible. The only thing, of course, that is accessible but does pose challenges is just the access to the top of the slide. The equipment meets ADA standards as far as that goes but having the transfer deck at the bottom we know is very difficult still to get to the top. Due to the size of the playground itself, unfortunately, there's really no way around that. Will it be more accessible, more things to use? Yes. Will it be as accessible as the Magical Bridge playground? No, it won't.

Commissioner Moss: That's fine. I think we had decided a while ago, that every new playground would have some new features that would be compatible, and you've done that. Thank you.

Chair Greenfield: Anyone else?

Commissioner LaMere: Peter, as always, thank you for your great work. I just want to compliment you on incorporating the shade into the playground features. I think that's something that, anytime we can do it, is very, very beneficial for our parks and for our children and our users. Thank you very much for being able to incorporate that.

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1 Mr. Jensen: I will give credit to Janette Cernif from Community Service, who worked with
2 the playground provider, actually, to get that put together. She did a good job of figuring
3 out a solution to that.

4 Chair Greenfield: Anne or Jackie, do you have any comments?

5 Vice Chair Cribbs: Nothing from me, Jeff. It looks great, thank you.

6 Commissioner Olson: The only question in the back of my mind – I think the answer is
7 that everyone that uses the park lives nearby and can go to the bathroom at home – is that
8 why we didn't consider a bathroom in this location? Just to jog my memory.

9 Mr. Jensen: The question of where bathrooms are selected is something we took up the
10 Parks Master Plan a couple years ago. This park doesn't quite meet the size. It had to be
11 over a certain amount of acres, and it had to have a few more amenities besides the small
12 playground that was there that would constitute having a restroom. From our categories
13 before, I think we identified overall six to seven parks that fit the criteria of having a new
14 restroom. This was not one of them.

15 Chair Greenfield: On the community garden, what is the likelihood of this being funded,
16 and are we looking at outside funding if we don't have any budget for it, which seems fairly
17 likely?

18 Mr. Jensen: Right now, there hasn't been any discussion about adding funding or having
19 another CIP for it, so there is no development of that. I think mostly the suggestion of
20 having a community garden was to alert the community that that was a possibility, and if
21 they wanted to take on the physical aspect of creating it, that City staff would assist them
22 doing that. Technically, it wasn't too much about the money that we were going to spend
23 on it. It was more about the enthusiasm of the community getting together and actually
24 getting out there to put it together. We are still open to that, but we haven't heard anything
25 else from our last meeting about someone who wanted to actually physically do that. Right
26 now, it is still an idea that we can move forward with, but it's not currently something that
27 we're looking at doing.

28 Chair Greenfield: If the community garden is not added, it will just remain as a grass area?

29 Mr. Jensen: Yes, basically like it's showing on this plan now.

30 Chair Greenfield: Could a community garden potentially be located on the other side of the
31 park in the future, if?

32 Mr. Jensen: That was one thing that was brought up in, I think, our Parks Commission as
33 well as the community meeting, that other locations were favored along this edge over here.
34 That was brought up. I think we're flexible to what someone would propose to do. If

1 someone wants to build a smaller plot somewhere, that is something that I think we would
2 consider and discuss further.

3 Chair Greenfield: So location is up for discussion. On the paved surfaces, is permeable
4 pavement a viable option for this project?

5 Mr. Jensen: I think that it is. Definitely it has some extra cost to it. My overall philosophy
6 on permeable paving is that paving should be made permeable where it is sheet flowing off
7 into the gutter. Because this is just sheet flowing basically off into the adjacent grass area,
8 it's definitely a non-permeable surface, but it's technically draining into a permeable area,
9 so it doesn't have the overall impact that run-off does. I think just for ease of maintenance
10 and for consistency of the surface, that concrete matches what's out there is the
11 recommended material.

12 Chair Greenfield: It's not worth the extra expense of installing it, the extra expense of
13 maintenance and consistency. That makes sense.

14 Mr. Jensen: (crosstalk) in this area.

15 Chair Greenfield: Finally, it sounds like one tree will be added. Is that accurate?

16 Mr. Jensen: The tree type that is planted there already is the red oak, and it becomes fairly
17 large. I think that the three that are there aren't very old. They're probably 10 to 12 years
18 old, and they're already fairly significant trees. We were just needing to plant one more out
19 there, I think would be fine, with that tree variety. But we can consider more if it's a desire
20 of the –

21 Chair Greenfield: The location you're talking about is below the playground, between
22 (cross-talk)?

23 Mr. Jensen: Basically here, then it's going to shade and provide more day shade to the
24 playground. These trees will protect the playground later during the day, but earlier during
25 the day, during the hottest part of the midday, then that one specific tree will do the work
26 of shading the majority of the playground.

27 Chair Greenfield: We could put Walter on the spot later and ask him what kind of tree to
28 put there, but what do you have in mind there?

29 Mr. Jensen: The three trees that are here right are red oaks, so I would say that we would
30 just plant another red oak. It is not a native oak tree, but it does grow extremely fast and
31 becomes extremely large. There's one, I think at the Art Center, in the little courtyard, it's
32 planted in the raised planter. If you want to see a scale of it, but it is quite large. It's a very
33 broad, kind of cathedral canopy to it.

1 Chair Greenfield: You'd be looking at adding additional red oaks for consistency and it
2 would be fast-growing for the shade coverage?

3 Mr. Jensen: Exactly.

4 Chair Greenfield: The reason I bring this up is we've been having ongoing presentations
5 on best practices for the national environment and am wondering if adding a native oak
6 would be a viable solution there. Perhaps not as fast-growing but would be more of a
7 connection to the native species.

8 Mr. Jensen: I would agree with you. We definitely try to promote and plant, not just native
9 trees, but native plant material as well. This location is a little bit tougher, because it's out
10 in the turf area. Native oak trees aren't particularly very happy about growing out there,
11 because it's usually too much water for them. There is an adjacent native oak tree that
12 grows on the property next door that overhangs a little bit. We could consider planting
13 some native oak trees along the edge of the planting area in here, where it's basically not
14 developed at all, to get them out there. Definitely, they grow at a much slower rate, where
15 the red oak will become a full-scale tree – a good 40 feet tall and 40 feet spread in 30 years,
16 our native oak tree would take 80 to 100 years to grow the same size.

17 Chair Greenfield: Understood. It sounds like considering some native oaks elsewhere
18 would be a good solution and alternative. Thank you very much for all of your
19 comprehensive work and thought and detail that's gone into this. Councilmember Kou, do
20 you have any comments? Any further comments by Commissioners? It's all yours, Peter.

21 Mr. Jensen: Daren, you can help me with this. Tell me what the process is, the
22 recommendation.

23 Mr. Anderson: Essentially, we're asking the Commission here to recommend that the City
24 Council adopt and approve the attached Park Improvement Ordinance authorizing
25 renovation as described in the attachment for the ordinance itself. If the Commission would
26 be ready to take a vote for that, that would be outstanding.

27 MOTION

28 Commissioner Olson: I move to recommend that the City Council adopt and approve the
29 Park Improvement Ordinance.

30 Chair Greenfield: Do we have a second? It would be appropriate to ask first if any
31 Commissioners have any questions about the ordinance. If not, I think we could probably
32 move forward to have a vote. Unless, Commissioner Olson or Vice Chair Cribbs would
33 like to comment further. Catherine, could you execute the vote on this for us, please?

34 Motion passed 6-0.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Catherine. Thank you, Peter and Daren. That's great work, and we look forward to seeing a spruced-up version of Cameron Park.

Mr. Jensen: I will add just one last thing on the oak trees. We are planting a very beautiful and adding to the native stand of oak trees next to the Junior Museum and Zoo, which is getting close to being completed. I hope that is a beautiful aspect of the new facility as well that we get to expand that beautiful native stand that's there. Yes, let's try to plant native trees as much as we can. Thank you, you guys.

Chair Greenfield: Great. Thank you, Peter. Thank you, representatives.

2. Urban Forest Masterplan Update.

Chair Greenfield: Next up on the agenda is the Urban Forest Master Plan update. Daren, would you like to introduce Walter, please?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, my pleasure to introduce Public Works Urban Forester, Walter Passmore. Thank you so much, Walter, for being here. We really appreciate it.

Walter Passmore: Thank you, Chair Greenfield and Commissioners. I am going to give you a brief presentation, and then we will go to questions and comments. This is not just about the Urban Forest Masterplan. This is another chapter in the series of Sustainability and Climate Action Plan that the Commission has been hearing in the past. I'm going to browse through some of these slides pretty quickly and dwell on others in a little bit more detail. As you know, the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan has a number of chapters, Natural Environment being one of those. This is a review slide. It is important to note that the 80 x 30 Goal is a reduction of emissions goal, and it doesn't do a great job at capturing the goals that we have for Natural Environment, because we have not quantified the carbon impact of Natural Environment yet. So, it does not show up on the charts. It's not reflected in our numbers. These are the Chairs for the different chapter. I will note that Daren is part of the Natural Environment Team, so we've been relying on some of his expertise as we develop this chapter. Again, a quick review – this is the Emissions slide. Note that there are no Natural Environment elements on this chart. We suspect that the sequestration from the Urban Forest would be about 100,000 tons annually, but that has not been quantified yet. That would be a below-the-line offset for some of these emissions. Here's a slide that I would like to spend a little bit more time on, because it helps us to understand how Natural Environment fits into the context of our Sustainability Climate Action Plan. You'll note on this graphic, on the left side is the dirty little factory and the little cars that are spewing emissions and causing all of these problems that we are trying to correct with the Sustainability Climate Action Plan. But, you'll also note that, in levels of increment, that 7.7 number is really a pretty small number on the chart. Now granted, this is the global

carbon cycle, so that's 7.7 peta-grams, or billion metric tons. That's a pretty big number, but when you compare it to the other numbers, such as the amount that plants photosynthesize at 120 peta-grams, or billion metric tons, it's rather a nominal number. It is interesting that these micro additions or subtractions from the cycle can kind of act like a rudder on a ship and can have some fairly detrimental effects. Not to minimize what we're doing with Sustainability Climate Action Plan at all, but I do want this chart to emphasize the importance of Natural Environment and making sure that any emissions reductions that we seek to accomplish should be coupled with really sound management. There's a number of aspects of management that we integrate with our city operations. Things like fire, timber, soil, water, land use – these are all areas of intersection that we can have significant influence, especially when you think about the amount of carbon that is stored in soil. Those blue numbers are carbon pools. That is how much we're storing. The 7.7 number on emissions is compared to a storage number of plants of 560 billion metric tons. Soils are storing 1,500 billion metric tons. You can see, the ocean is in the thousands of peta-grams. These are huge amounts of storage in pools of carbon, and if we fail to manage these effectively, those could be returned as emissions, or losses. It's really important to kind of understand the global carbon cycle and how all of this works, so that we can reflect on what actions we are taking to reduce emissions, but also, how can we make our Natural Environment work as well as possible? We are also drafting a series of co-benefits to go along with Sustainability Climate Action goals and quantified measures. Council was very keen on trying to quantify exactly what we're going to get, biggest bang for the buck, and it's not always easy to do that with Natural Environment, because it's really hard to quantify some of these co-benefits. Public health – we're just starting to understand how big of an influence Natural Environment has on our public health. If you listen just to the anecdotal evidence from the skateboarders that attended the meeting earlier, we know that it's really important to get people off their screen and out in nature, exercising. It makes you healthier, both physically and mentally, and I think it is no accident that Palo Alto has renown schools, because we have a Natural Environment that is second to none in the State of California. It's no accident that we have a high quality of life here. We have smart kids going to good schools. Natural Environment plays a part in that. We all know the kind of, grade school, trees emit oxygen, absorb carbon dioxide, so air quality benefits. Public safety benefits have been documented, because people tend to congregate and converse more often in areas of nature. So, under a tree, as opposed to on a concrete playground. They actually increase productivity of workers, increase attendance, decrease the amount of sick leave. There's all of these co-benefits that are more qualitative in nature; nonetheless, make Palo Alto a really special place to live. There is a Resource Conservation ethic that is developed as people are exposed more to nature. It's a self-perpetuating cycle. People interacting with trees makes them care more about trees, or people interacting with our Baylands makes them care more about those Baylands. You actually develop communities within the groups that participate in those types of care activities. It's a really valuable co-benefit that you can't really quantify. You can't necessarily put your finger on it, but there's more environmental stewards in places that

1 have nice environments. Regional benefits extend beyond the City boundaries. Obviously,
2 nature does not respect municipal boundaries, so what we do in Palo Alto is of benefit to
3 people living in East Palo Alto and Menlo Park and Sunnyvale, where they have less tree
4 canopy, where they have less access to great parks that we do here in Palo Alto. That
5 dovetails nicely into the Equity conversation. In a time where, as a culture, as a world,
6 we're struggling with equity, we really need Natural Environment more now than ever. I'm
7 not going to get too much into the reducing cost of living. Natural Environment definitely
8 has a big influence on co-benefits. There is a yet-to-be-quantified influence on carbon
9 sequestration, or the ability to gather carbon into the system. You saw on that graphic about
10 the global carbon cycle that there's a huge amount of storage that occurs in the Natural
11 Environment. Then finally, avoidance of carbon is also an important input that is not
12 quantified in our current Climate Action Plan, things like a car parked under a tree loses
13 less gasoline to volatilization than a car parked in an open parking lot. So, if we have parked
14 cars, we'd really like to not lose those emissions because the car is heating up to a point
15 where the gasoline volatilizes. There's a lot of ecosystem dynamics that occur in the
16 Natural Environment, and humans are part of this whole, but humans are the one species
17 that has trouble with the desire to self-regulate. We tend, as a species, humans, to have a
18 problem with consumption, as opposed to other species that tend to self-regulate. There's
19 a thing in wildlife management called "carrying capacity," and the easy way to envision
20 this is you have "x" amount of grass. There's a herbivore that eats some of the grass. There
21 is a predator that eats some of the herbivores, and any time that gets out of balance, then
22 one population is going to diminish. The other population gets overcrowded, either through
23 starvation or through disease. That self-corrects, and it goes back into balance. There's this
24 real interconnectedness, like this quote that each of us is a unique strand in the intricate
25 web of life, and here to make a contribution. Interestingly, every single culture in the world
26 recognizes that there is this really intricate connection between people and animals and
27 land, water, nature around us. You've seen the Natural Environment goals before, very
28 basic at this point. Restoring and enhance resilience and biodiversity and increase tree
29 canopy. I think in the future we really need to expand beyond just two goals. That might
30 be part of the input that you offer to the Sustainability Climate Action Plan as we move
31 forward. Obviously, I'm a proponent of increasing tree canopy, but I think that we probably
32 need more than two goals. I'm not going to read over all of Natural Environment key
33 actions. I will mention, we have made a good deal of progress on some of these. The water
34 efficient landscape ordinance was adopted by default by City Council. Since then, we have
35 hired a landscape architect to oversee implementation of that ordinance, and we've created
36 a number of conditions of approval to improve landscapes on every project that moves
37 through that review process. The number of applications has increased significantly in the
38 last few years, so I think it's working so far. We have commented on the Green Stormwater
39 Infrastructure Plan, and this year we actually launched a model project that combines Green
40 Stormwater Infrastructure with some of the practices that we identified in our tree sidewalk
41 conflict analysis, so one of the programs of the Urban Forest Master Plan combined with
42 some of the practices in the Green Stormwater Infrastructure Plan to create planting spaces

on East Meadow Circle. This was an interdepartmental effort that I feel is going to be a successful model for the future. The No Net Tree Canopy Loss, probably one of the most powerful programs in the Urban Forest Master Plan that was passed, that was duplicated in the Comprehensive Plan for the city and also mentioned in the Parks Master Plan, so a very powerful and effective policy that we are implementing on a project-by-project basis. We're currently developing a lot of work on native plants, particularly through our partnership with Canopy. We're going to be finishing up preferred and restricted species list in this fiscal year. We're also going to be completing an Oakwell Survey, which is going to identify all of our native oaks in town and provide recommendations on how to care for those. We're also establishing a baseline for carbon storage of tree canopy. This year, through our enterprise GIS system, we are launching a tree canopy analysis tool that will allow us to assess the percent tree canopy cover and the square footage of tree canopy cover on a parcel-by-parcel basis. We will be able to evaluate before and after on each project in the city and check for compliance with some of our policies, such as parking lot shading ordinance. These are some of the next steps for the Sustainability Climate Action Plan. More specifically, I want to get into some of the next steps for the Natural Environment. These were also related to the Sustainability Climate Action Plan, and I hope you will comment on that as it moves forward. Feedback from the community. Here are some specific things that we have been doing for Natural Environment. On the Urban Forest Master Plan, we completed a parks inventory for all the developed parks, and we started all of the developed parks on cyclical maintenance. That was not being done in the past. Now, every tree in every developed park will be on our pruning cycle. We've also started to inventory the trees in the developed areas of Foothills Park and identify other Open Spaces areas where we need to start cyclical maintenance, a big step in the right direction of effectively managing our trees in all of our public spaces. I mentioned the sidewalk conflict analysis, and what has emerged from that is we created standard details and also commented on the Green Infrastructure Plan. We're going to create much more effective soil space for our trees and plants to grow in. If you reflect back on that [break in recording] how huge of a pool that the soil space provides, so having healthy soil that's connected to other healthy soil that allows trees and plants to thrive is really starting to restore those natural cycles that are so critical to success of the Sustainability Climate Action Plan. We did enter a departmental collaboration on the Green Infrastructure Plan. We have collaborated with our Transportation group on street improvement projects. There's been some mixed reviews, I recognize, for some of the improvements that have gone in, with the bulb-outs and trees sticking out into roads and so forth. I think these will probably be fine-tuned as we go on. What has been, I think, exciting for me is to see that we are exploring innovative ways to put green space back where it has been absent for many, many years. That's my takeaway. We've been collaborating on the Foothills Fire Plan to try to make sure that we effectively manage our vegetation and respect those natural cycles, but also prevent fuel buildup in an unnatural way that would be prone to a significant wildfire and, obviously, a large release of carbon. Beyond our city boundaries, we've been working with other agencies as well. We work specifically with the San

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1 Francisco Estuary Institute on a publication for re-oaking Silicon Valley. It's been very
2 well received and distributed throughout California. This will be direction for us as we
3 move forward. We're also working with SFEI on some other projects. They are a great
4 research arm that we found to support some of the same goals that we have with the City.
5 We've also worked on two separate protocols. Protocol is basically just a way to quantify
6 carbon and credit back to projects the value of collecting and storing that carbon. We
7 contributed to an Urban Forest protocol through the Climate Action Reserve, which is
8 endorsed by the California Air Resources Board. We also contributed to developing a
9 protocol for city forest credits, which is not connected to California Air Resources Board.
10 It's a voluntary protocol. It's a carbon-plus credit. It recognizes the co-benefits and
11 quantifies those. It's been very attractive to a number of buyers, especially tech companies.
12 Microsoft has been a big participant thus far in the City Forest credits. We're hoping as we
13 move forward that we may be able to take advantage of some of these new funding sources.
14 I think that might have been my last slide. So with that, I will be glad to take questions.

15 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Walter. Appreciate you coming back to speak with us.
16 There's a lot there. I'd say it's a lot of very dense content that you're presenting to us to
17 try to digest. The Parks and Rec Commission has been very supportive of the Urban
18 Forestry efforts and, as you noted, this is an important component of the City's holistic
19 climate action plan. We've heard recently an overview on the SCAP presentation on Zero
20 Waste and on GSI. This is just a great continuation of this, and there's a lot of nexus and
21 overlap, so I appreciate that. Commissioner Reckdahl, would you like to start?

22 Commissioner Reckdahl: Do we have Public Comment first?

23 Chair Greenfield: Yes, thank you, and we do have someone to speak.

24 Lam: We have one speaker this evening, Karen Otto.

25 Karen Otto: I live in the southern part of Palo Alto, in Charleston Meadows neighborhood.
26 My comment is I think you need to add to your ideas of how to improve our canopy and
27 updating of the regulations and the protocols for protecting trees that already exist. In fact,
28 I have three recommendations, but I'm basing the comment on an incident that happened
29 in my neighborhood on the 6th of July, in which a neighbor who essentially hates trees
30 started cutting down his heritage tree at 8:00 in the morning. A lot of neighbors tried to
31 stop it, but we had no authority. We called the police. They have no authority. By the time
32 anybody in the city could respond, the tree was hacked, pretty much to death. I would like
33 to see you update your enforcement procedures. For example, you can increase the fine.
34 Five thousand dollars or, really you need to increase it to, like \$20,000 or something huge.
35 These people who own these houses in Palo Alto were all, unfortunately, way too rich, and
36 \$5,000 means nothing to us if we want to get rid of a tree, we'll gladly pay \$20,000 to get
37 rid of a tree. So you need to increase that fine. You need to fine the tree company, not just
38 the owner. This will make tree companies reluctant to follow instructions that they know

1 are not right. I think there needs to be a real-time process in which we can get faster reaction
2 for when we call in to the City and complain about a tree being hacked to death. By the
3 way, the tree that was being hacked to death was a heritage oak tree. It was a beautiful,
4 gorgeous probably more than a hundred-year-old oak tree. I just think you need to make it
5 easier for neighbors to save trees that are being destroyed by someone in their
6 neighborhood who doesn't want it. Right now, it's almost impossible. The person just goes
7 ahead and gets rid of it, and it's gone. That's what happened to that tree, and it just broke
8 my heart.

9 Lam: Thank you, Karen, and Chair Greenfield, that concludes speakers on the Oral
10 Communications on this subject.

11 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. We appreciate the comments. Keith, would you like to start
12 off?

13 Commissioner Reckdahl: Yes. To follow up with the public comment. If we see someone
14 cutting down a tree that's protected, who do we contact? Is that a police issue? Is there
15 someone else in the city? What's the correct route for that?

16 Mr. Passmore: My office handles enforcement in those cases.

17 Commissioner Reckdahl: I would agree. Five thousand dollars for when you have a
18 million-dollar house. I've known plenty of people who spent a lot of money making their
19 house more complicated because they had to protect their trees, and they were happy to do
20 that, but I see people saying, "Oh, I'm just going to cut down that tree, pay \$5,000 and
21 simplify my construction," so I would echo what she said. Anyway, talking about the tree
22 canopy inventory. How do we inventory that? Do we count the number of trees? Do we
23 count the size of the canopy, or how do we quantify that canopy?

24 Mr. Passmore: We have counted the number of public trees, but it gets a little bit more
25 complicated when you're trying to count all trees citywide regardless of ownership. We're
26 going to use remote sensing imagery to capture the square footage of canopy on a property-

1 by-property basis. Through GIS we'll be able to segregate that into parcels, neighborhoods,
2 any selection that you choose to make.

3 Commissioner Reckdahl: Can we get a good measurement of how much carbon is stored
4 in that, or is that hard to do?

5 Mr. Passmore: There is a model that we're going to apply to those numbers, so we'll be
6 able to break down the carbon storage and sequestration potential on whatever our selection
7 is, whether that's citywide or a smaller unit.

8 Mr. Reckdahl: If you know the number of square feet, that doesn't necessarily tell you how
9 much storage it is, right? I would assume that a large tree with its thick trunk is going to
10 have a lot more storage than a bunch of small trees. Is that correct?

11 Mr. Passmore: Right. Obviously, if you were trying to use those models to assess carbon
12 sequestration and storage for an individual tree, they would be statistically invalid. There
13 are models that exist, but it requires you to measure in the diameter, height of the tree and
14 other attributes. This model would apply more broadly to an area such as a neighborhood
15 or the whole city.

16 Mr. Reckdahl: If you compare our canopy today to what it was 10 years ago, have we lost
17 trees because of construction, or have we gained trees because the trees have grown older?

18 Mr. Passmore: Over the last approximately 28 years, we have increased our tree canopy
19 coverage by six percent, which may sound like a rather nominal number, but each one
20 percent in tree canopy represents between 5,000 and 10,000 trees. So, we have increased
21 the number of trees in Palo Alto somewhere between 30,000 and 60,000 trees, based on
22 the street tree inventory.

23 Commissioner Reckdahl: That's just public trees, or everyone's trees?

24 Mr. Passmore: No, all trees.

25 Commissioner Reckdahl: And that's the number of trees. How about the total canopy?

26 Mr. Passmore: We have those numbers for a study that compared 1982 to 2010 date. With
27 this new canopy cover tool, we'll be able to collect 2020 data, and every time we get new
28 imagery, the system will automatically update, so we'll actually have an annual update
29 from this point forward on amount of canopy cover that we have, so we'll be able to do an

1 annual comparison and see what our percentage increase or decrease is and assess the
2 reasons for that.

3 Commissioner Reckdahl: That would be really good, because the number you gave was
4 over the last 28 years, right? So that doesn't represent recent trends at all. It's just a long-
5 term trend.

6 Mr. Passmore: Correct. It's just two points in time with that initial study but moving
7 forward from this point we will be able to do an annual assessment.

8 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. That would be very good. You mentioned bulb-out
9 complaints. Can you explain in more detail about that?

10 Mr. Passmore: There's been a number of public comments about the Transportation
11 projects along Ross, Louis, etc., the traffic flow, I think, more than anything. It wasn't
12 complaints about the vegetation that was in the bulb-outs or traffic control devices. It was
13 just about the traffic flow and the amount of change that went on in those neighborhoods.
14 I'm not really the expert to comment on traffic flow.

15 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm not talking about the traffic flow aspect of that, but the trees.
16 Are people objecting to having trees in bulb-outs at all?

17 Mr. Passmore: No. Actually, the trees have been very well received.

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. I live in South Palo Alto, and we have no street trees,
19 because we have those rolled curbs in the sidewalk right next to the street. Would we
20 consider bulb-outs in other areas? Not for traffic purposes, but purely for vegetation
21 purposes?

22 Mr. Passmore: Possibly, I think, as the Green Infrastructure Plan is implemented, and we
23 continue to refine our transportation plans, there will be opportunities for those.

24 Commissioner Reckdahl: What other strategies? You mentioned about South Palo Alto
25 Tree Project in your slides. What other strategies would you have for South Palo Alto?

26 Mr. Passmore: I also mentioned that we have these protocols. As part of those, we've been
27 developing partnerships regionally and nationally so we would hope we would be able to
28 provide additional incentives, assistance to property owners in Palo Alto to plant trees
29 where it's going to make the biggest difference.

30 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, so that's just planted on their private property there?

31 Mr. Passmore: Correct. That's really our big opportunity. Most of the public space is
32 planted almost to capacity. In our inventory we log vacant spaces, and currently we're close

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1 to a 95 percent occupancy, so of all the inventoried spaces, only about five percent are
2 vacant. In comparison, there are a much higher number of spaces on private property, just
3 from looking at the canopy cover assessment. We suspect, just in South Palo Alto – Page
4 Mill, Oregon Expressway, south – there are about 24,000 vacant planting spaces for trees,
5 and of those, we did a survey through Canopy. More than 50 percent of the residents said
6 they would be willing to plant those spaces and that they foresaw no obstacle that would
7 prevent them from doing so. I think we conservatively estimate that we could add 10,000
8 new trees in private property in South Palo Alto.

9 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. Wow, that's impressive. Finally, Foothills Park – have
10 we had any problems – I guess in Open Space in general, but Foothills Park has the most
11 trees – any problem with losing trees due to drought? Are they in good health up there?

12 Mr. Passmore: Obviously, we lose some to drought. It's a natural process that occurs. I
13 don't expect that it has substantially diminished the canopy, because when you lose some,
14 then new trees take their place. Daren could probably comment on that better than I could.

15 Mr. Anderson: The only thing I would add, Walter, is that the Ranger staff have noticed
16 SOD deaths and some beetle deaths for the trees up at Foothills. Again, probably not a very
17 big percentage. It's fairly small, but it is noticeable.

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: When a tree dies and stays upright, do we let it be? There are
19 some animals that use that, but that's also a fire issue, too, right? So, what do we do when
20 a tree dies but stays upright?

21 Mr. Anderson: When we're in trouble with trees, I call Walter and ask for his help, so he's
22 the end-all, be-all when it comes to that for my group. It totally depends on where it's at.
23 If we've got it in an area near a picnic area, for example, and the trees dying become a
24 hazard, there's a hazard inspection done, typically by an arborist on Walter's team, and it's
25 addressed. If it was somewhere that it's really safe and it's died, it stays, is the norm.

26 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay.

27 Mr. Passmore: I would just add that snags are really valuable wildlife habitat. They provide
28 things that live trees do not provide, so to the extent possible, we like to leave them here
29 and there.

30 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, thank you. That's its.

31 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Keith. Commissioner Olson.

32 Commissioner Olson: Walter, thanks for coming, and I'm glad I get to go next, because I
33 have a question backing on Commissioner Reckdahl's question. If there is a dead or
34 dangerous tree on private property, is it the same process, or is that handled a little

1 differently, particularly if the homeowner is lowering the canopy on their property? How
2 is that handled?

3 Mr. Passmore: We only regulate a very small number of trees. Valley oak, Coast live oak,
4 are over 11 ½ inches in diameter. Redwood is over 18 inches. Any other tree on a single-
5 family residential property that is not being developed does not require a permit, so the
6 property owner would hire their own arborist. They would consult on the tree. They would
7 make a decision on what they're going to do with it. However, the City will provide
8 information, will provide references to property owners. We will do some preliminary
9 guidance over the phone or via email, but there is nothing that can replace an onsite visit
10 from a qualified arborist to do a thorough assessment.

11 Commissioner Olson: Okay, but there's no penalty there, and if it's a new project and, say,
12 there's a stand of eucalyptus, for example, that the owner wants to take down as a nuisance.
13 Would that impact their project, and the decisions around replacing that for the canopy
14 requirements?

15 Mr. Passmore: No, we do have the No Net Loss of Canopy policy, which we apply
16 regardless of species. We would actually the encourage the removal and replacement of
17 certain species that are invasive or a fire hazard, just because we want to improve how our
18 environment functions. We have approved those types of removals in the past, and I would
19 suspect we would continue doing those and encouraging people to make a more functional
20 environment.

21 Commissioner Olson: But would they have to replace it, then, with an equal size canopy
22 that's part of their project for their home, but with a better species?

23 Mr. Passmore: We try to apply reasonable interpretation to our policies and ordinances.
24 Yes, on the face, No Net Loss of Canopy means that you would want to replace with similar
25 stature trees, but we do have other mechanisms that we can consider. I guess it depends on
26 the project. We look at every one on a project-by-project basis, and we try to be reasonable
27 with our property owners.

28 Commissioner Olson: Okay. You had mentioned that a number of homeowners said they
29 would be happy to do planting on their own private property. Would that homeowner be
30 funding those plantings, or does the City help them in some way?

31 Mr. Passmore: Currently, the City funds canopy through the Forestry Fund, which is a fund
32 that developers contribute to that cannot plant the required number of trees to replace their
33 canopy on their own property. There are some projects that pay into that fund. Money from
34 that is transferred to Canopy to plant trees on private property in South Palo Alto where we
35 did need them, so there is a funding mechanism. It's a relatively small amount now. In the
36 future, we would like to grow that, to be able to apply it to more properties, because out of

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1 the thousands of properties in South Palo Alto that would be willing to plant a new tree,
2 we're only getting to 100 to 200 a year. It's going to take us a long time at that rate. We'd
3 really like to increase that rate and get more trees planted now.

4 Commissioner Olson: Great. Okay, that's all my questions. Thank you so much. This has
5 been super interesting and educational.

6 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Commissioner LaMere.

7 Commission LaMere: Walter, thank you so much for coming and speaking to us again. It's
8 always so enlightening and educational to have you here. I really like to about the cyclical
9 maintenance that you're doing and identifying the trees and just how you're cataloguing
10 everything. Also, just try the innovative ways, even if sometimes the innovative ways get
11 some negative feedback. At least we're trying some new things, and I think that's
12 wonderful. I don't know if you could speak a bit more – and this could be Daren as well –
13 but certainly love all the interdepartmental relationships that you have. You spoke about
14 preventing fuel buildup in Foothills Park. I was wondering how that is addressed, and
15 what's the mechanism for removing that buildup, or what do we currently do with that?

16 Mr. Passmore: Daren and I both serve as co-chairs on the Foothills Fire Plan. I'll probably
17 let him start, since he's the Foothills Park expert.

18 Mr. Anderson: Thanks, Walter. It really began, Commissioner LaMere, the headway on
19 fuel reduction and safe space around the facilities within Foothills Park with our
20 partnership with the County Fire Safe Council. They've been our mechanism to use the
21 CIP dollars and funding sources we've got dedicated to that Foothills Fire Plan to making
22 it realized. They oversee crews. We bring in CalFire crews, and they come in. Within
23 Foothills Park, if you've been up, I think the most significant clearing was in the last year
24 or two, when you look at the roadside clearing and the picnic areas from the entrance, all
25 the way down to the Oak Grove picnic area, where you can see significant fuel reduction.
26 The same with Towle Camp, the same 7.7-acre area, and it's the routine that we're into
27 now where we make the difference. The other things we've focused on are the escape routes
28 and then up and down Page Mill Road, where you can see a fairly significant reduction of

1 fuel. There used to be within that first somewhere between six to as far back as 30 feet off
2 the roadside edge that we've made good headway and sustained it.

3 Commissioner Moss: Also, up on the Los Trancos Trail at the very, very top.

4 Mr. Anderson: Yeah. I sometimes separate that in my mind because we use a different
5 contractor for the disking work on Los Trancos than our fire roads in Foothills, but it's the
6 same principle of keeping safe areas and reducing fuel load and having those buffers.

7 Commission LaMere: Thank you.

8 Chair Greenfield: Commissioner Moss, please continue.

9 Commissioner Moss: I just had a couple comments. I was going to bring up the fuel
10 buildup, but that was already done, so that's great. You said that the pollinator and native
11 plant program is not going to be official until FY 2022, which is about a year-and-a-half to
12 two years away. Is there any reason why we can't do that now?

13 Mr. Passmore: We're doing significant work on it right now. I don't know if maybe the
14 plan is just not going to be adopted until that time, but we've made great strides in updating
15 our Integrative Pest Management plan, and also we've started to construct a biodiversity
16 index, which recognizes the value of pollinators. It's kind of a work in progress right now,
17 but something that we hope will all coalesce at the same time.

18 Mr. Anderson: If I could just add on to that, Commission Moss, to what Walter just said,
19 we haven't waited. We've been working on pollinator and native plant improvements to
20 open space areas for 20 years. We've been doing the same for urban parks and for even
21 non-park areas, like that presentation you had from Juanita Salisbury presented on that. It's
22 nothing we're waiving on, but I think the big improvement that we could make is having
23 it being part of every capital program. What we end up happening every time is we're so
24 short on dollars all the nice-to-do's, like improve the habitat – it's more than nice to do.
25 It's critical that we do it, and unless you build it into capital program, it just happens well
26 enough or consistently enough. The commitment we're trying to make is, come FY 22, we
27 allocate a certain number of dollars to every CIP to make some sort of habitat improvement,
28 even to the urban parks, because it's so important.

29 Commissioner Moss: That was the segue into my last question, which has to do with the
30 fact that because Palo Alto land is so expensive, every construction project goes from edge
31 to edge to edge to edge, so there's really no way to add any trees. I'm thinking of the
32 housing that's going on on El Camino across from Lozano's carwash. That's from edge to
33 edge. I'm also thinking of those office buildings on Park Boulevard, right near Page Mill.

1 They are up to the sidewalk in all directions. Do you have some way to get construction
2 dollars to mitigate that, or build in the center, or something?

3 Mr. Passmore: I did mention that the Forestry Fund is the recipient of canopy replacement
4 dollars on some projects. We really try to emphasize planting onsite where possible, but
5 where that's not possible in these lot line to lot line type developments, we do accept
6 donations to the Forestry Fund. That money is used to plant trees elsewhere. I think we
7 could do more in the future. To your point, we make some really tough decisions on a
8 project by project basis. We probably want to have more options if we're going to allow
9 such comprehensive development of a site, we might need to do something in addition to
10 just planting a few extra trees. Maybe we need some extra land dedicated that's not going
11 to be developed in exchange for this. I don't know the answer right now, but I think we
12 need to explore those type of policy issues as we move forward into the future.

13 Commissioner Moss: I think that some of those construction, they have their parking
14 underneath, but if there's ever, ever a parking lot, I think that the one on Park Boulevard,
15 there's some parking between the building and the railroad tracks. I would think that for
16 every square foot of parking lot, you have a tree, a certain number of trees. I noticed the
17 big, big, big parking lot at Frye's or up on the Stanford Industrial Park Building, they were
18 built in the 50's, you've got huge parking lots still, or Cubberley parking lot, for instance,
19 that you would have the similar thing – for every square foot of parking you have a tree in
20 the parking lot. Do you have something like that?

21 Mr. Passmore: Not currently. There's a model that simulates what you're talking about.
22 The Public Art model, where you have one percent of every large project that is dedicated
23 to public art, but there's not currently something similar for Natural Environment.

24 Commissioner Moss: I'm also thinking of that Cal Ave three-story parking structure. Can
25 we put some trees up on the top floor in pots?

26 Mr. Passmore: Not in the current design. We did do a lot with the streetscape, though.

27 Commissioner Moss: That's all I have, Jeff.

28 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, David. Vice Chair Cribbs, please.

29 Vice Chair Cribbs: Yes, I'm back. Somehow, I got kicked out for a while, and I missed
30 David's questions, but I'm back. First of all, Walter thanks so much. It's great to have you
31 here, as usual. We all learn so much from you, so we appreciate it. I was interested in the
32 South Palo Alto Tree Planting Initiative. I think I've heard enough about it tonight, but
33 when you come back again it would be great to hear more specific details about that, and
34 how the Commission can help publicizing the fact that you have an opportunity to plant all
35 these trees, but we don't have enough money to plant them, but how the community could

1 get involved in that. That would be pretty remarkable. If you have a neighbor who has a
2 dead street tree who wants to have it removed, because it's a street tree, am I assuming that
3 the City will do that?

4 Mr. Passmore: Yes.

5 Vice Chair Cribbs: Is there a long backlog of those to do?

6 Mr. Passmore: Unfortunately, yes. COVID-19 really backed us up. This time last year we
7 were about a three-week return on responding to work order requests. Now, we're six to
8 twelve months.

9 Vice Chair Cribbs: Okay. I'm very familiar with a birch tree next door to me that is dead
10 and dying and needs to come out, so hopefully that happens soon, but I just wanted to know
11 if they were doing the process correctly. Finally, I'm sure that we're working with all of
12 our neighboring cities and the region on the kinds of things that you're talking about. Could
13 you talk a little bit more about the regionality of all of this?

14 Mr. Passmore: Actually, Palo Alto is really a state leader in Urban Forestry. Personally, I
15 have chaired the California Urban Forest Advisory Committee for the last five years. We
16 do work with our neighboring communities. None of them are quite as far along as we are,
17 but we share information. We can all learn from each other on program implementation
18 and overcoming obstacles. Because, not everyone loves trees, surprisingly. There are some
19 people that object to planting more trees or having more requirements. When you live in a
20 community and you have to share in those community values, some people are not as
21 receptive to that as others. We share stories back and forth. I think where we can really
22 share the benefits of our Urban Forest are with our adjacent neighbors. We've really tried
23 to do a lot of work East Palo Alto through supporting Canopy. A little bit of direct work to
24 share some collaborative and so forth. Canopy is really the nonprofit that ties a lot of our
25 neighboring communities with us.

26 Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you for that, and I was just going to specifically ask about East
27 Palo Alto and what we're doing, and I know Canopy is very supportive and very good in
28 East Palo Alto, but I'm really glad to hear that. That's all from me, thank you, except for a
29 big thank you to you and your team.

30 Commissioner Moss: Jeff, I have one follow-up to what Anne just said. That is, some of
31 these street trees that have been planted in the front of peoples' yards, they never, ever

1 water them, so they kill them. The question is, we used to have truck that goes around and
2 waters these new trees. Is that curtailed as well?

3 Mr. Passmore: No. In fact, we have a new truck, working even better, and this year we
4 watered more trees than we ever have in our history.

5 Commissioner Moss: That's great.

6 Mr. Passmore: In the last five years we've set planting records, with the exception of this
7 year, because of COVID-19, we had staff redirected to other tasks, but I intend to start
8 planning in earnest again as soon as possible.

9 Chair Greenfield: Thank you for the very thoughtful question. This is a subject that we're
10 all passionate about, and we really appreciate Walter and Deron's guidance on this. Just to
11 follow up on the watering, it's great to hear there is a new truck out there, and Canopy does
12 a young tree care survey in conjunction with the City, where they do an annual monitoring
13 of trees that are less than five years old and feed that information back to the City,
14 particularly when there's a problem. This year, with the COVID-19 restrictions, that
15 surveying is more difficult, like so many other things in our life. I'd like to get back to the
16 big-picture emissions that you were talking about. I know that it's difficult to quantify, in
17 general, the emissions of the Natural Environment, but certainly the need that we need to
18 maintain the natural environment and make it work as well as possible. What kind of
19 difference are we talking about between ideal behavior and "bad behavior" in terms of how
20 we're treating the environment? Can you quantify the impact we're talking about here?

21 Mr. Passmore: Not really. Not in numbers, no.

22 Chair Greenfield: How about comparing it to something else? It sounds so important, and
23 it's so difficult to grasp the scope of it.

24 Mr. Passmore: There are some good references out there. If you look at California timber
25 harvest statistics, we currently import about 90 percent of the lumber that we use in the
26 construction industry. We're only using 10 percent that's locally grown; however, the
27 growth of forest statewide is four times what we're harvesting off of those same forests, so
28 there's a huge difference between what we're able to harvest and what we're choosing to
29 import from overseas. That's maybe a good example of where a policy could incentivize
30 people to use locally sourced lumber, to reuse lumber. We have made some good progress
31 on our deconstruction process that really disincentivizes demolition and encourages
32 property owners to reuse some of the materials when they rebuild a house. We could
33 probably do more in a number of arenas such as that.

34 Chair Greenfield: Great. Thank you for finding some new and pertinent information to
35 share with us to answer a difficult question. We were talking about all of the benefits of

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1 trees in general and the co-benefits. I think these are clear to us, and I think our community
2 is very supportive of the benefits and the need for trees in general. For individual
3 community members, how does this translate down to them in terms of what they can do
4 besides planting trees? Can you speak to what individual members of our community can
5 think about and how to support our local and global community, actions they can take
6 related to this?

7 Mr. Passmore: Going back to the global carbon cycle, I know that's a really macro picture
8 of how everything works, but on an individual property, for one person, you can apply
9 some of the same practices. Getting healthy soils through application of compost and
10 mulch. Encouraging native plants that attract native wildlife and insects. Creating that
11 healthy habitat, even on your own property is possible. I think probably the biggest thing
12 that people in Palo Alto can do is information and influence. We have a society that is
13 highly educated, and we can share that knowledge with other people. We can educate others
14 about the right way to care for the environment. We can use our stewardship ethic to
15 influence other people to make good choices. Palo Alto is also an affluent community, so
16 we can let our money influence policies across the State of California, and even worldwide.

17 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Kind of related to that, you were talking about the new tools
18 you have for monitoring tree canopy, even down to a parcel-by-parcel space. How would
19 we use this information? Is there something that you would be offering to individual
20 residents to understand? What are your thoughts on that?

21 Mr. Passmore: I think a good example may be that we recognize when we adopted the first
22 version of the Urban Forest Master Plan that we had this canopy disparity between North
23 and South Palo Alto. Because of that, we started the South Palo Alto Tree Planting
24 Initiative. Being able to update our progress on an annual basis, I think is going to be really
25 valuable to keep us on task with how far we've come and where we still need to go.

26 Chair Greenfield: That makes sense. That helps. There have been discussions about the
27 trees being taken down, people not following the rules. Unfortunately, it seems like
28 incidents like that are one of the highest profile discussions of trees in our community, as
29 opposed to talking about the benefits. We're surrounded by the trees. Our community is
30 named after a tree. It's part of us, but we have more of a focus on the negative. People are
31 frustrated. The frustration of people flaunting rules and abusing them whether it's on a
32 local level or beyond, how can we improve on this, and what does our community need to
33 do?

34 Mr. Passmore: I think enforcement is definitely one mechanism of many that we can use
35 to make progress towards our goals. We need people to comply with the community ethic
36 that we adopt. Therefore, enforcement is important. From time to time, rare occasions, we
37 do have violations that occur, such as the one that was mentioned, and those need to be
38 corrected. We have drafted a new tree technical manual that improves on our policies, and

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1 we have also drafted changes to Title VIII of Palo Alto Municipal Code. In the near future,
2 we hope to complete the tree technical manual and following that, we would propose
3 ordinance changes to Title VIII to City Council to consider. We have given a presentation
4 on draft ordinance changes to the Planning and Transportation Commission in the past.
5 The next step would be to go to City Council, but we want the tree technical manual to be
6 completed first, so that we have those technical specifications to base the ordinance
7 changes on.

8 Chair Greenfield: Would it be possible to share the tree technical manual proposal with the
9 Commissioners? I think this would be interesting for us to look at.

10 Mr. Passmore: Yes, certainly.

11 Chair Greenfield: Okay, thank you. And is there a timeline for when the tree technical
12 manual update would be approved?

13 Mr. Passmore: We were hoping it was going to be improved before today, so I'm still
14 hoping it's going to be a very short timeframe. A lot of plans have seemed to change over
15 the last six months. So, I would be hesitant to give you a promise at this point.

16 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, and I appreciate that a lot of schedules have slipped over the
17 past six months. It's frustrating. There's a lot of important things we want to get to but
18 keep getting on it. We appreciate that. Finally, as I've alluded to before, I appreciate the
19 collaboration between the Urban Forestry Department and the Parks and Rec Commission
20 and Open Space Management that you and Daren have talked about. The last time you
21 presented to us – which was last October, and I appreciate the annual update – we talked
22 about further developing and formalizing our relationship so that the Parks and Rec
23 Commission could serve an official forum for the Urban Forestry Department as opposed
24 to more of an unofficial forum, which we are right now. Personally, I appreciate that a lot
25 of things are behind schedule right now, but I'm frustrated that we haven't been able to
26 finalize this. It seems like a natural fit for us to be able to move forward with this, and I'm
27 hopeful that this can get finalized in the near future. I appreciate everything you've done
28 for our community and specifically, working directly with issues that are important to our

Commission and staff which our Commission supports. Thank you very much. Council Member Kou, do you have any comments?

Council Member Kou: Thank you for the presentation. No further questions.

Chair Greenfield: Any follow-up questions or do we have any Commissioner comments? Thank you very much for sharing your evening with us, and we look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Mr. Anderson: Thanks, Walter.

3 Review of Recreation Summer Camps

Chair Greenfield: I see that Jazmin has now joined us/ Daren, would you like to introduce our speaker for the next item, which is review of recreation summer camps?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, my pleasure to introduce Assistant Director of Community Services, Jazmin LeBlanc. Thanks so much for being here, Jazmin. We appreciate it.

Jazmin LeBlanc: Thanks for having me. I am excited to present to you a wrap-up of our summer camp program that concluded last month. We decided to push ahead with making sure we could provide both in-person and virtual summer camps this summer. During the spring, when we were completely shut down in Recreation Arts and Sciences, we reached out to community members that had participated in our programs in the past and asked if we could get anyone to volunteer to speak with us, so we could learn about what would be important for their families this summer. We conducted a variety of focus groups and heard from community members that this summer was really important to them that they would be able to have something special to mark this as summer during this COVID-19 pandemic when so much of the world is impacted and their kids are not having anything close to a normal experience. Many families were worried about coming to do anything in person, but there were also a large portion of people we talked to that really wanted to be able to provide or send their kids to something that would be safe in person, if possible. We had about a 70/30 split, where about 70 percent of these families that we spoke with would like to do things in person if possible, and 30 percent definitely did not want to do that. That's what we've seen, actually. That was what we saw when we asked people about it. That's how people signed up for programs, and that's what we're seeing continue into the fall. We were able to actually provide about 1,000 children with the experience of being in summer camps this summer. About 650 were in-person, and about 350 were in virtual camps. Our camp programs were run through all of our different operations in Recreation Arts and Sciences, so that includes the Children's Theater, the Arts Center, the Junior Museum and Zoo, our Recreation division and our Aquatics program. We were very pleased to find that we were able to fill almost 90 percent of our seats for our in-person programs, which is a big, dramatic increased compared to what is typical for us, which is

around 75 percent. We were able to do this with 100 percent or better cost recovery. We knew that that was going to be a very critical piece, for us to be able to provide sustainable cost recovery programming this year. That did require us to increase prices, because our camps were all much smaller than normal. The camp prices increased, generally by about ten percent, so it was not a dramatic increase. What we came back with from community members was overwhelmingly positive feedback for both virtual and in-person programs. As I mentioned these programs covered a variety of types of camps, so visual arts, aquatics, performance arts, general recreation, science and STEAM-focused. This raised almost \$300,000 in program revenue. Some of the comments that we got back really made it all worth, because there were a lot of things to pull together to be able to provide safe programming. I'll read a couple of them. We got many that really highlight, I think, some of the things that we saw. "Thank you for putting on fun camp. My camper liked it a lot. He came home with exciting stories and asked to register again next year. I was hesitant to send my camper to physical camps during COVID, but the City of Palo Alto has done a great job of making sure campers are safe. Thank you." Another saying, "I'm so grateful that you held camp this summer. It was truly magical for my kids." These are some of the comments we got. We got many more similar to this. Typically, we serve about 5,000 people, so this was definitely far fewer than in a normal year, but still quite a lot, considering. Our camps ran over the course of a shorter period, because as you may recall, we didn't have any indication from the County that we were going to be allowed to offer any in-person programming until the first week of June. Normally, that's when we would start our programs, but that is when we found out what the rules would be. We were able to work pretty quickly and get things running in the first week of July. Fortunately, some of the partners that we work with, including our Aquatics operator, can pivot even faster than that and were offering camps within a week of the County order changing, but for most of our camps, we ran about five weeks, from July through mid-August. Our camps were generally two or three weeks long to accommodate County health orders, which is a big departure from normal, when they are usually one week long. Some of the questions that you may be wondering. We had about 75 percent of our participants come directly from Palo Alto, as Palo Alto residents. When you add in our neighboring communities in Stanford and East Palo Alto, that's another five percent of the people who participated. Then, some of our virtual programs actually had people registering from as far away as Washington State. That's something that we will continue to look at as we offer virtual programs, that that may be an opportunity for us to expand the breadth of the people who can participate in programs with us. I did look at our gender breakdown. Unfortunately, more than 40 percent of all our participants have left the field for gender blank, so we don't actually have great data there. What we saw is that about 25 percent of the people who participated were identified as boys, about 35 percent as girls and more than 40 percent didn't indicate either way, so we don't really have great data around gender participation. So, what is next? We have recently begun our fall programming, and as you can see from these two pictures that we've taken in the last couple weeks, we've expanded our programming to provide adult outdoor activities as well. What you see on the left are some

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of our adult ceramic studio participants outdoors on the Art Center Patio. On the other side, you can see some of our adult fitness participants, who are in the Lucie Stern Community Patio. So, we have right now about 870 people registered in our fall programs, and another 400 middle schoolers who are participating in outdoor fitness programs. This is not a typical middle school athletics program, but we are running outdoor fitness, socially distant activities for middle schoolers to do this summer as well. The majority of the people that we serve are youth, but we actually have about 300 adults, and that includes about 75 seniors who are participating in our programs this fall. Again, this is about 75 percent residents who are participating. In addition to the classes that we run in the fall, this is when we also get our team leadership groups up and running. We offer for team leadership groups that are leadership groups that serve about 25 teens at a time, each one. Those groups come together to develop events for other teens and to work on projects serving the needs of our teen community. We have about 100 teens in those programs. We're also looking at what we can do in place of our traditional special events this year. We're working in coordination with the City Manager's Office, and we're especially trying to see how we can perhaps provide some – I'm going to call them more place-making and community events that are socially distant and safe the COVID pandemic for community members to come together. We're looking at how this may be able to be something that we can join in with our Public Art program. Perhaps we can create some fun experiences with temporary art that provide local artists an opportunity to work in new formats. This will also reinforce and leverage our Special Events Team, who can help come up with programs that are safe to foster community. It also provides us a chance to create positive and uplifting messages to our community during this time, through distant events, art-making and social media events. What could this possibly look like? We're still working on it, so I don't want to give specifics of what you might see at the moment, but just some ideas that we're playing around with are things like scavenger hunts that take advantage of the many pieces of public art that we have in our community. So, going on a hunt for Greg Brown murals downtown might be something that we try to incorporate. As you can see on the left, we've got a picture of someone taking a look at a really intricately carved jack-o-lantern. We may be able to do things where we create art, seasonal art, for people to look at and enjoy for a moment in time. We do hope that we'll be able to put up our holiday tree downtown at Lytton Plaza this year, although we won't be able to have the same large event that normally goes along with it. We will have the tree, and we'll probably create some kind of a virtual event, so we're looking at a variety of other events that we can do that will try to mark the season as the year goes on and create opportunities for people of all ages and interests to participate. That concludes the presentation. This was, as I mentioned, a pretty brief summary of just what you're seeing, what we're offering in Recreation Arts and Sciences, and what we've done over the summer. I am happy to turn it over to any questions you may have.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Jazmin, so much for such a wonderful, uplifting presentation. Positive news is so welcome right now, and this sounds like a really successful program

1 that you've been able to organize for our community for the programs with a lot of really
2 significant challenges to face. It's really heartwarming to hear. I will open it up for
3 Commission comments. Commissioner Moss, would you like to start?

4 Commissioner Moss: Sure. I live right around the block from Cubberley, and there were
5 many, many kids playing sports all summer, and I noticed that it's very difficult, at all ages,
6 to maintain social distancing and masking. I was wondering, of all the thousand people and
7 all those classes, did you have any situations, any problems, any issues with COVID,
8 despite not having masks and not having social distance?

9 Ms. LeBlanc: We did have. I will say, as far as I know, we did have masks and social
10 distance. I'm sure there were a few occasions where people were not complying with the
11 rules, but we made clear to all of our staff – and actually, I still do this multiple times a
12 week – remind everyone of how important it is to follow the State and County guidelines
13 to keep people safe. But no, we did not have any cases of COVID transmission that were
14 brought to our attention during this. We did develop procedures for notifying people and
15 for what to do if anything should occur. We did have one person who had been exposed to
16 someone in their home that had COVID. They called us and said, "We can't come to camp,
17 because someone else in our home came down with COVID." So, there was someone who
18 ultimately did not have COVID, but had been exposed, who then, due to our protocol,
19 wasn't able to participate in the rest of the camp. We kind of went through the process, but
20 without an actual, yeah.

21 Commissioner Moss: That's amazing. I hope we can keep that up, because I know there's
22 many people playing sports into the fall now. I noticed that the people who run the camps
23 have to mask, but not the kids, so I wanted to know if that was an issue. Thank you. That's
24 all I have.

25 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Jeff.

26 Commissioner LaMere: Jazmin, thank you so much for this. It's great to see what the City
27 is doing. In terms of what David was talking about, I've seen some similar things, in terms
28 of at Cubberley, or outside groups who may have rented the fields and maybe not
29 showcasing best practices in terms of social distancing or even just private groups getting
30 together on a basketball court and playing five on five, or things like that, but it's very great
31 to hear with the programs that we are running that we did not have any positive tests. Do
32 we share any data with the County or with the State, with the fact that we're running youth
33 programs and here are numbers, and here's how we've been successful, or we've run
34 through a certain number of cohorts. Is there any data that gets shared with the County
35 Health Department or with the State?

36 Ms. LeBlanc: I think that would be very interesting, but no. It isn't something that they've
37 asked for. We are sharing informally among all of the other agencies in the county, so

1 Daren and I are on a call every other week most of the other towns in this county to share
2 resources and understanding and exchange what's working in each city, but it doesn't seem
3 to be rolling up to a higher level.

4 Commissioner LaMere: Okay, and I know that we do some things with the middle schools,
5 and you mentioned some of the programs we're trying to do, but do we have any other
6 conversations with the school district in terms of best practices or sharing things that we
7 have done that have been successful, now that the schools are trying to figure re-opening
8 and looking at different things? I think it would be interesting if there was any sort of
9 dialogue to the school district side, since we have run some groups through with success.

10 Ms. LeBlanc: Yeah, that would be certainly worth exploring further. Each of our program
11 areas has partners that they work with in the school district closely. For instance, the staff
12 in the Art Center and the Children's Theater work very closely with the Music and Theater
13 Department staff at the school district. I know for certain that they exchanged ideas in those
14 groups, but again, I don't know that we've been invited to share some of what's worked
15 with the higher-level administrators.

16 Commissioner LaMere: Well, thank you so much. What you do is very much appreciated.

17 Ms. LeBlanc: Thanks.

18 Chair Greenfield: Jackie.

19 Commissioner Olson: Hi, Jazmin, thank you so much. As a parent of two young kids, I can
20 see why you got immediate sign-ups and 90 percent capacity. I think there's a lot of pent-
21 up demand and wanting to get kids out there, so kudos to you and your team for pivoting
22 so quickly and making that happen and really just adding something new and different
23 besides the blur of everything else that has been happening during this time. The question
24 that I have has to do with access to folks who sort of are underserved in the community.
25 Did you find that a lot of folks applied for scholarships or any other type of tuition reduction
26 during this time period? Do we, in general in our programs, get a lot of uptake for extending
27 our reach?

28 Ms. LeBlanc: Thank you for that question. I'm glad you brought it up. I tried to take a look
29 at exactly how many people took advantage of our scholarship program during the summer,
30 and I wasn't able to piece out who signed up for our summer camps using the scholarship
31 versus some of our other after school programs we're offering right now. Interestingly, we
32 have close to 300 people that have filled out the paperwork so that they can participate in
33 the program this year, but we've only had about 50 people actually participate. We have
34 capacity, and we have funding to provide for more of our fee reduction scholarships than
35 what we've seen people actually request this year. I am not sure why, what's happening
36 there, but it's certainly something that would be interesting and worthwhile to dig into, to

1 find out if the price is still a barrier. Because, what we can offer is a sliding scale, but the
2 biggest discount you can get is fifty percent off of the price. So, is the price still too high?
3 Is that one of the issues? Is the issue perhaps that the income level that we're using as the
4 cut-off is too low, perhaps? There could be different factors at play.

5 Commissioner Olson: Do we ever reach back out to the people who didn't go all the way
6 through that process to see, is it a price issue, or are they getting stuck someone in the
7 process?

8 Ms. LeBlanc: That would be something very interesting to do that we haven't done. A
9 couple of years ago we did take a look at our fee reduction program to try to see if we were
10 providing an appropriate level of discount, and at that time it looked like we were, but
11 things change rapidly, and it's been at least five years since we did that.

12 Commissioner Olson: I would love to take a look at that again sometime, if that's within
13 our jurisdiction, just to really see. Sometimes fifty percent still might be too much for some
14 folks, and it's so important for the kids to get out and have access to these things.

15 Ms. LeBlanc: Yeah. Luckily, the people who've applied are in our system, so it's not too
16 hard to reach out to them. It might be something interesting to do, to reach out and try to
17 get some feedback on the program – what made them sign up for it, and why have they, or
18 haven't they, actually registered for things?

19 Commissioner Olson: That would be great. Thanks so much.

20 Chair Greenfield: Keith.

21 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm very glad that we're able to get this in to support the city.
22 There's a lot of people going stir crazy right now, so I imagine this is a really good help.
23 For the virtual classes, were they mostly one-way communication, like an exercise class
24 where the instructor is just shouting information in, or did you have two-way
25 communication during the classes?

26 Ms. LeBlanc: We tried to make it as interactive as possible, including for instance, the
27 Junior Museum and Zoo really tried to focus their virtual programming around their zoo
28 animals to try to put something really fun on the screen, actual live animals. And then, I
29 know they did things like have the kids run and grab their stuffed animals and talk about
30 those, as if they were the zookeepers for stuffed animals, so really tried to make it as fun
31 as possible. I think the programs that were the most successful typically for our virtual
32 programs, had more of an academic focus. We had some virtual debate team programs. We
33 had a variety of computer programming camps, things like that. Those lend themselves
34 pretty well to this kind of an environment.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Do these classes have higher capacity or lower capacity than normal?

Ms. LeBlanc: For the most part they have lower capacity, because it really is hard to engage people in a virtual environment that is going to stimulate them for a long time, especially for the younger kids. We had very good feedback for our programs that we offered during the summer for younger kids, but we did not find very many people signing their kids up for virtual programs this fall, even the same families that were really happy with their virtual zoo camp didn't elect to do virtual science programming this fall. We are not exactly sure why, but our hunch is that there's just so much overload. Most of those kids are taking virtual school, so it's hard for them to want to come back online, no matter how engaging and fun it is.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Did we have anything like exercise classes where you could have a large number in there?

Ms. LeBlanc: Yeah. We've been really playing around with it, and some of our things like Zumba were open, I think, to 30 and 40 people. We also, at the beginning of this...I feel really fortunate. We have an amazing staff, absolutely amazing people who are so passionate about their programs, so when we had to cancel everything in March, that didn't stop our staff. They immediately started thinking, "Well, what can we do now?" Throughout a bunch of free programming kind of as a way for us to just try to see what is going to work for us to be able to provide, and the free programming, some of it we had 70 people join, and it ended up being a singalong that the Children's Theater held, just to try to see, does this work? Is this something that we could sustain and offer, and would people pay for this, too? Can we make this experience so good that people would want to pay to participate? We tried a lot of things, but what seems to work best are smaller, more interactive programs, and as I mentioned, especially things that have more of an academic or computer focus inherently.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Do we think that the virtual classes are going to survive after COVID? Are we going to keep these around?

Ms. LeBlanc: We're going to keep trying, but it's hard to say, because at least 70 percent of the people who seem to be participating want to do it in person, and we're also finding we can't charge the same fee to do something online. If we have a relatively large cohort that wants to participate virtually, and they don't want to pay the same amount – although it still takes just as much staff time to produce something. What we're thinking right now is that we'll continue to offer virtual programming this year and keep a close eye on what seems to be successful, and then in future years, we would only offer virtual programming if we have proven that it's something that people want to participate in. So, it's probably not going to be of the breadth of everything.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, I can imagine that, but I remember back in the days when we had young kids. The younger one would have their nap schedule, and it would be such a pain, because you'd have to haul the kid to soccer practice, and it would interfere with nap schedule. It would be in some ways much nicer to have the virtual class in that case.

Ms. LeBlanc: I think some of the really small programs, we also have one-on-one vocal lessons. Those have done well. Despite, this isn't the perfect sound environment, but it is extremely convenient, that you don't have to take your kid somewhere for those lessons.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, thank you. Keep up the good work.

Ms. LeBlanc: Thanks.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Keith. Anne.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Yeah, thank you very much, Jazmin. That was a great report. Thank you and as Jeff said, very uplifting at this time in all of our lives, so I appreciate that. I think most of my fellow Commissioners have asked all the questions and comments that I had made, so just quickly, I'm really interested in the scholarship opportunities, and if we can figuring out, maybe going back to find out nicely why people didn't take advantage and all of that, because I think as COVID goes on, we still have quite a bit of unemployment in different places, and people are trying to conserve. It would be really good to make sure that we can get all of the scholarships placed to kids, so that they can take advantage. They are all losing, as you parents know, so much in this particular time, so it would be great if we could figure that out, the scholarship piece of that. Secondly, I'm so excited to see the fitness programs that you talked about. I wasn't sure – are you going to offer that during the school year? Now that sports are coming back, but maybe not until January. I'm worried that our kids are going to be sitting around doing screen stuff with not very much exercise, bad air outside, which we hope will go away. I'm excited that the Department can offer some of that, and I think it's really important to publicize it, because otherwise some of our kids are going to be missing a whole year of physical activity, missing sports and just missing exercise. I don't what your plans for that were for the school year.

Ms. LeBlanc: Thank you for that question. Yes, we are offering those middle school fitness classes right now.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Good.

Ms. LeBlanc: As I said, you can click in and get enrolled in something soon. There's already about 400 middle schoolers that are signed up, but we changed the program to try to be more accommodating to the health order and to families, so it's every three weeks there's a new program that you can sign up for, so there's still more space available for things. I think next month we've got plenty of space available.

1 Vice Chair Cribbs: What's the cost of that?

2 Ms. LeBlanc: I can't remember. I'm sorry. I want to say it's about \$170 per session, and
3 then you have two or three afternoons a week, you get together with a cohort at a local park
4 and play games and do techniques mostly, without getting close to anyone, that are related
5 to one of the middle school athletic sports that we normally provide. We have games and
6 footwork and throwing the ball related to football, and things like that.

7 Vice Chair Cribbs: How is that being publicized? Is it through the school district? Through
8 the *Enjoy!* Catalog? Through, just in general?

9 Ms. LeBlanc: Everything above, yes. It's in the *Enjoy!* Catalog. We did quite a bit of
10 promotion and social media and emails, and then through the PTAs. Hopefully, the
11 community knows that we have this program out there. I'll also add that our Aquatics pool
12 operator has been offering after school camps as well. Same kind of a thing, but this goes
13 to a slightly younger group, so 5 to 12-year-olds can go two or three afternoons a week and
14 play with other kids outdoors.

15 Vice Chair Cribbs: It sounds like everybody's been able to pivot and the community is
16 having a great benefit because of it. I have just one more quick question, and that's really,
17 looking back at the Master Plan. In the plan we talked a lot about discussions with the
18 school district about shared facilities. It feels like right now, with the pressure of COVID,
19 and some schools aren't in session, some are going back, and all of that, that there might
20 be some motivation and some opportunity to re-look at facilities that the school district has
21 they may not be using, or something that the City has that we might not be...so, is there a
22 vehicle, like the school/city liaison or something that somebody from Community Services
23 could bring that up?

24 Ms. LeBlanc: Yeah, I think that would be the appropriate committee, but school/city
25 committee that you mentioned. We also, as if said, we do have heavy communication with
26 some of the staff in the school district and are looking for ways to make sure that our
27 partnership is sustained. So, we've been actually focused a little bit less on facility usage
28 right now and just trying to figure out we pivot some of our typical programs that are
29 offered in the schools to this COVID environment. For instance, our Junior Museum and
30 Zoo staff are in all 12 of our elementary schools, teaching science programs. That becomes
31 essentially almost a full-time job for much of the school year, but this year it's still a little
32 bit unclear how we'll make that happen. We've been really focused on those types of things
33 at the moment, but I think you're right that this is an opportunity to look at other
34 opportunities as well.

35 Vice Chair Cribbs: It would be great if you could, and I do remember that you said that the
36 Art Center and the Art teachers and the Theater and the Junior Museum, so that's all great
37 news. Always opportunities out of challenges, I guess. Thank you very much.

1 Ms. LeBlanc: Thanks.

2 Chair Greenfield: Thank you again, Jazmin. I appreciate the positive presentation you've
3 given us. I appreciate the comments and questions of all the other Commissioners. I'll just
4 reiterate a couple things. I'm also very interested in the scholarship activities and the
5 follow-up and what we can do to improve our reach to the people who need our help the
6 most is certainly important. That will dovetail nicely into the next discussion item we have.
7 Following up on what Commissioner LaMere said as well, in terms of thinking that the
8 PAUSD, I think this is really important to ensure consistency of best practices and
9 preventative rules as necessary as we try to build a commonality and understanding, and
10 really what becomes an ethos in our community in terms of how to move to forward as a
11 group and do our best to get back to what we think of as being normal and to enrich our
12 lives. Anything we can do to foster this relationship with the school district and the City
13 seems really important, especially in areas where we're sharing things like fields and
14 facilities. Finally, are you involved Library programs at all? And, as a broader question to
15 you and Daren, should the Commission be considering library services, now that we no
16 longer have a Library Commission? I don't know if the Library has any programs going
17 on, like online story times or things like that. It seems to fit very closely with the type of
18 online programming that you're working to put together.

19 Ms. LeBlanc: I do work really very closely with them in an informal fashion. Again, even
20 things like the Art Center and the Rinconada Library being so close together, the facility
21 leads in both of those buildings are constantly in communication to make sure that they are
22 aligned on programs and events and things. In terms of COVID and recovery and reopening
23 plans, we haven't been involved in that. I will let Daren speak to the question around library
24 services being something that this Commission may want to take up at some point. Do you
25 have thoughts, Daren?

26 Mr. Anderson: Thanks, Jazmin, and thanks for the good comment and question, Chair. I
27 think before opining on that, I'd rather check with Library staff and get their take on that
28 one, especially in light of our efforts right now to expand into an area with Urban Forest
29 relationship probably should be looked at holistically and see if it makes sense, both for
30 CSD and for these other departments as well.

31 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I just thought it was worth bringing up, and if appropriate
32 we could designate a liaison to Library Services to talk about things further, but I'll look
33 for staff lead and Council leaders, for that matter as well, now that we have a gap with the
34 reduction [distortion]. Council Member Kou, do you have any comments?

35 Council Member Kou: Just that it's very exciting to see all the children's programs, even
36 for the adults. It's something we fought so hard for during the budget reductions, and it's
37 just really great. Thank you so much for your presentation and for the creativity also that

came with everything and all the staff members who worked to make it happen. Please thank them and to you, too.

Ms. LeBlanc: Thanks so much.

Chair Greenfield: Any final comments from any Commissioners?

Commissioner Moss: I want to echo what Council Member Kou said. It's amazing how creative the staff has had to be and risen to the occasion in those fateful March, April, May months to deal with all this. It's amazing, so I really appreciate it.

Ms. LeBlanc: Thanks again, and I will definitely take all this appreciation back to our staff. It mean a lot, because they have been really working hard, so getting this positive feedback from the Commissioners and Council Members and community members, it makes it worth it. It makes all the effort worth it, so thanks again.

4. Fund Development Ad Hoc Update

Chair Greenfield: We're going to move on now. We have one more agenda item to get through, and it's getting late. It was a very full docket this evening. The next item is the Fund Development Ad Hoc Update. This is a presentation from the Commission Ad Hoc. The Fund Development Ad Hoc was created to, one, explore and pursue funding for our Master Plan programs and projects, and two, to review associated CIP planning. Given the current COVID-related budget crisis, the Ad Hoc is particularly concerned about finding ways to bridge funding gaps that our community faces. These evenings recommendations draw upon the work of many, over a multi-year period, and I want to particularly thank Anne and David for their passion and hard work on brainstorming ideas and paths for community fundraising for many years. We're going to present some of these ideas for discussion and feedback, but this is just the first step of an important work in progress. Also, I believe this is maybe the first time that funding recommendations have been presented by the Ad Hoc to the full Commission since I've been on the Commission going on four years now, so we're excited about that opportunity. As we studied options for how to best increase community support to address these gaps, we quickly concluded that our non-profit community partners are a critical conduit for community outreach, for both financial and volunteer support. We settled our focus on two priorities. The first one is to identify solutions to address funding and resource gaps that are achievable now, and we're targeting both CSD recreation programs and community partner led environmental sustainability efforts, such as Canopy, EV and Grassroots Ecology. The second priority is to figure out how to make some progress towards big-ticket projects, like a new city-owned gym that we really just never get anywhere on. No doubt it's difficult and complicated, but we believe we need to start somewhere. We also made sure our efforts were consistent with a couple of fundamental requirements. One, let's not create significant new work for staff right now, and two, of course, let's follow our North Star, our Master Plan. We identified

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four different recommendations, which we'll go over quickly now. Really, the primary goal for this evening is to discuss these ideas, get your feedback and get some other ideas to move forward on. Here are our recommendations. First, update and promote a comprehensive summary of donation and volunteer opportunities. Second, create a highlight list to draw attention to the unique, less well-known giving opportunities. Third, work to understand, streamline and communicate how to channel funding to specific projects that community members want to contribute to, and finally, explore some creative approaches for securing grant dollars to fund Master Plan initiatives. On to the first goal. Intuitively, we wanted to create an easy-to-find one-stop shopping summary list of all donations and volunteer opportunities for our community, with some short summaries and website links. We were encouraged to find that the community partner details were already listed, fairly prominently, on the City website. Here are some screenshot excerpts from the current City site. This is the top level, and then there's also a secondary level with different groupings, for example, Environmental Partners. We noticed some inconsistencies and had some ideas on how to improve the display. We also observed that the webpage discovery isn't so great, as evidenced by our initial lack of awareness that it existed. Then we learned that the City is well into a major overhaul of its website, so it's not appropriate to make some modifications to this right now. The roll-out has been delayed, but it's now targeted for some time next year, so the next step forward would be that staff would appreciate the assistance from our Ad Hoc in reviewing and commenting on new website details before it goes online. We look forward to it assisting with this, and we hope this update will happen soon, so we can address the immediate needs of this. The next item is the giving opportunity highlight list. This is a pretty straightforward idea. We want to highlight unique giving opportunities and make a list that's accessible to the public. We're still working to sort out how this list will be posted, and we're interested, definitely, in other ideas to add to the list. The first item, the scholarship program for middle school after school sports, is something that we'd like to have in place by the spring. It's not that it doesn't exist right now, and we think it's a very important new gap to address, so we'll be working to figure out how to proceed here best with solutions. The next two items – the tree and park bench gifts – are available today with just a few clicks, and we want to just make this more readily apparent to the community. I'll now hand off to Anne to talk about our final two recommendations.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you, and before I start running through this I wanted to both thank Jeff and also David and the staff for helping us with this presentation. Getting it to this point means a lot to me. I feel like I've been on this Ad Hoc Committee for a really long time, and I look back to when David and I met with Allison to talk about library funding, and what we could learn from her. Oh my gosh, that was at least four years ago. I think that COVID and listening to the budget discussions that the Council had to have this April, May and June really provided the three of us with some impetus to say, "Okay, let's take a summary of what we've got so far – because we've got great community groups – let's see how we can publicize it. Let's see how we can kind of break this down and give

people the opportunity to contribute a little bit or contribute a lot.” It also came from a couple times I participated in community meetings, whether it was about restrooms or dog parks or planning and parks, and very often residents would say, “Hey, I’d like to contribute something,” when Peter would have to say, “Well, we don’t have money for that,” and the response would be, “Well, gee, I’d like to help with that. How can I do that?” Or, “I’d like to buy a new drinking fountain for a dog park. How can I do that?” Somehow, it’s not really clear, so we wanted to make that clear, that there was a way within the City to contribute to either a foundation, the Park Foundation, or the Recreation Foundation, or there was a process by which it would be easy to give money to particular projects. We’re on the public/private project partnership part. Obviously, here – I’m going back to the presentation – the goal would be to increase private funding for community projects, so we can streamline the process. I have great faith in our community that people will contribute to projects that they’re interested in, if it’s easy for them to do that. But, obviously there are some challenges. The fact that our three committee members weren’t quite sure that there was a City website that listed all of our foundations, and we found that out. Anyhow, I think that very often it’s a matter of communication. We thought it would be fun to give the Commissioners some ideas of small projects that people could get involved in. Here are just some ideas under \$15,000: a dog park drinking fountain, new playground equipment, and then a very small one – ping pong balls for the ping pong tables at Lytton Plaza. An idea of a medium contribution might be \$15,000 to \$100,000, which is the Arts Center kiln replacement. We understand there’s been a little bit of money contributed toward that. We always have to have large and extra-large projects, because we do have those in the Master Plan. We want to keep in mind that the City of Palo Alto does not have a gym that it owns itself. We think it’s really important that we need to really look at that and say, “Hey, how could we create the opportunity to have a gym that is a Palo Alto Community gym?” I was very happy to hear today the skaters and the young people coming to talk to the Council meeting, because I remember 35 years ago a group of skaters did the same thing when I worked for the City, and the result was actually the Greer Park skate bowl. Just to count the partner organizations that are supporting private contributions. The Recreation Foundation has done a lot of programming support in the past, created money for the May Fete parade and a bunch of other things, and Friends of Palo Alto Parks is standing by, as I understand it, and some of the dog owners have even contributed funds to the Friends of Palo Alto Parks. The one thing, as the Commissioners look at this list, I’m sure that you all have projects that you’d like to see put on the list. I think that’s what we really want to have from everybody tonight. This is a work in progress. It’s not cast in stone, and we want to build this and make sure that it is put out for everybody to hear. These are just some of the things that we were concerned about with the public/private partnership. These are very much for the big projects, but we have to work with the City to identify the project. We have to get City approval of the project. We have to determine the best vehicle for community funding. We do have the Adopt A Park city gift program, and then there’s the opportunity to engage in various foundations. Then, there is also a process, as Council Member Kou knows, to accept public donations. The last thing that the

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committee wanted to bring up is the opportunity to seek a planning grant that would involve the opportunity to figure out how the city, which does not have a grant writer at this point, as we understand, that could help us identify funding for large projects, whether it's the gym, whether it's a pool in South Palo Alto that we've talked about, whether it's a number of things that were in the Master Plan. The Master Plan had a big ticket when it was accepted a couple of years ago, and in order for it to be successful, it's going to need a considerable amount of money. Given COVID and given the economic situation, there's going to have to be some grant and foundation assistance and writing but in order to do that, we have to work with the City to see how the City staff would work with a grant writer and what kind of rules and process there would be, but we didn't want to leave the opportunity to have a grant write out of this ad hoc report, because we felt that it was really an important thing. I'll close there now and turn it back to Jeff, but I really want to reiterate what I said about inviting our fellow Commissioners to provide feedback, thoughts, not only tonight, but going forward in the future so that we can really make this a document that will be helpful, not only to the Commission, but also to the City and the community.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Anne, and we're definitely interested in hearing other Commissioners' feedback on these ideas. Commissioner Moss, is there anything you'd like to add?

Commissioner Moss: Looking historically, I've been on the Commission with Anne for a number of years, and one of the biggest issues is staff time. If somebody comes up with an idea of a skate park and some funding, you've got to have staff to deal with it. We have to make sure that we separate the two and focus strictly on the funding part, and then as Jeff mentioned, there is a process for engaging with staff. We have to deal with these things separately. Otherwise, if you tie them together, then you never, ever get anything done. That's what we're trying to do here. The second thing is that when we came up the Parks Master Plan so long ago, two years ago, the first thing that the Mayor wanted to do was come up with a bond measure that would pay for everything. That provide to be extremely difficult and also off-putting, so we want to focus again on smaller donations, individual donations, public and private partnerships. Maybe someday we'll get to a bond measure, but we don't want to wait. We don't want to put all our eggs in that basket, so this is an attempt to deal with that historical perspective. That's all.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, David, and thank you to both you and Anne again for your passion and drive and ideas for keeping this going and burning for so long. It's finally exciting to make some progress on this. Commissioner Reckdahl, would you like to comment first?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think this is a really good idea. I'm really glad you guys are pushing this. We should have been pushing this for years. I think in general, people want to donate to a specific project. I think that's more attractive than just a general donation. If

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you can have specific projects on the website and say, “I want to put \$10 towards this, or \$200 towards that,” I think that will get more donations. The biggest thing is just marketing. The vast majority of people in Palo Alto don’t even know that the Friends of Palo Alto Parks even exists, so we have all these websites. We have *Enjoy!* Catalog. People are going to enjoy using the website to register, we should be plastering on the edge of the screen whatever link we want them to click to for donations. There’s two ways of looking at it. One, what do they want to do to help themselves? “I want a dog park, because I have a dog.” The other is the scholarship aspect, saying, “You have enough money to register for this class. Not everybody does. Click here to sponsor a scholarship.” That may be effective. Marketing. And once the election is over, my front yard is going to seem very empty, so I’d love a sign that says, “Donate to Friends of Palo Alto Parks,” or whatever.

Vice Chair Cribbs: I love that, Keith. That’s great.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think marketing is a big thing. We have to concentrate on getting the eyeballs. Thanks.

Commissioner Moss: And the major thing is to be able to market a particular project, not just throw money at the Friends of Palo Alto Parks for no reason. That marketing needs to be project-focused as well as just giving to Parks.

Chair Greenfield: I think we’re all in agreement that people are much more interested in donating to specific projects where they know exactly where their money is going to go, rather than putting money into a fund. And that’s exactly what we’re focusing on, the third recommendation. We have some processes in place. It’s really complicated right now, and we’re working to try to understand it ourselves and take a look at how to make it simpler and easier and less cumbersome, and then communicate it. It’s going to take some time, but I think it’s a really worthy effort. Commissioner Olson.

Commissioner Olson: Thank you all. This is great, and thanks to Commissioner Moss, because I was going to ask if we ruled out a bond measure, so it sounds like we have. I know it is very complicated, and probably this isn’t the right climate. I am very much an advocate of starting small and having some wins and gains and get the marketing out to fund smaller projects and then growing from there. I think you guys have laid out some really great things. I think when we get the ball rolling here I would love to see some of this funding going to Cubberley, of course, but I think it’s great, and I think really getting the word out, because I do think people tend to be very generous when asked, so I maybe we need to do more asking. Thanks.

Chair Greenfield: I’ll add that, when it comes to Cubberley, that is going to take a bond, no doubt about that. We’ve got to have a plan in place before we can start that process. Commissioner LaMere.

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Commissioner LaMere: Thank you for taking the time to put this together. I agree with the sentiments of my previous Commissioners. I find it interesting in terms of trying to figure out how we take a group like the skateboarders that just spoke. How do we help them along on this journey to try to get a skate park, for example? I understand that takes staff time, but sometimes it's interesting in terms of what comes first? The funding or the ideas? How does that work to produce something? Sometimes it seems that we might have an idea, but we don't go through with the idea, because we don't think we have funding. Or, sometimes there might be a funding source, but they can't get that idea generated or through to the Commission and then to the City Council, so I think working on that and figuring that out as well or having a better understanding of that would be helpful. This is such a great project and so needed. Thank you guys so much for all of your hard work on this.

Commissioner Moss: Do we want to have Daren just respond to that about the process? Because it is not well known, this idea of funding for a project idea first.

Mr. Anderson: Thanks for that question, Commissioner Moss. There's probably a lot of different ways of doing it. I think that will be one of the good outcomes of this process that the Commission is going through, is to capture them and be able to articulate them, so people who want to do the next skate park or Magical Bridge Playground, or whatever it is, can see some templates and examples for how they happened, and we can better guide them through it. I don't think it's just one way. The example I think may be most relevant to what you just mentioned was the Magical Bridge Playground. I was in Greg Betts' office – former Director of Community Services – when Olenka Villarreal, the champion who organized and implemented the Magical Bridge Playground first proposed it. It was a number of years back. It was just a concept at that point and sort of grew organically through her championship and partnership with the Friends of Palo Alto Parks, and then forming her own organization – the Friends of Magical Bridge. Though that's one great paradigm that we can build on, I don't think it's the only one. There's lots of other methodologies that either Palo Alto has used for other projects or other agencies and cities have used successfully. I wouldn't want to limit ourselves to just one when I think there's probably a lot of good ones. Again, I see that as one of the positive outcomes of this endeavor.

Chair Greenfield: I think that's a common theme we're hearing is it's not a one-size-fits-all type of answer and approach and there's lots of variations that come into play. That makes it more complicated in outlining a process, but that's the challenge in front of us. Jeff, I really appreciate your question. I think it really is important to help the community understand that when they have an idea for a project, how they can give it some legs and the steps necessary to start the ball rolling, so that a proposal can be made to the City on a project. The City is going to have to approve any project before we start getting funding for it, but the genesis of the ideas and formulating that and nurturing it along and working with the City and the Commission to develop a plan that is going to be feasible, both for

1 the City to support and for the community to support financially, that's really what we're
2 after.

3 Commissioner Moss: When he talked about multiple ways, certainly having a CIP project
4 that's already been scoped out and already been put on the calendar, and if somebody wants
5 to contribute to offsetting some of the cost of that CIP when it comes up, that's certainly
6 another way to do it, and if we only could publicize those CIP projects, like we do when
7 Peter Jensen goes out to give the community meetings for Ramos Park or for Cameron
8 Park and people come, and they say, "Well, yeah, I'd like to donate a little bit of money to
9 my community park." That's certainly another one of those options that Daren was
10 mentioning.

11 Chair Greenfield: Council Member Kou, do you have any comments? Anyone else? Daren,
12 do you have any other comments you'd like to share on the ideas [inaudible]?

13 Mr. Anderson: Just one, to express gratitude for the Ad Hoc, so respectful of the fact that
14 staff's got a lot on their plates right now and took this on by themselves. I know that's a
15 big endeavor, and there's always, "Wouldn't it be great to understand what staff's doing
16 on this and this and this," but you took it all in your own hands and ran with it, and I just
17 wanted to express gratitude for that. Certainly, we will help. Jazmin has already weighed
18 in, and will be of great assistance, and I will do my best, too, to move this forward. I just
19 wanted to say thanks. I believe in this, too. We recognize in so many different ways, from
20 ping pong balls to those CIPs that we do that you mentioned, where if we just had a little
21 bit more we could such-and-such addition that I know the community would love and that
22 we're so close, but we don't have that framework built. I see that being such a valuable
23 addition to what we offer, and we just don't have it right now. I would love to help get us
24 there as best I can.

25 Vice Chair Cribbs: Could I just thank and follow on Daren's comments a little bit, and just
26 say that what would be important, I think, for the Ad Hoc right now is if our other
27 Commissioners would, "I guess we can do this, if you can email us suggestions so that we
28 can add it to this living document," I think that would be incredibly important. I think we
29 started out with the idea that no idea is too crazy, that this is all for the good of the
30 community. So if you could do that for us, I think that would be really, really helpful. We
31 try to not spend too much staff time and request too many things. I think we were kind of
32 successful, not all the way successful, but it would be really helpful so that this is a real
33 Commission initiative, not just an Ad Hoc initiative, that would be great.

34 Chair Greenfield: Actually, we are looking for Commission input. I think that input should
35 be forwarded to Daren, just to pass on to the Ad Hoc.

36 Commissioner Moss: Are we asking for project ideas, or funding sources, or partnerships?

Vice Chair Cribbs: In my mind, David, it's anything that any Commission wants to send to Daren, and we'll see how it fits in.

Chair Greenfield: And I'd like to ask staff to forward the presentation to the full Commission. I think there's a lot of content in the presentation that would be helpful for the other Commissioners to review and go through it. That will help you come up with some ideas for us, I think.

Mr. Anderson: Catherine, would you mind emailing that to the full Commission when you get a chance?

Ms. Bourquin: Yes.

Chair Greenfield: Any final comments as we look to wrap up. We're after 10:00 already, but I don't want to shut down important comments on an important subject like this.

4. Other Commission Ad Hoc and Liaison Updates

Chair Greenfield: Does anyone have anything to share beyond what's in the agenda notes, or any comments, questions or further updates?

Commissioner Moss: Are we invited to that closed session on Foothills Park with the Council, or is it just the Ad Hoc?

Mr. Anderson: No, Commissioner Moss, it's just Council and staff.

Commissioner Moss: Okay.

IV. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 27, 2020 MEETING

I think we have three potential items on the agenda right now. I'll go through them quickly, and I'm also interested in other suggestions from the Commission. The first one is that Valley Water is looking to present on the Baylands Tide Gate project. They are requesting a PIO. That would be an action. We also have the Office of Transportation, Sylvia Star-Lack, the Transportation Manager, lined up to give a presentation, which will be, again, a bit of a continuation of our S/CAP Sustainability series. She's looking to talk on the COVID response from the City, including safe routes to school, shared streets and summer streets. Daren, you had mentioned that John Aikin was interested in presenting the Baylands Solar System Interpretive Display? Do you want to talk a little bit more about that, just briefly?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, I still haven't gotten confirmation, but it's an interpretive display that would span from the Junior Museum, through Rinconada Park and connecting with the Arts Center, I believe, across the street, in a long, linear fashion. There would be different

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1 little markers, I guess, that would delineate the solar system to some degree. I don't have a
2 lot of details other than that, but I know Jazmin had mentioned that she and John may be
3 willing to come. I still need to confirm that, but I think we can put it tentatively on the
4 agenda for October.

5 Chair Greenfield: It sounds like a fun item to include. I think it would be a good idea to try
6 to keep the agenda to three items, so if something else comes up, that would probably be
7 one that we would try to push out into the future.

8 Commissioner Moss: For a later meeting – now that you're talking about John Aikin – is
9 that Baylands Friendship Trail. Does he want to talk about that at all?

10 Mr. Anderson: Thanks, Commissioner Moss. I did bring that up, and I think there's
11 willingness to bring that as well. I just wasn't sure which meeting, whether it would be
12 October or thereafter. I'll check with John and see his availability. He's at the trail end here
13 of wrapping up the JMZ project. He's just completely absorbed in that right now.

14 Chair Greenfield: Great, and other future items, I know we have potentially a Ramos Park
15 PIO discussion. We have a program update for Families, Children and Needs. I don't
16 remember exactly what that was. Is that an idea of yours, Anne, or Daren, did you suggest
17 that?

18 Vice Chair Cribbs: I think it might have been an idea of mine, just to continue. It was such
19 a great report from Jazmin about this summer, to keep the Commission focused on what
20 the City is doing for families during this time. It doesn't have to be a long report, or maybe
21 it's part of Daren's report, but that was the topic.

22 Chair Greenfield: Great, thank you, and we also will be looking for annual updates on the
23 Aquatics program and the golf course.

24 Mr. Anderson: For the golf course, we're targeting November tentatively.

25 Commissioner Moss: Is there any reason to bring back Magical Bridge, because I talked to
26 them earlier in the summer, and they will always be happy to come talk to us, but I'm not
27 sure if we have a reason. Are we interested? I take that to be a no.

28 Chair Greenfield: I agree, it would need to have a reason, so that it would have some focus
29 for them. Anyone else? Great, well if you have suggestions for agenda, please feel free to
30 reach out to Daren with those, and he will pass that on.

VII. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Greenfield: Council Member Kou.

Council Member Kou: I think, if I remember correctly, on Monday, the City Manager announced that the Community Service Children's Theater is coming back. The first show is *Red Riding Hood*, on September 26th and 27th, so if you go onto the website, I'm sure you find the sites and buys the tickets and watch the show.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I have a comment as well. As a Commission we've talked about the idea on various occasions the barbecue at Foothills Park that are located on the road between the lake and the Orchard Glen picnic area on the hillside seem like a hazard and given all of the reminders of smoke and the fires over the last month, I'm really interested in seeing what we can do act immediately to talk about removal of those barbecues in the picnic areas that are really very infrequently used, but it looks very hazardous. The idea of lighting a fire on that hillside for recreational use is frankly disturbing to me, so I'd be interested in staff looking into that and figuring out how we can proceed if involvement is requested.

Commissioner Moss: And the one just south of the dam on the south side.

Chair Greenfield: That's what I'm talking about. There's picnic areas on both sides of the dam on the way to Orchard Glen.

Mr. Anderson: I'm glad to look more into that and get back to the Commission on it.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Appreciate that. Anything else? I want to thank Peter and Catherine and Jazmin, earlier, and Lam earlier and then Daren for all of their assistance.

Commissioner Moss: And Walter.

Chair Greenfield: In broadcasting and having our meetings. We're kind of getting used to this new normal, whatever it is. It's going to be this for a while. Thank you to Lydia for joining us. As always, your continued presence and attention is awesome. Thank you.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned by motion by Commissioner Moss and second by Commissioner LaMere at 10:18p.m.