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**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
August 25, 2020
Virtual Conference
Palo Alto, California**

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

14 **Commissioners Absent:** None

15 **Others Present:** Council Member Kou

16 **Staff Present:** Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Lam Do

17 **I. ROLL CALL**

18 **II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS**

19 Chair Greenfield: Any agenda changes, requests, or deletions from anyone? If not, then
20 we will move forward.

21 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

22 Chair Greenfield: Are there any members of the public who would like to speak?
23 Catherine, looks like there's nobody who would like to speak.

24 Catherine Bourquin: No one's raised their hand.

25 Chair Greenfield: We will move forward with the first business item. Actually, I'm going
26 to recommend an agenda change. I'm going to recommend that we have the Department
27 Report before the Business, which is normally what we do. We had changed that for our
28 last meeting. If no one has thoughts otherwise, then let's proceed with the Department
29 Report please, Daren.

30 **IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

31 Daren Anderson: Thank you, Chair. Daren Anderson with Community Services
32 Department. I forwarded the Commission an email recently regarding an upcoming



1 community meeting on the safe parking program that the City and the County are
2 working on to cosponsor. The program will help households living in their vehicles to
3 transition to stable living. This meeting is in advance of City Council’s consideration of
4 opening a safe parking lot at 2000 Geng Road. This is the location of the former
5 temporary fire station next to the Baylands Athletic Center. The meeting is on August
6 31st from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. It’s a Zoom link that you can find on the Planning
7 Department’s webpage page. The upcoming Council meeting on this topic is tentatively
8 scheduled for September 14th. On August 19th, Foothills Park and Pearson-Arastradero
9 Preserve were both closed due to concerns about park visitor and employee safety caused
10 by the smoke from the nearby wildfires. Unfortunately, the proximity of the fires and the
11 smoke continues to be an issue of concern, and both preserves remain closed at this time.
12 Mid Peninsula Regional Open Space District preserves adjacent to Foothills Park are also
13 closed. This is Foothills Preserve, Los Trancos and Monte Bello Preserve. An evacuation
14 warning was issued as a precaution on the evening of Sunday, August 23rd, for several
15 areas within Santa Clara County, including Palo Alto Hills and the Foothills Park area. I
16 read just moments ago that the fire evacuation warning was lifted in Palo Alto by Cal Fire
17 thanks to progress on the CZU Fire. Palo Alto Fire continues to monitor fire activity in
18 our area, and a crew is stationed at Station 8 in Foothills Park for fire watch specific to
19 the CZU Fire. You can find more information on the regional fire status and online
20 resources at cityofpaloalto.org/news. On Friday, the City opened the El Palo Alto Room
21 at Mitchell Park Community Center. Monday until this Friday, this will be open 10:00
22 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. to provide a respite from the smoke due to expected continuation of
23 poor air quality. Staff will continue to monitor and evaluate the air quality going forward
24 and expand that timeframe as necessary. We'll be following the CDC-issued guidance for
25 operating cooling centers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Rinconada Pool has also
26 been impacted by the poor air quality. The Pool is closed today, and they'll be adjusting
27 the schedule day by day. There’s a morning and afternoon air quality check to determine
28 if they will be open or closed, and people can go to the pool website, paloaltoswim.com,
29 to get information on the status of whether it’s open or closed. Some upcoming activities
30 in the parks. We’ve got Briones Park basketball court scheduled to be resurfaced in the
31 last week of September. This project will be approximately one week. The Rinconada
32 Park project will begin at the end of September and last through December
33 approximately. That end of the park, from the tennis courts to the Girl Scout House,
34 would be closed during that construction period. The City of Palo Alto is holding a Zoom
35 webinar on September 9th from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 to share a high-level overview of
36 current City of Palo Alto sea level rise adaptation projects and plans. Valley Water staff
37 will provide an overview of the South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Phase II feasibility
38 study, the 2019 Safer Bay feasibility study report, and the Palo Alto Flood Basin Tide
39 Gate Structure Replacement Project. I realize that gets a little convoluted and it’s a lot of
40 studies and plans, but I encourage you to participate in that webinar, if you’re available,
41 just to learn more.



1 Mr. Reckdahl: When was that webinar? What date?

2 Mr. Anderson: This is on September 9th, and you've been sent an email on this already
3 today. This is September 9th 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. In addition to Valley Water making a
4 presentation, Palo Alto staff will also provide an overview of the Palo Alto Horizontal
5 Levy project and the Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment and Plan. More
6 information about this can be found at cityofpaloalto.org/sealevelrise. Regarding the
7 Foothills Park access pilot that was last presented to the Council on August 3rd, I'm
8 working with the City Manager's Office, the City Attorney's Office and the Planning
9 Department to prepare for returning to Council with pilot options that meet the criteria
10 the Council defined. A brief update on COVID-19 health guidelines, some changes since
11 we last met. The County guidelines now allow for individual picnic tables, barbecues and
12 park benches to be open, while group picnic tables and areas still remain closed. A little
13 bit of confusion around playgrounds. Bear with me just for a second. The County
14 guidelines currently state that you may have playgrounds open. The County guidelines
15 also say that you have to follow the State guidelines if they are stricter. The State requires
16 playgrounds to be closed. Because of that, our playgrounds remain closed at this time.
17 The guidelines also specify that drinking fountains need to remain closed. Summer camp
18 programming wrapped up earlier this month. Programs were a success with over 900
19 children participating in virtual and in-person programs. Nearly 90 percent of the open
20 spots for in-person programs filled up, and a lot of happy campers participated in the
21 programming. The fall programming is now posted on our catalog webpage, and CSD
22 has developed over 300 in-person and virtual programs for adults and children. All
23 programming will follow County guidelines. That concludes the Department Report.

24 Chair Greenfield: Do Commissioners have any questions for Daren on the Department
25 Report?

26 Vice Chair Cribbs: First of all, Daren, I really appreciate your moving so quickly to close
27 Foothill Park and Arastradero Preserve. I thought that was a really smart move, so good
28 work on that. Secondly, in terms of Rinconada, it turns out that I've been getting great
29 reports about the communication to the community, with the staff and with Swim Palo
30 Alto and Tim Sheeper's group. In spite of people being disappointed when their lap
31 swimming isn't available, staff is doing a really good job of letting people know. Of the
32 90 percent filled camps, were there any reports of anybody contracting COVID, that you
33 know about?

34 Mr. Anderson: There was one exposure, but no children that I'm aware of contracted it.

35 Commissioner LaMere: What is the air quality threshold with which they would close a
36 swimming pool or other outdoor activities that the City runs?

1 Mr. Anderson: I'm not totally sure. I know it's when it hits "unhealthy." I couldn't tell
2 you the exact air quality index level, but I can check in with the pool and email that out to
3 the Commission, if you'd like.

4 Commissioner Moss: You said 900 children took part in camps. Approximately what
5 percentage of those were virtual versus in-person?

6 Mr. Anderson: I don't have that information, but I can try to find out and send that to
7 you, if you'd like.

8 Commissioner Moss: You said that there are additional programs that you've already
9 created for the future?

10 Mr. Anderson: For fall.

11 Commissioner Moss: Three hundred of them?

12 Mr. Anderson: Yes.

13 Commissioner Moss: Wow. All virtual?

14 Mr. Anderson: No, it's a combination of in-person and virtual.

15 Commissioner Moss: That is a terrific record about COVID, being able to get through
16 that and still stay safe. That's really fantastic.

17 Commissioner Reckdahl: I was up at Foothills Park two weeks ago on the weekend, and
18 someone had their car backed up to the lake. The stereo was cranked really loud, and it
19 was echoing through the whole valley.

20 Commissioner Moss: Amazing.

21 Commissioner Reckdahl: I was on the Woodrat Trail, way over on the other side of the
22 hill, and I could hear the boom, boom, boom. If I could hear it, all the animals could hear
23 it. I was just wondering do we have regulations about amplified noise in Foothills.

24 Mr. Anderson: There is amplified noise restrictions in all of our parks, and I don't know
25 why the Rangers didn't contact this person. If you see that again, you could call dispatch,
26 the non-emergency police dispatch, and they'll notify the Rangers to make contact with
27 them.

28 Mr. Reckdahl: I've been up there other times and haven't had the problem. It was just a
29 one-time deal, and I was wondering about that. I was up on the east side of the park.
30 Usually I'm on the other side. There were bicycle people coming from Arastradero, and

1 they were using that last trail that goes up to Bobcat Point. They were going back and
2 forth. I hike that. You could see there were a lot of tracks over there, so it wasn't just an
3 isolated incident. People are coming from Arastradero. I said, "You can't do this in
4 Foothills Park." He goes, "This is Arastradero." I said, "No, this is Foothills Park. You
5 went through that gate back there." I went back and looked at the signage. It does have
6 clear signage. If you weren't paying attention, it would be easy to miss. It's a lot of fine
7 print, and people just blow through the fine print. Is there a way to put a bigger sign that
8 says, "No bicycling" or "No bicycles past this point"?

9 Mr. Anderson: Yeah, I can take a look at that.

10 Commissioner Moss: You said that there is bicycling allowed on the roads but not on the
11 trails. That's confusing. Whatever signage you put there, you should make that clear.

12 Mr. Reckdahl: Bicycles have to enter the front gate. Only pedestrians can enter that gate
13 from Arastradero.

14 Commissioner Moss: That should be made clear.

15 Mr. Anderson: It is on that gate, but I understand your point that it might be just too small
16 and hard to see as you're coming in. We can certainly look at enlarging that or adding the
17 appropriate signage.

18 Commissioner Moss: I saw the same thing coming from Alexis Drive and cutting over to
19 the right to get to Arastradero. There is no signage whatsoever on Alexis.

20 Commissioner Reckdahl: When the Council made the motion to rename the park, was
21 that part of the motion or is that something that's going to be coming back? Was that
22 officially passed by Council or not?

23 Mr. Anderson: That was passed by Council; however, it requires some changes to the
24 Municipal Code. That will be coming back in the package that I bring to Council.

25 Mr. Reckdahl: Even just the name change?

26 Mr. Anderson: Yeah.

27 Mr. Reckdahl: That's in the Municipal Code also?

28 Mr. Anderson: Right.

29 Commissioner Moss: Why is that?

1 Mr. Anderson: The name is in the Municipal Code and referenced there. The attorneys
2 advised me that would be one of several Municipal Code changes that we'll bring,
3 including the change from misdemeanor to infraction and the one that would allow a
4 pilot.

5 Commissioner Moss: How close did the fire get to Palo Alto?

6 Mr. Anderson: I don't have that information.

7 Mr. Reckdahl: I was looking at that earlier today. Portola Redwoods Park, a big chunk of
8 that got burned, but that's still over the hill and down a bit. Even like Long Ridge, that
9 didn't get hit at all. I think we're okay.

10 Commissioner Moss: That Foothill to the Sea hike that I did that started at Arastradero
11 and went through Foothills, half of that path was burned, everything from Pescadero
12 Creek and Portola, through Big Basin, through Butano was all burned.

13 Chair Greenfield: There was a lot of devastation right around the corner. Thank you to
14 staff for acting so quickly to close down the areas appropriately and ensure safety for our
15 community and for our Rangers and staff.

16 Commissioner Moss: Did this fire season have any impact on the number of barbecues
17 that we're going to have in Foothills Park going forward?

18 Mr. Anderson: We haven't made any changes yet on that.

19 Chair Greenfield: The barbecues at Foothills Park are an open issue for us to spend some
20 time considering. Hopefully, we'll get a recommendation from the ad hoc on that issue
21 and come to the Commission to discuss it further. Daren, the closure of the Girl Scout
22 House area at Rinconada Park, essentially that's just an extension of the area that's
23 already closed for the JMZ construction?

24 Mr. Anderson: I think that's right.

25 Chair Greenfield: That seems pretty well-timed on balance. The name change of Foothills
26 Park will incur some expenses over time for signage, literature, things like that. That will
27 be part of the report that goes back to City Council in terms of the details, like the Muni
28 Code change?

29 Mr. Anderson: Potentially. You say literature. What jumps at me is park maps. We'll
30 usually exhaust our existing supply before making a new one. We wouldn't incur costs
31 on that. The website ones, there's no cost to that. It's really the signage in the park.
32 We've got some existing funding to do that kind of change.

1 Commissioner Moss: Exactly what name did they approve?

2 Mr. Anderson: Foothills Nature Preserve.

3 Chair Greenfield: That's important because there already is Foothills Preserve.

4 Mr. Anderson: There's an adjacent Mid Peninsula Regional Open Space preserve called
5 Foothills Preserve.

6 Chair Greenfield: Not to be confused with Foothills Nature Preserve. As far as going
7 back to Council with details on how to potentially implement a pilot program with the
8 guidelines that they specified, is that something that you will be working with the Parks
9 and Rec Foothills Park ad hoc on? Would that come to the Commission for review before
10 it goes back to Council?

11 Mr. Anderson: I'd certainly be briefing the ad hoc, but right now there aren't plans to
12 bring it back for discussion to the Commission.

13 Chair Greenfield: Thank you for the clarification. Any other questions before we move
14 on? Thank you, Daren. You've certainly engaged us with the report as evidenced by all
15 the questions you got from us. Let's move on now to approval of the draft Minutes.

16 **V. BUSINESS**

17 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the July 28, 2020 Special Parks and**
18 **Recreation Commission Meeting**

19 Commissioner Moss: I wanted to change one word. I said, "bouncy castles," not "bouncy
20 balls." I don't want bouncy castles in Foothills Preserve.

21
22 Chair Greenfield: Do you have a page number to reference on that?

23
24 Commissioner Moss: No, but if you search for "bouncy," you'll find it.

25 Chair Greenfield: I think we can consider that change. I actually have a few changes to
26 suggest as well. On page 1, change Vice Chair to Chair for my name. On page 17, there's
27 a reference to Greg Betts spelled "Betz." I'm recommending that change to "Betts." On
28 page 20 in the second to last paragraph, just looking to insert "most" before the word
29 "pristine" on a comment that I made. The final recommended change is to include links
30 to the presentations with all of the minutes. In this case it would be a link to the
31 presentation that was made during the Foothills Park panel discussion. Anyone have any
32 comments?

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

3 **2. Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI)**

4 Chair Greenfield: We'll move on to our first discussion item. It's an update on Green
5 Stormwater Infrastructure. Welcome Pam Boyle Rodriguez back. We were speaking a
6 little bit beforehand. It's hard to believe last January was the last time you presented to
7 us. It seems like just yesterday. We look forward to your presentation. Daren, did you
8 want to say anything before she started?

9 Mr. Anderson: Just to welcome Pam, and thanks so much for being here. We greatly
10 appreciate it.

11 Pam Rodriguez: Thank you for having me, Commissioners and Council Member Kou,
12 and thank you, Commissioner Moss, for giving me a lot of feedback and suggestions
13 about what to bring to the Commission. Commissioner Moss has been the liaison for the
14 Stormwater Oversight Committee, and he's brought some really good ideas. It's been
15 helpful to try to bring the ideas of GSI with Parks and Rec and also stormwater
16 management. I thank you for that. As Chair Greenfield said, I came in January of 2019 to
17 talk to you about the then draft Green Stormwater Infrastructure Plan. It did go to Council
18 in, I believe, June of 2019 and was accepted by Council. Afterwards, we had it printed
19 and in the fall disseminated copies of the Plan to your Commission, the Planning and
20 Transportation Commission and the City Council. If anyone on the Commission needs a
21 copy, please let us know; we still have some extra copies. Hopefully you've had a chance
22 at some point to at least thumb through it. I know it's pretty long, but it is a good
23 summary of what we put together based on internal feedback from a lot of different staff
24 and also externally through a long public process. Today I come to talk to you about what
25 we've been doing since last summer about implementing this Plan. This is just a short
26 reminder of what we're trying to do with the GSI Plan in a very brief way. That's
27 basically the presentation. I'm just going to go through it briefly. I'm trying to focus on
28 items that we're working on that are most relevant to the Parks and Rec Commission, and
29 I'm not going to get into too much detail about anything. Please feel free to stop me along
30 the way or ask me about anything at the end that I haven't mentioned yet. The intention
31 of the Green Stormwater Infrastructure Plan – from now on I'm just going to call it GSI
32 to shorten things – is to begin to transform our traditional storm drain system. On the left
33 you see the storm drain inlet. Traditionally, everyone wanted all the rain that hit the
34 pavement to get out of their neighborhoods, to get off the streets. It made sense for safety,
35 but unfortunately there were some unintended consequences to water quality and a lot of
36 other things. It really hurt our San Francisco Bay. The intention of this is to start
37 envisioning a different way to manage stormwater and to start looking at what are some
38 green ways, some natural ways, to manage stormwater so that we can infiltrate it, capture

1 it for irrigation, allow plants to use it, and provide a lot of multiple benefits with it. I
2 don't know if it will ever be our intention to completely transform the system, but what
3 we want to do is try to revisit how we do things and see if we can start to complement our
4 traditional system with GSI and maybe along the way start to transform it little by little.
5 This will take a very long time. As we all probably know, we can get a lot of different
6 benefits from GSI, and that is one great reason that we would like to see more GSI in
7 neighborhoods in our cities. As we know with urbanization, there's been a lot of negative
8 consequences. As we integrate GSI into our neighborhoods and revitalize our cities, we
9 can begin to reduce stormwater flows. We can improve water quality. We can provide, in
10 some cases, safer routes to schools or safer bikeways, safer places to walk, which is
11 incredibly important now that we're using streets very differently during the pandemic
12 and hopefully in the future. It helps to slow down traffic. It improves our air and water
13 quality. It brings much value to communities in many areas throughout the nation.
14 There's been a lot of studies that show that houses in neighborhoods with GSI tend to go
15 up in value. There are a lot of different benefits to GSI and a lot of reasons why we want
16 to do this. I wanted to show you, without getting into it too much, some examples of how
17 we can integrate GSI into parks. Thus far, we've looked at how to integrate GSI in a lot
18 of our facilities. There are private properties that have it and, as you all know,
19 Charleston-Arastradero, which just finished recently, is our first green street. It does have
20 a handful of GSI facilities, and hopefully in the future we can have more in other streets.
21 As you can see on the top left, we can include trees in landscaped areas. We can amend
22 soil to improve infiltration. We can have permeable pavement, even permeable parking
23 lots. On the top right, you can see that we can capture rain and use it for irrigation in
24 parks. We can infiltrate it. We can use it for trees. We could even irrigate playing fields if
25 we have large underground detention storage. That's a lot more expensive compared to
26 putting in cisterns or permeable pavement, but it is possible. These projects are
27 happening in other areas. It's something that we can consider. There are definitely many
28 challenges because it would mean closing the fields for a certain amount of time, but I'm
29 not going to get into those challenges right now unless there are some questions about it.
30 As you can see at the bottom right, we have a lot of paved trails and roads. The Bay
31 Conservation Plan – forgive me, I think it's BCCP. I'm sorry if I'm not remembering the
32 name of it. We did integrate some pervious pavement into the parking lots and some of
33 the trails there and have talked about that vision. Whether it can come to fruition, we're
34 not sure because we don't yet have the funding. The first step is trying to get these ideas
35 into plans and potential designs. Again bottom left, talking about re-naturalizing our
36 streams and creeks. That's one thing that's happening by the North Ventura Coordinated
37 Area Plan, where Matadero is located. This is an example of what would be called a
38 bioretention area. There's a lot of terms that are thrown around that can mean similar
39 things. In general, this is sometimes called a bioretention area or a stormwater planter. I
40 don't know if you can see my cursor, but you can see that there are iron grates along the
41 sidewalk and a lot of pavers next to the curb and gutter. When it rains, there's stormwater
42 picking up pollutants, oil, grease, copper from brakes, and other items, maybe pesticides,



1 picking up trash. It's going into these grates, and it's being captured in these stormwater
2 planters. There's an added benefit to the stormwater planter that it actually captures trash
3 and doesn't allow it go to our storm drain system, which takes trash and other pollutants
4 straight to our creeks and the Bay. We can capture trash as long as we're maintaining it,
5 we're not letting it become an eyesore. We could also put trees in there if we adequately
6 design for them and allow enough room for root growth. Here's something else that
7 we've been working on. Our group has been talking with Peter Jensen and Urban
8 Forestry about how we can start to create systems where we have enough root growth.
9 These are called suspended pavement systems and, as you can tell, they're pretty much
10 like big plastic crates. They allow the tree to grow much taller than a stunted street tree
11 that you might see in some places. The tree roots can spread out. There has to be
12 appropriate soil and gravel, and there's a design that's involved. Basically it can be made
13 so that not only is there appropriate room for a large tree, which meets urban forestry
14 goals, but these systems can also capture stormwater. You can see this. This is along a
15 street. This is not a local picture, but you can see there's an opening on the street that
16 captures stormwater. There's a tree in there, and this probably has a suspended pavement
17 system. Otherwise, these trees are not going to get much taller. We're working closely
18 with Urban Forestry to do that. This is a flyer from Philadelphia, where they have a very
19 large green stormwater infrastructure program. I just wanted to show you because this is
20 a good graphic of how trees can be built to get enough tree root growth, and then there's
21 gravel where the water can infiltrate. It can go down maybe to groundwater or at least to
22 subsurface soils where it can be stored for future uptake by the roots. When that fills up,
23 it can still go to the storm drain system. I wanted to show you an example of something
24 that we were able to make happen. It hasn't been constructed yet. As you all now, the
25 Public Safety Building has gone through a pretty thorough design process. Peter Jensen
26 can also talk about this. This is a depiction of what it's going to look like. As you can see,
27 there's a lot of different trees along the sidewalk, along Sherman, along Birch, and on the
28 other side there will be some along Park. We worked together with Engineering and
29 Urban Forestry, Peter Jensen, our Landscape Architect, and were able to figure out a way
30 with the consultants so that we're putting curb openings where these trees are. These
31 trees may not necessarily be at the exact same spot when built because this is just a
32 proposed design. What we're hoping to do is, where these trees are, put some curb
33 openings similar to some designs that we looked at earlier. We're going to be able to treat
34 an additional, as you can see here, almost 21,500 square feet of impervious surface. We
35 were hoping to get it on Park and some of Birch. Because of utilities and other
36 challenges, we couldn't make that happen. This side of Sherman Avenue that is next to
37 the Public Safety Building will all be draining to these trees and stormwater planters, and
38 that water will all be treated before it goes to our downstream creek. That's one example
39 of something that we're doing to try to combine urban forestry goals with GSI goals,
40 meeting both goals and also being able to leverage an existing project. Before we were
41 able to make this happen, there was going to be stormwater treatment onsite due to
42 different requirements that are in place, but now not only are we going to treat the



1 impervious area of almost 50,000 square feet, but we're going to treat that additional
2 impervious area from the street. If you look at the implementation chapter, one of the last
3 ones in the GSI plan, we talk about a lot of ideas that we would like to implement. Some
4 of them need to be done chronologically, and there's a lot of things that can be done in
5 parallel. All that to say we definitely need support. It took a while, but we are in the midst
6 of finalizing a contract with the consultant team for a five-year contract term, which is
7 pretty long, because we have a lot of different products that we want to create, a lot of
8 different processes that we are going to go through. Because working on them
9 simultaneously will help us be more efficient with our funding and help us be more
10 efficient during our schedule so that implementation can come faster, we're doing this
11 longer contract period. More to come on that. We're also working on calculating
12 impervious surface throughout the City. I realize I should have explained what
13 impervious surface is just in case. It's the surfaces in our City where water cannot
14 infiltrate. It can be anywhere from concrete, a rooftop of a building, of our home, our
15 driveway, sidewalks, streets. If there's really very compacted soil, to a certain extent it is
16 considered impervious. What we're focusing on is looking at these areas. This is not Palo
17 Alto, but it is an example just to show you. It's using a lot of computer analysis to look at
18 the red areas, which are impervious. I'm sorry the red is pervious, and the blue-green is
19 impervious. What we're going to do is basically use a pretty technical process with a
20 consultant's help, because it's going to be very time-consuming, to calculate how much
21 impervious surface we have in the City. We're going to work with Urban Forestry to
22 figure out if we can use their canopy cover tool that they're working on, to figure out how
23 many kinds of trees there are within the pervious surface, and to come up with some
24 goals to reduce impervious surface over time, but we need that baseline first. We also
25 have an outreach plan that we started working on a few months ago, shortly before shelter
26 in place, that we're using to increase awareness of GSI and stormwater pollution
27 prevention and to increase participation in our stormwater rebate program and, hopefully
28 down the line, to increase the participation from residents in the stewardship of our
29 different GSI measures. I'm really thankful to Peter for helping us with trying to integrate
30 some GSI into the Rinconada project. I'll also be talking to you a little bit about our
31 stormwater rebate program and a pilot in the Southgate neighborhood. This is a budget
32 that was approved by our Stormwater Oversight Committee—Council Member Moss has
33 been part of these discussions—just to show you some of the items that we're able to
34 fund with our stormwater fee. Right now, we get approximately \$385,000 a year to work
35 on GSI implementation and the construction of GSI. Because GSI costs a lot to construct,
36 it's good to use this amount to leverage other projects. In this case we're going to be
37 leveraging the Rinconada project and be able to add some GSI to that project. The Plan
38 implementation is the item that I mentioned before. It's going to help us create a
39 guidebook, so that we know as staff how to build GSI in our City in a very consistent
40 manner. When you see something in one corner and you go to another part of the City,
41 it's designed in a very similar way, which for most eyes it's not going to matter. For us, it
42 will matter because it's going to allow us to manage them and maintain them over a long



1 term. It's also going to allow us to measure performance and effectiveness of them over
2 the long term. We're hoping that in about five years or so, maybe sooner, we can have a
3 public-facing tool that works to look at not just how much impervious surface we have in
4 the City, but how much GSI we have to see how much pollutants and stormwater are
5 getting treated by our GSI and to see how effective it is to meet the other benefits, such as
6 those that were listed in that matrix that showed the different multiple benefits. We're
7 also looking at additional funding opportunities, a different consulting contract. I mention
8 a lot of consultant contracts because we are a very small team. We're only a couple of
9 people. There is a lot that we want to get done, and we do need that consultant support.
10 It's not a very big contract, but it's going to allow us to try to start digging into how we
11 can supplement the funding we're getting from the stormwater fee, so that we can start
12 paying for maintenance of a lot of different measures. Right now, Daren's team and the
13 contractor that is managed by Daren's team help maintain GSI at parks and landscape
14 medians and along some of the streets. They currently don't get any funding from the
15 stormwater fee because it wasn't initially allocated when it went to voters. Now we want
16 to look at other ways that we can provide that funding because it doesn't make sense to
17 construct these measures if we don't already have allocated funding for the maintenance.
18 The outreach plan I've mentioned. The last thing is the rebate program. I will talk about
19 the partnership with Valley Water. The second from last, the bioretention area
20 maintenance is something that is not in contract yet, but we're hoping to do a pilot with
21 an external organization to try to maintain bioretention areas separately from the
22 contractor that's under Daren, so that we can help supplement some of that maintenance
23 cost and bring experience to those types of features. You all are probably really familiar
24 with Rinconada Park. You have Embarcadero, Middlefield, Lucie Stern and Hopkins
25 Avenue. What we're doing with Peter Jensen is capturing—thank you, Peter, for doing
26 the design for this—roof runoff from Lucie Stern and from most of Hopkins, and we're
27 going to put bioretention areas in the design. I'm not sure if it's finalized. It's going to
28 allow us to capture stormwater runoff that otherwise would just be going down the street
29 because there are no storm drain inlets on Hopkins Avenue. Instead of saying, "How can
30 we put an additional pipe in or additional inlets in Hopkins," which would be very
31 expensive, with about \$250,000 we're going to put in bioretention. We're going to be
32 treating 31,000 square feet of impervious surface. As you can see, little by little, we're
33 trying to leverage other projects. We're trying to partner with other people and trying to
34 address opportunities that are there for existing capital projects that are being planned
35 now. It doesn't mean that we're not going to be looking outside of that, but these are the
36 easier opportunities for us to manage. At the same time, it doesn't necessarily mean that
37 we can do this for every project. This is another project that we were very fortunate that
38 Peter was willing and able to do the design. As I said, we're going to capture about
39 10,000 square feet of roof runoff from Lucie Stern. It's not the entire building but most of
40 it. It's going to run off to Hopkins, and then we'll capture some more runoff from there. I
41 wanted to talk to you about our stormwater rebate program. Just in case not everyone
42 knows, the City has a stormwater rebate program. It's had one for a while now. It's



1 funded by the stormwater fee. It was funded by the previous round of the stormwater fee.
2 It has never had a lot of participation. It was before managed by another group and never
3 got the attention that it could have. We're not sure if participation is going to improve
4 and increase, but our goal is to really focus on improving this rebate program, trying to
5 dig into why people are not participating as much as we would like and also looking at
6 how to make the process easier for residents. One thing that we're doing is partnering
7 with Valley Water. I'm not going to really show you much of this website, but anyone
8 that is a user within Valley Water can go to this website and receive a rebate. Valley
9 Water provides rebates for rain barrels, cisterns and rain gardens. We provide rebates for
10 rain barrels and cisterns, and we've just started to provide rebates for rain gardens. We
11 also provide rebates for pervious pavement. We've created a partnership effective July 1st
12 with Valley Water under a larger umbrella partnership that Utilities has with Valley
13 Water. We're providing matching rebates through the Valley Water application program.
14 Before we were still willing to provide the matching rebates, but a resident had to go to
15 this website and go through the process of applying, and then they also had to go to our
16 process and apply separately. Now for these three items, the rain barrel, cistern and rain
17 garden, residents, business owners, employees if they want to do something, and renters
18 as long as they have permission from the building owner or their homeowner can apply
19 on here for a rebate, and they will receive one from both Valley Water and from us.
20 There are different criteria that have to be followed, but at the end of the day it is not too
21 hard to meet that criteria. As long as it's met, the rebate is received. For pervious
22 pavement, it would still need to happen just through the City. We're hoping that that will
23 make it a little bit easier for residents. We also conducted phone interviews of past
24 applicants to figure out any lessons learned, what they liked, what they didn't like about
25 our program to try to use that to improve our program. We recently sent out an online
26 survey. Hopefully, you all have seen it. We've sent it out through a lot of different
27 distribution channels. If you haven't seen it, please look at the newsletter from the City
28 Manager's Office. If it's okay, Daren, I can share the link with you, and you can share it
29 with the Commission. It's to help us understand how—sorry, were you going to say
30 something?

31 Mr. Anderson: Only to say yes, I'd be glad to do so.

32 Ms. Rodriguez: Thank you so much. It's to help us understand what those who live and
33 work in Palo Alto think about GSI, understand about GSI, and to gauge what kind of
34 participation they might have in the future. I'm not going to go to this link because I'm
35 probably taking a long time. We're also rebooting our stormwater rebate program
36 website, and we'll be sending out an email to let people know when it's ready, hopefully
37 in the next couple of weeks. We're intending for that to be much easier to use. We're also
38 hoping to have signage in the future. For anyone who puts a rebate measure in their
39 property, well be providing a sign. People who are walking by on the sidewalk, driving
40 by, they'll be curious, "What is that sign?" Maybe that will bring attention to the rebate

1 program. With other programs like in Seattle where these two pictures are from and
2 where they also provide signs, it's been really positive for those who put in the measures.
3 They are very proud of what they put in. They take care of them. They put in a lot of
4 maintenance, and they want people to know what they have in their yard. This is a pilot
5 project that we are doing in the Southgate neighborhood. I'm just going to go to the link
6 because this is a pretty small picture. You all are likely aware of the Southgate
7 neighborhood. I just wanted to show you this. Palo Alto High School is over here. Peers
8 Park is on the southeast side over here. All these blue areas and also the purple areas are
9 where we've put in bioretention areas and also pervious pavement walkways probably six
10 years ago or so. This was done because there is no storm drain system in this
11 neighborhood, and the Public Works engineering group had the foresight to do something
12 different. There are actually bioretention areas that help capture the flooded corners and
13 other areas in the neighborhood. What we found is that this is a great place for us to start
14 working on a pilot partnership with Grassroots Ecology. As you all know, Grassroots
15 Ecology helps restore different areas to native vegetation, helps support other contracts,
16 works with our own Parks Department in the Foothills and Baylands. Because they have
17 their own nursery, they have a lot of knowledge about native plants. We're starting to
18 work with them on this because we want to try to integrate more native plants into our
19 bioretention areas and within that more pollinator species. This is the way that GSI
20 practitioners are moving. It also coincides with requests from our residents. What we've
21 noticed when we've visited these sites is that some areas were looking okay and were
22 maintained pretty well, and there were some areas where the plants weren't looking very
23 good. These are examples of areas that are not great. On the right, this area is still
24 functioning in that it probably can still capture stormwater. In terms of the benefits of
25 native vegetation and providing habitat for some birds, bees, anything else, insects, it's
26 not doing very well. You can see the compost is gone. Whatever mulch was there is gone,
27 and it's really just a rock bed. On the left, it looks a little bit better, but it needs just some
28 additional stewardship. Unfortunately, when these were built, there was the agreement for
29 the landscape contractor that the City has to provide this maintenance. What we're
30 finding in the Bay Area and really nationwide is that a lot of landscape contractors lack
31 the expertise in GSI maintenance. These kind of things happen unless we are proactive
32 and take some steps to improve it. That's what we're doing in the Southgate
33 neighborhood. What we want to do, as I mentioned, is increase community awareness
34 and engagement, improve the function of these bioretention areas, reduce the demand on
35 the City maintenance crews and the City maintenance contractor, and try to come up with
36 some standardized ways to maintain these sites that can, at the end of the day, be more
37 efficient but also support a higher performance from these areas. We want to increase
38 pollinator species. The Southgate neighborhood is already a very attractive neighborhood,
39 but we want to beautify these type of areas, to make them more attractive. We believe the
40 better these bioretention areas look, the more support we can get for them. If they end up
41 being planted with a lot of species, if they look great, and if a year later they start to just
42 be an area with rocks and weeds, then we're not going to retain the support that we got.

DRAFT

1 These are two areas that we're going to focus on first. What we initially wanted to do was
2 work with the neighbors and also invite volunteers from the City. We were going to do
3 this in April. Unfortunately, we had to change our plans. What we're doing now is staff
4 from Grassroots Ecology and staff from the City are going to try to revitalize this area.
5 Grassroots Ecology has grown plants in their own nursery for these areas. We have a
6 plant list. We have pollinators. We have natives. We've talked about all the different
7 things we want to do to rejuvenate this. I won't go into the details, but a lot of staff has
8 been involved. We can also keep in mind that we don't want to create something that's
9 going to create a lot of extra maintenance. We want to try to test some things, such as
10 putting the pollinator species, and include Grassroots Ecology in this process. They will,
11 once we can start working with volunteers in these type of areas, help train volunteers.
12 Hopefully, the neighbors in the area will start to adopt these, whether it's an informal or
13 more formal program we create, and they will help take care of them. This is just an
14 example to show how one of these areas is working. You can see that there's rain going
15 across the street. You can tell that it's still functioning. It is capturing rain, but we could
16 do a lot more to provide more benefits from this. In Phase I, we're going to monitor those
17 two areas that I mentioned. We're going to learn how we can change it over a few
18 months. As we monitor and adapt, we change the management, and we figure out a way
19 that we want to rejuvenate other areas in the neighborhood. As we learn, we come up
20 with some standards, and that will also hopefully help to inform any maintenance of any
21 other features. Over time, we hope to spread this to other areas beyond the neighborhood.
22 We also want to add signage to the stormwater rebate program applicants' properties, but
23 we also would like to add signage to areas where we have GSI, for example, the Mitchell
24 Park Library. If somebody goes to the Mitchell Park Library and they don't know what
25 they're looking at in the median, they might just think it's a landscaped area that has
26 some trash in it. We want to put some signs out there. There is one sign on a fence, but
27 we want to start putting signage everywhere. Fire Station 3 was just finished, and there's
28 some bioretention at that intersection. We want people to know when they're going by,
29 which is really positive in Palo Alto. Because we have so many people biking and
30 walking, it will really raise awareness of what these measures are. This is going to be
31 going out as a flyer to the neighborhood, Although we're not inviting volunteers to work
32 with us, we are saying, "If you're interested, please drop by. As long as we follow the
33 social distance protocols, you can come by, and we'll talk. Please sign up if you're
34 interested in the future when we can all work together and volunteer together." This is
35 also a notice that we're going to be closing the street because that's safer for all of us
36 when we do this. Once this is finalized, Daren, I can also share this with you. The next
37 phase we're hoping to also, through a grant that Grassroots Ecology got from Valley
38 Water, work with San Jose Conservation Corps. This would be the beginning of
39 developing a green workforce that can focus on GSI. As I mentioned, landscape
40 contractors don't really have this experience, so we're hoping to increase that experience
41 in the Bay Area and more specifically in the South Bay here, and hopefully that will
42 grow. If the San Jose Conservation Corps can start to learn how to maintain these and get



1 certified, they can start to put more of their students into the workforce. They have a high
2 school, and then they also train. A lot of these graduates from San Jose Conservation
3 Corps go on to other companies and take their expertise with them. We're hoping to
4 provide them with a lot of training. We have planned to also attend some of their classes
5 and provide additional training on stormwater management. Some of the things we have
6 coming up, not all of this is related to GSI. As you all know, in the third Saturday in
7 September there's an International Coastal Cleanup Day, which translates to a California
8 Coastal Cleanup Day. We always have a volunteer trash cleanup event at Matadero and
9 Adobe Creeks. We also have one at San Francisquito Creek that Grassroots Ecology
10 helps with, but we're not able to do that this year. We're going to have a way to provide
11 trash grabbers and trash bags and gloves to those who are interested. We encourage
12 throughout the rest of September to just pick up trash in the neighborhoods or maybe a
13 local park. As long as it's socially distanced, we highly encourage it, and at least people
14 can feel like they're still contributing to our Coastal Cleanup Day. It's just going to be a
15 longer period in a smaller way but hopefully still making a difference to help clean up the
16 Bay. We'll be sending out information about that. Palo Alto is also a sponsor for a Green
17 Streets' Sustainability Community Symposium that is for the South Bay. It was going to
18 be an in-person conference earlier in the year. That was changed. We are now doing it as
19 a three-part webinar. I've been helping plan it, and I can send out an email about that. It's
20 about how we can re-envision using our streets, not just using our streets for driving and
21 doing it for driving and then for everything else, but how we can envision using streets
22 for all stakeholders and less about cars and more for everything else, including GSI.
23 There will be more information coming about that. I wanted to mention that the
24 stormwater permit that we have to follow, which requires us to implement GSI, is
25 implemented and enforced by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. They have a
26 five-year permit cycle, so our permit cycle is going to be done at the end of this year.
27 They're extending it until next summer, but next spring they will come out with a draft.
28 I'm mentioning this because there will be a section in there about GSI. They are
29 intending to have requirements to require more stormwater treatment for both
30 commercial and residential developments. That could impact our neighborhoods a lot,
31 and that could cause some strain on local businesses. I can send a link when it comes out.
32 We definitely can't ask you to provide particular feedback, but I just encourage you to be
33 involved in that process because, once that gets adopted by their board, it will be in place
34 for five years. We're all very focused on trying to have a healthy comeback once the
35 pandemic is over, and the regulators are focused on that, too, but they may have a hard
36 time seeing how to balance it all. It'd be great if the public could provide comment on
37 that. You've already received an announcement from Daren about the Sea Level Rise
38 webinars that are coming up. There are going to be webinars coming out for all of the
39 different key topics that are in the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan. One of the last
40 ones is going to be about natural resources, during which we'll talk about urban forestry.
41 Walter Passmore and I will be providing that webinar. We'll be talking about urban
42 forestry, decreasing pesticides in parks, GSI and some other things. More to come on



1 that. Just wanted to let you know those are coming. The Sea Level Rise will be the first
2 one. I believe the Natural Resources will be the last. From September to the end of the
3 calendar year, there will be webinars every three to four weeks. You'll also be seeing
4 social media ads. I don't know if any of you are on social media, but there will be social
5 media ads about GSI and about our stormwater rebate program. We've never done this
6 before, so we're excited to get the word out. We are going to have a new website around
7 January or February about GSI, on which we are hopefully going to have maps of all the
8 GSI that we have in our City and information about each project, being able to zoom in
9 on maps and look at different things. There's going to be a lot of features. If you all have
10 any comments, please email me if there's anything you want to see on the website.
11 There's a lot of work to be done on it still, but we're hoping that it'll be a good resource.
12 Right now, we just have a pretty basic GSI website. This will really, hopefully increase
13 understanding and awareness of GSI in the City. That's it. Thank you for listening to me
14 talk for probably a really long time. I appreciate that. Thank you, Daren, and thank you,
15 Commissioners and Council Member Kou. I'm happy to take questions.

16 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Pam. Before we go to Commissioner comments, are there
17 any members of the public who would like to speak? If so, please raise your hand. It
18 looks like there's nobody looking to speak right now, so we can move to Commissioner
19 comments. First, Pam, thank you very much for the presentation. It's always great to get
20 such an informative and detailed and focused update. Lots of good stuff coming out, and
21 it's really great to see the progress and the implementation over the past year. I'm
22 wondering if you can clarify where your funding comes from. I thought I heard you say
23 it's \$385,000 per year, and I wasn't quite sure how that broke down. I'm interested to
24 know what percentage comes from the General Fund that's allocated by Council, what
25 other sources of money we have coming in, what's the percentage breakdown, and how
26 are we looking to change that.

27 Ms. Rodriguez: In terms of funding, the implementation funding that I spoke of to
28 support all the different plans and other items, including the stormwater rebate program,
29 comes from the stormwater fee. It's \$385,000 for the stormwater fee. We carefully
30 manage that because it's not a lot. Separately from that, there is \$125,000 to be used for
31 the stormwater rebate program and other innovative projects if something different comes
32 along. We've been using that also recently for implementation. Currently, we allocate
33 \$25,000 for the stormwater rebate program, which doesn't seem like a lot, but we
34 actually don't even use that much each year, which is why we want to increase
35 participation. We want to increase that allocation of \$25,000. We're hoping it will
36 increase once people know more about it. We're not really sure why people are not
37 participating. We have no funding from the General Fund going toward implementation
38 and going toward our program itself. Some of the General Fund budget may go toward a
39 capital project that may include GSI, for example the Public Safety Building, where
40 they're also treating part of that street, part of Sherman Avenue. That will come from the

1 General Fund. The Rinconada project will be coming from the stormwater fee as well. In
2 general, we have not requested any General Funds yet for GSI. We're hoping to have a
3 better sense of what implementation will look like, and we may find out that we need to
4 go to the General Fund for that. We have not decided to request that yet.

5 Chair Greenfield: The rebates are paid for by Palo Alto or by Valley Water?

6 Ms. Rodriguez: The rebate page I showed you is for Valley Water. The match from the
7 City comes from the stormwater fee.

8 Chair Greenfield: Half of the rebate amount is coming from Valley Water and half is
9 matched by the City?

10 Ms. Rodriguez: Yes. I could try to show you. You can see these rain capture rebate
11 amounts. For example, let's say you wanted to get a 200-gallon system. You can get a
12 rebate of 50¢ per gallon for those 200 gallons. You would get 50¢ from Valley Water;
13 an additional 50¢ you would get from the City. In total, you can get up to \$1 per gallon
14 for putting in your system. Does that make sense?

15 Chair Greenfield: Sure. Is that made clear on the website in terms of trying to attract
16 people to use the rebates? If they're getting twice as much as it looks like, that can be
17 more appealing.

18 Ms. Rodriguez: That is our intention, to make it more clear. We think that maybe there
19 was lack of clarity in some of the information, so we are changing that.

20 Chair Greenfield: Thank you for the clarification. Anybody like to start off on the
21 Commission? Jeff, please.

22 Commissioner LaMere: Pam, thanks so much for putting this together. It's so interesting.
23 You mentioned signage. I was in Washington D.C. last year, and they had some projects
24 going on, and they had signage. It really does raise awareness, and it's very interesting.
25 Anything that we can do with signage on these projects is great. I know that GSI costs
26 money. You mentioned, for example, the benefits to housing in a community and how it
27 has potential to raise the value of the houses. Are there any studies out there or are there
28 any numbers to be able to put on, for example, what it means to have the improved air
29 and water quality or what the cost is when it reduces flooding so you don't have to repair
30 a road as much, things that you can put a number on that provide some context that says,
31 "Certainly, we're asking for this money, but there are legitimate economic benefits to
32 what we are doing"? I would be interested in some of that, if that's available at any point.
33 I know you guys have a small team, so I certainly respect your time and what you're
34 trying to do. I'm so happy that our community is participating in this project.

1 Ms. Rodriguez: Thank you so much. You make a very good point, and that is definitely
2 something that is part of a lot of discussions that I have with other GSI practitioners. It's
3 really how can we quantify multiple benefits so that the public can understand why GSI
4 is such a much better decision a lot of times, not all the time but a lot of times. It doesn't
5 make as much of an impact as when we quantify them. That work has been done in a
6 limited way in some other cities. I'm not aware of that having been done in the Bay Area
7 or even in California. There are some studies. I could look some up and send you links.
8 What we're hoping is to move in that direction and to do that working with Urban
9 Forestry. They're creating some additional tools, too. Maybe within the next five years
10 through that performance tool—I call it a performance tool, but really it's to show all the
11 benefits that we're getting from GSI and to try to quantify them in some way—we can
12 say how much carbon we're capturing, what we're doing differently, the sustainability
13 impacts of using concrete versus pervious pavement, the urban island heat effect
14 reduction, all of those things. I appreciate your comment, and I will definitely look into
15 that a little further and note that's something you all would like to hear more about.

16 Chair Greenfield: Keith.

17 Commissioner Reckdahl: First, I enjoyed this a lot. This is really good stuff. Let me cut
18 to my comments here. You used a term, stormwater treatment. I assume that just means
19 passive treatment, that you have a bioretention area and it just soaks into the ground.

20 Ms. Rodriguez: It's a very general term, and it could mean a lot of different things. If it
21 was an industrial facility, they might use more mechanical type equipment to improve the
22 water quality because they have very high-risk pollutants. In general, for what we're
23 talking about in our City ...

24 Commissioner Reckdahl: For streets and parking lots, it's just a bioretention that soaks
25 into the ground.

26 Ms. Rodriguez: Right or it could be pervious pavement or some kind of underground
27 cistern. We can capture and treat that as well.

28 Commissioner Reckdahl: Wasn't there some proposal either by Valley Water or by the
29 State that said that we would have to get rid of our stormwater sewers and put all of that
30 into our sewage treatment? This was like a year or two ago that this was floated. Was that
31 not accepted?

32 Ms. Rodriguez: I've actually not heard about that. I'm sorry.

33 Commissioner Reckdahl: I just want to make sur that, when we talk about treatment here,
34 it was all passive. The water goes into the area, and it slowly seeps through the ground.

1 That's if everything goes well. What happens if there are erosions or sinkholes or
2 something like that? Is that something that we have to worry about?

3 Ms. Rodriguez: Potentially, yes. We do have a high water table, so it does make it much
4 more difficult for us to put in these type of measures to infiltrate down into the ground
5 versus putting some kind of liner so it acts more like a contained area. In a lot of areas
6 where there's not a high water table and the soils are different, they just allow them to
7 infiltrate through the soil, down into the groundwater. A lot of ours, we've been lining
8 them. Let's say it's a bowl of water. Once it fills up, it overflows, so the bioretention
9 overflows to the storm drainage system. One of several things we're doing with the
10 consultant over the next five years is to figure out what can we do in these areas where
11 there's a high water table. Maybe there are areas that are closer to the groundwater
12 contaminated plume. Maybe there are areas that people are concerned about for other
13 reasons, sea level rise. How can we address those other things and still get the most effect
14 out of these GSI measures? It is definitely something to think about. We don't know the
15 answer, but we're thinking about it.

16 Commissioner Reckdahl: The other end of the spectrum is, between the clay soil and also
17 the runoff and the silt, will it get hard-packed and now not be permeable at all. Is that a
18 concern?

19 Ms. Rodriguez: I'm sorry, could you repeat that?

20 Commissioner Reckdahl: If the water runs off the street, for example, and runs into the
21 bioretention area, we want that to be permeable, right? We want that to drip in through
22 the soil, in general, right?

23 Ms. Rodriguez: Yes.

24 Commissioner Reckdahl: What happens if that silt that's coming off the pavement causes
25 compacted soil so that there's no drainage, and now it becomes basically a concrete
26 swimming pool?

27 Ms. Rodriguez: Ideally, it's being maintained in a way that the silt that's covering it is
28 being removed at a frequency that's necessary, maybe twice a year, maybe once a year.
29 It's being removed, and it's being replaced by additional mulch and compost on a yearly
30 basis. If that's happening ...

31 Commissioner Reckdahl: There is regular maintenance on these things. We just don't let
32 it go.

33 Ms. Rodriguez: That's correct.

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: Is there any concern about pollution building up? The stuff that
2 comes off the roads has a lot of oil and other pollutants in it. Do we have to worry about
3 that being concentrated in these bioretention areas?

4 Ms. Rodriguez: That's a very good question. We're still trying to figure that out. It's still
5 a pretty new science. What we're finding and planning on is that there is a need to replace
6 the soil at some point because it could potentially be contaminated. The best thing to do
7 is to have a monitoring program in place where we can measure and maybe send the soil
8 for analysis every few years, especially in areas where we think there might be higher
9 pollutants coming off the streets or off rooftops. If the soil has particular pollutants that
10 are too high, then we would have to remove the plants, remove down to a particular depth
11 and put in new soil. That replacement, though, is not thought to need to happen more than
12 maybe every 15 to 20 years, unless it's a highly polluted area.

13 Commissioner Reckdahl: That's good. You talked about the suspended pavement. I'm
14 really excited about that because for the street trees we have so many constraints. If we
15 can get rid of that root constraint, it allows us to perhaps have a native plant instead of
16 something that's not native. How robust are those designs? How durable? It looked like
17 there was a lot of plastic and stuff that could degrade over time. My concern is that we
18 have a tree that gets to be 30, 40 years old, a big mature tree, and then all of sudden that
19 area under the roots decays and now the whole thing tilts over and we lose the tree. Do
20 we have experience with that?

21 Ms. Rodriguez: Yes. They've been used in other parts of the country for maybe 30 years
22 or so, 30, 40 years. They've been successful. There have been very little known issues
23 where there is actual collapse. There might be a sign that something is going wrong, and
24 then you might need to do some improvements. Yes, you would need to take the sidewalk
25 out. Ideally, you would design it in a way so that you plan for some kind of long-term
26 maintenance and replacement. In general, there is a particular structural soil that is
27 intended to also keep that up. If for some reason that starts to disintegrate, you still have
28 that other structural soil that's holding up the sidewalk. Generally, it is not really known
29 to cause a problem.

30 Commissioner Reckdahl: Can you comment about how well the Mitchell Park Library
31 areas, the retention under the parking lot, how well they are working?

32 Ms. Rodriguez: We have some parking spaces that are pervious, and then we have the
33 bioretention in the parking lot. You're talking about the parking spaces?

34 Commissioner Reckdahl: The parking spaces, yeah. It's pretty complicated because
35 there's like layers of stuff under there to keep everything open. Have we had a good
36 experience with that?

1 Ms. Rodriguez: Our Public Works group does sweep it really often. In this type of
2 maintenance, in general, some of the corners are missed, so they might get clogged. If
3 you don't have someone going in there with a blower, you need to get everything out, and
4 then the street sweeper picks it up. Some of the areas in Mitchell Park have started to
5 clog, but it's not very much. Really, it just needs to get a good pressure washing, and then
6 it'll be fine. We have that in the back of our head. There's a new pressure washing
7 contract that's going to go in effect. Pervious pavement, we haven't looked into ours very
8 much. The Junior Museum and Zoo, as you probably know, is also going to have
9 pervious pavement in some of the parking spots. We don't have a lot of experience at the
10 City of Palo Alto, but there have been a lot of studies about pervious pavement. We know
11 the best practices, and we're going to apply those to maintain that area and see if it
12 works. There are some infiltration tests that we can conduct maybe every year or two
13 years that we're going to start doing, so that we can see if it's clogged or not clogged and
14 then apply the appropriate maintenance.

15 Commissioner Reckdahl: Peter, about the retention places in Rinconada Park, are they
16 going to be next to the Magic Forest because that's always so short of water? I would
17 think that that would be very helpful for those trees to have that retention pond near them.

18 Peter Jensen: We have to step back and talk about the filtration planter. The romantic idea
19 of it being a ring garden and percolating down into the ground is mostly not what we are
20 building. We are building filtration systems. They are lined with plastic. That is a
21 guideline when you have the water table at six feet or higher. There is really no
22 percolation to it. One of the main challenges to it is putting it close to or next to existing
23 trees because you would have to actually remove five feet of the soil and replace it with a
24 filtration soil. Like I said, the majority of them are all plastic lined and really don't
25 provide any watering techniques to those things that are outside of the liner.

26 Commissioner Reckdahl: I was totally confused then.

27 Mr. Jensen: Palo Alto is very difficult for the GIS stuff just because the soil type is heavy
28 clay and the water table is very high. If we lived on a bigger sand dune, you could do
29 more percolation with the water, especially around Rinconada Park. All of them except
30 for Fire Station 1—I say all of them. The new Junior Museum and Zoo has several. The
31 Rinconada Library has a few large ones around it. They're all basically plastic-lined.
32 They're independent of the environment around them.

33 Commissioner Reckdahl: The water goes into these plastic-lined tubs, and then they just
34 evaporate or what happens to them?

35 Mr. Jensen: No. It has a drain system at the bottom. The idea is that it's supposed to
36 percolate down through the soil. The soil is, say, growing some type of microorganism
37 that's been studied to break down pollutants. There is a drain line at the bottom that

1 overflows to the storm drain system. It still eventually gets to the storm drain, but it's just
2 filtering out the particulates that have collected on whatever surface, roof or street.

3 Commissioner Reckdahl: That rain garden that they put in Bol Park recently, is that the
4 same thing or is that different?

5 Mr. Jensen: That's different. That's not a GSI feature. That's just a rain garden that is
6 meant to hold water. It doesn't have the filtration soil that is required, nor does it have a
7 liner to it. Installing the filtration planter is a trickier design aspect with the liner. That's
8 the part that really starts to limit the amount of plant material, especially trees, inside of it
9 because technically you've basically built a giant pot or planter. It doesn't have a lot of
10 soil volume to it.

11 Ms. Rodriguez: That's why the suspended pavement systems are something we're hoping
12 we can use more of.

13 Commissioner Reckdahl: That would be really nice because that's going straight to the
14 tree then.

15 Ms. Rodriguez: Yes.

16 Chair Greenfield: Commission Olson.

17 Commissioner Olson: Hi Pam. Thank you so much for coming. I can certainly see why
18 Commissioner Moss is so passionate about this area. It's quite fascinating. You had a
19 very early slide that was a hub and spoke-looking one and touting the benefits of GSI.
20 One of them had to do with bike and bike parking safety. I wasn't quite sure how to make
21 that connection between what we saw and how that translates into safety.

22 Ms. Rodriguez: There is a rendition of Charleston-Arastradero, of what it used to be and
23 what it became. I don't have that out right now. It was a very wide-lane road. When it's
24 more narrow, you can put in—sometimes it's called a bump-out for bikes. It comes out
25 into the road; the sidewalk goes like this and then like this. It could be concrete, but it
26 could be a bioretention area where you can also capture stormwater. Because it comes out
27 into the street, it tends to make the street more narrow. It creates more safety features.
28 These areas are usually used in intersections. Usually when a car gets to an intersection
29 and they want to turn right, if they don't slow down, it's a safety issue. We can put
30 bioretention areas that make the intersection go out further, and it will cause them to slow
31 down and go around. Those are examples of how safety features can happen. It's called a
32 Green Street. It's really adding GSI to a street, which adds to the benefits of what a
33 Complete Street is. A Complete Street is really designing it for pedestrians and bikers.
34 Maybe next time I come I can bring some examples. I don't know, Daren, if it's okay to

1 email that to you and then for you to share that with them? I can show you some
2 examples as well.

3 Commissioner Moss: Pam, what you're mainly talking about is separating the bike lane
4 from the traffic lane with a bioretention feature between the two. Is that right? Like on
5 Ross Road.

6 Ms. Rodriguez: Yes. There can be ...

7 Commissioner Olson: Did we lose Pam?

8 Chair Greenfield: Pam, you've frozen up a bit on us.

9 Commissioner Olson: While we're waiting, I understand now. It's something that's built
10 into the design of the street overall, not necessarily having to do with the drainage leading
11 to the safety. It's all together. I appreciate that and happy to receive any supplemental
12 materials that Pam provides afterwards.

13 Chair Greenfield: It looks like she's trying to reconnect. Are you back, Pam?

14 Ms. Rodriguez: Sorry, I don't know what happened. I just wanted to mention that when
15 you have that spacing of street, bioretention area or concrete area and then the bike lane,
16 it does create this area where the street sweeper can't really get to. Let's say there's this
17 area and then there's this small curb right next to it and then the sidewalk. Usually the
18 street sweeper comes along the street and goes right up to the curb and gutter. If they get
19 to this area, like on Ross where this bump-out sticks out, but the bump-out is not
20 connected to the sidewalk—there's this curb and gutter that's going behind it—the street
21 sweeper can't get there. Looking at it from the internal side of the City ...

22 Chair Greenfield: Does anyone have any questions for Peter?

23 Commissioner Reckdahl: Let me follow up on the redwoods issue. Is there any way that
24 we can route some of the drain water into the redwoods, like you did for the rainforest, to
25 add some more ground moisture for the redwoods?

26 Ms. Rodriguez: I think someone's trying to tell me I'm talking too much.

27 Mr. Jensen: Keith just had a question about the redwood stand in Rinconada Park. It
28 would be very difficult to get it in there just because of the amount of digging you'd have
29 to do. You'd have to take out a good chunk of root in there. Those trees are already a little
30 fragile as they are. They would probably have to be in better shape to do something like
31 that.

32 Commissioner Reckdahl: You end up damaging the roots more than you'd help them.

1 Mr. Jensen: At first you would. That's the other thing. That entire area, I would consider
2 it just one organism. The redwood trees have grown together into one plant material.
3 Even if you set the water out in the middle of the space, it's not really going to be
4 available to a lot of the trees that are on the outside area of it. Probably the damage done
5 from trying to install something would be too great to offset the benefit of it.

6 Chair Greenfield: Jackie, did you have any more questions? Are you finished?
7 Commission Moss, our liaison.

8 Commissioner Moss: As the liaison, can I go last?

9 Chair Greenfield: Yes, you may. Vice Chair Cribbs.

10 Vice Chair Cribbs: My internet connection is sending me messages that it's very
11 unstable, so I may freeze in a little while. I'll just get my questions answered later. First
12 of all, thanks so much for the presentation. It was great. I especially loved the pictures of
13 where GSI is being used and how it's being used in different facilities around the City.
14 That was really helpful. You mentioned that playing fields take a long time to turn over
15 into a GSI fixture or something like that. Could you say a little bit more about playing
16 fields and all of that?

17 Vice Chair Cribbs: Maybe not. Peter, did you ...

18 Chair Greenfield: Pam is coming back.

19 Ms. Rodriguez: Sorry. Likely, it would be 12 to 15 months to build, maybe less. This is
20 just making room for contingencies in case things go wrong. You just have to dig up the
21 field, put in a very large underground storage tank, and then there has to be additional
22 filtration in there, so that it gets to a point where it's safe enough for the plants as well.
23 There has to be some kind of area where it can be tested, and it would need to be tested
24 before it was used. It would be connected to the irrigation system. Daren, I don't know if
25 you know off the top of your head how much you all use to irrigate playing fields. It can
26 get really expensive. It could be helpful in offsetting that. There was actually an idea that
27 came from the purple pipe company that helps transport pumped water. He thought that
28 we could do something like this for stormwater, but make it also capture the water that's
29 coming from his tank. The groundwater that's being taken from the site can go into the
30 underground tank as well and can go through the same filtration process. There's a lot of
31 technical specs that have to go into that, but perhaps there can be a dual purpose for that.
32 We've just talked about that informally. There would have to be a lot of public support
33 because we'd have to be giving up the fields for a year.

34 Vice Chair Cribbs: It sounds like 18 months, maybe even almost two years.

1 Ms. Rodriguez: Potentially.

2 Vice Chair Cribbs: At least it's nice to know about that. One thing that I wanted to
3 compliment you ... Jeff, Pam is freezing again.

4 Chair Greenfield: Actually, I think it was you.

5 Vice Chair Cribbs: Maybe it's just me.

6 Commissioner Moss: You are, yeah.

7 Vice Chair Cribbs: Is it me? I can work with you guys. I have just a couple other
8 questions that I'd like to talk about later on. The final thing is how do you choose which
9 parks are the next addition for GSI treatment?

10 Ms. Rodriguez: That's a very good question. We need to spend more time sitting down
11 with Daren and his team to talk about that. The most obvious choices are those that are
12 already in the Capital Improvement Plan that you all support. It doesn't mean if other
13 opportunities come up, that we can't go that way. It does require a lot of coordination and
14 collaboration, and we sometimes don't have time for as much of that as is necessary.
15 Daren is a pleasure to work with and so is his team. Definitely if you all would like us to
16 work on that, we can at least look at that.

17 Vice Chair Cribbs: Do you feel like you're getting enough outreach into the community
18 on so many great programs, opportunities for rebates, and that kind of thing? What can
19 we at the Commission do to help with any kind of outreach?

20 Ms. Rodriguez: Thank you for asking. That's very kind. It would be helpful if we sent out
21 the information about the survey, and if you all could send it out to all your neighborhood
22 lists and all your contacts. When we have our stormwater rebate program webpage, we
23 wanted to send that announcement out and to make sure that everyone understands the
24 partnership that we have with Valley Water, if you all could help get that word out.

25 Vice Chair Cribbs: Yes.

26 Ms. Rodriguez: I failed to mention, because it's new and it didn't get into the
27 presentation, that we're actually going to have a webinar. I believe it's going to be
28 October 3rd, and we will also send that. It's going to be a webinar to teach people about
29 how to install rain barrels and rain gardens. During that webinar, we'll also talk about the
30 stormwater rebate program. We'd really appreciate if you could help get the word out.
31 It's tough because everyone is getting so many emails these days, even more than before.
32 If you all would just let five people know, that would be really helpful. Thank you.

1 Chair Greenfield: Have there been any considerations for capturing the runoff underneath
2 the artificial turf fields?

3 Ms. Rodriguez: Yes. That can be done with grass or artificial turf, the same type of
4 project.

5 Chair Greenfield: Is that something that we've ever considered?

6 Ms. Rodriguez: Not seriously, no.

7 Chair Greenfield: Because it's not a cost effective solution?

8 Ms. Rodriguez: We had an initial general idea in Bol Park to potentially put some
9 underground retention there. We didn't have a chance to bring the idea to the
10 neighborhood ourselves, and it was preliminary. It was really a rectangular drawing on a
11 piece of paper, and we didn't get support for it. At the same time, we were developing
12 our GSI Plan, so we didn't have a chance to really dig into that any further. We decided
13 to put it on hold. That being said, since we've been working on implementation, we
14 haven't dug into that concept. We think that it's going to require a pretty collaborated
15 outreach approach with parks and probably Palo Alto Unified, but we haven't thought
16 about it formally. If you guys have any ideas about how to go about that, obviously when
17 the timing is right. Now would be the perfect time to do the project, actually, because
18 those people can't go on the fields, if only we had the money. It would be great if I could
19 hear some ideas from you all about that, if you have some now.

20 Chair Greenfield: Daren, are you aware of any considerations for water capture on the
21 artificial turf fields?

22 Mr. Anderson: No, I'm not.

23 Chair Greenfield: It sounds expensive, and I'm not exactly sure what you'd do with the
24 water as well. I guess it would just be a pre-filtering before going into storm drains. Also,
25 if we do have any big projects for grass fields in the future—I don't know if the Baylands
26 Athletic Center redevelopment would have any grass fields as opposed to artificial turf—
27 this is something we should put on our list to consider in the planning stages. That seems
28 like the cost-effective time to do it, and also it's going to be hard for the community to
29 want to shut down a field for 18 months to put a GSI system in. Getting back to the rebate
30 program, what is the current participation level now, and do we have some modest goals
31 that we're shooting for?

32 Ms. Rodriguez: This past fiscal year, I would say that we had maybe four applicants. It's
33 incredibly low. We did have a utility bill insert sent out at the beginning of the rainy
34 season, but we didn't have resources to do a lot more. We also did a workshop in

1 partnership with Utilities in December. At the workshop, we had probably at least 60
2 people who attended, but as a follow-up we were hoping that then people would be
3 contacting us. We didn't get contacted, so we're not really sure where the gap is. We're
4 also hoping to put more resources together, maybe some how-to guides, some resources
5 that already exist out there. It's really getting them together in one location. Probably the
6 last two to three years, we've only had four or five applicants per year at the most.

7 Chair Greenfield: On the rain garden, the rebate is based on per square foot of roof.
8 Could you explain what a rain garden is? Is it drainage off the roof to go into a garden or
9 something more than that?

10 Ms. Rodriguez: You've basically explained it. Ideally, the downspout would be—I forget
11 what the criteria is, but we have a minimum distance that the downspout and the rain
12 garden have to be from the foundation and from the home. The downspout needs to have
13 some kind of extension, and then basically a rain garden is like a detention, like a
14 depressed area in your yard. It doesn't have any engineering specifications like we have
15 to do in the street. It's just a depression in your yard. If you can make it fit, put in ideally
16 native, drought-tolerant plants or things that you want. Mulch is generally better than
17 rock. In the past, as you saw from the Southgate bioretention areas, there was rock in
18 there. That was the practice then. Now the practice is to use mulch because the rocks in a
19 lot of areas tend to heat up and cause harm to the plants. Design it like you want, and put
20 the downspout there, capture water, and it's a rain garden. We don't have strict criteria
21 for that. It is a new program. It just started in July, so no one's yet applied to one.

22 Chair Greenfield: I hope we can get some numbers and start building. I agree that signage
23 is a great idea, especially something like the Mitchell Park parking lot. It seems like the
24 permeable pavement is a significant component of current implementation plans. I'm
25 wondering how quickly is this technology evolving and are there different types to
26 consider using for projects moving forward or we'd continue using what we have. I'm
27 wondering how the cost compares to traditional impervious surfaces, both for
28 implementation and maintenance.

29 Ms. Rodriguez: That's a really good question. In general, it can be more expensive. There
30 are different types of technologies. The most common that you're all familiar with are
31 what's called interlocking pavers. There are these pavers that have spacing in between
32 and you would put gravel or something like that in the spaces, and then they infiltrate.
33 There are also pavers that are pervious. Water runs right through them. Those tend to be
34 used sometimes in walkways or sidewalks, driveways. They don't tend to get driven on
35 as much; although, there is a street in the City of Berkeley where they did that as a test.
36 Aside from that, if it's to drive on, it tends to be pervious asphalt and pervious concrete.
37 Pervious concrete is probably the most expensive and pervious asphalt as well because
38 they have to be made to maintain the weight of vehicles at the same time, not just

1 vehicles but large vehicles and fire trucks and things like that. It tends to make it more
2 expensive. There are ways where you can look at just doing maybe strips. Some cities
3 have done just a parking strip on a street in pervious. It won't get as clogged. It won't
4 need as much maintenance because people are parking there, not necessarily driving on
5 it. If you design it in a way where you can get a lot of infiltration which, as Peter said, we
6 do have trouble with that here, it doesn't necessarily have to be the whole street with
7 pervious surface. It can just be maybe the sides where the parking is. There's a lot of
8 technology. It's evolving rapidly all the time. We do also try to be aware of that. There's
9 a national group called the Green Infrastructure Leadership Exchange that's relatively
10 small. It's made up of municipal staff and utility staff that work on implementing green
11 infrastructure. There are these work groups that my colleague and I belong to. We talk
12 about the new science and lessons learned, so we're learning from each other all the time.
13 I talk to people from all over the country each month. The purpose of that is to make sure
14 that we're all using the best practices and the new practices. We're trying to keep up with
15 it. We may not always succeed in using the best practices when we do a project, but
16 we're trying to keep up with the times.

17 Chair Greenfield: That's great. How does the increased cost get budgeted in? Does that
18 help with some sort of green project certification? For example, what was done at
19 Mitchell Park.

20 Ms. Rodriguez: We're not quite there yet. We don't have a system in place that easily
21 identifies the cost of using GSI versus not using GSI and, within that GSI umbrella,
22 which of those GSI types is best to use. We're pretty much in the midst of trying to figure
23 out the cost of maintenance by staff, by contractors, and what is the cost of construction
24 versus for GSI and not. I would say safely in three years we'll have that, hopefully
25 sooner, fingers crossed. That is one thing that the consultant is going to help us with,
26 trying to help us figure out some kind of system that staff can use with a flowchart and
27 information and life cycle cost because that is really what we're focusing on. This green
28 infrastructure is an asset. The minute we build it, it becomes an asset for the City just like
29 a fire hydrant in the street, a pipe. It's an asset, so we have to treat it as such and,
30 therefore, we have to figure out what the life cycle cost is. That is something we're still in
31 the beginning of, and it's actually something that even the lead programs in other places
32 are still trying to figure out. It's very easy to figure out what the life cycle is of a pipe or a
33 valve. It's very hard to figure out the life cycle cost of a pervious paver or a bioretention
34 area. I'm sorry I can't give you a better answer.

35 Chair Greenfield: I'm sure that data will be getting better as we move forward. Does the
36 naturalization of creeks play a role in GSI planning? For example, as we talk about
37 potentially naturalizing Matadero Creek at Boulware Park.

1 Ms. Rodriguez: We haven't considered that very much in the GSI plan. We've focused
2 on stormwater management measures. We recognize that we have a lot of nature-based
3 green infrastructure in the City of Palo Alto. It plays a part in that if we're going to have a
4 restored area of the creek, we should plan ahead and make sure that we're not letting
5 additional pollutants flow into the creek. Maybe we plan to have stormwater runoff
6 filtered with GSI before it goes into the creek. It can play a part in terms of that. I've tried
7 to provide my comments about including GSI in the North Ventura area. It's not a
8 priority, obviously, since housing has been, but it is something that we're hoping we can
9 integrate there. It can be a new way of designing a neighborhood.

10 Chair Greenfield: That sounds really important to consider as we look at redevelopment
11 of Boulware Park, considering that Boulware Park will probably get redesigned before
12 the naturalization of the creek project moves forward. We should be considering that in
13 our planning at this point, so we should take note of that. What is the biggest bang for the
14 buck in GSI, in terms of what are the most cost effective solutions or the low-hanging
15 fruit that's easiest to get some tread in the project?

16 Ms. Rodriguez: When you're looking at these things, the biggest bang for your buck is
17 very large measures, like in a big park where you can capture a lot of drainage. In these
18 areas on the streets, it's great because there's a lot of multiple benefits, like the safety
19 features. In terms of bang for our buck just with GSI, it's not really great. These areas
20 that are discreet everywhere around the City are very expensive to maintain. If we keep
21 doing that, we have to take into account that we need a bank of maintenance funding. The
22 problem with Palo Alto is, because we have a high water table, we don't have soils that
23 infiltrate well. Because of the way it's laid out geographically, it doesn't lend itself for
24 these large projects. The City of San Jose, for example, is working on a large project right
25 now.

26 Chair Greenfield: It sounds like it really comes down to acreages.

27 Ms. Rodriguez: Exactly.

28 Chair Greenfield: That's really the key, and that's a problem as we look at adding this
29 into parks or fields and things like that, which we appreciate.

30 Ms. Rodriguez: Exactly.

31 Commissioner Moss: I'm so glad that you all went ahead and asked the great questions
32 that I was hoping you would ask. This is the beginning, not the end. I have a page full of
33 notes to work with Pam over the next few months. She did a great job to focus this on the
34 park system and the impact of GSI on the parks. My dream, obviously, is that no
35 stormwater should leave any of the parks. It should all stay on those parks, help with
36 irrigation. Unfortunately in this climate, one of our things is climate resiliency. We have

1 drought. We have six, eight, ten months of drought every year. We get a ton of water in
2 three months, and then we have nothing for nine months. The challenge is not only to
3 protect homes and businesses from floodwaters and also to protect our Bay from
4 pollutants, but also to better use that stormwater and retain it so that we have a lower
5 water bill in the other nine months. I'm excited about the purple pipe thing and the cistern
6 thing. If we could build more cisterns or if we could use more of our groundwater to
7 water the lawns and water our park landscape, that would be fantastic. It's a big challenge
8 for GSI. This is not so much the little bioretention areas on the sides of streets, but really
9 bioretention on a major scale in, say, Mitchell Park or Greer Park with that huge field.
10 Can we make bioretention areas that would be able to be attached to purple pipes or
11 something like that, to be able to water that field all those other nine months? That is the
12 challenge. The other challenge is the compacted soil. We have in our parks many trees,
13 and many of them are in compacted soil. If we could put in bioretention areas in those
14 parks to not only keep the stormwater in the parks, but also to help the trees that are there
15 and help them be more efficient in picking up their water, that would be great. The other
16 thing I want to work with them about is—Peter and Pam have done a great job with
17 Rinconada Park, and I would like to see every park upgrade that we have in the CIP have
18 bioretention features built into the plan. Peter did a great job for Rinconada, just like he
19 did for the Magical Bridge features. I would like bioretention features in all of the park
20 redo's that we do. If we have to do new paths, pavement, new plantings, new
21 playgrounds, even new artificial turf fields, every time we touch something like that we
22 should be thinking about bioretention at the same time. I would like that to be a part of
23 each CIP project. It'll save us money because we can use some of this \$385,000 to reduce
24 the cost of each of those redo's. When you add all of these bioretention areas, they
25 actually become part of the park system, and our scope increases with all of these pocket
26 parks and all of these green spaces. It's something that we have to consider. That's why
27 the maintenance dollars in that \$385,000 a year is so important as well as a new source of
28 funds for the Community Services Department. That in a nutshell are some of the things
29 that I would like to work with Pam on over the next months. Any questions about that?

30 Chair Greenfield: No, but thank you for your support and your ongoing efforts.

31 Commissioner Moss: I'm very excited.

32 Chair Greenfield: That's great. Council Member Kou, is there anything you'd like to
33 add?

34 Council Member Kou: No, except to Pam. It's a great presentation. Thank you.

35 Chair Greenfield: Again, thank you, Pam, for all the information and insights. I know you
36 have our support, and we're looking forward to helping this project grow in acceptance
37 and implementation throughout our community. It's for a good cause. Thank you.



1 Ms. Rodriguez: Thank you so much. It's always so enjoyable to talk with all of you
2 because you're all excited about GSI just like we are. I really appreciate your support and
3 your willingness to continue to think of ideas and asking these tough questions. I'm going
4 to keep them in mind. I've written them down. I hope to keep bringing new information
5 back to you. As you know, I'll be in touch with Commissioner Moss. We haven't really
6 presented to the Council yet, but hopefully in the future we'll have an opportunity. The
7 agenda is always really full. I'm so glad that you were part of this, Council Member Kou,
8 and you got to hear this. Thank you for your support, and thank you for having me.
9 Hopefully I'll see you sooner than another almost year-and-a-half, I guess.

10 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. We'll look forward to it.

11 **3. Update on Ramos Park Improvement Project**

12 Chair Greenfield: Next up is the Ramos Park Improvement Project. We have Peter
13 Jensen. Daren, would you like to say anything before Peter speaks?

14 Mr. Anderson: Just to welcome our City Landscape Architect, Peter Jensen, who has
15 worked hard on this design and led some very fruitful public discussions at community
16 meetings. Thanks, Peter, for being here and presenting.

17 Mr. Jensen: Thank you, and thank you, Commission, for having me. Peter Jensen,
18 Landscape Architect for the City of Palo Alto. I'm going to go through a presentation for
19 the Ramos Park renovation project. We had a meeting prior to this where we discussed
20 the outcomes of the first meeting. This one will focus on the second community meeting
21 and the input by the community there as well as looking at the overall proposed plan. We
22 are talking about Ramos Park. Here is a historic drawing of the park, an old landscape
23 plan of the park. The overall idea, of course, with most of the park landscape renovation
24 projects that we do is to maintain the integrity of the park and the overall layout and
25 structure. You can see here that the current park is exactly like it was drawn, except for
26 this back area that was never really developed and that's just grass right now. We do
27 want to use this as guidance for our renovation plans and maintaining and keeping the
28 park intact per its design. Most of the renovations will start to look at the area closest to
29 East Meadow Drive, and most of those renovations start to look at the playground and the
30 renovation of the playground. Here is an aerial image of Ramos Park. You can see that it
31 does have a playfield area. It has a large concrete paved area that has a basketball hoop,
32 but currently no striping on the paving. We'll talk about that a little bit. It does have a
33 loop walkway. You can continue the loop here on the decomposed granite through the
34 picnic area because the current path dead -ends right there. If you recall from this plan, at
35 one point there was a school located in that front corner, Ortega School. You can see that
36 the pathway bluntly stops where that property line was. Of course, that school does not
37 exist anymore, and that open land is now part of the park area. That is something that we
38 are proposing to do with the pathway and extending it out. Here are existing images of

1 the playground. Currently, the playground is equipped with playground equipment for
2 tots, which is two- to five-year-olds, smaller kids. You can see the size of the equipment,
3 the swings being the bucket and the spring toys. That's something that we're going to
4 discuss a little bit further. The overall CIP amount is \$271,000, mostly looking at the
5 playground equipment replacement, replacement of some site amenities, trash receptacles
6 and drinking fountain, ADA improvements, areas in the walkway that may need to be
7 repaved due to lifting and things of that nature, and then the renovation of the existing
8 paved court, which is mostly looking at how can we stripe the court to make it more
9 useable. We're also coupling this project, the CIP for the park renovation project, with
10 the restroom CIP, which is a \$350,000 CIP to install new restrooms in parks. Ramos Park
11 was one of the restrooms on the list from the Parks Master Plan, which set up criteria for
12 restrooms to be added to parks. It was decided that it's best to join these two projects so
13 the work and impact of the park can be grouped into one time period and not over
14 multiple years of different projects. Here are some images of the first community meeting
15 that we had before COVID when we could meet in a room together. There were some
16 question boards, some stickers added to them, some information about the restroom
17 location. Here are the votes for it. We went through this in our prior meeting for the first
18 information. We also did an online survey that allowed a lot more people from the
19 community to be involved in the input. We got a really good return on it with 167
20 community members partaking in the survey. Questions were added to the survey that
21 were posed by the community in the first input meeting. That had to do with security
22 lighting, the loop path, adding native and habitat garden, and the addition of a defined
23 dog park area, which we'll talk a little bit more about coming up. The online survey again
24 asked about the restrooms. We can see that it's very close in support for the restroom
25 with 86 votes. As we know, adding a restroom to a park is usually difficult work when it
26 comes to convincing the community. Usually the majority of the community in the
27 instances that we've observed over the last at least decade have not been overly
28 supportive of adding restrooms; however, Ramos Park does support having a restroom.
29 That's definitely a good sign because we do want to add a restroom to the park due to the
30 facilities that are there. The community is interested in adding equipment to the
31 playground for older kids, ages 6 to 12, which we'll look at. They are interested in
32 striping the paved area with basketball court lines, but you can see there were some other
33 ideas there. I think the current plan is to add basketball court striping to the court and also
34 to add another basketball hoop. There is support for security lighting. This came up in the
35 community meeting, to add more security lighting, not lighting that illuminates the field
36 for night play, but just lighting at night that is of low intensity and that allows more
37 vision through the park. There was support for extending the walkway that currently dead
38 ends in the park, support for having native planting added to the park area, and then there
39 was a lot of support for having an enclosed or defined dog park area. Again, that input
40 came from the community from our first community meeting. From that input and from
41 the input provided by you from our first Parks and Rec Commission meeting, this is the
42 proposed renovation for the park. You can see that the majority of the funding will be in



1 the playground area and replacing the playground equipment with new equipment. It also
2 includes our restroom facility located here, the extension of the walkway out to East
3 Meadow, the planting of a buffer native plant garden along the street frontage, which is
4 currently unused turf, striping of the court, and a little adding of native plants in the back.
5 This area is also showing the potential space for a dog park area. We'll talk about that a
6 little bit more, as far as the opportunity to have a pilot program for an off-leash program,
7 to see how it can function without having to fence the area and make it a defined dog
8 park. As I mentioned before, the community was interested in having more equipment in
9 the playground that would also be used for older kids. Using the existing form of the
10 playground, the playground doesn't change in its overall limits or scope. We used the
11 small area shown in the pictures, that was sand, that had all the spring riders as the tot lot
12 space. We brought a tot lot swing back. We returned some spring riders and have a little
13 climbing log structure in that space. The remaining space, currently a mix of rubberized
14 surfacing and play mulch, will become all rubberized surfacing for full accessibility and
15 have equipment for ages 6 to 12, older kids, a larger swing, a disk swing, some spinning
16 apparatus, and then a climbing and sliding structure. The grouping of the equipment is
17 based on the Magical Bridge playground layout where we're providing multiple pieces of
18 equipment, especially spinning and swinging, which are the two most beneficial play
19 activities for all children, and making sure that no matter what their ability is you can find
20 an apparatus to either swing or spin on. Here are some images of the proposed
21 equipment. You can see the climbing structure is fairly significant with a nice large slide.
22 It actually has multiple slides coming off it. The disk swings, an accessible spinner, the
23 disk spinner, a little bowl, teacup spinner, and then this is the proposed climbing structure
24 or tunnel for the tot lot area. The other scope of work for the park is adding a restroom.
25 We're proposing to use the restroom design that we have used at the golf course. It's
26 basically two unisex stalls with space between to have supplies and to access the
27 plumbing to make the restroom easier to maintain. It has an anti-graffiti exterior. It has a
28 time lock on the door as well as motion detector lighting. These are the features that go
29 along with a new restroom to make it more secure in the evening hours. Of course, we
30 want a restroom in Ramos Park because of the children's playground that's located there.
31 There's a large active turf area. There's an open passive turf area. There's a fairly large
32 group picnic area, as well as the court, the walking path and existing exercise stations.
33 The park has a lot of programming to it. Because it does have that much programming
34 that's bringing many people to the park, it does behoove us to have a restroom that can
35 serve all of these programs. We mentioned the community's interest in having a dog
36 park. There are definitely many dogs and dog owners that use the entire park as an ad hoc
37 dog park right now with their dogs off-leash. Of course, Palo Alto Code prohibits dogs
38 off-leash in parks. Instead of proposing to create an entirely fenced-in dog park area like
39 we did at Peers Park just recently, we are proposing here a pilot program using the turf
40 area that is unprogrammed on the side for an off-leash dog run area at specific times
41 during the day. This would also include the rules signage, a waste bin, perhaps additional
42 bench seating, if we have enough budget to do that, for the dog owners. It would be a



1 pilot program, so this needs a little more development from the Parks and Rec
2 Commission as well as just more conversation with the community on setting up the
3 rules, the times are, how we judge the success or failure of the off-leash dog park. I put
4 the period being 6 to 12 months. Hopefully in six months we would have a good
5 understanding if it was successful and we can continue to have it, but it may need to be
6 longer than that to gather more data. Currently, this is what's being proposed as far as
7 providing a space for local dog owners to come and use the park as they are now, but use
8 it so that they're not breaking the law while they're using it, that they have a defined
9 space that they can use. Here are some images of some native planting areas. I should
10 mention that the development of the dog park would also have that native plant buffer
11 along East Meadow Drive. It would also have probably a 42-inch-tall chain-link fence
12 that would be in the planting area, that would be hidden, and that would be a defined
13 backstop for any type of balls or dogs that decided to run towards the street and provide
14 them a more safe and defined buffer, limiting any access to the busy street. That native
15 planting would start to be a mixture of California native plants and hopefully more
16 specifically more native plant material that's from this specific area. You can start to see
17 a little fence that's back there. I would imagine that the planting would start to grow
18 around the fence and hide the fence in that location. Our overall project schedule, this is
19 our second Parks and Rec Commission meeting. If we need to have an additional
20 meeting, I don't foresee that unless there's some community pushback this evening or
21 further development that the Parks and Rec Commission would like to see for the plan.
22 At some point, hopefully, finalizing the plan. We would come back with a Park
23 Improvement Ordinance in September or November, in the next couple of months for the
24 Commission to approve. We would work on preparing the bid documents, send the Park
25 Improvement Ordinance to the City Council for approval in the spring, bid the project
26 right after that. Hopefully in mid-spring going into the summer, we would start to do the
27 actual work in the park. That's it for my presentation. I'll open it up to the Commission
28 for any questions that you have.

29 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Peter. We have a couple of members of the public who
30 would like to speak. Before we do that, do any Commissioners have any clarifying
31 questions or you'll have an opportunity to ask Peter after the public speakers?

32 Lam Do: Chair, first off, we have speaker Shani to be followed by speaker, Lakshmi. I
33 apologize if I mispronounced your name. Shani, if you're ready, you will have three
34 minutes to speak.

35 Shani Kleinhaus: Thank you. Good evening Chair Greenfield and Lam and everybody.
36 This is Shani Kleinhaus. I'm a resident, and I use Ramos Park all the time. I love some of
37 this, I have to say, the playground, the native plants. There's a lot of good stuff here, but
38 I'm really very concerned with breaking the design of the park and its integrity, which
39 staff said they didn't want to do, with that straight path, with the bathroom, where they

1 are placed. The whole Ramos Park is curvilinear. Everything is built with curves there.
2 There's not a lot of straight lines, and the straight line of that path that goes straight to
3 East Meadow is only 142 feet from the entrance that's already there. It doesn't really
4 make sense, especially in times of climate change, to put a lot of concrete when it's not
5 needed and the distance is 140 feet. I'm thinking that if the intent of this is to avoid or to
6 go around and skirt the picnic area, then the best thing is to move the picnic area or two
7 tables or three tables of the picnic area to where you have a bathroom in the middle of the
8 picnic area, which I really don't understand. You make the dog park a little smaller in
9 that area, and the whole design becomes a lot less linear in that area, and you add a few
10 oak trees and you make this something that fits in with the spirit of the park, instead of
11 breaking it. No straight path, instead move some of the trees and don't create another
12 entrance to the park 140 feet from the existing one. It really doesn't make sense. People
13 who want that to avoid the picnic tables can then—if you move two picnic tables, then you
14 maintain that spirit. I really urge you to really look at that very carefully and to add trees
15 in that area as well. Otherwise, most of it is okay, but I would even remove this stub of
16 trail that seems so enticing to continue it. It's a remnant to a building that used to be
17 there. The building is gone, but the stub of path is still there. That's why people are
18 always tempted to continue it straight ahead. I don't know if they are trying to save one
19 minute of time, of walking. I actually calculated it; you save 2.7 minutes if you walk on
20 that trail instead of walking to the regular entrance. You need to look at a different design
21 on this. Thank you.

22 Mr. Do: Thank you, Shani. Our next speaker is Lakshmi. Once again, apologies if I
23 mispronounced the name. Lakshmi, you have three minutes to speak.

24 Ron: This is Ron. I'm using Lakshmi's computer. I wanted to talk about the proposal for
25 dogs. I want to just say I'm a dog owner myself. I have a one-and-a-half year-old dog.
26 When the puppy was very young, we used to go to Ramos Park and let her socialize. I
27 find this was a very critical aspect of bringing up the dog because the dog is able to react
28 very well to people and other dogs. In these times, it's very hard to go and socialize your
29 dogs. This park is one area where kids, especially with a lot of pups, come there and play
30 with each other and to socialize the puppies. I see people wearing masks, keeping a safe
31 distance, and doing it in a very respectful way of everyone. I really like your suggestion
32 on fixed times. If you can work it out where it's convenient for the neighbors as well as
33 for other people, it would be really wonderful because I see people are very respectful
34 when it comes to cleaning up or on the noise. It's just a bunch of kids playing with the
35 dogs, and they really don't make that much noise. My key point is that it is a great aspect
36 of what you propose with the times, location and the structure of how you're doing it. I
37 really would like to commend you and endorse it strongly. Thank you.

1 Chair Greenfield: Thank you to both of our speakers this evening. I appreciate the public
2 input as always. Now, let's move to the Commissioners for comments and questions.
3 David, would you like to start?

4 Commissioner Moss: I was at the second public meeting and gave most of my comments
5 at that time. They've pretty much been incorporated. The main comments were the
6 restrooms. The reason that some people didn't want the restroom is because of safety and
7 security. Having the restroom where it is with security locks and security lights and close
8 to the street is going to be the best way to deal with that. The other thing is the off-leash
9 area. We need to make sure that there is signage so that both dog owners and people who
10 don't have dogs and want to protect their children all know what the rules are for that off-
11 leash area. Those were the two main things. The only other thing is the perimeter path.
12 Somehow I thought that the perimeter path was going to actually go between the dog area
13 and the fence to the people's houses, but where it is is okay as long as it serves that
14 purpose of going around the park so that people can walk in a circle. I love to do that on
15 Cubberley track, and I think it's a good idea to have a perimeter path.

16 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Commissioner Olson.

17 Commissioner Olson: Hi. I believe that all the comments that I made in our last meeting
18 were incorporated. I'm very thrilled with the new design, and I don't have any questions.
19 Thank you, Peter.

20 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Commission LaMere.

21 Commission LaMere: With the basketball court and that concrete slab, is there anything
22 additional as far as striping, other things it could be used for in addition to basketball?
23 Maybe something to think about with that. In regard to restrooms, I know it can be a very
24 polarizing topic. For example, Hoover Park, do we have a lot of problems or complaints
25 with that restroom or historically with the restrooms at the parks? Have we had a lot of
26 security issues or have we had a lot of issues, whatever other issues may come up with
27 restrooms in a public park? At Ramos Park I've used it quite a bit for youth soccer and
28 little league practices, so I obviously know the need for a restroom at some of these
29 places. Either anecdotally or if there have been studies done, what's been the security of
30 those restrooms and the cleanliness and so forth?

31 Mr. Anderson: Thanks for that question. I can share a little of the feedback. I don't
32 believe we have any studies per se, so it's mainly anecdotal. For the most part, I would
33 say it's positive, appreciated by the users. There are examples, however, of certain sites,
34 like Greer might be a good example, where the heavy use on summer weekends from
35 league play can overwhelm the restroom to the point where we probably need to either
36 bring in supplemental porta potties or enlarge that restroom. There are other sites, like
37 Baylands Athletic Center, where we've had chronic vandalism. A gentleman has been

1 breaking in when it was closed for COVID. For part of that time period, he would break
2 in, and little fires were set inside. I'd say that is the exception rather than the rule. Most
3 of the restrooms are maintained well, kept clean, don't have vandalism issues by and
4 large, but it wouldn't be correct to say it doesn't happen at all.

5 Chair Greenfield: Commissioner Reckdahl.

6 Commissioner Reckdahl: Overall, it looks very nice. I also agree that I thought we had a
7 perimeter path around there. Didn't we talk about that last time? We were going to extend
8 that path that goes by the court, so it would follow along the fence line to make that path
9 a little longer.

10 Mr. Jensen: I think we discussed that as an aspect if the dog park was an actual fenced
11 and defined space, that you would have to have some type of buffer or a walkway that
12 would be back there. Since we're not proposing to define it and just pretty much leave it
13 as it is now, no further walkway back there is proposed for the off-leash area.

14 Commissioner Reckdahl: How about that back corner? Right now we don't do anything
15 with that. Have you thought of other ways of using that back corner?

16 Mr. Jensen: We looked and discussed at some point having a community garden or
17 something back there, but it is very close to the houses and unfortunately there is an
18 existing tree. You can see it back there. It does shade the area pretty good. Unfortunately,
19 that is just a tough space to put something in, especially if it was built, because it is kind
20 of hidden in the corner. Right now we are not proposing to do anything, just to leave the
21 grass area as it is. We would definitely take some suggestions for that space.

22 Commissioner Reckdahl: Would the native plantings be a good spot for that instead of at
23 the entrance or did we want it for ornamental reasons to be at the entrance?

24 Mr. Jensen: Currently the entrance that's off Ross Road down here is kind of a pseudo
25 planting area that just needs a little bit of help and some more plant material to make it
26 more drought tolerant and native. The other area is this strip along the front, which is
27 really an unused turf area that goes pretty much along the whole frontage of the street and
28 that can be converted to native planting. It would cut down a lot on the mowing and
29 excess irrigation that unused turf area is getting. That would be another place to do it
30 back there. It is larger in size. Because it is tucked back there in the corner and with our
31 limited budget, we did not propose to renovate the grass in that space.

32 Commissioner Reckdahl: We'll leave something for next time. Finally, the dog park. I
33 think this is a great spot for a dog park. We need a dog park here. As you know, I'm not
34 thrilled about having no fence on it. We should just bite the bullet and have a real dog

1 park. It's better for the dog owners. It's better for the community. There's a reason we
2 have a leash law, and we should respect that. That's my two cents. That's all, thanks.

3 Chair Greenfield: Vice Chair Cribbs.

4 Vice Chair Cribbs: Thanks, Peter, very much for all the work on this and the community
5 meetings. Like David, I was at the last community meeting, and I'm really happy with the
6 progress that's being made toward the renovation of Ramos Park, both in the bathroom
7 area and also the opportunity to try out the pilot dog program to see if we can get that to
8 work. Both the dog parks and the bathrooms have been on the agenda for Parks and
9 Recreation Commission, it seems like, for a long time and are certainly part of the Master
10 Plan. This is great progress. It would be wonderful if we could figure out a way, Peter, to
11 have a perimeter track for people to walk on. I thought that was part of a plan originally,
12 but maybe not. Anyhow, thank you very much for all the work on this. I think it's great
13 progress.

14 Mr. Jensen: Thank you. Extending the concrete walk out to East Meadow is an attempt to
15 make a continuous paved and ADA-accessible walkway around the park. Currently, you
16 can walk through the picnic area. The surface, though, does stop being concrete at these
17 points here and becomes decomposed granite, which is not the easiest thing to walk on
18 when it's wet. It also needs continuous maintenance to keep it level. It doesn't always
19 receive that. Adding this continuation of the walkway just ensures that there is a
20 continuous loop around the park that is fully accessible.

21 Chair Greenfield: I'd like to follow up on that same point, Peter. Is it possible to pave
22 over the decomposed granite path and thereby have just a single loop within the park,
23 keeping the curvilinear structure and also keeping a walking path within the park, rather
24 than having to go out to the sidewalk? Is that an alternative?

25 Mr. Jensen: That's something we can look at doing. As you can see, that area is fairly
26 heavily covered by trees, so there would be some root impact to do that. It's something
27 that we can look at doing.

28 Chair Greenfield: I would strongly prefer that. That would reduce the amount of
29 pavement overall. I agree with the suggestion to remove that stub to nowhere if we don't
30 have a path going through there. Aesthetically, the straight path is more of a change to the
31 current park. Also, having the loop within the park and going under the trees or near the
32 trees there would be preferable. There are lots of different people using that walkway,
33 whether it's walking a dog or kids on little bikes or bigger kids on bikes, or people of all
34 ages walking through it. The feeling of walking the loop rather than going out to the
35 sidewalk and feeling like you're leaving the park and then having to walk to back in
36 would be much preferable.

1 Mr. Jensen: The other thing that needs to be considered is the straight walkway. You can
2 see that it is straight. It is the accessible pathway to get to the restroom. We can start to
3 develop a pathway through the trees. That was also a consideration with adding the path
4 there. We can look more at continuing the concrete around the picnic area.

5 Chair Greenfield: I'm sorry. I didn't quite catch that. Are you suggesting we need to have
6 that path to the restroom, which makes sense, or are you suggesting adding that path and
7 also paving over the DCG?

8 Mr. Jensen: We can do both of those things. That's mostly up to recommendation by the
9 Commission of what direction would you like to go in. I would recommend extending
10 that pathway to the street because it provides more direct access to the restroom down
11 there, so you don't actually have to travel onto the sidewalk to get over there. We could
12 also look at having a concrete edge along there that would extend that walkway.

13 Chair Greenfield: What about just having the concrete arc over the DCG and then maybe
14 a little stub out to the restroom as opposed to adding the path?

15 Commissioner Moss: That's what I was thinking of.

16 Chair Greenfield: Trying to minimize the pavement and keep the aesthetics.

17 Mr. Jensen: That's definitely a possibility as well.

18 Chair Greenfield: That sounds like something I'd be very interested in seeing pursued. I
19 agree that the perimeter path makes no sense if there's no formal dog park fence. Also on
20 the subject of the path, it may be better if there weren't a paved path or if there is a loop
21 where the dogs can access the dog area without going on the paved path and potentially
22 interfering with people on bikes or walking. The egress may be a benefit as well. I really
23 like the idea of the off-leash dog area pilot here. It really fits the feel and the desire of the
24 community, how they're using the park right now. It's really important to be able to
25 authorize this off-leash usage for our community. It's an excellent opportunity for a pilot,
26 and I'm very supportive of that. I'm interested in what hours you're thinking would be
27 suitable for the off-leash use.

28 Mr. Jensen: That's really not up to me. That involves more discussion from the PRC ad
29 hoc as well as more input from the community. I know from our last meeting that the
30 times from like 7:30 in the morning until 9:00 and then 3:00 until 7:00 or something like
31 that was mentioned by the community in the past. Something in that time range would
32 work, open hours in the morning and in the evening before work or after work. What
33 those specific times are, we probably need to have more discussion to figure out exactly
34 what that is. It would also behoove us to have some more input from the community on
35 that aspect of it.

1 Chair Greenfield: Would it be important to not have off-leash hours when there's soccer
2 practices or soccer games going on?

3 Mr. Jensen: That needs to be considered in the overall timeframe when the off-leash is
4 open for use.

5 Chair Greenfield: That sounds good. Otherwise, great work on the plan overall. I'm very
6 supportive. I used to live on the other side of the park, and I was using the playground
7 when it was just refurbished last about 20 years ago or so. It's definitely ready. Thank
8 you for all of your great effort on this. Do any other Commissioners have any follow-up
9 questions?

10 Commissioner Moss: Like Commissioner Reckdahl, I'm skeptical of the off-leash. I'll
11 see it through the pilot, but it is very important that the public monitor the situation, help
12 to determine the signage and keep the peace. I suspect, when the word gets out, there will
13 be more dogs than there are today. I'll be watching very carefully to see how this pilot
14 goes. Otherwise, a fenced-in dog park like the rest seems like a perfectly good place to
15 run your dog. Anyway, we'll see what the pilot does.

16 Chair Greenfield: I appreciate your comments, and Keith's as well. I have concerns about
17 the dog park being located in that rectangular area backing up to residents' yards. I've
18 been by the park a lot, and it seems like it could work there. It's worthy of a pilot. I agree
19 we need to monitor and make sure it's right. I appreciate the efforts of the ad hoc and
20 staff throughout this idea. Any last comments or questions? Thank you very much, Peter,
21 for all of your efforts on this. I hope the next time that we see you it will be for an action
22 to approve moving forward with this.

23 Mr. Jensen: Jeff, while we have the power of Zoom, which is actually very beneficial for
24 me to do some of these things For the pathway, we talked about we can connect over like
25 this, but then we can also probably do this and then get rid of this guy. Do you guys see
26 me drawing on there?

27 Chair Greenfield: That looks great. I really like that concept.

28 Mr. Jensen: The restroom plan is to sit right here, as you can see in this space. We can get
29 in some type of walk here, entering into the park there and not connected all the way
30 down. That will give them more direct access from the picnic area to the restroom
31 because the majority of the folks using the picnic area aren't going to walk around.
32 They're just going to walk through this landscape area. Adding that little walk into the
33 picnic area would probably help direct traffic to the restroom in a better defined path, so
34 they're not walking too much into the planting area around the picnic area.

1 Chair Greenfield: I suspect the community would prefer the aesthetic of having the path
2 going to the restroom from the circular path as opposed to a path from the sidewalk
3 straight to the restroom.

4 Mr. Jensen: Right.

5 Chair Greenfield: Overall, that would be an improvement.

6 **4. Other Commission Ad Hoc and Liaison Updates**

7 Chair Greenfield: Our next order of business is the Commission Ad Hoc and Liaison
8 Updates. There is an attachment with reports. Do any Commissioners have any questions
9 or other updates to add?

10 Commissioner Moss: I just wanted to point people to the BCCP Liaison report. I'm
11 wondering, Daren, if we want to have a presentation someday on the agenda for this
12 Friendship Trail and all of the signage that they're planning to put on this trail through
13 the Baylands and all the way through East Palo Alto and all the way up to Cooley
14 Landing. It's an exciting project, and it definitely will have an impact on the Baylands.

15 Chair Greenfield: Daren, does that sound like something that would fit on an upcoming
16 agenda?

17 Mr. Anderson: Yeah, let me check in with John Aiken, who is the project lead on that
18 one, and I can report back, either with a summary or see if he can fit into either
19 September or the following Commission meeting.

20 Chair Greenfield: Anyone else? There is a recent update for the Cubberley ad hoc. We
21 had been looking to work with staff and with Kristen O'Kane on potentially helping
22 refine a formal policy for leasing space at Cubberley. After further consideration, Kristen
23 has gotten back to us that she thinks things are working fine as they are. There's not as
24 much issue with demand as has been anticipated, and so we're not going to be moving
25 forward with that. We'll look to see if there's something else we can help with.

26 Commissioner Moss: There is now a Friends of Cubberley, and they are having a
27 candidates meeting on September 17th at 7:00 p.m. to hear from the City Council
28 candidates about their plans or hopes and dreams for Cubberley and how to move it
29 forward. That's September 17th at 7:00 p.m.

30 Chair Greenfield: I'm not sure that we should be getting involved with candidate forums
31 as part of our role, but we'll move forward.

32 Commissioner Reckdahl: I should add one more thing about the NVCAP. We're getting
33 to the end of the process, and the Working Group has really finished putting in their

1 input. They're now going to have a couple of designs come forth and then do some last
2 iterations. This will go to Council probably by the end of the year. One concern for us is
3 that a lot of the designs have a lot of housing but very little or no parks. That's not
4 consistent, so we may have to be pushing back on if you're going to add people in there,
5 you need to add parks too. Some of these are high density, and we need that parkland.

6 Chair Greenfield: We've still got a chance to be done by 10:00 if we move on to the
7 tentative agenda.

8 **IV. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 26, 2020 MEETING**

9 Mr. Anderson: Chair, there are two possible ones. Cameron Park Improvement Ordinance
10 would be on there and then possibly Ramos Park. I'll confer with Peter and see what
11 timeframe we think we can pull this together by.

12 Chair Greenfield: The fund development ad hoc will be ready to present something next
13 month. We're hopeful. Does anyone else have any suggestions or comments for agenda
14 items either next month or anytime throughout this calendar year? I know Commissioner
15 Moss just made a suggestion.

16 Commissioner Moss: The Friendship Trail.

17 Chair Greenfield: I'm hopeful we can get an update from the Urban Forestry Department
18 from Walter, something similar to the annual update that we got last year. We need to
19 follow up with him and see what timing works for him.

20 Commissioner Moss: Hopefully we'll have an update on the Foothills access.

21 Chair Greenfield: That certainly should be coming at some point. Anyone else?

22 **VII. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

23 Chair Greenfield: Does anyone have any additional comments or announcements?

24 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

25 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Moss and second by Commissioner
26 LaMere at 9:58 p.m.