MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
February 23, 2021
Virtual Conference
Palo Alto, California

Commissioners Present: Chair Anne Cribbs, Vice Chair Jeff Greenfield, Jeff LaMere, David Moss, Jackie Olson, Keith Reckdahl, Amanda Brown

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Council Member Kou

Staff Present: Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Lam Do

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Cribbs: Good evening, everybody. Welcome to the February 23rd Parks and Recreation meeting. It’s a beautiful evening tonight, and I’m looking forward to a good and fruitful meeting. Catherine, would you take the roll, please?

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Do: Our first speaker tonight will be George Moxie, to be followed by Arthur Keller.

Mr. George Moxie: Hi, Commissioners. Hi, Lam. It’s nice to see you this evening. I just thought I’d come back and give you a very quick update regarding our Baylands project that we’re hoping to do. Lam and I have been in contact about the MOU draft that we sent to the City that he had forwarded to the Attorney’s Office. They’ve come back and asked us to convert that into a Letter of Intent. I have received that back from our attorney today, and I will be reviewing it tomorrow with him. We’ll be forwarding that back to Lam tomorrow, so hopefully things will continue to progress, and we really appreciate your support. Thank you.

Mr. Do: Thank you, George. Our next speaker is Arthur Keller, to be followed by Mark Nadim.
Mr. Arthur Keller: I’m trying to extrapolate on my remarks that Adobe Meadow Neighborhood Association is opposed to a dog park at Ramos Park. We don’t want a formal dog park. We are opposed to a dog park, because a formal dog park will attract more owners and dogs than currently use the park. It will also tend to make a dog park a destination or attraction to owners, for dog owners from a further distance. Ramos is a small neighborhood park, and an increase in traffic and people would ultimately alter its neighborhood feel. Many dog walkers use enclosed dog parks as an outlet for dog clients to run around and burn off energy. Based on our [unintelligible] of this park, they don’t always watch the dogs they are charged with watching in the enclosed area. Dog owners have previously used the enclosed park at Mitchell Park and feel that dogs brought to the enclosed park are not well trained and do not respond well to commands. That’s why dog owners take the dog to the enclosed area. A few dog owners have seen more aggressive dogs in enclosed areas and had their own dogs charged at and attacked in an enclosed area. That’s why they will not go back to an enclosed area, because of the experience. Some dog owners have seen the unattended dogs in the enclosed area while they go exercise, basically using the park as a babysitter. Sand and gravel that’s put down in enclosed areas often smells of urine as well as fences due to the nature of the many that have marked the fence. Once an enclosed park is built, that area can no longer be used for anyone else, but Ramos is too small a park to permanently close off that area to others.

Mr. Do: Our next speaker is Mark Nadim, to be followed by Grant Elliot.

Mr. Mark Nadim: I live on Alexis Drive. In late December and early January, there were a lot of cars on Alexis Drive. At the Alexis entrance to the park. These cars were parked along Alexis and Laurel Glen. We’ve seen as many as 15 to 20 cars parked at that time. The situation has changed at Foothills Park. I believe that the novelty of the park is wearing off and is going to wear off further in the next few months. As COVID restrictions and our lives and sports events open up, less and less people will be coming to the park. We noticed the number of cars at the Alexis entrance at the back of the park have gone down to between one to five cars at a time. I go to the park once or twice a week, and I did notice that the number of people at the park on weekdays is much less than what it used to be in January. Based on all this, I urge you not to have a kneejerk reaction in implanting restrictions and entrance fees. Speaking of fees, the question is, why is it that Palo Alto residents need to pay fees? I was attending a function at the San Francisco Botanical Gardens last week, and when I went to their website to purchase tickets, I noticed that San Francisco residents can enter for free, so why we don’t implement similar things for Palo Alto residents at Foothills Park? Thank you.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Mark. Our next speaker is Grant Elliot, to be followed by Tally Catts [phonetic].
Ms. Sharon Elliot: This is actually Sharon Elliot. We’re using Grant’s computer tonight. I wanted to just say a few things about the dog park at Ramos that has been projected. I think that constructing a dog park there, where there’s a lovely multi-use green space, and converting it to a single use fenced area that will be used only by a small minority of the visitors is not a fair decision. Many visitors use it during normal times. Of course, with the pandemic it’s different. But usually there’s volleyball there, soccer, catch, croquet, picnic areas are often spilling over into that area. So, we really don’t want to see it become a single use area. The other thing that we’re very concerned about is that the dog park is going to be only ten feet from neighbors’ fences, and that makes neighbor’s backyards almost unusable during lots of times when there will be dogs in the dog park area. If people have pets in their own backyard, it will cause consternation for those pets. So, I’d like to see that proposition taken off of the renovation plans for Ramos.

Mr. Do: Thank you. Our next speaker is Tally Catts [phonetic], to be followed by Robin Holbrook.

Ms. Tally Catts: I’ve been living on Ortega Court for about 35 years, next to Ramos Park, and I wanted to second Sharon and Grant’s disapproval and opposition to the planned fenced-in dog park as part of the renovations, for the same reasons. I’ll reiterate that it’s planned to be about ten feet away from the residences, which is unprecedented. We’ve not heard of a dog park like that in Palo Alto, or out of Palo Alto, that’s so close to the residences. It’s a small park. Secondly, it’s not in accordance with the Parks Master Plan, which calls for additional dog parks in the northern part of Palo Alto. There are already three dog parks in South Palo Alto, including Mitchell Park, which is only half a mile away from Ramos Park. The planned park is much too small for a park. It’s even smaller than the Greer dog park and the Hoover dog park, which are considered small according to the Master Plan. Thirdly, it won’t be used by the dog owners because of its size and because the dog owners usually congregate there outside of the park. It won’t solve the problem that I think you guys were trying to solve for in the first place, of that congregating. So, I would appreciate it if it would be taken off the table for consideration as soon as possible. Thank you.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Tally. Our next speaker is Robin Holbrook, to be followed by Florie Hutchinson.
Ms. Robin Holbrook: Hi, I’m another member of the Adobe Meadow Neighborhood Association Board. I see that we have really come out in force to oppose the dog park in Ramos Park. What I was planning to say is almost redundant at this point, but I would like to reiterate the strongly-made and well-phrased opposition to the dog park. When I first heard of the planned renovations at Ramos, I was thrilled. I am thrilled. I think it will be wonderful to get a bathroom there, to get other upgrades at this small gem of a park. I was originally not opposed to the idea of a dog park, but when I looked at the plans, as has been mentioned, the proposed siting is right next to neighbors, right up against the backyards of neighbors on Ortega Court. It’s such a small park. It’s such a little gem of a park. I go there every single day on my walks around the neighborhood. It is widely used by people in our neighborhood. It’s our neighborhood park, and I have spoken informally with neighbors and people in the park, and no one seems to be…I’ve run into one person who was in favor of having a fenced dog park there, but everyone else agrees that it is just too small for a dog park. It’s a lovely little park as it is. It’s just too small. I’ve been to all of the parks in Palo Alto. I’m an avid walker, and none of the other dog parks are in a park as small as Ramos. It will just impact that other park uses too greatly, I think, so I hope you can make this change. Thank you.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Robin. Our next speaker is Florie Hutchinson, to be followed by Michelle Rosengaus.

Ms. Florie Hutchinson: Hi there. Thank you so much. I just wanted to voice my concern about the traffic on Alexis Drive as a resident of Palo Alto Hills. We moved onto Alexis Drive about three years ago, and as a mother of four small children who are nine, seven, four and two years old, we regularly walk up Alexis Drive into the entrance to the Foothills Nature Preserve. As I think Mark Nadim mentioned earlier, we as a family of six, have regularly counted upward up 27 cars in the cul-de-sac parking at that entrance on Alexis Drive, and as a mom of four small children and not the only family on Alexis Drive with several small children, it’s highly concerning for us from a safety point of view. The other thing to note in addition to the sheer volume of cars parking up there, because of where we are positioned on Alexis Drive, which is one of big bends, I’ve noticed that the cars, being non-residents, are literally driving between 35 to 40 miles an hour around that bend, which is incredibly dangerous. We’ve seen a higher frequency of car accidents on Alexis Drive in the last couple of months. So, I just wanted to voice my concern, both as a mom of small children and one of several families that lives on Alexis Drive – I believe there are about 37 houses in Palo Alto Hills who personally use that entrance to the Preserve by walking in, which also begs the question of the admission and tariff, given that it is literally like our version of a backyard or park that we have used and certainly, due to COVID and having to be homeschooling my children, the usage from our point of view is nearly daily. That’s what I just wanted to voice tonight.
Mr. Do: Thank you, Florie. Our next speaker is Michelle Rosengaus, to be followed by Meg Winslow.

Ms. Michelle Rosengaus: Good evening. I live on Ortega Court. We’ve been here for 35 years, and we are the flag lot that is directly next to the fence for the proposed dog park. I am voicing my objection to the construction of the dog park. I know that you have received a slew of emails from the neighborhood and from the Adobe Association, voicing everybody’s objection to this dog park. The site, Ramos Park, is really too small, and the site is sandwiched between our homes and the picnic area, and there is some very serious health issues regarding dogs using a mulched area. You don’t wash the mulch, and it just incubates all the pathogens. If I open my windows, my nose is directly above what will be the proposed dog park. Also, accepted guidelines have to have 120 feet as a buffer from the dog park, and Ramos Park is way too small. Right now, it’s proposed to be 10 feet from my house and 10 feet from the picnic area. Even the houses across the street on East Meadow, I don’t even think are 120 feet from the dog park. I’m hoping that you will remove it from the renovations for the park. It is a really beautiful community park, and we have babies all the way to seniors exercising there, and everybody wants the green space to enjoy some peace and quiet, not a fenced-in, mulched dog park that is going to be used by a few dogs. I hope that you will keep our green space as it is, so we can all enjoy it. Thank you.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Michelle. Our next speaker is Meg Winslow, to be followed by Howard Hoffman.

[technical difficulty, Ms. Winslow unable to hear]

Mr. Do: How about we return to you, if you could join the cue again, and I will bring you up as the following speaker? Our next speaker will be Howard Hoffman, to be followed by Amy Horn.

Mr. Howard Hoffman: Hello. I’m the Founder of Palo Alto Dog Owners, representing more than 300 dog owners in Palo Alto. I think the verdict from the neighborhood around Ramos Park is pretty clear. One of my best friends is one of those neighbors, and we had a nice discussion about this. Basically, he would rather keep the status quo, which is where people are using the park off-lease illegally. I tried to point out to him that that really is not ideal, because that makes some of his neighbors into scofflaws. So really, going back around the circle here, the best thing for these smaller parks – and we’re talking about a number of them, not just Ramos – we were talking about having a trial of off-lease hours, and I think rather than constraining dogs in a fence, I think based on the cost and the impact, I think the best thing is to go back and actually give it try to have off-lease hours at Ramos Park. I think that would be better. That’s what’s happening now. It’s just not constrained by time. If we can go back to that concept of having legal off-lease hours, then I think that the neighborhood will be a lot happier, and I think it could be a great model
for the rest of the city. Thank you very much.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Howard. We will try to return to Meg Winslow. Meg, if you could give it another try, please.

Ms. Winslow: Okay, I’m sorry. This may be the wrong place to bring this up, but I just wanted to know if this meeting is being broadcast on MidPenMedia.org? I don’t see it there, and I’ve been having some problems with Zoom. That’s my question.

Ms. Bourquin: It’s not being broadcast, because another meeting is happening.

Ms. Winslow: Oh, okay. Sorry. Thank you.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Meg. Our next speaker is Amy Horn.

Ms. Amy Horn: I live on Alexis Drive near Foothills Park. I want to make three points this evening, to follow up on what Mark Nadim said earlier. One is we walk up and use Foothills Park a lot, and we have noticed a growing volume traveling at actually higher speeds than would be expected on a residential street, so we definitely appreciate help monitoring the traffic at the entrance coming through Alexis Drive into the park. Secondly, I did want to say that because we use the park on a very regular basis just walking and family time, we would love to make sure that for Palo Alto residents that the fee, especially for the [inaudible]. The third item I wanted to make sure that we support sharing the park and the resources with the [inaudible] population, but we want to make sure that there is proper signage, to encourage people not to litter on either Alexis [inaudible] toilet paper, dog poop, just trash, food packaging thrown around the parking. The cars parked have parked in the cul-de-sac up at the top of Alexis. And then just walking around the park on the trails. I was just there earlier this afternoon. You see toilet paper, and you just see things that are just now littering what is supposed to be the nature preserve that can be enjoyed by all, so I would encourage proper signage and just education of the bigger number of people that come to use the park to make sure that it stays good for generations to come. Thank you.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Amy. Chair Cribbs, that concludes speakers.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you very much, Lam, and thank you to all the speakers. We really appreciate your thoughts and your comments and your consideration. Appreciate your being here.

IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chair Cribbs: Daren?
Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. Good evening. A brief update on COVID-19. Santa Clara County is currently in the purple tier. However, on February 22nd, just yesterday, the State issued an update that said that outdoor use sports would be allowed to resume in California counties where the case rates are fewer than 14 new cases per day, per 100,000 residents. Both San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties meet that threshold. This would take effect on February 26, 2021. However, Santa Clara County hasn’t made any updates to their website to reflect this. We would be obligated to follow the more restrictive of the health orders. So, if County follows State guidelines there would be a number of changes. Some of them, for example, would be that pickleball and tennis, double play, would be allowed. Adult outdoor volleyball and softball would be allowed, and staff will continue to closely monitor Santa Clara County’s website to see when they update their health order to reflect this change with the State, and then I’d be glad to provide another update for the Commission on all the things that would come about as a result of that. An update on the Recreation Division. Got some exciting programs starting in April. For example, there’s indoor cooking classes at Lucie Stern Community Center for youth ages 6 to 13. Spring Cooking with Junior Chef Stars. Classes will be held with one instructor and a stable cohort, a maximum of 14 students. There will be indoor Lego engineering, Spring Break Camp at the Mitchell Park Community Center for youth ages 5 to 10. Jedi Engineering Spring Break Camp with Lego materials. The camp will be held with one instructor and again, the stable cohort of 14. Outdoor sport classes, such as soccer and tennis, will also be offered. The Boost Program, an adult fitness program, is offered in the outdoor patio of the Lucie Stern Community Center, and virtual programs are still being offered every quarter, such as Communication Academy for Youth, Lego for Youth, and Tia Chi for Adults. You can find more programs and full descriptions on the website. Recreation staff is issuing field permits to youth groups provided they adhere to all the requirements for youth recreation and athletics. Most of the youth teams are using the field spaces for practice and skill-building. Cubberley continues to remain closed to indoor rentals; however, there are several Cubberley tenants and artists on the site that are able to continue their programs and operations, while following County and State guidelines. The School District is also operating onsite with special education classes. And as you saw in an email that was forwarded to the Commission, there was the potential imminent domain action by PG&E to take a portion of Cubberley, but thanks to support from the community, PG&E backed out. An update on Youth Golf. The Baylands Golf Links has resumed our very popular Youth on Course Program, where youth aged 18 and under may play for $5 on weekday afternoons after 2:00 p.m. Staff is working on implementing a pollinator planting design for the front area of Arastradero Garden. The design plan for the pollinator came from Juanita Salisbury. Dr. Salisbury, you might recall, had done a presentation to the Commission in the past on pollinator gardens that she’s partnered with the City and built and developed along Embarcadero Road and a few other areas that are thriving and doing well, so we hope to replicate that at our Arastradero Community Garden. On February 19th – this was last Friday – the Safe Parking Program at 2000 Geng Road opened. This is an area near the Baylands Athletic Center in the location where the Palo
Alto Fire Station had temporarily stayed while their fire station at Rinconada was being reconstructed. The site can accommodate 12 vehicles and includes a building with a shower. The nonprofit, Move Mountain View, which oversees five other safe parking lots in Mountain View, will operate and oversee this site. Council approved this arrangement in September. Lastly, I had a request to give an update on the Highway 101 pedestrian and bike bridge. I contacted the project manager yesterday, and she said that she’s working on an updated schedule for the bridge installation and will provide an update to the Commission very soon. Unfortunately, I don’t have any more details on that one just yet, but I will be glad to do so as soon as I have more information from her. That concludes the Department Report.

Chair Cribbs: Daren, thank you very much for that really exciting report, as we start to come out of COVID. I’m especially excited that the Baylands golf program for youth is back. Great news on all of what you reported. Are there other Commissioners who have questions for Daren? I don’t see any hands up.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Just a clarification on the status of the dog park and Ramos Park. It’s not on the agenda, so I’m not looking to go into details. Just to understand, when this item last came to the Commission, we were talking about the off-leash pilot program, and then public meetings have progressed, and it sounds like the focus now is away from the off-leash program and considering a formal fenced-in dog park. I thought that we had discussed previously that there was no budget available for that. Could you explain what the current direction is of discussions?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah. Let me back up and start with the last Commission meeting where we talked about this, where there was tepid response on the part of the Commission for the off-leash pilot program. There were concerns, numerous, which made staff want to go back to the community and offer other alternatives to see whether a dedicated fenced dog park had any interest, and I think the clear response is no. They do not want a fenced dog park. There seemed to be some interest from the community for the off-leash pilot, but not universal. Then again, that had been discussed with the Commission, and it also was sort of a tepid response. In meeting with the Ad Hoc Committee, with Peter Jensen, who is sort of spearheading this endeavor, the feeling has been let’s not pursue a dog park at Ramos. It is already separate from the improvement project, so it’s not part of that at all. The intent was just to reach out to the community, gauge a response. I think we’ve done so and have our answer that a dedicated site is not appropriate for Ramos. The next steps that the Ad Hoc has been talking about – and I believe Commissioner Moss, who is also on the Ad Hoc, provided this in the Ad Hoc update – is that we’d be looking at other opportunities, areas much further away from residences, as suggested by many of the attendees to the last community meeting.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I appreciate that clarification.
Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Daren. Are there other Commission who have a question? Okay, I don’t see any. Thanks again, Daren.

IV. BUSINESS

1. Approval of the Draft January 26, 2021, Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes

Chair Cribbs: Are there any changes, any additions, to the minutes?

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

2. Impact Fee discussion and Recommendation

Chair Cribbs: Daren, I believe Lindsay Wong or Kristen are going to present this?

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. My pleasure to introduce the Community Services Director, Kristen O’Kane, and the Senior Budget Analyst, Lindsay Wong.

Ms. O’Kane: Thank you, Daren. Good evening, Commission. I’m actually going to let Lindsay Wong, who is our Senior Management Analyst…You probably remember Jazmin LeBlanc, who was here. Lindsay has taken over Jazmin’s responsibilities on an interim basis, so I wanted to introduce her to you. She is going to introduce our consultant, who will be giving a presentation on this item. I’ll turn it over to you, Lindsay.

Ms. Lindsay Wong: Good evening, everyone. As Kristen said, I’m with the Community Services Department. Tonight, we will be presenting the Parks Community Center and Library Development Impact Fee Justification Study that was recently completed by our consultant, DTA, and we will discuss their recommended updates to the fees. They have a presentation for your tonight. Just for some background, Palo Alto has imposed impact fees for new developments since 2001, but the baseline fee levels have not been reviewed or updated in 20 years, nor has the actual cost inflation of land valuation in the city. So, the Community Services and Library Departments hired the consulting firm, DTA, to complete a Development Impact Fee Nexus Study to determine the maximum impact fee levels that would be appropriate for Palo Alto. This was presented to Finance Committee on December 15th, and is expected to be brought to Council in early March. With that, I will turn it over to Nate Perez from DTA, who will present the Justification Study that they completed and the recommended updates to the Development Impact Fees.

Mr. Nate Perez: Thank you so much, Lindsay and Kristen. Glad to be here tonight, Commissioners. I’m a Managing Director with DTA. I’ve actually been working for the City of Palo Alto for, I don’t know. I probably started in 2013 or 2014 on a series of projects, so this update felt like a natural extension of some of the work we’ve previously
done. I’m going to go through a brief slide deck. Any fee in California is really a function of some pretty simple math. We’re going to try to demystify it tonight. It’s really cost divided by your demographic profile. Costs are driven in the parks space by land. The cost to acquire new acreage, and in a place like Palo Alto and Coastal California and on the Peninsula. I’m a San Jose resident; I’m in Willow Glen right now. That cost per acre is very high, as we all know, especially homeowners. So that’s going to drive a lot of the fee. Palo Alto has two specific kinds of park fees that are in play. I’d like you to keep that in mind as I go through the presentation. Right now, there’s a bit of a disconnect between those two fees. I think the really, really pressing issue here is to create some convergence between those two fees and to bring them into alignment. We will get started and hopefully I can share my screen correctly. Hopefully, there should be PowerPoint with a very garish red. Let me know it’s not case.

[adjusting screen]

Mr. Perez: Tonight, I want to talk about process throughout this. Impact fees are sort of enabled, for the lawyers on the Commission, the lawyers in the group, by the Mitigation Fee Act, Government Code 66,000, which was passed in 1987. I’m a recovering land use attorney, so I really attack it from both a financial angle and a legal and process angle. We want to make sure we’re crossing T’s and dotting I’s at every opportunity and every juncture there. We’re also going to talk about demographics. Palo Alto is an interesting community. On the scale of new communities – maybe a new Master Plan on one end of the spectrum, and full buildout on the other end of the spectrum – I think we know what Palo Alto, from a land use perspective, is closer to. That creates some interesting elements of any Nexus Study that’s going to be done in the City. For parks, separate from community centers and separate from library, we’re going to talk about inventory, and we’re really going to talk about what people want to hear about, which is what the fee is currently and what it’s going to. A little bit of background about DTA. As I mentioned, we have worked for the City of Palo Alto for quite some time. Founded in 1983. Really specialized in public finance and urban economics. We’ve done over 500 impact fee studies in California alone. I’ve project managed almost 110 of those. I’m brought in a lot to come in as an expert witness, be deposed. I’m going to a trial next month, not for one of the studies we did. So, we bring a lot of multidisciplinary, cross disciplinary, chops to this. We have engineers on staff, hydrologists on staff, land use planners on staff, attorneys on staff. But really, we come at it from the lens of public finance. How do we cobble together money for a public agency so that you guys can build what you need to build and/or maintain what you need to maintain? We specialize historically on special districts as well – CFDs, assessment districts, things of that nature. A little bit of background. As Lindsay mentioned, the City has a host of impact fees, but the impact fees we’re talking about tonight are park, community center, and library, which folks are a little bit confused about, as they are very often grouped together. I call them quality of life impact fees. It makes sense to sort of evaluate them. The usage factors tend to be similar, and the benefits
tend to be similar. The City did adopt an impact fee program for those three fees in 2001. It really hasn’t been revisited since, and I don’t know if any of you own your home in Palo Alto since 2001. That was sort of a locked-in assessment, but a lot’s changed, and that needs to be covered. That needs to be addressed, not only for financial reasons, but also for Nexus reasons. We are trying to draw a nexus between the calculation of the fee and the justification of the fee and what your Parks and Rec, Community Center and Library Departments are accomplishing. I usually recommend every five years. Of course, I’m a consultant. That means you hire me more, but at least every ten years I like to see. I think 20 years is a bit too long. Really, the key takeaway from this process, which already went to Finance Committee, is the development of...you’ll hear a lot of different names, but the simplest one is a Nexus Study. That Nexus Study is going to define the maximum fee that the City can charge. City Council will hopefully approve that study and adopt it. This doesn’t mean City Council has to charge that maximum fee. Far from it. But, that maximum fee defines the maximum nexus and the maximum cost recovery that you can have. Beginning with a little bit of an overview. Sorry for the graphics. We’re always trying to update our clip art. Really, in the Parks space, Community Center and Library space – and if I start to just say Parks as a proxy for all three, I apologize. No offense to Community Center and Library. It is the bulk of the fee here. But in the Parks space, the first thing they have to do is really figure out where our level of service is in the community. That’s the inventory that I note here. What we did is we surveyed Lindsay, and Lindsay’s team, and Lam’s team, and their counterparts in the various other departments to try to figure out, what do you guys have? Because once we know what you guys have, and we figure out your demographics in our community, we know your level of service. We know your acres per thousand residents. We know your number of ball fields per thousand, things of that nature. And then the goal is to provide that level of service to future residents, so you’re extending it forward. Because if future residents don’t defray the cost and make sure that level of service is maintained, what happens very logically is a deterioration of that level of service. There’s a lot of different ways to calculate impact fees. Some of you guys, I’m sure...I’m not joking. I’ve been in front of Palo Alto City Council enough, some of you may actually be rocket scientists. There are different ways to calculate impact fees. This is the most common in the parks space, this level of service approach. At the end of the day, you end up with a fee that’s calculated typically by unit, or per nonresidential square foot. That’s that final column. Okay, so where do we begin? We begin with an inventory. This might feel familiar. It might not feel familiar, but it’s just figuring out what our existing facilities are, and really categorizing them as best we can. It’s not as intuitive as folks might think, because certain facilities – a pickleball court or a basketball court – may not equal technology upgrades at Cubberley, may not equal sod upgrades at Rinconada. So, there’s a bit of a disconnect sometimes. We do try to use some of these larger buckets to group these things together, so we can manage it. Because in any one of these impact fee studies there might be a thousand inputs. It can become a little cumbersome to review, but really the key elements that are driving your fee and the fee calculation in Palo Alto are really the acres of city
parks and the acres of natural open space. This would be just some quick examples of your
park inventory, which is discussed in the staff report and in the study as well. Community
Center, I think you guys know these five really well. The square footage, what might be a
better proxy rather than acreage. Not all square footage is created equal, of course. We try
to control for that. Think air conditioning rooms and things of that nature, but at the end
of the day we do need to talk with the City’s real estate brokerage to even come up with a
number. Libraries are very similar. Square footage is sort of king, or queen. Volumes of
textbooks is also very critical. Little note here – this is a very studious group – things that
have been noted as integrated units – technology upgrades, furniture, fixtures and
equipment – you’ll note that there’s five different libraries. We have five integrated units.
We do that to really sort of collapse it for pricing, and essentially what we’re saying is that
there’s a level of service related to technology at each of these five, so if those need to be
updated, we would roll them out across all five over a 10- to 20-year period. So that’s what
that integrated unit means. It’s just helps us cost it out appropriately. We have this
inventory. We’re trying to find a level of service which we can extend forward. Inventory
is the numerator. The denominator will essentially be our demographics. We look at
Department of Finance. We look at City finance documents. We look at ABAG. Right
now, in Palo Alto…and there’s been a shift in Palo Alto about housing and priorities and
goals. It’s fantastic. A lot of this was really sort of memorialized in the 2017 EIR, the
Environmental Impact Report that the City processed. And really, what we understand to
be the selected scenario, which is scenario three, what you guys see on the left here – and
this is directly from the EIR – is estimates of the city’s population. City employees – as
you guys know better than I do – is not that easy of a number to pin down. You don’t have
a clicker there. I’m not trying to bring up a sore spot, but if you don’t have a business
license tax or per-head tax, if can be a little tricky. What we do is we cross reference these
numbers with our own data sources, our own data platforms. We do this in so many
communities, we have a pretty good feel for it. And we validate them, and we’ve validated
these. On the right side is really there’s some 2030 totals. This impact fee study has a 20-
year horizon, so it’s going to go 2020 to 2040. We’ve taken those 2030 numbers and we’ve
extrapolated them out to 2040. We essentially compare the gap between existing residents
and the future residents we created between 2020 and 2040. Excuse me, existing residents
and existing employees versus future residents and future employees. These are just some
summaries, some nice, lovely tables. Generally, Palo Alto is about 67,000 residents.
Numbers may not sum due to rounding, of course. Number of housing units by single
family, multi-family. It’s very, very common in the impact fee space to draw a distinction
between single family and multi-family just because of, typically, the number of persons
you have in each of those households. Also, I think there’s an economic argument about
the fee can be borne by each of those product types. So, we see existing equivalent
dwelling units, which is just sort of a fancy term for how we standardize different uses,
and we use a single family home as our base, and projected future equivalent dwelling
units, so it’s really essentially the same metric. What we’re looking at is a 10- to 15-percent
growth over the next 20 years. If you grow at one percent a year, it compounds, so you
might be at 24 percent at the end of the 20-year horizon. If you grow at about 0.5 percent to 0.7 percent, you end up somewhere between 10 and 15 percent over your current population. We thought that was very much in line with the scenario three. We ran these figures through Finance. We ran these figures through the Planning Department. And through the Finance Committee. A little bit more interesting – or perhaps not – this doesn’t drive a lot of the fees, the commercial component of it. You have to figure out some ratios between commercial and...In this case hotel and motel are the two categories that you guys have historically charged. We try to figure out a way to equalize that with single family housing. We charge these fees on a per-thousand square feet. You can see on the top is your existing portfolio of millions and millions of square feet, and the bottom would be the portfolio of the square footage and the employees that we would expect to add. If you could see that 96,000 figure, that sort of dovetails very nicely with this demographic, this 95,000 figure, which by the way, was in 2014, so it makes sense that it was a little bit off in slide 11. Just trying to figure out that demographic, you can’t really figure out the future until you figure out the base, and then you set those two off to figure out the relationship between them. So now we have a level of service. We apply that level of service to our cost metrics or our cost centers. The idea is that we know what we have to extend forward, the number of acres per thousand people, the number of ball fields per thousand people. Well, what do they cost? Because if you don’t know what they cost, you only have ratio. You don’t have a fee that you can charge moving forward. This is where land valuation becomes a very critical element. Figuring out what that value is and how that compares to communities on the Peninsula, as your peers, is really the number one key component of a park impact fee study, and also, I believe, it’s the most important part of a library and community center impact fee study, although not as predominant as what you see in the parks space. I’m going to pause here, because right here we have a park impact fee and a Quimby fee. I’m sure you guys know the difference, but it can be a little bit confusing and intricate. There’s two legal structures under which you can charge an impact fee in California. Two enabling legislations. You typically charge a Quimby fee for a subdivision, for a subdivision map, to someone who has a tract map for more than 50 housing units. That would be the classic Quimby fee. The classic Quimby fee would apply in Fresno County, Madero County, Riverside County, where you see massive subdivisions of land into residential product. Where a Quimby fee doesn’t really work very well is when you’re under 50 units. Actually, it doesn’t work at all, legally. Or when you have a mixed used project. So, you have this disconnect. So, there’s another enabling legislation which is Government Code 66,000 the Mitigation Fee Act, which is how you typically charge traffic fees, fire fees. I did the City’s Public Safety Fee a couple years ago. That is under the Mitigation Fee Act. You can very much end up on the same space, but the City is using – and Kristen or Lindsay, step in if I’m mis-speaking – but it is sort of a bifurcated approach, and you’re going to see a little bit of the tension, which this fee study hopes to resolve between these two fees. Into both calculations go a sort of base valuation per acre. I know this is a big number, somewhere between $4 million and $5 million an acre. I assure you it’s not based on comps. We use CoStar data. We use Nielsen data. We spend tens of
thousands of dollars a month on data platforms, basically for this purpose. We smooth out
the data. We remove highs. We remove lows. We don’t look at the most prime residential
developments either for the acreage we’re looking at, more so, the kind of acreage you
would purchase to acquire a park, and that needs to be updated. It’s in your Quimby fee.
It’s been somewhat updated, but in your park impact fee, it really hasn’t. That’s what
created this tension, that we need to resolve. You’ve seen this final bullet point. What we’re
proposing is to update the mitigation fiat fees, and then also update the land valuation in
the Quimby park fee. They are separate code sections in your municipal code. We’d like
to clean them both up and call it a day, so that’s that’s sort of the process-related element
of it, but that land valuation factor is critical. So, what we have now is, as we mentioned,
this $3.9 million figure, that is what’s in your code. That has been updated. We understand
that figure is approximately, for your Quimby fee, about $5.1 million per acre. You can
see, some other communities on the peninsula, you can see our suggestion of taking it to
about $5.7 million. I would argue, that’s not a very large adjustment because this fee, this
element of your fee program is much closer. We did the Campbell update. They ended up
selecting $3 million. We actually recommended closer to $4 million. Santa Clara was
recently done. Saratoga’s is being updated. Mountain View’s is being updated, and
actually, San Jose has currently just issued an RFP and should be issuing an award very
soon to update their land valuation. You want to be close to your neighbors, of course, but
your neighbors are always updating their fee studies as well. You do it every 10 years.
There’s this tendency to sort of surge and fall behind a little bit. I would argue that I don’t
think your surge here is really unwarranted. I would also argue that as far as the community
and land value, Palo Alto, even with these peers, is actually unique. I’ve found that in my
previous work with the City over the past seven or eight years. What does this mean? What
does this land valuation mean for you guys? Because right now it’s just a number. This is
the tension, and this is the tension between the Quimby fee and the park fee, and you can
see right here is right now, the fiscal year 1920 Quimby fee, is about $62,000 per home.
It’s not low, but it’s a function of the value of land. It’s a direct output of the value of land
in your community, but right now the actual AB1600 park fee from 2001 is stuck in the
past. And we see this. We see big updates when we do this. We don’t get hired to do three
percent updates. You can fix that with CPI. So, we have a little bit of this tension where
we have a gap, where certain folks with big projects who were subdividing, would be
paying a Quimby fee, and folks with smaller projects or with a mixed use project would
be paying this lower sum, so we identified that, and we thought of that as something that
needed to be brought into alignment. Now it doesn’t mean that you necessarily need to
charge the $62,000. We’re setting maximum fees here, and you can charge lower. Actually,
we could update that $12,000 figure and the city could continue to decide to charge it.
Obviously, it’s been a very interesting year, with COVID, but we feel that, from a Nexus
justification perspective that we would like to bring these into alignment. What our fee
program actually has done is, by updating that base land valuation, whether it’s $5.1
million... We’ve actually selected $5.7 million, both in our Quimby fee and in the AB1600,
the mitigation fiat fee. The first column is your Quimby fee, the result of a slight update
I'm sorry. This would be an update 20 years in the making, and that's a big change. We're going to talk about that, because it needs to be talked about, but because all the costs are essentially stuck in late 90's dollars, both land value...I think the imputed or implied land value in the old study is about a million bucks an acre. Construction costs, similarly, all of these things are just are from 20 years ago. I mean, really it's not unique. It's not even surprising. It's just when you don't update something for 20 years, and you see 5 to 10 year-over-year growth, and housing prices, if not higher, in Palo Alto, you end up with a bit of a disconnect. So, what we've done here is by recalculating the AB1600 - excuse me the mitigation fiat - I don't, want to use too many different acronyms and codes. I apologize. And updating the Quimby fee, we see better convergence between the two. There's some slight distinctions between how the fees are allowed to be calculated, under state law, so it's hard to arrive at perfect convergence, but we feel that this is definitely a step in the right direction to sort of tidy up the house. So, what does this mean? You guys saw that $12,000 figure. Now I'm showing you a $57,000 figure. Holy cow. Sticker shock. You know, I've somehow stopped talking about community centers and library, as well, for a little while. Community centers and library, we see the construction costs driving a need for an update. We don't see it...You're not acquiring fresh acreage in quite the same way, and it is sort of much more difficult. You tend to see tear downs and rebuilds rather than the acquisition of new acreage, and then the installation of a park on that acreage. So, the increases in the community center, library fee that we're proposing are much smaller, but you are really reflecting the increase in construction costs and labor trade over the past 20 years. The park is driven by that and the increased land valuation, so the new mitigation fiat fees that we're proposing, while now converging with the Quimby fees that you're charging, that you have been charging, are very close. It is, in some respects, you know, two times, if not three times increase. So, we took a look at that. We met with Finance Committee. We know that that is sort of an eye-opener. I mentioned the other cities and agencies on the Peninsula. Their fees are much closer to this one that we're proposing now than they are two years old. The old fee of $12,000, and I believe that information is in the staff report as well. So, in many ways you're really sort of leveling up, but what we've proposed – more of what we're thinking about proposing to Council, and we'd love your feedback – is coming up with a sort of a four-year tiered approach and phasing in any increases. This is sort of a busy slide. My colleague, Kyle [phonetic], is on, and she did her best to try to put this on one slide. It’s four quadrants, and the idea is that we're just sort of tapering measured increases and phasing in those increases – 25 percent of maximum cost recovery, 50, 75, and then 100. We like this approach because it helps with sort of that noticing function with the development community. Anyone who has a map that's currently in process, they're not going to be surprised. And it gives time, provides people an opportunity to just adjust to the change and to sort of phase in that change. This was something that we've recently come up with since we met with Finance Committee. We thought four years was appropriate, because ultimately, at the end of four years, you're getting back to fully justified cost recovery levels, and if you don't get back there quick.
enough each one of these years, you're sort of, essentially, subsidizing the fee program through other channels and other avenues. So, at the end of the day, this would sort of be…This fee program this is not your entire fee load, as I mentioned. We worked on your public safety fee. You have a traffic fee. You have an affordable housing fee. Affordable housing fees everywhere tend to be large. I'll leave it at that, but this is one that needed to be updated – 20 years old – and needed to be brought into line alignment with your Quimby fee. It needed a Nexus refresh. But given the given the change and given everything that's going on in the world, we felt we felt that phasing in, that approach, is probably more appropriate as a recommendation. Of course, the Council is well within their discretion to say, “We accept the report,” if they choose to accept it. Of course, we're going to charge less than that out into the future, or something like that, especially with everything going on in the world. I know I keep saying that, but it is very real, so Council will have full discretion every year to revisit these fees and to decide really what's best – more fee revenue, more money, of course, for parks. I'm with the Parks and Rec Commission. I would be loath to not bring that up. It will provide additional revenue. Lindsay and I had tried to estimate. It's not perfect. The fee tends to get collected all at once. A lot of projects are paying the Quimby fee which is very close to the proposed new Quimby fee, but we estimated – and Lindsay or Kyle, please jump in – potentially it would be an additional about a million bucks a year to sort of bring online, to fix this, what I view as a gap. By the way, and just with staff and everyone, I want to be very clear. I do this all over California. These gaps are common. This isn't a particularly interesting topic for most folks. It's what I do, but it's not it's something that everyone loves to do, so if you remember how I mentioned, I recommend every five years. Most folks aren't doing this any more frequently than every 10 years. What happens is staff transitions, things like that, so I have plenty of communities that I have been working with, we're looking at fees from the late 90s. So, I do want to make that point clear, but those are our recommendations. It's a path for additional revenue which, you know, and I know, sales tax and TOT is a huge part of Palo Alto’s general fund, and I think you know, I know, all staff has been working hard to be really creative there. This would contribute to that. Does it fix anything? Does it build a project on day one? No. Because you need permits to collect these, and then you have multiple permits, you have dozens of permits and hundreds of permits to collect these funds, because they are pay-as-you-go revenues. So then, you develop a bit of a revenue account that's finally big enough to do something. Then you draw it down, and that's sort of the common practice with impact fees. I've been blathering on for a while, so let me open up to questions and comments. I will just be muted, and will stop sharing my screen. If anyone has a question about specific slide I'm happy to jump back and pull up that slide. Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Nate, and thank you, Lindsay and Kristen. I think what we’d like to do is see if any Commissioners have specific questions or comments, and then Kristen, you’re asking for an action tonight? So, we are going to need a motion?

Ms. O’Kane: Yes. I’ll just confirm with Daren that that’s how the agenda item was written, that it would be an action?
Mr. Anderson: That’s correct. It’s a action.

Ms. O’Kane: So, this is going to Council on March 8th, and what we’d like to do is include a recommendation from the Commission on whether you support the fees, or the tiered fee approach, so either way we would like to include a recommendation from the Parks and Rec Commission in our staff report.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, thanks for clarifying that. It was very interesting to get this staff report and go through it. Actually, it brought up several questions from me about why we haven’t done it for 20 years, and now I understand that. And why Palo Alto seems to be out of line more than other cities, and the fact that other cities are going to be catching up and that kind of thing. It was very interesting how parks were treated and community centers, so I appreciate having some of this. I’m sure that there are questions from other Commissioners, so if you would raise your hand. Vice Chair, I would ask you help to look for people who have their hands raised, because I’m clearly not seeing them, and I keep missing people. If you would kick me under the table. Since you can’t do that, let me know if you see any hands that are raised. Let’s start with David.

Commissioner Moss: I think what I saw briefly is as 157-percent increase for a single family home over the four-year tiered fee approach. Is that correct?

Mr. Perez: Yes, that’s correct.

Commissioner Moss: I’ve been on this Commission for five years. Is that right, Anne? Five years?

Chair Cribbs: Yes.

Commissioner Moss: Several years ago, we created the Parks Master Plan, the 20-year Parks Master Plan. The first question that the City Council and the Mayor asked us was, “How do we pay for it?” so, I’m all in favor, even though I own a single family home, I’m in favor. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you very much. Commissioner Reckdahl?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I had some clarifications. Can you go back to slide 13? Okay. I’m confused about the “employees per 1,000 square feet,” the fifth column there. That “0.8 employees per 1,000,” that seems very low. How are you calculating that column?

Mr. Perez: That would be when it’s ran through an adjusted employee factor, so really that would be times five. Because those adjusted employees in that middle column, we’re accounting for the amount of time in the week that an employee could theoretically or hypothetically visit a park. We believe it’s usually around 15 to 20 percent. So, we’re taking those employee figures and we’re reducing them, because an employee is not the same as a resident under this structure, because they have less of an opportunity to visit a park. So, those employees per 1,000 square foot, should really be adjusted employees per 1,000 square feet, so you would see 4.0 in the commercial/industrial space, which might
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feel a little bit more like some of the office and retail metrics that you guys might be familiar with.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Even 4.0 seems…Oh, that’s the time barrier.

Mr. Perez: Yes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: How many square feet per employee are you using?

Mr. Perez: Actually, a lot of studies use ratios. Sometimes you’ll see some 250 square foot per employee or 500 square foot per employee. In the industrial space you might see around 1,000 square feet per employee, up to 2,000. We actually are using existing building square footage, figures from CoStar, and then we have assigned your employees to those next codes associated with those, so we believe the ratio is actually not sort of an industry standard ratio that we would use in a lot of places where it was hard to nail down. We would believe – if you would follow me – a 0.8 ratio for commercial/industrial would be an adjusted ratio, so times five – because we have a 20-percent reduction – would be about four employees per 1,000 square feet, so about 250 square feet per employee. Which you would see more in the high density office space. Remember, this is smoothed out across all kinds of commercial and industrial, of course, but that was if you would invert the numbers, that’s how you would end up there.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, 250 square feet. That’s a lot of space. Most new companies are much less than that. You don’t see anything above 200 anymore. The ones that opened in San Francisco in the last year, too, they’ve all been like 150. That has a direct issue, because when you’re talking about…we’re not billing this per employee. We’re billing this per square feet, but all your calculations are assuming what uses will an employee make of a park. So, we’re off by a factor of 40 percent now, because we are assuming that there’s going to be less employees than there really is. They’re going to pack them in at 150, and we’re assuming 250. So, we’re not going to be billing that development enough to account for its park use.

Mr. Perez: Perhaps. I think there’s a tension between the residential and nonresidential. An impact fee study is a little bit like whack-a-mole. The costs are covered. This would just change the ratio between the various land use types. It doesn’t leak out. It is the existing ratio. I do think you make a great point about the future ratio, though, and how that may be high. I can work with Kyle Martinez [phonetic] and my staff and Lindsay to provide some feedback on what that might do to the figures. I think the total EDUs, if you’re following the column far to the right, that’s the actual figure that gets baked in to the denominator. It’s not a big component of the fee study, so I think the change would be pretty small, but we can absolutely evaluate it, and I think it’s a great point. I think you definitely agree –

Commissioner Reckdahl: I don’t know for sure, but this is the maximum that we can charge, and you want to be as pessimistic as possible, because you’ve tied your Council’s hand. They can’t go higher than this, but they can go lower. So, if you’re being too
generous in saying that every employee gets 250 square feet, you’ve tied the Council’s hand to not be able to build enough parks to accommodate when the employers have 150 square feet per person.

Mr. Perez: Agreed. I know Palo Alto’s sort of commercial/industrial stock is vastly office and office of a particular kind of quality. It is blended across all categories, including retail, including food service and things of that nature, but I do hear you, and I do agree, as a lease-holder in the Bay Area of multiple office properties for DTA, I do look at these things. We can pack them in more than we used to. What I can do is, I don’t think it adjusts the base ratio, but that future ratio, we can get you some feedback on what that might do to the figures. I do think it’s going to be compressed, but we can provide you that feedback, definitely.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, thank you. I had another clarification. The amount for land value, your estimate of $5.7, that also seems very low. You can’t buy anything for $5.7 million per acre in Palo Alto. How did you come up with that?

Mr. Perez: What we’ll do when we look at the stock is we control typically for residential transactions and remove those. So, we’re looking at typically Class B kinds of transactions and land that would be less valuable because of its location. I know that may not be exactly what folks want to hear, but because you’re not going to go buy Zuckerberg’s land to put a park on. Then we control for highs and lows, typically try to carve out anywhere from five to ten to sort of smooth out the averages. We did arrive through a couple different methodologies, at a $5 to $6 figure. However, I do think that the City could very easily justify a higher figure. It will just, 20 percent higher here, the fee will be 20 percent higher. I do think that this is conservative, but we felt that with the percentage increase that Commissioner Moss noted, over 20 years, we felt that it was sort of important to maybe take this is manageable chunks. If a 150-some percent increase is a manageable chunk. But I don’t disagree with you. I think that $5.7 figure is probably on the conservative side.

Chair Cribbs: So, Nate, you see where this is all coming from. Obviously, we’re very passionate about parks and having enough money to generate new parks and pay for existing parks. Keith, thank you very much for that. Do you have another quick question? I’m anxious to move us on a little bit.

Commissioner Reckdahl: This is important.

Chair Cribbs: Good. It is important.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah. The $5.7 I think is low, but it’s very much low. If you look at recent transactions, most of our parks are surrounded by residential area, so if we’re going to expand any parks, we’re likely going to be buying neighboring houses.

Chair Cribbs: Right.

Commissioner Reckdahl: And if you look at the recent sales, they are all in the neighborhood of $20 million. In North Palo Alto, $30 million-breaker. So if those are the
lots that we’re going to have to be buying to expand the parks, we really shouldn’t be booking $5.7. We’re going to be way off and won’t be able to buy the parkland that we need.

Mr. Perez: Yes. Well put. Well made. I do think that there is an opportunity to increase this a bit. I think our recommendation from DTA was, given the time that has passed, perhaps to sort of right the ship, so to speak, we could always come back very quickly thereafter if this is not cutting it, and do a further update. It’s actually quite easy and quite affordable for the City to do that. We were a little reluctant to push on that 157-percent increase, but if that is the Council’s direction, I think that – the Commission’s direction and the Council’s direction – I think that $5.7 figure could very easily and justifiably be $6 to $7. I think beyond that, I would suggest that we’re looking at more prime acreage. But I have seen folks attempt to do that, so if staff and the Commission and the Council would like to see that push, we can take a look and come back.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Again, we’re not buying mythical lots. We’re buying real lots, and if those lots are $20 million an acre, we should be booking $20 million an acre.

Chair Cribbs: Keith, is that something that you’d like to see in the staff report?

Commissioner Reckdahl: This is something that has to be addressed. You have my point. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Yes. We do have your point. Thank you very much. Commissioner Brown?

Commissioner Brown: I have four fairly quick questions. The first one is on slide 10, about ABAG that was part of the information that you used. Are you using the latest RHNA numbers, and since those are not final, how are you going to deal with the updated RHNA numbers? Because I appreciate Commissioner Reckdahl’s point about buying houses, but we also have RHNA numbers that City needs to live up to.

Mr. Perez: So, the RHNA numbers, yes. It’s more than the elephant in the room. It’s going to be the room for 2021 and beyond. Commissioner Member DuBois had a similar question. Right now, because they’re preliminary, we haven’t utilized it. We felt like looking backward to the 2017 EIR, which was the product of a lot of discussion, was a bit safer. But once those numbers are finalized – and not only finalized but internalized, probably in an update housing element – I do think it would be appropriate to provide an update at that time. What’s exciting about it is that the pressures are sometimes counterintuitive. You add more units and everyone’s “Oh, we’re going to get more money.” You’re going to get more money because there’s more permits, but the actual per-unit amount may drop when you re-run those figures. So, we probably don’t want to jump the gun to avoid some of those counter pressures. But the RHNA figures absolutely have to be addressed once they’re finalized. Because if HCD is going to continue to be that forceful, I think we’re going to see every housing element in California updated. I wish I had a better answer. I think we’re all struggling with that. It would be the perfect time. I think a general plan update was classically when we would redo impact fee studies.
I think the RHNA finalization is going to become another point where we redo all of the studies.

Commissioner Brown: Okay, fair. In a similar vein, ADU’s, my understanding is impact fees are generally waived for a certain point in Palo Alto. Does that mean that the impact fees are offset to the other uses, just by nature of what we’re legally allowed to do?

Mr. Perez: Yes. Yeah, ADUs is one of those policy discussions that we used to see in the senior housing space and the below market space. It is difficult…so yes, because they are relieved in such a leakage out of the model and out of the fee structure that’s not recovered, if we knew exactly how many ADUs were going to be built in a community, we could estimate and try to build into the mathematics. I don’t think it would be significant enough that it would really adjust the bigger line item figures at the end.

Commissioner Brown: Unless something like SB9 were to pass, and then essentially this would all need to be reevaluated.

Mr. Perez: Right. Yes..

Commissioner Brown: Just wanted to note that.

Mr. Perez: I don’t want to sound like an ex-lawyer, like, “Oh yeah, new legislation. Let’s redo the numbers.” But there are those certain pressure points and inflection triggers, which I think do require…Right now all communities have been managing their impact fee, application of ADUs through resolutions and ordinances. Because it’s still such a small component of what’s happening.

Commissioner Brown: My other question is on slide 16. Just trying to understand the different between Quimby and a park fee. Let’s say a micro-unit 50-unit building, if it was condo-mapped, would it subject to Quimby fees? And park fees, if it was a rental?

Mr. Perez: I think it would be subject to the Mitigation Fee Act fee.

Commissioner Brown: Okay. I was just wondering if it was sort of unintentionally incentivizing a certain type of development. The last question is about the four-year tiered approach. Because you’ve been working with so many other municipalities throughout the state, is that four-year timeframe something you’re seeing that’s common, not just with this type of fee, but all fees? Or are people looking toward a longer horizon?

Mr. Perez: It’s a great question. I typically do three. The adjustment here, in absolute dollar figures, the way it sort of broke, I felt that in maybe year one, modification a bit jarring, especially to someone who is sort of mid-process, so we extended it out to four. But I would usually, 75 percent of the time, do three and then occasionally, as here, do four, with bigger changes in absolute dollars. I’ve never particularly done longer than that, just because I recommend updating every five years, and there’s also some reporting that’s required every five years. The City has to do an annual report for their impact fees, but every five years there’s a special report that has to be done, where you have to demonstrate that you were doing what you were supposed to be doing, and I think it’s hard when the...
phase-in period is the exact length of that reporting period. So we try to keep it less than that.

Ms. Brown: Okay. Thank you. That’s all my questions.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Mandy. Jeff, your hand is up.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes, I certainly support the comments that Commissioner Reckdahl made regarding the question about why the Palo Alto valuation of land is so low. To put it in context, why is the Palo Alto land valuation lower than Sunnyvale? Why is it not similar to Los Altos?

Mr. Perez: Not knowing the exact specifics of the Sunnyvale fee – it’s one of the few on the list that I didn’t know – I think they were more aggressive and wanted to push the envelope, perhaps, a bit more. There is some play in this data selection. Reasonable minds can differ. It also is one of the more recent updates.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thanks. I don’t know if staff has any comment as to why that might be rational to consider, with a better understanding of context here.

Ms. Wong: I actually do want to jump in here. I have some notes in going through this process that the Planning Department also had their own internal fair market value land calculation, but they also placed it around $5.5 to $5.6 million, so it’s pretty aligned with what Nate has presented here, and I’m happy to follow up with Planning to get more information on how they came to those calculations as well. I’m not sure if that helps this conversation a little bit.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Okay. That’s helpful to hear that the Planning Department has come up with it, but can you put it in context to help me understand why Palo Alto’s land valuation would be similar to Sunnyvale and not similar to Los Altos?

Ms. Wong: I’m going to see if maybe Kristen or any other staff on this call have some more context.

Mr. Perez: I’m happy to pull the Sunnyvale fee program and evaluate it. Different consultants sometimes do different methodologies, and sometimes they’re charged with being more aggressive than perhaps in other communities.

Vice Chair Greenfield: That’s fine. I don’t want to get bogged down in this. Next question. I’m not seeing any data regarding the impact fees of neighboring cities. I’m seeing the impact fees of similar sized cities to Palo Alto, which don’t seem to be as contextually applicable. Is this information that’s available, and will this be provided to the City Council when the matter goes to them?

Mr. Perez: Which cities would you guys like to add?

Vice Chair Greenfield: You could get a map and draw a circle around us. It seems like it would be appropriate to understand Los Altos, Menlo Park, Redwood City, Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Los Altos Hills. I mean, I think staff could help me with that if you have
further questions. The next question, is there any way to differentiate between what we charge to commercial retail versus commercial office as we’re looking to expand the impact fees that we’re charging, particularly given the COVID impacts everyone is dealing with right now, it seems like there would be a lot more reticence to hit retail development harder, potentially, than commercial office. And is that a distinction based on the way the City has things structured, or is that something that can change?

Mr. Perez: It is something that can change. It’s something that we could evaluate. The City has used this structure previously, so that provides the best process and legal safeguard, because you’re updating the rates more so than the nonresidential structure, but we could absolutely look at bifurcating commercial and provide some feedback on what that looks like.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Okay, and is that a question that’s left to staff, or the Council, to provide guidance on? The reason I’m asking, if it’s something that Council would dictate and policy, then it could be something for the Commission to consider as part of our recommendation.

Mr. Perez: For example, if this fee program were brought to Council and Council voted on it, we couldn’t then bifurcate it. It would have to be brought before. But if Council and Commission and staff direct us to, we can take a look at it and provide feedback on what that might look like. If folks liked what they saw, updating the report is not very difficult.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Okay, and am I reading correctly that you’re suggesting moving away a tiered single- and multi-family residence fee structure?

Mr. Perez: Yeah, I am, just because we didn’t feel that those square footage breaks reflected the reality of the housing stock in Palo Alto anymore. It’s also something that I have not seen in many communities. I don’t want to say it’s not industry standard right now, but the distortion around 900 square feet on the multi-family, we felt was too great. An 800-square-foot apartment isn’t categorically that much different than a 950-square-foot apartment. Perhaps on the single family side, you could see a little bit of a distinction there, but folks haven’t done impact fees like this in quite some time, so we wanted to refresh that a little bit.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thanks, and does staff have any input regarding the tier structure existed to begin with 20 years ago? And is staff recommending that we do away with that now?

Ms. O’Kane: I don’t have any background on why that existed. I think we’re relying on our expert consultant to advise us on this. As Lindsay said, our Planning Department has been involved in this process, and as far as I know, has not objected to this change.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thanks, that’s helpful. Last question. In looking at the ramped-up schedule, ramping from 25 percent to 100 percent over four years, I’m curious why the first-year fee would be 25 percent of the maximum instead of taking the different between
the current fee and the maximum and increasing/adding in 25 percent of the increase. In
fact, what it looks like is the single family fee would actually go down in the first year.

Mr. Perez: It would go down for the biggest homes, but for the medium-size tier it would
go up a little. That’s certainly a path, and if staff would like us to do that… We had a varied
conversation last week, whether you’re phasing in the delta. I felt that the optics, if you
will – I know folks don’t like that term – but the optics for the year one adjustment was a
little cleaner in this path, but I’m really pretty agnostic between the two. You get to the
same point. I think they’re both defensible. And both are utilized. I’ve done both ways.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Because that way, you have a smooth and similar increase each
year.

Mr. Perez: Sure. Certainly..

Vice Chair Greenfield: Okay. So that was a conscious decision to do that.

Mr. Perez: It was, yeah. Not every Commissioner, not every Council Member is as pro-
fee as others, so I think we were trying to provide a smooth adjustment and a smooth
refresh of the fee program, but we can definitely take a look at that and maybe provide
what the tiered alternative…as you mentioned, it’s unbelievably easy to calculate, if
staff…It doesn’t need to be in the study, either. It can just be something that’s adopted by
staff, so it will be very easy, and we’ll provide that.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: I wanted to see if there were any members of the public who wanted to speak
on this particular item? I don’t see any hands, but just in case, Lam, do you see anybody
who wanted to speak? Okay, I guess not. Council Member Kou, did you want to say
anything about this item?

Council Member Kou: No. Thank you so much, Chair.

Chair Cribbs: You’re very welcome. I’m listening to all of this and some of the questions
that I had on my initial sheet have been answered. I wanted to ask, given everything that’s
going on right now, is this the right time for the Council to do this? Is it because we haven’t
done this for 20 years that you’re recommending that it be done now? How fast is the
timeline? Because it feels like the Commission some, not unanswered questions, but some
thoughts about the valuations that we’d like to get understood before we make a
recommendation. Is that sort of the consensus of the Commission?

Mr. Perez: I would like to note, it’s pretty proportional the way the fee has been calculated,
so I think a 20-percent increase in land value, you would generally see a 20-percent
increase in the fee. Sort of to demystify that, so you guys can plug-and-play right there. I
just wanted to mention that.

Chair Cribbs: Okay. In terms of timing, any comments about that? Maybe, Daren, do you
have a comment about the timing?
Mr. Anderson: No, I don’t have a comment. This is an action, so we want to get this motion tonight. The timing is you’ve got to do something this evening, because this moves on very quickly.

Vice Chair Greenfield: And I think the timing consideration is that this is already on Council’s agenda.

Chair Cribbs: Yes. That’s why we’re having this tonight instead of pushing it off like we wanted to do, to the March meeting or even April. Let’s see if we can put together a motion to recommend this, and is it possible to put in the staff report that Commissioners had questions, or do we not want to do that? Keith, I’m looking to you for thoughts.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, I mean, I don’t think it’s ready for prime time. I will not be supporting this report. I think there’s too many holes in it, but I don’t know what the other Commissioners think.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you for that. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: I think we received a lot of good feedback tonight. I’m curious whether there is room to make a recommendation on the report, but have some of that feedback incorporated for going to Council, or if it’s just sort of a take-it-or-leave-it right now.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, we’d look to Kristen for the answer for the answer to that, but I think I know what it is. Kristen?

Ms. O’Kane: Sure. We can certainly add the outcome and summary of this meeting, including your comments to the staff report. We can certainly do that. I just want to remind the Commission – you probably know this – but this has already gone to the Finance Committee. From that meeting, it was a recommendation to come to the Parks and Rec Commission. We recognize that that was in reverse order. We should have come to the Commission first, and then Finance Committee. But that’s the order we did it. We can easily put in a summary of your comments into the staff report. If you want to include something in the motion related to that…for example, you could say you support the report. You don’t support the report, and say why you don’t or do, you could certainly add that into the motion. So, whatever you want us to put in the staff report, we can certainly do that.

Chair Cribbs: Okay that sounds fair.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Kristen, could you clarify when this report went to Finance? When did Finance approve this report?

Ms. O’Kane: Lindsay, do you know the date on that?

Commissioner Reckdahl: It was December.

Ms. Wong: Yeah, it was December 15th.
Chair Cribbs: I just sort of feel like these Park Impact Fees have a direct bearing on the work that we are all trying to do. In reading the report today, I just had a lot of unanswered questions, and I felt like we’re being a little bit rushed to get this done, understanding that it’s already on the Council agenda. It’s already been approved by Finance, so it would be great if the rest of the Commission and we could make a motion, if we could move to support the report, but also include our concerns about it. Would somebody like to make that motion? Daren, can you put that up on the screen, do you think, so we can see it?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, bear with me just a moment.

Chair Cribbs: I think at the end of the day that I’d like to support this report, but I’d also like to outline the concerns about that we talked about, about the valuation, and are we asking for enough money? Would we include the concern that, maybe the request, to increase the land valuation and some of the other things that have been mentioned? Well, let’s try, then, if we use this as a motion to get a second on this motion, so we can discuss it.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Has someone made the motion already?

Chair Cribbs: No, Daren is just putting something on the screen for us to respond to. Maybe we don’t even have anybody to make a motion.

Vice Chair Greenfield: While we’re in this limbo place, I think I’m siding with Keith at this point. I’m not seeing that this is something that I would support without more information, and I’m not exactly clear what the urgency is for this to go to Council and to get approved immediately. It sounds like it’s been 20 years, and it seems like it would be more appropriate for us to be asking some questions to get vetted before it goes to Council for consideration.

Commissioner Moss: Can’t we just put wording in here with the caveat that you look at increasing the valuation per acre and decreasing the square footage per employee, et cetera? Can we just say that?

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, I think that was what our suggestion was that we could say that. Are those the only two things that we’re wanting more information about, or were there others? I didn’t write anything else down.

Commissioner Moss: And a three-year tiered fee instead of a four-year tiered fee? What else did we have, Keith.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Well, I agree with Jeff’s point about moving the difference. It makes no sense to go backwards for the first year and then move forward. I would want roughly three different spots. But the big ones for me were the square feet per employee and the land value. I think we’re maybe doing the Council a disservice by dropping this in their lap without the answers to the questions. That’s part of the reason they have us do it, is so the questions have been vetted, and the big questions have been answered.

[crosstalk]
Commissioner Moss: I thought it was to spell out the questions and have staff go back and get them answered before the Council.

Chair Cribbs: I think it’s matter, in that case, of timing, in terms of when this is scheduled to go to the Council. So, I think we’re perfectly free, Kristen, as a Commission, to not recommend, from our perspective, that this be recommended right now.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I agree, and I think we don’t recommend it, then that’s something for City Council to consider. If we’re not recommending it, because we’re looking for more information, another item that I think is very important that wasn’t mentioned is the splitting of the commercial between retail and office. I think that’s very important to get a better understanding of before this proceeds.

Ms. O’Kane: Chair Cribbs, could I make a couple of comments?

Chair Cribbs: Please.

Ms. O’Kane: In response to Vice Chair Greenfield’s comment about why it needs to go to Council. If this is going to move forward, we need to do it relatively soon, so it can get into our formal budget process. If not, it won’t be for another year. You can certainly make a motion to not recommend it. I think we would likely still go to Council, partly because this is considered a public hearing, and as a public hearing, when it goes to Council it’s a public hearing, it has noticing requirements that have already begun. So because of that, it would likely still go to Council on March 8th. But you can certainly not recommend that we move forward and delay this as part of your motion.

Commissioner Moss: I don’t want to delay it, because then we’re saying we don’t want an increase at all, and I don’t want then to get that message. We do want an increase, so we need to move this needle forward somewhat.

Chair Cribbs: I think David has a good point. I think we certainly want to see the fees brought up to where they should be. We just don’t have the information to go ahead with it. There are lots of unanswered questions, but I’m happy to just have somebody make a motion to recommend that we move this forward, and then we’ll see how the vote goes.

**MOTION**

Commissioner Brown: I’ll make that motion.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Is there a second?

Commissioner Moss: I second.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, discussion?

Mr. Anderson: Do you mind verifying that I’ve got the motion correct?

Chair Cribbs: Yes. I was going to ask you to do that. Thank you.

Commissioner Brown: Looks good.
Mr. Anderson: Okay.

Commissioner Moss: I thought we were going to add those other things at the bottom.

Commissioner Brown: I don’t think that dictating the land value increases…I think that a lot of it comes from the data that’s supplied if we want to give the information saying additional information on neighboring or adjacent cities be added, that’s fine, but I don’t think saying to increase land value just to increase land value is the right direction I would want to include.

Commissioner Moss: I guess I’m okay with it, so we’re basically saying we want an increase, and you figure out how much. You figure out how much between now and the time it goes to the City Council. You figure out how much. We’ll take anything you can give us.

Commissioner Brown: I think if we want to give them feedback on some of the comments that were mentioned, I’m open to that sort of discussion. I think saying “raise it”, just to raise it is not necessarily the best message to send.

Commissioner Moss: The feedback we’re giving is outside of the motion. The minutes of this meeting are the feedback.

Chair Cribbs: Yes. I think that’s what we mean, that we would put the questions or comments in the staff report, and the motion would be separate, instead of listing the concerns in the motion.

Commissioner Moss: Okay, then I’m fine.

Ms. O’Kane: The Council staff report will be published on Thursday, so there may not be time for Nate to do some of this additional work for the staff report, but I think he could include it in the presentation to City Council, so we can say, “This was the Parks and Rec Commission’s main point of concern.” Sorry, Nate, if I’m putting more work on you without talking to you first, but then you could include that, Nate, in your presentation to Council what the outcome of that was.

Mr. Perez: Yes, certainly I’m happy to take these three main points of feedback and provide essentially maybe an alternative scenario before Council, and then add a slide addressing tonight’s meeting and show what some of those suggested arrows would do. We’ve done low, medium and high approaches before, as well. The land valuation discuss, we’ll just have to discuss with staff, because we can’t raise it once we’re already at Council, but if we provide direction we could update that rather easily. We can definitely address tonight’s questions before Council. In advance of that, hopefully, but definitely in front of Council on March 8th.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m sorry. Could you please clarify that regarding the land valuation? You’re saying once this goes to Council for consideration, the land value number can’t change? Or, it can’t change after they approve…
Mr. Perez: From a process perspective, yeah, the Council would be voting on a Nexus Study, and it’s very difficult and inadvisable to change it that evening, but it could certainly be rejected, and we could come back with an updated report, which is not cumbersome. I don’t want to suggest that it’s all that difficult to update. I would probably just need to get some direction from Kristen and Lindsay and staff in the next couple days on the acreage component, definitely. That is the most significant piece.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I appreciate that. That clarifies how I will vote on this. I will not be supporting this motion, because I do agree with Keith that I’m concerned about low-balling our max number and limiting the flexibility that Council has to consider a higher figure in the future, particularly both now and however this number scales up over time.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Jeff. Other comments from other Commissioners before we vote on the motion? Okay, Catherine, could you do a roll call vote, please? Let me see if Council Member Kou has anything.

Council Member Kou: No, thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Bourquin: Commissioner Brown?

Commissioner Brown: Yes.

Ms. Bourquin: Commissioner Cribbs?

Chair Cribbs: Yes.

Ms. Bourquin: Commissioner Greenfield?

Vice Chair Greenfield: No.

Ms. Bourquin: Commission LaMere?

Commission LaMere: Yes.

Ms. Bourquin: Commissioner Moss?

Commissioner Moss: Yes.

Ms. Bourquin: Commissioner Olson?

Commissioner Olson: Yes.

Ms. Bourquin: Commissioner Reckdahl?

Commissioner Reckdahl: No.

Ms. Bourquin: Five to pass, two to reject.

MOTION PASSES, 5-2.
Chair Cribbs: Okay, thank you very much. Nate and Lindsay, thank you very much for being here tonight. Kristen, do you have anything you want to add before we move on?

Ms. O’Kane: No, I don’t think so. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, great. Thanks, everybody, very much.

Mr. Perez: Thank you so much.

3. Foothills Park Policy Discussion

Chair Cribbs: It feels like we should all get up and exercise and then sit down again. This will now move us. We’re quite behind schedule. We have allocated 90 minutes for the Foothills Park discussion. It’s going to make it pretty late, so let’s see if we can keep our comments, I want to make sure we get them all, but let’s try to make sure that we keep them as pithy, as Daren says, as possible. I wanted to just mention before we go to Daren, that he will summarize the Council’s decisions last night, but I also wanted, for those of you who didn’t listen to the meeting last night, to say that the Council was very appreciative of the Commission’s work and the Ad Hoc’s work on Foothills Park to date. Everybody, I think, is understanding that this is a work in progress and that people are working very hard to make this whole thing work out. I, for one, and I know everybody else, really appreciates the work of the staff. I’d like to turn it over to Daren now, and then we will go to the public after that and then back to the Ad Hoc, and then to the Commissioners for what I’m sure will be a very good discussion. Daren?

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. Good evening. This item is a discussion item. The Commission will not take action or make a recommendation this evening. The Commission does plan on taking action on this topic at the March 23rd meeting. Yesterday, February 22nd, City Council discussed Foothills Park and the recommendation that the Commission had made at the special meeting on February 11th. Last night City Council adopted an ordinance to change the name of Foothills Park to Foothills Nature Preserve. Council also adopted an emergency and regular ordinance to amend the Municipal Fee Schedule to add an annual entrance fee for Foothills Park that includes the following: Fees for veterans, low income visitors, student drivers, and persons with disabilities are waived. Although not part of the motion, our attorney stated that it is reasonable to infer that the Council meant to include active military in this list. Council also amended the Municipal Code to authorize the City Manager to adjust the visitor limit from 300 people, 120 vehicles, not to exceed 660 people, 260 vehicles at any one time, and not to count persons with disabilities towards those attendance limits. Also, part of the ordinance is that the following persons shall not count towards that limit: That is, visitors with reservations at Towle Camp, Oak Grove and the Interpretive Center, City-sanctioned recreation and educational groups, including City-run summer camps and field trips, et cetera. Group permit holders, volunteers and visitors in a vehicle with a valid disabled person parking placard or license plate. This is a summary of the fees that are now in place. That’s the $6 vehicle per day, daily fee, and free for City’s designated volunteers volunteering that day.
in the Preserve. Active military, veterans, students with I.D. who are driving, and vehicles with disabled person placard or license plates. And then the annual pass, the $65 non-resident, $50 resident and City employees, 25-percent discount for seniors and free annual pass for active military, veterans, and low income visitors. Just a reminder, the discount and free pass can be applied to both resident and nonresident. I should note the Emergency Ordinance, again, took effect immediately, while the Regular Ordinance takes effect 31 days after the second reading, or April 8th. The Foothills Park Ad Hoc met multiple times in February to discuss Foothills Park policies, and the Committee focused on providing feedback on this list of policies you see before you. Some of the policies appeared to the Ad Hoc as ones that are a little less complex and may not require as much Commission discussion, such as the policy consideration about using the term “vehicle entrance fee” versus “parking fee.” While other policies, such as the daily vehicle entrance fee and the discounts and waivers associated with that are more complex and may require significantly more Commission discussion. I have slides for each of these policy considerations, and as you discuss them, I can go to whatever slide you would like, or we can go in the order in which you see them. With that, I’m going to pause and turn it over to the Chair and the Ad Hoc, to continue however she advises.

Chair Cribbs: As everybody understands, we’ve had a very long list of things to discuss. At one point, we thought a little bit about putting priorities on this list. I think, given the way the meeting is going tonight, that what I’d like to do is to have Daren go through the first slide. Actually, no, I’m sorry. I’d like to have the Ad Hoc speak as Daren puts the slides up. Then we would consider whether we can make, not an easy decision, but a decision right now, or this is something that needs to be put in another bucket for later on. Let’s try that with the first one and see how it works. Daren, given the fact that we’re doing this this particular way, should we go to members of the public now and then come back to the Commission?

Mr. Anderson: Sure. I think that’s fine, Chair.

Chair Cribbs: Lam, I don’t see anybody who wants to speak, but –

Vice Chair Greenfield: Excuse me, Chair, before we move. I just have a question about what you just said. We’re going to go through the list. We’re going to see if it’s something we can agree on right now, of if it should go in a bucket for later consideration. Would there be separate buckets for –

Chair Cribbs: The second bucket would be the ones that maybe we need more research, we need more information.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Is the second bucket items that we would not consider for the March recommendation we make?

Chair Cribbs: No, I would like to see if we could get the ones that we can develop consensus on tonight, and then perhaps get to the ones for March also in the second bucket. The third would be the things that we’re pushing off to either September or December.
Draft Minutes

Vice Chair Greenfield: Great. I just wanted to clarify that, because I know that the Ad Hoc did recommend that some of the things on this list not being considered for March, so those would effectively go to the third bucket.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, and the Ad Hoc also was very interested in making sure that we have the flexibility to review the data that’s going to be coming in, and there would be other decisions, and there would be other things that are going to come up. This list obviously is not complete yet.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Great, thank you.

Chair Cribbs: You’re welcome. Okay, I don’t see any member of the public wishing to speak, so Daren, let’s go back to the daily vehicle entrance fee.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. The Ad Hoc started by looking at different pricing options for larger vehicles, in particular, busses. You can see before you the different methodologies and pricing structures that state parks and our two adjacent county parks use for busses. The Ad Hoc made the recommendation you see before you, that the $6, which is already in place for the vehicles with up to nine, and then $30 for the small busses and $60 for the large busses, mirroring the California State Parks model.

Chair Cribbs: Okay.

Commissioner Moss: I agree.

Chair Cribbs: Let’s see how this works. Let’s go to either Jeff or Jackie on the Ad Hoc and see if you want to add anything from the Ad Hoc’s perspective, or if this is what you want to express. Jeff?

Commission LaMere: I don’t have anything to add other than what is shown here. We thought it was smart to mirror what the California State Parks does as we discussed the tiered pricing structure.

Chair Cribbs: Jackie? Thank you.

Commissioner Olson: Same here. The only thing I would note is that we do call out later some of the waivers, like the handicapped placard that are not part of this, so I think this is what we all aligned on.

Chair Cribbs: Okay. Daren, let me ask just one thing. Is somebody in the staff taking any notes that need to be kept track of?

Mr. Anderson: I’m taking notes, yes.
Chair Cribbs: And doing everything else, too. Okay, other Commissioners comments?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Overall, this looks good. I’m happy with it. There was some talk about whether we allow busses at all. Daren, did the Council ask that? Is that something that we’re going to debate? What does staff feel about busses? Do you feel good about that or not?

Mr. Anderson: Very fair question. I was going to note that that did come up with Council last night, and I think it is something we should debate. I think there are still a couple of things outside of the considerations we’ve already looked at in this document, or in this presentation, that we’ll still need to discuss. So that’s one of them. I think you’re right that if you choose to ban a certain size or weight category of vehicle that maybe it makes this unnecessary.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. The second question is, does this apply to people, like school trips that make reservations? Or, is this just for busses that show up at our front door unannounced?

Mr. Anderson: Good question. You’ll see one of the future recommendations from the Ad Hoc is that school groups, permitted school groups, are not charged a fee. We can get into more detail on that in a subsequent slide.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. With those caveats, I’m happy with this, then.

Chair Cribbs: Great. David, you said you were good with all of this, right?

Commissioner Moss: Yes.

Chair Cribbs: Vice Chair?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I agree with Keith. Hearing from Council considerations and concerns that we should be looking into potentially limiting large vehicles, I agree with the general approach that the Ad Hoc has here, and overall, I think the Ad Hoc has done a great job in preparing all of the items in this report. Thank you. It gives us a great starting point for the discussion today. I think we could…I would easily support the $6 per vehicle fee if we wanted to split this off into two items or we have the basic daily entry fee, and that was approved today. That went into the bucket one, and then we had a separate bucket for a large vehicle policy, because I think that’s really what the consideration here is that we’re talking about. What is the policy for large vehicles? Are we letting them in, and if we are, what is the fee structure for them?

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Mandy?
Ms. Brown: Daren, you said that Baylands has a policy for banning the vehicle limits at the Council meeting last night. Would the small busses and large busses both not be allowed in this case, or how this is written right now, or is it just the large busses?

Mr. Anderson: I believe it would apply to the small busses as well. It was a fairly modest – and forgive me, I don’t have it in front of me – but I want to say 10,000 pounds or something to that effect. I believe that would apply to most of your small busses.

Ms. Brown: Okay, thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Daren, was there a conversation with the Attorney’s Office, or were you going to have one about the kinds of busses that would be able to come in?

Mr. Anderson: No, we haven’t had that, and I think we could put disclaimers that you want, either the size and less permitted, or something to that effect. I think we have some latitude and flexibility on that.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, so the only discussion on this one – and I think everybody is agreed with this – is that we need to find out about the very large busses. I think we’re all, in our mind, thinking about giant tour busses with lots of people.

Mr. Anderson: That would be really helpful, Chair, to confirm this, exactly what kind of homework you want staff to do in this point about the large vehicles. Is it the intent to find a way to exclude busses over a certain size, or weight, and still allow in our permanent busses, like school groups and that kind of thing?

Chair Cribbs: That would be my intention. Anybody have an objection to that?

Ms. Brown: I agree with that.

Chair Cribbs: I think we can move on to the next slide, Daren.

Commissioner Moss: One more question. The huge recreational vehicles, you know, vehicles that are as big as busses, but only have two people in them. Do we care? I mean, you can’t park just anywhere. You’ve got to park at the very end, and you’re going to take up about three or four parking spaces. Maybe this has nothing to do with this slide, but do we prohibit them? I don’t know.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you for that, Commissioner Moss. I agree that if we’re talking about it, it would be good to have that clarity if that’s where the Commission wants to go. If RVs should be lumped in there, please let me know, and I could do some research on how to make that happen.
Vice Chair Greenfield: I agree with David’s point. I think that would be worth getting some staff input on. Daren, I was also just interested in a clarification. The current policy at the Baylands, you’re limiting the medium and large busses, but are school bus field trip busses permitted?

Mr. Anderson: They are.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Okay, so that’s really the type of policy consideration that I think Council was referencing and that I think we’re articulating. So, what I’m hearing is that already exists in the Baylands.

Mr. Anderson: I would just say, it’s not the most nuanced policy. That sign went in 25 years ago. Yeah, I think it would behoove us to think this through and have a well-vetted and explained process behind it; whereas the Baylands, I think, is a little more opaque. I will follow up on that. Just to clarify, Chair, if we end up going with the other route, do you still want the small bus fee at all, or for…?

Chair Cribbs: I would prefer the small bus fee, unless there’s a big impact on staff then, Daren.

Mr. Anderson: Okay, very good, and in addition to staff doing a little research on this— and perhaps the Ad Hoc can meet again and digest this and work through it a little bit more to—

Chair Cribbs: But this is one of the ones that we would want to have be an action as part of a motion for March.

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Chair Cribbs: So, we could mark that as such.

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, good.

Mr. Anderson: Bear with me just a second. This slide is just to reiterate that the $6 fee applied to both residents and nonresidents, to help make things a little faster. I don’t think Commission action is necessary on this, since Council has already made this, in effect, but perhaps it’s something you want to discuss very briefly tonight?

Chair Cribbs: I think it’s worth a brief discussion. I’m certainly in favor of supporting the fee, although in my dreamworld, I would like us not to have a fee at all. But I don’t believe that that’s possible right now. So, I support the $6 fee. Other Commissioners? Let’s go to the Ad Hoc. Jackie?
Commissioner Olson: I think this is one where we thought this would be kind of the low end of what we could support, so I’m curious to hear the other Commissioners reaction to that.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Jeff?

Commission LaMere: I have nothing else to add.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Other Commissioners? Council Member Kou?

Council Member Kou: No comments. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I think I agree that this is something we can support. I think, given the action that Council took yesterday to offer free entry to a number of groups, it really kind of takes away the discussion about having the same fee apply at the entrance. It impacts staff, if they’re looking at potentially charging different discounts, or if we’re offering different discounts for different groups for daily fee. Previously we had only considered it for the annual pass, so given that, I think this makes sense to approve and see how things go and provide some feedback in the summer, next time we get back to this. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you.

Mr. Anderson: Chair, this one is – do I understand correctly – not an action item for our March meeting?

Chair Cribbs: I don’t think so, because it’s already been decided, but I think we just wanted to make sure that the Commissioners had an opportunity to weigh in.

Mr. Anderson: Very good. Would you like me to move forward?

Chair Cribbs: Yes, please.

Mr. Anderson: This is, of the many discounts and options that the Ad Hoc had looked into was the free Library pass idea. The concept being there would be a limited number available at Mitchell and Rinconada Library. The conversation started with five passes available at each library. This would be a physical pass, at least in the beginning, that the person could check out and post in their windshield when they come visit the Preserve, the idea being they could check it out for a few days and then return it shortly thereafter, like you would, perhaps, a video or something along those lines. I did have a conversation with the Library staff. They were very generous and eager to help and support this. I should also note that the Ad Hoc was interested in ways to make this simpler and easier for folks.
to get. For example, the “check it out online and print it at home,” and I think that’s
certainly something we could look into. There’s just a little bit of trying to figure how we
could make sure that wouldn’t be easily copied and maybe used inappropriately.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Daren. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: I am very much in support of using our libraries in this way and
having a way for people to wait and have a way to come to the park for free, but also I
think it’s a great way to engage more people with Libraries.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Jeff?

Commission LaMere: I agree with Commissioner Olson, who brought up this idea. I think
it’s a wonderful idea and a way to engage more citizens and allow more access to our
parks.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, I’m just very grateful to the Library staff, too, for being willing to
take this on. I think that’s great. It’s wonderful. Other Commissioners comments? Jeff, do
you have your hand up?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m sorry. That’s because I never lowered it.

Chair Cribbs: Well, at least it works now.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yeah, thank you. I’m generally in favor of this idea. Just trying to
understand – this has been fully vetted with the Library staff, and staff believes this is a
workable solution? Is there any more research that is required on this before staff would
be comfortable moving forward with this?

Mr. Anderson: Thanks, Vice Chair. I think so. It was a very brief conversation with the
Library staff, and as I mentioned, the general willingness to help make this successful in
any way, but the fine details have yet to be worked out, and I’m glad to take any notes
you’ve got, the Commission has on this, in terms of number of days, how long the check-
out would be, details like that. A lot of it I would be looking for guidance from the Library
staff on what’s effective from their perspective as well as yours.

Commissioner Moss: I’m in favor –

Vice Chair Greenfield: That suggests that we should discuss this item a little bit further at
the next meeting to clarify some of the details. Or is that something that would be best left
to staff?
Mr. Anderson: If I can take your feedback tonight and try to work those things out with the Ranger staff, the Librarians, that would be really helpful, and I think, yes, it would be an actionable and hopefully a brief discussion on the 23rd.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Great. Thank you.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, especially with COVID, I’m worried about the Librarians having a lot to deal with right now, and do we want – even if we like this – do we want to delay it for two or three months and let the Libraries ramp up and get back to normal? That would be one question. I just don’t…If the Librarians are happy doing this, then go ahead. But I do think we need some more talk about duration, so I agree with Jeff that we should postpone the official endorsement until we’ve talked about it.

Chair Cribbs: So, you’re suggesting to postpone it maybe until this summer and maybe until COVID gets a little bit more understandable?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I would want to give the Librarians that option. And if they think that would be a good thing, then I would think that’s a good thing. If they’re not bothered by this, then we don’t have to wait. But I do think we should talk about this more. For example, do they have to return it within 24 hours, 48 hours, one week? We should talk about that, because there’s pros and cons to that.

Chair Cribbs: Okay.

Mr. Anderson: Commissioner Reckdahl, if possible, some of that feedback would be really welcome tonight, if you wouldn’t mind sharing some additional thoughts on what would be, perhaps, the idea in your perspective.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The tradeoff is that if you let them have it for a whole week, since there’s a limited number of passes, but then less people can use it. But if you make it too short, then they may actually have to take an extra drive over to the Library and return it, so giving them, say, 48 hours to return it allows them to make another trip to the Library, kill two birds with one stone. So, both from a traffic standpoint and also just from a convenience standpoint, having a medium, like a two-day checkout seems reasonable. But I could be convinced otherwise. That’s just my off-the-cuff response.

Commissioner Moss: Daren, my recommendation along those lines is that maybe this is a paper that has an effective date and an expiration date, and you could adjust it to, say, three days, and it expires right there on the piece of paper or a QR code or something like that. It basically automatically expires in three days. That way there’s not all this passing of paper, and you could even do it possibly online. That would be my only suggestion. Otherwise, I think it’s a terrific idea, and we should do it as soon as possible.
Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Commissioner Moss. I’m glad to discuss that with the Librarians and pick their brains on how to do it. I guess that’s sort of in keeping with the Ad Hoc’s hope that ultimately it could be check out online, print it at home, bring it in and it’s short term. I’ll talk that over with the Librarians, too, to see how we might make something like that work.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Just a quick question for the Ad Hoc. Where are you envisioning that this would be a multi-day pass, or it would be a pass that would just be used for one day?

Commissioner Olson: I envision it being a pass just used for one day, so I wouldn’t envision needing a lengthy term on it, but maybe one overnight in case they can’t get back to the Library to return it.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. So, given that it’s a single day pass, and also taking into consideration Keith and David’s feedback, especially regarding COVID, it seems like maybe the idea of a laminated pass that has to get returned is a bad idea, particularly given COVID, where the Libraries have a 72-hour policy, where you return a book and it sits in a holding location for a period of time. It seems like if we were able to authorize Libraries to print out passes for five for each day, and the date was included on it, that would be better. Then it wouldn’t have to be returned, but then that increases the complication that they have to have these passes printed out. Anyway, things for staff to consider. But if it’s not possible to...If we have to use a laminated pass, we might want to consider doing this post COVID.

Commissioner Moss: I actually think a laminate would be fine, because just like a credit card you could put the “goop” –

Chair Cribbs: Hand sanitizer.

Commissioner Moss: Hand sanitizer. Just wipe it off, just like you would a credit card. It’s not the same as a book. A book you can’t do that to, but a laminated thing you could. So, keep that as an option.

Chair Cribbs: This, then, rests with Daren, with the staff and the Librarians to figure out the details, so this gives you enough to talk with them about?

Mr. Anderson: I think so. Thanks.

Chair Cribbs: Hopefully we get the answers, and we can include that in the March suggestions.

Mr. Anderson: Yes. This next one that the Ad Hoc had supported was limited free entry days. This was modeled off the National Parks standard, where they have six free entry
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The days you see before you were my suggestions, so if you don’t like them, please blame me. I was trying to find a way to offer different days of the week, one holiday, one weekend day, and avoid some of the peak days of summer, where there might be a concern that you’re coming on a day where you’re going to get turned away, because the crowds are at such high visitation levels. I could share if you like – I don’t have it on the screen – but the National Park days were mainly oriented around holidays, so in addition to MLK Day, they had the first day of National Park Week, the one-year anniversary of the Great American Outdoors Act, National Parks Service Birthday, and Veterans Day.

Commissioner Moss: What about Earth Day?

Chair Cribbs: This was a really fun one to put together, and to discuss. Jeff, you want to comment, and then Jackie, and then we’ll open it up to the Commission, because I’m sure there will be some great ideas.

Commissioner LaMere: We all thought this was a great idea, to encourage people to the park and allow them to come in for free. Hopefully, it reaches people who can get there on different days. We thought it was nice of Daren to think of different days that people might have off and also include a holiday as well, certainly realizing that park visitation may be high or people may be turned away, but we thought this was a great idea to incorporate.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: Same here. I think my main concerns were having a holiday, a popular holiday at least, like our New Year’s, et cetera, and having overcrowding at the park, but I think MLK day, being in January, that that takes some of that concern off. But I’m happy to hear other thoughts from our Commission.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. I thought Daren did a really good job of going through the calendar and staying away from some typically well-traveled days in the summer and in the fall. So, I thought it was good work. Other Commissioners?

Commissioner Moss: This is great. When you go to the de Young and it’s always the first Thursday of the month, or something like that, but I think this is much more equitable.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I do wonder, though, whether we should have at least one in the summer. I know it’s going to be the chance of them being turned away, but again, if this is for equitability, then we are kind of banishing them to the season where they have school. So, for school kids, the only one they really could do is the Saturday and MLK. Do we want to move one of these into, let’s say, June? So that you could at least have one shot of going outside of school days?

Chair Cribbs: That’s a good point, Keith.
Commission LaMere: I would support that.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I agree with Keith. The related concern I have is that it’s six months in a row, so if somebody comes around to June, the only way they’re going to get in the park on a free day, they’ve got to wait six months, at least. I’d look this diagram a little bit more, like maybe drop the February and the April one, or February and May, to have a summer weekday, and also a weekday sometime in October or November. But overall, I really like the approach. I think six days is great. The fact that we’re modeling after National Parks, that’s great. I really like the sentiment.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Daren, if you look at the historical visitation, does it match up with schools, or does it match up with seasons?

Mr. Anderson: A season is always the highest, the summer being the peak and then spring and fall sort of starts to taper off, with the lowest in the winter.

Commissioner Reckdahl: So, if you’re going to add some outside of school days, but you don’t want to hit high visitation days, are we better off going, let’s say, in June to get it in the spring after school is done? Or do it before they go back to school? Does that make sense?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah. Both are viable and legitimate. I could see a lot of value of having a day in June, too, where the weather is so nice.

Chair Cribbs: Maybe we should just add a day, just add the first something in June and have seven days instead of six. I like the continuity of it going every…starting in December and going through June.

Commissioner Moss: School doesn’t end until like June 15th.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I don’t understand why we would leave October and November out. Just to have such a long gap between whenever we’re doing and the first Saturday of December. I appreciate the eloquence of how it’s set up now, every month, and it’s rotating days. But it doesn’t strike me that that’s the most equitable and practical overall for people who want to take advantage of these days.

Chair Cribbs: The other thing that we could do is to leave the days the way they are right now and then as we revisit this in August, if it’s been very successful, start some new days in the fall. If not, just leave it be.

Commissioner Moss: Well, you’re going to miss the summer then. So, maybe the first of August, just before they go back to school, and then we can worry about the fall later.
Mr. Anderson: Just one bit would be helpful. That idea of staggering and spreading them out a little more. Right now, we’ve got it into consecutive ones. If you think we’d be better served staggering them every other month, is that something you’d like me to pursue?

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, why don’t you go ahead and do that, Daren? What about the Ad Hoc? What do you think?

Commission LaMere: I’m not opposed to that. I’m actually not opposed to adding more than six for the entire year.

Commissioner Olson: Same here.

Chair Cribbs: So, would we like to add a day per month for the year?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think my preference would be let’s start slow and start with six, and if it works out really well, then we can add one. I guess we have seven days of the week. Maybe add a Sunday, and we can have seven days.

Commission LaMere: Or else we add one for the summer, but that allows us to revisit this after the one that would already be added for summer.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Are we trying to wrap up discussion on this item?

Chair Cribbs: Yes.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Tonight?

Chair Cribbs: We are. Because it’s a fun item, and I’m sure we can reach consensus very soon, and then we’ll have this done. And it’s a great thing to announce, too.

Commissioner Moss: I don’t see the magic with six. I think you could add seventh one maybe in August, early August. I don’t see what’s so special about six.

Chair Cribbs: Let’s add a seventh one in June. School goes back really early, like the 15th of August for elementary school kids in Palo Alto.

Commissioner Moss: Yes.

Mr. Anderson: Forgive me, I might have missed this. The beginning of June they’re not out of school in some places, and so we might not want the 1st of June? Did I hear that correctly?

Chair Cribbs: Yes. Some schools are out really early around here, and some of them go through the end of June, so it’s hard to know.
Mr. Anderson: Okay. Or we could have that one be a Sunday, and that way –

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, make it a Sunday.

Mr. Anderson: Okay.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Or, later June might be better to avoid graduation-type conflicts.

Chair Cribbs: And Father’s Day. Yeah, don’t put it on a Sunday in June and Father’s Day, Daren.

Mr. Anderson: There was some discussion amongst my staff of just having some simplicity so people could know, okay the first of these months, it’s easy to remember, put on your calendar. As it starts to be moving days, it could be a little more challenging for folks to remember.

Commissioner LaMere: Then maybe choose August and avoid June.

Vice Chair Greenfield: And if we’re adding a Sunday, do we really want to be adding a Sunday during the summer?

Chair Cribbs: No.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I thought the consideration for summer would be a weekday.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, kids are out, and also there’s less competition.

Mr. Anderson: Okay, so perhaps the Sunday is on a different time of year?

Chair Cribbs: Like December.

Mr. Anderson: Okay.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Could I suggest that Daren takes our feedback and works with the Ad Hoc to put together a list for us to approve next meeting?

Commissioner Moss: Yeah that would be great.

Chair Cribbs: Yes, with the goal of being able to recommend this in March.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Absolutely, and when I was asking if you were trying to make a decision, I meant are you trying to make a final decision tonight versus next month.

Chair Cribbs: I knew what you meant.
Ms. Brown: Can I just make one comment about, maybe not for this first iteration of it, but if we do go to expand future days beyond six or beyond even seven, maybe picking a specific calendar day, like the 23rd or the 24th, and looking at where it doesn’t fall in the summer and not saying, “All right, this is the date for the entire year.” Because I think what I heard from the Council last night was that they wanted it as simple as possible for the public to remember. The 23rd just happens to be the day Palo Alto was incorporated, so that could just be an easy one to start off with, a day they celebrate it.

Mr. Anderson: I had debated that, too, Commissioner Brown, because that’s the model National Parks uses. The only challenge is, of course, it’s moving all the time and then you don’t have equity amongst the days of the week staying consistent and potentially falling a lot on weekends, but maybe that’s just not a big concern.

Commissioner Brown: And maybe it’s not the same year to year. At least you have one date to message for the entire year as a little bit of clarification, and you can ramp up the communications toward the end. It’s just another thought that maybe the Ad Hoc can discuss.

Mr. Anderson: And that, again, is how National Parks does it. They’ll issue, I think, every year the new list as you noted. Very good.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Maybe the day of the week you pick is the day that MLK day falls on that year. So that you still have the holiday included.

Mr. Anderson: Okay, great. Any other feedback on this item? The Ad Hoc, as I think the whole Commission knew, was interested in pursuing this and recommended free daily passes. Council has already addressed this. I don’t believe there’s need to go into this any further. Chair, do you agree?

Chair Cribbs: No. I think we’re good on this one.

Mr. Anderson: Pedestrians and bicycles. The Ad Hoc believes making free daily passes for pedestrians and bicycles would help make the entrance process a little bit smoother. There is a concern, a very real concern, about whether this would add to problems with people parking outside and trying to walk into the Preserve, which you’ve heard tonight. We’re having some issues with that at Alexis Drive. Most regional parks aren’t charging for pedestrian and bicycle entrance. There is an element of it being impractical to collect fees from pedestrians and bikes, especially the ones coming in from other gates. Impossible at the other gates, challenging at the main gate, but it is possible.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Jackie, do you want to speak to this one?
Commissioner Olson: Yes. I’m supportive of staff’s view here and prefer to prioritize safety on this one.

Chair Cribbs: Jeff?

Commission LaMere: No additional comments.

Chair Cribbs: I certainly support having the bikes and pedestrians without an entry fee. I’m not so sure that we can resolve this next time, because I think that there still needs to be some discussion outside what we have to opine on, and that’s understanding what other City staff, like Traffic Enforcement and Parking and all of that can do to help out some of the complaints and the comments that we’re hearing both from Los Altos Hills and from neighbors on Alexis Drive and other places, to mitigate their parking. I’d be interested in thoughts on that, Daren. And I don’t know whether that needs to be part of this or not. Maybe it’s just enough to say that we support daily entry for pedestrian and bicycles.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. Just on the comment of how to address those other problem areas – Alexis Drive, Los Altos Hills, side streets – it’s complex, and I don’t have the solution yet. We’re in communication with Los Altos Hills staff. We’re just starting conversations with our Transportation team to get them more involved in helping us figure out the best ways to address those. I also need to meet with, talk to the folks, at Alexis Drive to figure out their thoughts on how to best manage that.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, if there’s some sort of a parking sticker that they get, and then you ticket everywhere else. But sort of that’s not what we do, so we’ll leave that to you, but I think it is a big concern. Do we know if any law enforcement is ticketing on Page Mill Road?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. I heard from Los Altos Hills that they have requested extra service in their areas around Altima, so I know that the Sheriff’s Office was issuing some citations. The Rangers haven’t had as many problems on Page Mill Road with the illegal parking. The majority of it seems to be either drop-offs or walking from a little further away. But Los Altos Hills did say there were people parking in front of driveways. One person had to get towed. So, it is problematic.

Chair Cribbs: But are they parking in front of Los Altos Hills driveways?

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Chair Cribbs: So, why would their law…Are they Sheriff law enforcement?

Mr. Anderson: That’s right. Yes.

Chair Cribbs: Do we know that they are ticketing?
Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Anderson: I guess what I’m saying is it hasn’t solved all of the problems.

Chair Cribbs: Sounds like it hasn’t. Other Commissioners?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think we’ve got to keep our eyes on this. I don’t think there’s anything we can do now, but if there are problems down the road, we can address it then.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, I’m sure we’re going to be hearing about them on a continual basis, which is good. We want to know that.

Commissioner Moss: I can see the creative people getting Uber rides up there. Then, because of lack of internet access, not being able to get an Uber back. But anyway, being able to get up there with an Uber, or the only other thing is whether Palo Alto would like to start a shuttle service, where you park down at the bottom of the hill, and you pick up a bus, get on a little shuttle bus and get driven up to the top there, and the shuttle bus runs back and forth all day on Saturday and Sunday. Is that a business we want to be in?

Chair Cribbs: That sounds like to me something for a later on discussion.

Commissioner LaMere: One other thought, Chair, that I had was, is this not necessarily something impacted by fees, but rather something that might happen if the park is full more often, where then, people are looking for ways into the park, because they can’t go through the front entrance. As opposed to something that would happen if they’re trying to avoid the fee?

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, so as Keith says, we’ll just need to keep track of all of that.

Mr. Anderson: Just to clarify, in my experience in working for state parks, various municipal parks and county parks, is yes, people will, on both accounts, when there’s a fee they’re going to park outside and try to walk in for free where they can. Likewise, when it’s full, they’ll look for those alternative entry points.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I think this item is a perfect third bucket item, something to keep on the list of things to consider and it seems like we’re kind of digressing into entry point consideration discussions –

Chair Cribbs: Which will come later.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yeah. And I don’t know if it’s better to consider entry point considerations, but I think it does beg the question that we review the bike policy and
clarify the bike policy. Not a lot of people understand or are aware that you’re not allowed
to ride a bike between Foothills Nature Preserve, as it will soon be known, and Arastradero
Preserve and the reasoning for that. I think that’s something that we ought to discuss.

Chair Cribbs: Okay.

Commissioner Brown: I agree that it’s something that we should monitor but as we’re
going to get feedback from the public, I think there should be a clear direction or phone number
or a form for folks to be able to provide feedback in one place. Because I feel like some of
it is going to go to different public safety agencies. So, if there’s a way to consolidate all
that feedback, so we make sure we’re giving as a clear picture to consider moving forward
that would be helpful. Or, to invite them to come and give us feedback at a future meeting
as well.

Mr. Anderson: Very good. I’ll spread that with the Los Altos Hills staff, because I know
they are receiving calls from their community, and invite them to write and attend meetings
with the PRC, as well as passing on any information I get from my staff and other agencies
as well.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Daren, regarding Alexis Drive, has the Transportation Department
been notified of the potential for increased cars parking there when we start implementing
the entry fee? And is that something that the Transportation Department would be working
on as opposed to Community Services?

Mr. Anderson: I think it will be collaborative, and yes, I have emailed Transportation staff
with the complete list of all the things we’re looking at. So that’s inside the park issues –
do we have enough ADA parking? Do we need speed bumps? The outside of the park
elements. Is there a crosswalk that’s needed on Page Mill? Do we have the right No
Parking areas? And how do we address people parking where they shouldn’t?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Sounds like I opened a box.

Commissioner Moss: Yes, a whole lot of stuff.

Mr. Anderson: What would be helpful, Chair, is to understand that this pedestrian, bike
free thing, is an actionable item for our March 23rd, or is this not?

Chair Cribbs: I was just going to say, so where are we with this? Because I think the
intention is that pedestrians and bicycles are free now, and yet we want to be concerned
with unintended consequences and review this as we go into the fall and December. Jeff
and Jackie, is that what you’re thinking, too, when we discussed it?
Commission LaMere: Yeah, I was thinking that we have what we had written and have it free and we monitor. A lot of these things may need to be revisited that we have as we gather more data.

Chair Cribbs: Good. Thank you. Me too. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: Yes, I agree.

Chair Cribbs: Daren, does that provide what you need?

Mr. Anderson: Almost. So, is that part of our action on the March meeting, as affirming this, or are you saying that you don’t want to address it yet?

Chair Cribbs: No, I would like to have it be part of our action. If the motion doesn’t pass, it doesn’t pass, but I’d like to have it part of the action, and I’d like to have the flexibility to make changes as we go through the year, but I don’t want to start in with a fee for bikes and pedestrians, and how are we going to count them, and all of that right now. I’d like to have the free, and see how it works out.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I have a quick question regarding that. I support what everyone is saying. I’m just trying to understand procedurally, this is kind of a passive action. I think Daren is asking, do we want to include this as part of the motion, even though we’re not going to be recommending any change as a result of this? This sounds very similar to the previous, regarding the $6 entry fee for residents and nonresidents where you were suggesting that you wouldn’t want to include that as part of the action. It seems like we should be doing the same thing for what I was referring to as passive actions, or whatever is a better way of phrasing them is.

Mr. Anderson: Chair and Vice Chair, one option could be, we could summarize in the body of a staff report, as opposed to part of a motion.

Chair Cribbs: Okay.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I prefer this not to be a motion, just to keep it simple. We have so many other aspects of it. The more we throw in, the harder it’s going to see –

Chair Cribbs: To pass that motion. Yeah.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Find the needle in the haystack.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, that’s fine with me. Daren?

Mr. Anderson: Got it. So, school field trips, the Ad Hoc had discussed this and wanted to make sure we were providing opportunities for students. And this was the methodology
that we thought made the most sense, was to allow them in via the permitted school trips for free. Now, Council has taken this separate action for students driving into the Preserve. But just to reiterate, I’ve got just a little bit of extra data. This had not yet been shared with the Ad Hoc, but there was a couple questions we asked. How would we run the reservation system like this? And the JMZ staff very graciously said they would be happy to handle reservations for all school field trips, be they guided and programmed like the one JMZ currently offers, or self-guided. So, they would help with that element. They also said that in their opinion, waiving the fee for a school already participating in a programmed field trip made a lot of sense, but they were open otherwise – meaning, schools that hadn’t paid for or a part of a permitted program – would pay an admission fee, perhaps at a reduced rate. They also suggested maybe waiving the admission fees for Title I schools. They also agreed on keeping this to weekday only, which has been the case, but it would bear clarifying, which I don’t believe we’ve got that captured anywhere.

Chair Cribbs: I like all of that. That’s great. Jeff?

Commissioner LaMere: I agree with those recommendations. I just think it’s important to remember how this all started. I mentioned, I think last meeting, in terms of the pilot proposal and trying to get more kids into the park, and more schools, I think this is great and would certainly rely on the expertise of the JMZ, who have done this, and what their recommendations are as they have seen what works, particularly favor waiving the fees for Title I schools.

Chair Cribbs: Great. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: I agree with that. I have a question on the recommendation. Are they suggesting that school trips be charged a fee if they didn’t previously have a permit or some other fee, Daren?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. If they were already participating in a programmed field trip, yes. But otherwise, that school should pay the admission fee, perhaps at a reduced rate, was their recommendation. So, this would be the self-serve models where a school just wants to come up and they’re not paying for the JMZ or part of some subsidized program the JMZ has.

Commissioner Olson: So, even if they notify us in advance and request a permit?

Mr. Anderson: That’s their suggestion, the JMZ staff. I realize that is different from what the Ad Hoc had discussed, where we just thought, to make it simple, any permitted school group that comes in, meaning they make their reservation with the JMZ whether they’re part of a program or not, would get in free. That was the Ad Hoc recommendation. I had just gotten this feedback from the JMZ staff and wanted to share it with you.
Commissioner Reckdahl: Let me play devil’s advocate. Being against school kids seeing the park is kind of like being against puppies or being against apple pie. But there’s a reason we’re charging this fee. It’s because we need the money. The park has a lot of costs associated with it, and the road to hell is paved with good intentions. We have all these good intentions about giving a break to here and a break there, and at the end, we may actually end up with such little fees that it’s not worth the hassle for collecting the fees, because we’ve given so many breaks to people. That’s one thing that I’d be worried about.

Chair Cribbs: Other thoughts?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m just trying to understand. The JMZ is suggesting that not all school bus permits would be free?

Mr. Anderson: Right.

Vice Chair Greenfield: And on a broader scale, it seems like we need to have a policy in place – with staff’s input, of course – on how many school bus field trip permits we permit each day. Beyond that, we really don’t want to see busses coming in. I guess we wouldn’t be able to inhibit school groups coming in in a combination of private vehicles, but it seems like you want to avoid getting overloaded with the school groups for both staff’s sanity and for the environmental side of things as well.

Chair Cribbs: We talked about it at the Ad Hoc, though, it seems like there was a number of permits a day that were issued, Daren?

Mr. Anderson: No, not that there are a fixed number, because it’s highly variable, depending on what they want to do and how many are in the group. It’s just that there’s control mechanisms where staff is looking at a permit request, understanding what they propose to do and where and what time and can say, “Oh, you’re looking for a Friday in the afternoon. That’s a very busy time. Here’s what’s available.” So that kind of adjustment based on Ranger and eventually JMZ staff, would certainly be in play.

Vice Chair Greenfield: It sounds like staff needs to work with the Ad Hoc to come back with a recommendation on this for us to try and get in our March recommendation. Is that right?

Chair Cribbs: Yes, we could do that.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Is there more input you need, Daren?

Mr. Anderson: It’s a very good question. There are a lot of nuances depending on the size of the groups that make it difficult to wrap up into a neat policy package. I wonder if there’s an element where some degree of staff discretion on the number of school trips
could be managed that way, as opposed to trying to craft something now. I’m glad to try and work with JMZ and the Ad Hoc.

Chair Cribbs: Well, I think this is an important one for us to decide in March. Let’s go back to the Ad Hoc and we’ll have the discussion about it and see if we can get a little bit more information, since we’re just learning about the JMZ, and then come to a conclusion that we would present in the March meeting.

Commissioner Olson: Yes, and in particular, I would like to know why they would recommend imposing a fee on school trips that are outside of the parameters that they are suggesting. And also, whether there would be any markup to the schools for running their reservation through JMZ.

Mr. Anderson: I think the answer to the last part is no, they wouldn’t, meaning just to go through the reservation system and get booked and put into a time slot. No, there wouldn’t be a markup or a fee there. I think they were only proposing some entry fee if you’re not Title I and you’re not going through a paid program, albeit a reduced one. They didn’t provide details on that, but certainly we can discuss this with the Ad Hoc and involve someone from the JMZ, to pick their brains and work through that issue.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Do you envision that the JMZ’s role will be changing at all with respect to field trips?

Mr. Anderson: I don’t know that for sure. I’d have to converse with their staff, but glad to bring that up. One new part is obviously in the past they would be scheduling their own trips, and this would be a little different for other schools who now could come to them and they would be sort of just playing that role of squeezing them in and managing the reservation system. To that degree it would be new.

Chair Cribbs: Daren, can we move on, and can you tell me how many more slide there are? It’s 10:00 right now, and I’d like to see how much more we can get through tonight before we really tire everybody out. And I’d also like to make sure that we can discuss the Ad Hoc Committee assignments and take action on that tonight, so that we don’t have to do it at the retreat.

Mr. Anderson: Yes. In addition to the one you see before you – visitor capacity – we’ve got the online reservation system, the Hillside barbecue reductions, the dog policy, the photography and videography policy, the group permit policy and the Grove picnic policy, and the environmental monitoring data collection, and lastly, the vehicle versus parking fee terminology.
Chair Cribbs: Okay, well I think a few of those we can knock out pretty quickly and then some of them push over, because some of them aren’t meant to be reviewed until even the wintertime. Is everybody okay to proceed for a little bit longer? Okay.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Sure, and maybe anything that’s not simple, we can just agree that we’ll have a discussion at the next meeting for the items that we’re aiming for in March just to move things along more quickly.

Chair Cribbs: Right, okay.

Mr. Anderson: Very good, so this was just about not counting the pedestrians and bicyclists towards the visitor capacity limit. The Ad Hoc had noted that pedestrians and bicyclists don’t have as significant an impact on the Preserve as vehicles do. They also noted that there is no accurate way of knowing or controlling how many pedestrians are entering Foothills Park, given that pedestrians are allowed to enter the Foothills via the Bay to Ridge Trail, through Pearson Arastradero Preserve and Los Trancos Open Space Preserve.

Chair Cribbs: Jackie or Jeff, any comments?

Commissioner Olson: I think that was a great summary. Nothing else –

Commissioner LaMere: Nothing additional.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Other comments?

Commissioner Moss: I’m okay with this.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I agree with this. I think this fits in with a group of things that we’re listing at the bottom and not including in the motion.

Commissioner Reckdahl: In practice, I agree. In theory, I don’t. If we had 500 pedestrians walk in, we should be able to close the park, and if we don’t count them towards the visitor capacity limit, the staff doesn’t have any way of closing it unless we have enough cars in there. So again, to get the staff enough flexibility, I think in theory, we should count both. In practice, I don’t think we’re going to have 500 people going through, but I think we just shouldn’t paint ourselves in a corner.

Commissioner Moss: We can count them, but not count it towards...well, we can count them, but not count them in the same way. I think that this is sort of a moot point for now. We don’t have a huge number of pedestrians and bicyclists, so can we revisit this later in the year?
Chair Cribbs: Yeah, I think that we look at it when we make our report back to Council and see how we’ve done with it. Because you’re right, Keith, we might have 500 people walking in someday.

Commissioner Moss: Not likely, for now.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I agree.

Chair Cribbs: Daren, do you have enough?

Mr. Anderson: I think so.

Chair Cribbs: Great. Let’s go to the next one.

Mr. Anderson: The Ad Hoc Committee discussed some of the merits and challenges with the reservation system for vehicle entrance to Foothills. There’s concern that a reservation requirement may limit visitation unnecessarily, especially for people with limited online access. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends that staff continue to investigate options for how a reservation system might work for Foothills Park, but not implement one at this time. They recommend discussing reservation system again towards the end of calendar year 2021.

Chair Cribbs: Jackie or Jeff, any additional thoughts?

Commissioner Olson: No.

Commissioner LaMere: Nothing additional.

Chair Cribbs: For me, I’d certainly like to push it off and discuss it at the end of the year. Other Commissioners?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I don’t think we have enough information to consider making a recommendation on this a month from now. I don’t know that we’re necessarily talking about the end of the year. It could later in the year, but this one actually might be the end of the year. Third bucket, yes.

Chair Cribbs: Yes, third bucket.

Commissioner Moss: I would love a reservation system as soon as possible for like 50 to 75 reservations per day, or maybe even less, but it’s impractical for right now until we can investigate options. So, keep working on those options.

Commissioner Brown: I agree with everybody. I think we do need more information, but I strongly support the idea of a reservation system and look forward to discussing it moving
forward. However, I don’t think it’s part of the clean-up of our initial approach, so I support talking about it later on.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you.

Mr. Anderson: We did speak with Yuba’s County staff, who have implemented a reservation system for very similar reasons that most parks systems are experiencing, the super high level of visitation that they don’t have that much parking. So, we’ve picked their brains a little bit on how they’re using theirs. We’ve got a bunch of follow-up questions that we haven’t received answers to yet, but we’ll keep working on that and trying to learn from them, as well as from a few other agencies that I think have had their for a little bit longer. So, we’ll try to learn from all them and try to understand what might fit well for us for discussion, as you said, at a later point. Any other comments on reservation system?

Chair Cribbs: No, I think we got it.

Mr. Anderson: The Ad Hoc Committee supports removing nine hillside barbecue pits at Foothills Park to help improve fire safety in the Preserve. I had shared in the attachment and in our previous January meeting a report that we had generated that showed where these are. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends that staff continue to evaluate the remaining Foothills barbecue pits for fire safety. Just to note, this was in response to the extreme 2020 wildfire season that Open Space staff had analyzed our picnic areas in Foothills for fire safety. That report had made note of the six different day use picnic areas and staff had looked at those hillsides and noted that they’re not very frequently used, very infrequently rather, and staff believed that removing them will not have a negative impact on the visitor experience, but it will make fire safety improvement at the park. I should note one other thing, that removing these nine barbecue pits would still leave 28 barbecue pits located at the Orchard Glen picnic area, and the two large group barbecue pits at Oak Grove.

Chair Cribbs: That’s good to know. Thank you. Jeff, comments?

Commission LaMere: The only comment I would have I’m actually in favor of removing more barbecues just because of the fire danger, really evaluating the use of fires at all in the park. But definitely endorse removing the ones on the hillside as soon as possible.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: Same here. I think it’s important to take these ones out and see how it goes.
Chair Cribbs: I certainly agree with that. This has been on our agenda for quite a while, so it would be nice to get it done in March. Other Commissioners, comments?

Commissioner Moss: I strongly agree with Jeff LaMere about getting rid of these nine, and getting rid of more later. Absolutely

Vice Chair Greenfield: I agree with the same.

Ms. Brown: I agree also, sort of a pilot removal.

Chair Cribbs: A pilot removal. That’s good. We’ll see how the fire system goes this year, but I think it would be good to revisit it in the summertime and see as well. Daren, is that enough for you?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, it is.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Darned if we aren’t going to get a pilot program.

Mr. Anderson: The dog policy – the Ad Hoc did not support making any changes to the existing dog policy for Foothills Park, and those are that dogs are required to be on leash at all times and not permitted in Foothills Park on weekends and holidays. the Ad Hoc did agree, just like the previous one, that this should be reviewed again at some point later on in the year.

Chair Cribbs: Ad Hoc, any comments?

Commissioner Olson: My only comment is we’re changing a lot of things all at once. It’s like, love to not change another rule and use our studies to really inform further changes.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Jeff?

Commission LaMere: No additional comments.

Chair Cribbs: Other Commissioners?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Third bucket.

Commissioner Moss: Yeah, I would love to see all dogs left out of the park, but this will do for now.

Chair Cribbs: I think that in some of the work that the stakeholder group is doing, there is some educational tools that we will be able to use about dogs in the park, too, and behavior, so hopefully that will help. Okay, I think we can move on on this, Daren, unless you need something else.
Mr. Anderson: No, just to confirm that this would fall under the category where we’re not making a –

Chair Cribbs: We’re not making any changes.

Mr. Anderson: Yeah.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, keeping it just the same.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The thing that bothers me is that we don’t know if dogs really affect the wildlife. We don’t have any insight into that. But that’s a long term questions, so don’t do anything now, but we really should get some experts to talk about the impacts to the wildlife – of all this park visiting, not just dogs.

Commissioner Moss: It’s not so much the dogs. It’s the dog owners and picking up their waste and not letting their dogs go so far off the trail. That’s what’s so frustrating, not the dogs. It’s the owners.

Chair Cribbs: Usually the case.

Mr. Anderson: The photography and videography policy, the Ad Hoc notes that there is an existing Parks and Open Space regulation pertaining to commercial photography and filming and did not feel any additional policy action was necessary at this time. I include the links on that, but if you would like, I am glad to share some of the highlights from the policy, if that would be helpful, or turn it back to the Chair.

Commissioner Moss: Does that have anything to do with weekends and holidays versus weekdays?

Mr. Anderson: It does not.

Commissioner Moss: So, they could come anytime?

Mr. Anderson: Not any time. If it’s a commercial enterprise – and that’s what we’re talking about with this policy – in certain situations they’d need a permit, and we would govern, like we do with all our permits, when and where and how many, and all those details.

Vice Chair Greenfield: But there’s currently not a fee structure for permits?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I would want to mimic all the surrounding parks. What do Santa Clara and San Mateo do?

Mr. Anderson: I can do some homework on that.
Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you, fees, and I would suggest that we put this into the second bucket and do some research on it and consider a recommendation for March.

Commissioner Moss: I ran into a large commercial photography team at Arastadero about a month ago, so you’re already doing something with them already. I didn’t ask them how much they were charged for their permit, but they took up a lot of real estate.

Mr. Anderson: We do have, in our Municipal Code, the ability to charge a fee for this. It’s variable on how much staff time it takes and nuances, but it’s not spelled out. It’s $50 if you’ve got three cameras and $75 if you’ve got five people operating the camera boom. It has none of those details. It’s just a range where staff can determine how much staff time.

Commissioner Moss: Footprint and number of hours in the park.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I would point out that this is an issue that City Council has raised in previous discussions, so I think it would be worthwhile for us to do some research on it to understand what the consequences of the actions are and clarify what our neighbors are doing.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, but given the amount of work right now that the staff is doing on Foothills Park, I would recommend that we keep the policy the same, and just wait and do some research when staff can do that, but not as a really high priority and have a decision or revisit it in December.

Commissioner Moss: Okay.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I don’t know how others feel, but I think we ought to put it on the “maybe” list for March, given that this is something that Council has brought up.

Commissioner Moss: It depends on if they can do any research before then, because I don’t want it to come up again with no more research.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Correct, but my concern is that if other people have fees and we don’t, it may attract people, and I don’t want to be attracting more people. Or more [crosstalk] prices is the big thing.

Mr. Anderson: And again, we do have fees, so if someone comes and says, “We want to shoot a commercial,” they don’t do it for free. We do charge them. Again, it’s variable, depending upon what they want. They go through a Special Use Permit, through PD, with Open Space weighing in, and different fees are assessed, but I can come back with details on that and try to pick two or three neighboring agencies to find out what they’re doing specifically, and see if we can borrow best practices if you’d like.
Commissioner Moss: But if you don’t have time before March, then I’m happy with moving it out. So, pick your battles.

Commissioner Olson: And maybe, Daren, it would be helpful just to know, how often does this come up? Because if it’s pretty few and far between, then it may not be something that we need to prioritize.

Mr. Anderson: Very good. Just off the top of my head, I would say it probably happens, that we get about six requests a year.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Before they couldn’t go into Foothills Park, I don’t think.

Mr. Anderson: Right.

Commissioner Reckdahl: And Foothills Park is a lot prettier than Arastradero, so we may have more demand coming.

Mr. Anderson: Very good. I’ll put in the staff to research and come back and work with the Ad Hoc in more detail.

Chair Cribbs: That would be great, Daren. Thank you.

Mr. Anderson: The Ad Hoc reviewed the existing policies on group gatherings and the Oak Grove picnic area, and the Committee is in favor, in particular, for the Oak Grove. I think we mentioned before that there is 150 people max for that picnic area, and there’s adjacent parking and the restrooms there. So, it’s 150 capacity for that area. We had discussed, I think in one of our previous meetings, should we be restricting corporate action there? The Ad Hoc Committee noted that they weren’t in favor of restricting corporate use of Oak Grove at this time. They felt that restrictions should focus on the number of people and how the facility is used, rather than which people use it. Just a quick recap on what the group permit policy is. A gathering permit is required for any group greater than 25 people, and that’s for Palo Alto Parks and Open Space. I mentioned the Oak Grove. There’s just one more detail in the Oak Grove policy that’s worth noting, that all members of the party, including guests and caterers, musicians, et cetera, must exit the park before closing. Equipment may not be left after the event, and examples of activities that are not permitted are things like bouncy houses, petting zoos, climbing walls, video boards, laser tags, et cetera. Those are often the kind of requests we get for people who have rented Oak Grove, so the Rangers will ask those details. That is listed in the sign-up sheet as you register for the reservation. It says if you have any non-Open Space type of request, discuss it with the Rangers, so the Rangers could say, “Unfortunately, that’s not allowed here in the Preserve.”

Chair Cribbs: And Daren, tents were in that list, right?
Mr. Anderson: No. It’s not in this example list, but yes that would probably fit in, depending on what they were proposing.

Commissioner Moss: I’m thinking back to the Palantir event at Cubberley where they had floors and they had tents and they had music, boomboxes and all kinds of stuff. I don’t want that.

Chair Cribbs: Thoughts, Jeff?

Commission LaMere: Just that we didn’t want to restrict who was using it, as Daren had said, but the Rangers have experience and discretion in understanding what’s allowed and best use of the park. One question I do have, and I don’t remember if we covered this, with reservation policies, are we doing anything to give residents priority over reservations of group areas, or anything in terms of like we do with Enjoy, where residents have a week ahead of time of registration, or anything like that?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. It’s part of the lawsuit settlement. All of the reservable areas in Foothills Park, residents have a priority of 25 percent of the reservable time. So, in the case of Towle Camp, Oak Grove and the classroom, they’re a year in advance reservations. It’s a year in advance for residents; nine months in advance for non-residents.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: Nothing to add.

Chair Cribbs: Other Commissioners, thoughts on this?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I agree. There was public backlash with the whole Palantir stuff, and we got so many people mad at us. I think we need to look at the lessons we learned from Palantir and make sure that we don’t repeat the same mistakes.

Commissioner Moss: Luckily, with them, it took them about a week to set up and four days to shut down, so the idea that you can’t have anything overnight, I think that will help.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I think we should further consider the pros and cons of corporate group reservations, particularly since this is something the City Council raised last night. If we don’t have a position on this and do some research and provide some data on it, it’s possible they could choose to act on their own without our input. So, I think it’s something we should consider.

Commissioner Moss: What did they say, specifically?

Vice Chair Greenfield: There were some general –
Chair Cribbs: Just asked about any corporate policies, if that would be discussed. Jeff, did you have other information?

Vice Chair Greenfield: No, that’s all And Daren, just getting back to the reservation policy, it sounds like there isn’t any need for the Commission or Council to develop further policy on it that that’s spelled out within the terms of the settlement. So that’s enough for staff to go on?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. That’s my understanding.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Great. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Good. So, do people want to try to put this on for March, or do you want to get more information?

Commissioner Moss: Put it on for March.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, me too. Okay, Daren let’s move on to the next one.

Mr. Anderson: Sure. Is there any other feedback that might be helpful so I could check with other agencies? Are there any other Commissioners that feel that we should be banning corporate? It would just help me a little bit.

Commission LaMere: Chair, if I could just say one thing. Obviously, the Palantir sticks in everyone’s mind, so there needs to be a belief and trust of the decision-making of those that are handling these permits to appropriately look out for the park and the correct uses. I guess we’re certainly deferring and relying on that expertise and trusting in that. I think some of it is how much do you need to put in writing to ensure something like Palantir doesn’t happen again?

Commissioner Moss: I’d even go one step further. I think I heard Daren mention the word “musicians,” and I’m thinking of musicians or deejays and boom boxes, even PA systems, where you’re going to have the CEO making speeches. How loud can it be, and how much amplification do you want? The Rangers have to have some guidelines, and I don’t know what’s happened in the past.

Mr. Anderson: We have existing noise ordinances that are already in place to protect from that. And the use of Oak Grove, by the existing policies, couldn’t exceed 150, so whatever Palantir, if they wanted to rent Oak Grove, they would be doing the same thing that someone would do on a birthday party, if they had 150 people. So, there would be no exceptions or extra things allowed as it stands with the policy as it is. I think the thing I was trying to understand is are we looking at just banning corporate altogether?

Chair Cribbs: I would not be in favor of banning corporate altogether.
Commissioner Reckdahl: What is the policy right now for Mitchell Park, for example?

Mr. Anderson: I don’t believe there is a policy that prohibits a company from renting a picnic area at Mitchell. Likewise at [crosstalk] Hills.

Chair Cribbs: Or at Rinconada.

Mr. Anderson: Yeah.

Commissioner Brown: I think what might be helpful for the March discussion, maybe even more so than outside agencies, comparing what other agencies are doing, is looking at on an identity level what the different parks permit within Palo Alto. So, how the Oak Grove policy compares to Cubberley or Rinconada or the other parks. Just so you can see how it differs.

Commissioner Moss: I would like to know about Rancho San Antonio. I would like to know about Cuesta Park. Are we the only game in town, or do they allow these things as well? And what about the Baylands, and what about Arastradero Preserve? They don’t have picnic table. You have that one picnic area at Baylands. Have you ever had an event out there?

Mr. Anderson: No. It’s sized according to the associated amenities, so there are enough picnic tables at Oak Grove and associated parking and restroom, that for our history at the park, it has accommodated 150 without trouble. Baylands is very different. There’s no adjacent restroom. There’s lots of parking, but there’s only four picnic tables and four barbecue pits. It’s really small. We don’t have large groups out there, and I think the same could be said for most of the other picnic areas. It’s highly variable, depending on which area. At Mitchell where you’ve got some group picnic areas, I could come back with the numbers, but it’s really dependent on how many trash cans, picnic tables and parking you have available, associated with that picnic area.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I don’t think we want to ban corporate groups altogether, but we may want to put some constraints on it and perhaps require approval for a for-profit corporate group renting the area to go through the Community Services Director. For example, if a company has a service day organized in the park, and they’re going to do some cleanup and want to have a barbecue afterwards, absolutely we want to support that. We want to encourage that. We may want to have some guidelines beyond that, but I think it’s something that merits some consideration. I don’t know if we get this done by the end of next month or four weeks from now, or not.

Chair Cribbs: Well, we can try. How’s that?
Commissioner Reckdahl: When we talk next month, let’s talk about what the noise ordinance is, because I’m concerned that if it’s so many decibels, that’s really hard to enforce. But let’s not talk about that tonight.

Mr. Anderson: It is, by the way, decibels. Is there any other, aside from Oak Grove, which we’ve mainly talked about, other group permits that you want to discuss?

Chair Cribbs: For Foothills, no.

Commissioner Moss: You said there were six picnic areas. I didn’t know there were six. I only know of two.

Mr. Anderson: I can pull them up if you’d like me to toggle down to the picnic area. I’ve got photos of them if you want to see it. For example, Oak Grove, Orchard Glen, Pine Gulch –

Commissioner Moss: Oh.

Vice Chair Greenfield: But I think we’re talking about group permit policy right now. Oak Grove is the only picnic area that is reservable via permit.

Commissioner Moss: Yeah.

Mr. Anderson: So, no other group permit policy questions that I should look into for the time being? Okay. Environmental monitoring and data collection – I think we’ve talked in the past about what Grassroots and Open Space is doing in terms of monitoring. The Ad Hoc is supportive of that. In addition to that effort, recommends that the recommendations being worked on by the stakeholder group – I discuss this in the staff report, I believe – that’s looking into people, infrastructure and the environment, come back with any recommendations on the environmental portion and discuss them with the full Commission. In addition to that, it’s forming partnerships with universities and local colleges for additional environmental research study. This is also something that’s coming in part from that aforementioned stakeholder group, where we have some folks from Stanford and Jasper Ridge who are really engaging and helpful and willing to talk to students about doing future research studies in Foothills Park, where we can gain valuable data.

Chair Cribbs: The only thing that I would add to this is just the suggestion of an established docent program for the future that could be discussed. But this is really a “later on.”

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’d like to suggest that we just rename this, and I came up with this name originally, but Shani Kleinhaus had a much better suggestion, I think, in her comments. I think this should be Environmental Resource Management Plan, and what
you have listed really becomes a subset of that. I think that’s a better umbrella to encompass what we’re after. That was Environmental Resource Management Plan.

Mr. Anderson: Any other comments on this topic? Chair, am I correct that this would not be an action item for our March meeting?

Chair Cribbs: I don’t know. I think maybe it just belongs in the category of the list that, like the entry fee and all of that.

Mr. Anderson: I just meant that you don’t need a motion to it. It could just go in the staff report like what we’ve just talked about?

Chair Cribbs: Yes.

Mr. Anderson: Okay.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I can see the situation where we might want to tell Council we are concerned about this and prep them to, if not immediately, in the long run have some reaction to this. Because right now, we’re doing nothing, and we’re just hoping that we’re not damaging the wildlife or damaging the environment. I think we have to start making the plan and socializing the fact that a plan is needed with the Council.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Maybe Council Member Kou could comment further on this, but are there details that we should be providing that would help for purpose of budgeting, for next fiscal year? Because we’re not doing much right now, because it’s difficult to do, and it’s expensive to do. But if we’re going to need some funding for this, then we need to be planning in advance for that.

Commissioner Moss: Yeah, I think there needs to be some milestones that we can show progress. As Keith said, we don’t want to show nothing. There is stuff being done. What’s being done? What are the partnerships that we started? Who have we started working with? What kind of meetings have we had? In other words, can we have some progress milestones, bearing in mind that we really can’t have too many tours and work groups as long as COVID is still out there, but we should be working towards that, so that by the end of the summer, there are people running and ready to go. I think that would make Council feel better.

Chair Cribbs: Well, why don’t we, then, put it in for March, so that we can maybe just have an outline of what’s being done at this point. Will that make people feel better, do you think, Keith? From your comment?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think we should be talking about it, and even if our talking has, say that we’re going to do this and going to do that but don’t have all the answers, that’s at least a first step. I think some of the Council Members are forgetting about the fact that
our primary purpose in life is to protect Foothills Park, or Foothills Preserve. We’re thinking more about parking spaces than we are about wildlife.

Council Member Kou: Don’t forget the natural environment, too.

Chair Cribbs: Yes. Okay, let’s try to get that on for March, and then I agree with you, David, that we need to put together a timeline for some of these things to be accomplished. Some of it will be budget-driven, and some of it will be with our partners. It actually is a very exciting initiative, so I’d be happy to have other people be excited about it as well.

Commissioner Moss: I’m cautiously optimistic that budget will not be as much of an issue because of partners who are very willing to work with us. There’s a lot we can do.

Chair Cribbs: I think so.

Mr. Anderson: I don’t know if there’s much needed for this one, the term between vehicle entrance fee and parking fee, the Ad Hoc supports using vehicle entrance fee. Parking fee suggests you could enter, drive through the Preserve for free, and as long as you’re not parking, you could stop, and as long as you’re not staying and getting out of your car, it would all be fine. It’s really not practical in Foothills to have something like that work. It would be a challenge operationally.

Chair Cribbs: I think we’re using that right now. Jackie and Jeff, do you want to add anything? Pretty self-explanatory.

Commissioner Olson: Nothing to add.

Commission LaMere: Nothing to add.

Chair Cribbs: Other comments from everybody? Okay. So, vehicle entrance fee it is, Daren.

Mr. Anderson: Very good. I don’t know that this needs to be an action item, maybe again, just captured in the report. Chair, that wraps it up.

Chair Cribbs: I was just going to say, I have a feeling that that wraps it up. Gosh, my compliments to you, Daren, for putting the slides together, but also to the Commission for thoughtful comments. It seemed like a very daunting list when we looked at it in January, or whenever, as we looked at it. I’m sure that there will be lots of things that will get added to the list and get revised and get re-discussed and all of that, but I think it’s good at this point, so here’s the next steps.

Mr. Anderson: Very good, and immediately for staff, I’ll do the research that the Commissioners have asked for during this meeting, confer with the Ad Hoc, probably
more than once, to go through all these things and try to really package together a
thoughtful response to each of these to make our March 23rd meeting effective and efficient
and hopefully successful, and we don’t have to wordsmith too much on a motion. Does
that sound like a reasonable next step?

Chair Cribbs: Yes. I was just going to say, if we could have some motions to look at, or a
motion to look at and avoid wordsmithing every piece of it, I think that would be very
useful for everybody’s time and energy.

Mr. Anderson: Very good. Staff’s got a lot to work on on this issue, and we’ll get on it
right away.

Chair Cribbs: And doing a good job, too, so thank you and thank the staff that’s working
on it, but I think everybody should give themselves a big round of applause, because that
was a lot to get through tonight, especially after our late start. So, thank you all very much.

Vice Chair Greenfield: And thank you very much to the Ad Hoc and staff for putting
together this to help us get through this quickly. Just one quick thing on next steps. Just
wanted to highlight that City Council had requested that the Commission return to them
with a status update in August timeframe. Regarding that suggestion, we aim to have
something on our agenda for July to review where we’re at at that point and forward the
input to City Council. That could be a new recommendation with changes, or it could just
be a status update, as far as I’m interpreting that.

Commissioner Moss: And might as well throw the December one in also.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, I think so.

Mr. Anderson: Very good.

4. Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Review

Chair Cribbs: Daren, could you put up the screen for the Ad Hoc and Liaisons? We looked
at this last time we had a meeting and everybody, I believe, was in agreement about the
liaisons that were listed. Excuse me, about the Ad Hocs that were listed. We combined
some and changed some, and I didn’t hear from anybody that we wanted to add anything
at this point, so the task tonight so that we can take action on this, is to have all the
Commissioners pick which Ad Hocs they would like to be on for the next year and get that
settled, so that we can do a motion and pass that on.

Commissioner Moss: Chair, one question. Do you really still think that one Foothills Ad
Hoc is enough?
Chair Cribbs: Well, here’s the deal. I actually think it would be great if we had a second one, but we can’t because of the Brown Act. Daren or Kristen can probably explain it better than I can, because they’re much more familiar with the Brown Act, but I believe that we are only allowed to have one Ad Hoc on Foothills Park at this point.

Mr. Anderson: That’s correct.

Chair Cribbs: Perhaps when the Ad Hoc gets our job done, we would create a different Ad Hoc for different parts in the year, but I think I’m right on that, Daren.

Mr. Anderson: That is correct. Yeah. It was too risky to have serial meetings in the opinion of our attorney.

Chair Cribbs: So, to go through this list, we have the Baylands Tide Gate. Fund Development for CY21. Given the fact that the CIP review didn’t have a lot to discuss this last time and got put off a little bit, I am not so sure we need to put people on that committee right now. Foothills Park/Foothills Policy.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Excuse me, Chair, could I interrupt and ask, Daren could you make this bigger for us, please? Thanks. Sorry about that.

Chair Cribbs: The Park and Facility Use Policy has morphed into Racquet Court Policy. That’s really given the new direction from Council about the Boards and Commissions rules about having a specific topic to address for the Ad Hoc. Park Improvements is now going to be called Dog Park and Restrooms. Recreational Opportunities has been shortened and changed to New Rec opportunities. So, in the past what I remember is that Commissioners have signed up or volunteered for a particular committee of interest, and I think we have seven committees. Actually, if we populate the CIP review, we have seven, and we have seven Commissioners. We’d like to have two or three Commissioners on each Ad Hoc, at least I thought so. David, it was kind of lonesome just having two people on our dog committee.

Commissioner Moss: No comment.

Chair Cribbs: No comment, okay.

Vice Chair Greenfield: A quick question for staff as far as the CIP Review Ad Hoc. I agree this is something we should create, given the guidelines of the new manual for Boards, Commissions and Committee, would it seem more appropriate to create the Ad Hoc later? Or is it reasonable to do it now?

Mr. Anderson: I think it’s reasonable to do it now, Vice Chair.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Great, thank you.
Commissioner Moss: I’d like a show of hands of how many people would like to be on that Foothills Policy Ad Hoc.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think almost everybody does, right?

Commissioner Moss: Right. So, I think that’s the one we should start with and the rest will fall…

Chair Cribbs: All right, well let’s start with that one. I have been on the Foothills Ad Hoc and have enjoyed it very much, and I’m happy to step back this year and do something else.

Commission LaMere: I have been on it since, I believe, 2018, and while I enjoy the continuity and having sort of learned very much about it and been deeply involved in the policy, I will also step away to provide opportunities for other Commissioners.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Jeff, and thank you for your service on that. We talked about how long you’ve been on that Ad Hoc Committee. Really appreciate your thoughtfulness and your work.

Commissioner Moss: I second the emotion.

Commissioner Olson: I, too, am happy to share the love and have some fresh blood for those who are really eager. I’m also happy to continue, but I do think it’s important to hear as many voices as possible on this, so I think we should just start fresh on that one.

Chair Cribbs: Yes. I think so, too. It really would be my goal for every Ad Hoc, that people really pick what they want and be passionate about it, and also have some turnover the Committees and have some new blood and some new way of thinking and some new perspective. Should we raise hands for the Foothills Committee, starting out with that one? David? Daren, are you keeping notes with this, too, because last year I remember I didn’t, and I was surprised to find myself on a committee that I didn’t…don’t remember signing up for and I was trying to participate on another committee.

Mr. Anderson: Yes. I will take notes.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you so much. I see the Vice Chair.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes, I’m interested if a spot is available. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: There appears to be. I’m looking for another hand. Okay, well, let’s leave that one and go on to the Baylands Tide Gate.
Vice Chair Greenfield: Sorry. I guess I’d like to ask, Jackie, you said you’re interested in staying on potentially. I think it’s important to have three people in that group, and I think it would be helpful to have some continuity, so I don’t know if –

Commissioner Reckdahl: I would want at least one of the people from last year to continue on. Otherwise, you’re starting from scratch.

Commissioner Olson: Yeah, I think it might also, for Commissioner Brown’s benefit, be good to explain a little bit about how many of these we end up being on. It looks like I was on four before. I think we can probably go through and get our first couple on each one, and then try to fill in the blanks with –

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, that’s what I was actually trying to do, so thank you very much, to get two on the Foothills Ad Hoc and then go to other ones. But if we want to do that, Jackie, if you want to stay on that committee, that’s great. Because I do agree about the continuity.

Commissioner Olson: Sure. I’m happy to continue on.

Chair Cribbs: Great. Thank you. So, Baylands Tide? Daren, could you talk a little bit about what that committee might do?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, thank you, Chair. So far what’s involved is conversations with Valley Water and learning about exactly what they were proposing and proposing counter alternatives. For example, the Ad Hoc was really effective in getting them to explore alternative closure windows of the levy system that they need to access. So I think it’s review of design that will be coming up soon when they eventually bring a Park Improvement Ordinance, I imagine the Ad Hoc would do an early iteration review of that, and then just further discussions offline with staff and the Valley Water team.

Chair Cribbs: Just as a point, Valley Water has grants available, and money, right?

Mr. Anderson: Oftentimes, yes

Chair Cribbs: Okay. Thank you. Any volunteers on the Valley Water?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m interested in staying on this group, just to see it through for continuity. I initiated some of the discussions with the group, and very productive and I think this is an Ad Hoc that would probably be disbanded after the initial plan. I don’t know if it would continue after the initial plan is put in place or continue monitoring. I’m not quite sure about that. We’d have to figure that out.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I’ interested, although if others are interested, I certainly can step out.
Chair Cribbs: Okay, Keith, I’ll note that. Okay, let’s move on to Fund Development. I’m interested in staying on this committee.

Commission LaMere: I can help out with that.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m interested in making room for someone else.

Commissioner Brown: I’d be interested in being on this one.

Chair Cribbs: Perfect. Okay, then the CIP Review. David?

Commissioner Reckdahl: In the past didn’t sometimes we just have a single person do this? Is this like a liaison?

Chair Cribbs: No, it wasn’t a liaison. We had a committee, actually.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Some years I was the committee of one.

Chair Cribbs: I do remember that.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think it’s really, especially for newer people to see how the CIPs work, but I don’t know if it needs a big crew in there.

Chair Cribbs: Okay. Let’s leave it for a little bit. I found it very, very – for the short time I was on it this year – I found it very, very interesting. Racquet Court Policy? This is tennis and pickleball, specifically.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’ve been involved with this for four years, and I think some new blood would be good. I think there are some interesting things coming up, regarding tennis and pickleball to be involved with.

Chair Cribbs: Definitely. Okay, Dog Park, and Restrooms? Any takers on that one? This was a big part of our Master Plan, or continues to be, about putting more dog parks in parks, and putting more bathrooms in parks, as well.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Mandy has a dog, right?

Ms. Brown: And it’s being quiet right now. Yeah, I’d be interested in being on this one.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, well, Mandy, I will join you there. And New Rec Opportunities?

Commission LaMere: I’d like to remain on that Ad Hoc.

Chair Cribbs: And that’s the one I thought I was on last year, so I’d like to go on that one.
Commissioner Reckdahl: I’d be interested in staying on that, but again, if people have strong feelings, I’m willing to step off.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, so here’s the scorecard right now. Jeff and Keith are on the Baylands Tide Gate. Jeff LaMere, Anne and Mandy are Fund Development. David is CIP review. Foothills Policy is David, Jeff and Jackie. We have nobody for Racquet Court Policy. Mandy and Anne are Dog Parks and Restrooms, and New Rec Opportunities are Jeff and Keith and Anne.

Commissioner Olson: I can sign on for Racquet Court Policy.

Chair Cribbs: Great. And painted lines on the courts, right? That’s great. Thank you. Okay, so Daren, I’ll coordinate with you and maybe we can send this list out and give people a couple more days to fill in some of the blanks.

Mr. Anderson: Chair, if we’re taking an action tonight –

Chair Cribbs: Oh, that’s right. We can’t do that. Okay, thank you.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Right now, is Jackie the only one on Racquet Court?

Chair Cribbs: Yes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, you can add me.

Chair Cribbs: Great. And we have one person in CIP.

Vice Chair Greenfield: We have time to add someone later on that, since it won’t be convening for some time.

Commissioner Brown: I’m happy to be on that one.

Commission LaMere: You can add me to CIP.

Chair Cribbs: Oh, good, Jeff, and who else said that they were happy to be on?

Commissioner Brown: It was Mandy.

Chair Cribbs: Great. Well done. I think we’ve got it. If we’re taking action on this, Daren, do you need to put this up on the screen so everybody can see it?

Mr. Anderson: I certainly can. It’s going to take me a second to type it up.

Chair Cribbs: That’s okay, but we can go through the Liaisons as well. Do you need to have an action -?
Mr. Anderson: Would you like me to type that up, or we could just read it off.

Chair Cribbs: I think we can read it off. I was going to say, though, if you wanted to type it up, we could go through the Liaisons while you’re typing it up, and I’ll take the notes.

Mr. Anderson: Sure.

Chair Cribbs: So, Aquatics I’ve been doing for a long time. I’m happy to step back if somebody else would like to do that Liaison work. I don’t hear anybody, so guess –

Vice Chair Greenfield: You have the credentials, Anne.

Chair Cribbs: I’ll stay there. Baylands 10.5 Development? Would somebody like to be a Liaison on that particular one?

Commissioner Olson: I can.

Chair Cribbs: Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: Yes.

Chair Cribbs: Great. Community Gardens?

Commissioner Brown: I’d like to do that.

Chair Cribbs: Cubberley?

Commissioner Moss: I can do that.

Chair Cribbs: David. Field Users?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’d like to continue doing that.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, that’s good for your continuity, I think. Golf?

Commission LaMere: I’ll stay with Golf.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Jeff. GSI?

Commissioner Moss: I can give that up.

Chair Cribbs: Can we leave that open for now?

Commissioner Moss: Yeah, there’s not much going on.

Chair Cribbs: Okay. Palo Alto Recreation Foundation? I think that’s me.
Vice Chair Greenfield: Since they’ve agreed to have you as the Liaison, I think you should be our Liaison as well.

Chair Cribbs: I know. That would be awkward, right? PAUSD? And the City?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I’ll keep that.

Chair Cribbs: Safe Routes?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m interested in keeping that unless someone else is interested in jumping into it.

Chair Cribbs: Sustainability? Keep that open. Skateboard Park?

Commission LaMere: I’ll take Skateboard Park. I’ve done some work with that already.

Chair Cribbs: Great. Urban Forestry?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m very interested in that.

Chair Cribbs: Ventura Plan? Keith, is that something with -

Commissioner Reckdahl: Oh, yeah. I’m sorry. Yes.

Chair Cribbs: Your knowledge –

Commissioner Reckdahl: I should take that for continuity.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah.

Commissioner Reckdahl: That’s almost done anyway.

Commissioner Moss: Yeah, how many millions of dollars can we get out of the Frye’s property for a new parkland?

Chair Cribbs: Youth Council? I will do that one. Okay, Daren, I think we have the list.

Commissioner Brown: I’ll do Sustainability. That one is still open.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, so the only one now that is still open is GSI, in case anybody just got interested.

Commissioner Olson: I can take it.

Chair Cribbs: All right. Thanks to everybody. That’s terrific.
Commissioner Reckdahl: If Jeff would want help on Urban Forestry, I wouldn’t mind joining like we did last year.

Chair Cribbs: Okay.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Sure.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I don’t think we did anything because of COVID.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m hopeful that more will be happening on that this year.

Mr. Anderson: Am I okay to unshare that, Chair, and share the motion page instead?

Commissioner Moss: One more comment and that is that Sustainability and GSI are very similar. There’s a lot of overlap. So, if you wanted to merge those two, you could do that without much trouble.

Chair Cribbs: Okay. Let’s see how it goes. Right now we’ve got Liaisons for both of them.

Mr. Anderson: I just want to make sure I’ve got these correct. Do the Ad Hoc Committees meet your list, too, Chair Cribbs?

Chair Cribbs: Are you going to write them down, or do you have them written? It’s not showing on my screen.

Mr. Anderson: I have the Ad Hocs only. I’ve been typing up that while you were –

Chair Cribbs: Can’t do two things at one time. Aquatics is Cribbs. Baylands 10.5 is Jackie. Community Gardens is Mandy. Cubberley is David. Field Users is Jeff. Golf is Jeff LaMere. GSI is Jackie. Palo Alto Recreation Foundation is Cribbs. PAUSD/City is Keith. Safe Routes is Jeff. Sustainability is Mandy. Skate Park is Jeff LaMere.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Skateboard Park.

Chair Cribbs: Urban Forestry is Greenfield and Reckdahl. Ventura Plan is Keith, and Youth Council is Cribbs. Good work, everybody. That’s a great roster.

MOTION

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’d like to make a motion that we adopt this as listed.

Commissioner Olson: I’ll second

Chair Cribbs: Is there any discussion? No. Catherine, would you…
MOTION PASSES, 7-0.

Chair Cribbs: Great. Congratulations, everybody. It will be another fun year.

V. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR MARCH 23, 2021

Chair Cribbs: I think we pretty much know what it is, it’s Foothills Park. But Daren, were there other things?

Mr. Anderson: I think that is going to be the dominant one, Chair. I don’t think I’ve got anything else, but I’ll confer with other staff both at CSD and Public Works, as usual, to see if they’ve got anything outlined that they need on.

Chair Cribbs: Great. I think after tonight, probably it would be good to have an only Foothills Park meeting. So, we’ll wait and see.

VI. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Bourquin: Daren, Tim Wong was supposed to talk about the housing in Palo Alto. Do you just want me to share the fliers, since he went off the attendees at the beginning of the meeting? I don’t know what happened.

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, I think two things. One is maybe we could pop it up real quick if it’s okay with the Chair. Alternatively, we could just email it to the Commission as well.

Ms. Bourquin: I can email it, but whatever they prefer.

Mr. Anderson: Since you and I don’t really have the background to talk them through it, perhaps that would be the most prudent.

Ms. Bourquin: Okay. I’ll do that.

Mr. Anderson: Okay.

Chair Cribbs: Okay. Thank you for that. Any other announcements? We have our retreat coming up soon.

Commissioner Moss: I was going to mention about the Ramos Park and the off-leash dog park, but Daren beat me to it in his staff report, so I don’t think there’s much that I need to add to that. I think that’s going to be the big challenge for the dog park people, is where to put an off-leash dog park this year. That’s it.
VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cribbs: If there are no other comments or other announcements, we could entertain a motion to adjourn, but I would thank everybody before we do that, and say good work tonight, I know it was a lot to get through and a lot to sit through, but I feel like everybody had the opportunity to make comments and do what we’re all trying to do, which is the best for the park, both for the environment and for the enjoyment of the visitor experience. Thanks, and special thanks to staff. Gosh, we really recognize what a great job you guys are doing, supporting us, and I think it was really clear last night. I think the Council, as I said, was very pleased at the work of the staff and also the Commission, so it’s really great to have you guys as part of the team, so thank you, Daren. Please convey that to the rest of your staff that aren’t here with us tonight.

Mr. Anderson: Absolutely.

Meeting adjourned by motion by Commissioner Reckdahl, second by Commissioner Moss, at 11:00 p.m.