



**MINUTES  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
May 24, 2022  
Virtual & In- Person Conference  
Palo Alto, California**

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**Commissioners Present:** Chair Greenfield; Vice Chair LaMere, Commissioners Nellis Freeman, Shani Kleinhaus, Anne Cribbs, Amanda Brown and Joy Oche

**Commissioners Absent:**

**Others Present:**

**Staff Present:**

**CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**

Chair Greenfield welcomed the newest Commissioner, Joy Oche, to the meeting.

**BUSINESS**

**1. Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing Use of Teleconferencing for Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting During COVID-19 State of Emergency**

The Adoption of the Resolution passed, 7-0, by roll call vote.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**



1 Monica Williams, President of the Palo Alto Pickleball Club, addressed the Commission  
2 on behalf of the club. She thanked the Commission and Mr. Howard for the hours of work  
3 in creating and installing the new signs at Mitchell Park, as well as the Pickleball Ad Hoc  
4 Committee for their understanding of the frustration generated for evening players when  
5 they could not see the lines under the LED lights. She announced that the pickleball event  
6 for the Bay Area Senior games will be held at Mitchell Park the following Friday through  
7 Monday. Over 300 players from as far away as Hawaii and at least 60 Club members ages  
8 50 to 80-plus would compete in the competition. She urged the Commission to come out  
9 and see what pickleball is all about. She noted that the past week they hosted officials from  
10 the City of Dublin which is building a new park and planning to include pickleball courts  
11 but wanted to see the Mitchell Park courts before finalizing their plans. Also, the Mayor  
12 and Vice Mayor of Mountain View recently came to see Palo Alto's pickleball courts. She  
13 shared that the Club is focusing on their youth, many of whom play pickleball after school.  
14 Freshman Christina Sioux [phonetic] at Palo Alto High School recently founded the Paly  
15 Pickleball Club which has 21 members and is growing. Ms. Williams thanked the  
16 Commission for believing in pickleball and supporting the community being built next to  
17 the Magical Bridge Playground. They have dubbed their courts The Magical Pickleball  
18 Playground.

19 **AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS**

20 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

21 **2. Approval of Draft Minutes from the April 26, 2022, Parks and Recreation**  
22 **Commission Meeting**

23 Motion by Commissioner Brown to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2022, Parks and  
24 Recreation Commission meeting with correction noted by Commissioner Cribbs.  
25 Seconded by Commissioner Cribbs, the motion passed, 6-0-1 by roll call vote.

26 **CITY OFFICIAL REPORTS**

27 **3. Department Report**

28 Mr. Anderson welcomed new Commissioner, Joy Oche. He reported that the Parks and  
29 Recreation Commission Work Plan is scheduled to be reviewed by City Council on  
30 Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at 5:00 p.m. Chair Greenfield and Mr. Anderson will be attending to  
31 make the presentation.

32 The Tree Ordinance Update will go to City Council on June 6<sup>th</sup>. It will include an update  
33 to the Municipal Code Ordinance 2.25.50, which describes the purposes and duties of the  
34 Parks and Recreation Commission. This is in response to City Council's direction to have  
35 staff formalize the Commission's role on urban forestry issues. The Commission will also



1 serve as a community forum for matters of the Department of Public Works, Urban  
2 Forestry Section. It will also provide feedback, recommendations and interpretations to  
3 City Council on urban forest plan and associated policies.

4 Mr. Anderson reported on swim lessons. According to Team Sheeper, they are training  
5 swim instructors and currently the plan is to get swim camps started, which include swim  
6 lessons. They hope to add weekly swim lessons by July. This is staff-dependent, but they  
7 are hopeful to be able to accommodate more lessons this year than last.

8 Mr. Anderson reported that the Cubberley tennis court resurfacing project is underway and  
9 should be completed by approximately June 30<sup>th</sup>. Regarding recruitments, the vacant  
10 position of Coordinator, Recreation Programs, was filled by an internal promotion for  
11 Javad Goads [phonetic]. He will begin his new role in June and will oversee the  
12 Community Program as well as support the Commission and the Open Space Parks and  
13 Golf Division. Recruiting is still underway for a Parks Maintenance position and a Parks  
14 Irrigation position. Mr. Anderson also reported that Sara Duffy, Senior Management  
15 Analyst, will be departing at the end of the month.

16 Family movie nights at Mitchell Park are back, with free movies starting at 7 p.m. Since  
17 space is limited, pre-registration per family is required. The upcoming movie nights  
18 include, on May 27<sup>th</sup>, *Moana*, in honor of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific  
19 Islander Heritage Month. On June 17<sup>th</sup> there will be a movie called, *Sing 2*; and on July  
20 22<sup>nd</sup>, *Luca*. Information is available on the City's calendar.

21 Progress has been made on efforts to move ahead with the skate park. There is a  
22 community meeting set for Wednesday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30. Mailers, emails and flyers will  
23 be distributed with information on that. The meeting is to discuss the proposed location  
24 and collect community feedback to bring back to the Parks and Rec Commission.

25 Mr. Anderson announced that on June 18<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the City of Palo Alto is  
26 hosting an Open House at the Municipal Service Center to showcase behind-the-scenes  
27 work that is done for the community. Mr. Anderson extended an invitation to all to join  
28 them and bring the family for a fun and educational day featuring demonstrations, displays,  
29 food, music and other activities. The MSC is located at 3201 East Bay Shore Road.

30 Regarding pickleball, staff and the Ad Hoc Committee were involved with the issue of  
31 color for the pickleball lines on the shared use courts at Mitchell Park to make it easier for  
32 pickleball players to see the lines, while not causing issues for the tennis players. The color  
33 "yellow gold" was found to be used successfully at a neighboring agency's shared use  
34 courts. The lines will be painted on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Commissioner Cribbs remarked that the  
35 lines on the pickleball court look great and she hoped all would go and take a look at them.  
36 She understood the Pickleball Club helped finance the lines on the court as well, and this  
37 is a good fundraising example for the community.

1 Commissioner Cribbs asked Mr. Anderson to find out how many scholarships have been  
2 requested for Park programs and camps for the summer, and swim lesson programs. She  
3 is concerned about kids not being able to participate due to the economy and COVID. Mr.  
4 Anderson will check on this. Commissioner Cribbs also requested an update on the middle  
5 school athletic program and projections and plans for the fall. Chair Greenfield asked Mr.  
6 Anderson to explain what the City involvement is with the middle school athletics  
7 program, since they are typically separate. Mr. Anderson replied that there is a Recreation  
8 team involved in helping facilitate the program, working with PAUSD to some extent. He  
9 said he would collect details on current activities and plans at the next meeting.

10 Commissioner Brown commented that the signage on the courts at Cubberley were very  
11 clear and complimented staff on this. Vice Chair LaMere asked if there is a way to know  
12 how many groups have been displaced at Cubberley and what has happened to the groups  
13 who would have been using the Cubberley gym. Mr. Anderson said he has communicated  
14 with one of the managers who oversees the program. He said they were able to find other  
15 places for them, such as gyms at the YMCA.

16 Commissioner Freeman appreciated the work on the pickleball lines. He said it shows how  
17 the City and the community can work together to make things happen. He said one of the  
18 complaints was that some were having trouble seeing the lines when it was getting close  
19 to dark, and he wondered if they had received any feedback on that. Mr. Anderson said he  
20 had not, but will inquire and hoped it was successful. Commissioner Freeman said the  
21 courts look good. Regarding the tennis courts, he wondered what kind of communication  
22 there has been so that people know what to be aware of in terms of conditioning, et cetera,  
23 that has to take place. Mr. Anderson said that Cubberley and CSD staff have signage there  
24 to make sure people are aware. There have been emails to the user groups, and by the time  
25 they are ready to open there should be no additional requirements and the courts can be  
26 used exactly as they had before, only they will be safer and better. The color of the new  
27 pickleball lines will be the yellow gold.

28 Chair Greenfield asked for an update on the Foothills Nature Preserve visitation limit. Mr.  
29 Anderson said Council did approve the recommendations from the Parks and Recreation  
30 Commission. The associated pieces that they did not approve will go through the approval  
31 process through the City Manager, which is currently taking place. Those include items  
32 such as the fees changes.

33 Chair Greenfield asked for an update on the dog park. Mr. Anderson responded that a  
34 community meeting was held and was successful with good feedback and participation.  
35 There was broad support for the concept of expanding the dog park at Mitchell Park. It  
36 will be expanding an existing dog park to make it bigger and adding a small dog park  
37 adjacent to it. There was feedback from Peter Jensen, landscape architect for the City, and  
38 Mr. Anderson was taking notes and amending the plan accordingly and will come to the

1 Commission in June for discussion and probably in July for a Park Improvement  
2 Ordinance which is required for implementing such a project.

3 **BUSINESS**

4 **4. Ad Hoc Reports**

5 Chair Greenfield invited any updates from the committees or liaisons. He commented that  
6 Commissioner Oche will be assigned to an Ad Hoc Committee and liaison roles. He  
7 invited Committee reports from the Commissioners.

8 Commissioner Freeman reported he, Vice Chair LaMere and Commissioner Cribbs have  
9 been working on the Palo Alto Wellness Center update on a weekly basis to put together  
10 the plan, working out logistics and building a list of local citizens who could contribute.  
11 They have momentum moving in the right direction and are collecting information and  
12 building a list of people that will be on an advisory board and also the Board of Directors,  
13 if and when they move in the direction of making it a nonprofit, similar to some other  
14 projects in the city. He noted the name, “Palo Alto Wellness Center,” as opposed to “gym,”  
15 noting that the committee wants to make sure it is broader in scope and will be able to  
16 reach a large portion of the community.

17 Regarding the soccer fields, Commissioner Freeman said he and Vice Chair LaMere met  
18 with Tyler, Adam, Mark and Miguel. They discussed some of the issues relating to clean-  
19 up of the soccer fields, especially after large tournaments, including trash pickup,  
20 restrooms, et cetera. One of takeaways from the discussion was to reach out to some of the  
21 neighboring cities to see how they are managing some of their events and maybe looking  
22 at modifying the field and court use policy as part of the special event permit, so that a part  
23 of it would be for them to determine the number of people that would be attending and to  
24 try to gauge how many restrooms would be needed, and what type of trash and recycling  
25 bins would be needed as well. They will be meeting again to try to strategize and put a  
26 plan in place going forward.

27 Vice Chair LaMere remarked that his son is a student in a PAUSD school, and he received  
28 an email from the Superintendent, Don Austin with some relevant updates for the group.  
29 One was regarding Terman Park and low level exploratory discussions between PAUSD  
30 and the City for a land swap to add additional land to Cubberley. He said he is a liaison  
31 for Safe Routes, and the City and the School District are working at Palo Alto High School  
32 and Churchill. When school is getting out or starting, there is a lot of bike and people  
33 traffic. They are going to extend the bike lanes all the way to El Camino in conjunction  
34 with the School District, who is going to give an easement. The City will pay to put in the  
35 bike lanes. This will help the area which is often very dangerous. Vice Chair LaMere said  
36 the letter also addressed the recreation/sports programs and discussions with the City and  
37 the District, trying to give more low income families access to those activities.



1 Commissioner Cribbs reported on the Funding Opportunities Ad Hoc. Vice Chair LaMere  
2 and she were delighted to have Commissioner Oche join them in a meeting, talking about  
3 the two years' of reports they have been working on, with various Ad Hocs, the idea of  
4 making it easy for citizens and other groups to donate to City projects. They will continue  
5 looking at those kinds of things and will bring a report to the Commission in June or July.  
6 Regarding the Wellness Center, they have had a meeting with Joel Kirsch [phonetic] and  
7 the Cardiac Development Center who also has an interest in the Wellness Center.

8 Commissioner Brown reported that she and Chair Greenfield met to discuss the website  
9 refresh. They came up with a list of suggestions and are working with staff on next steps.  
10 She asked for clarification regarding the Safe Routes improvements on Churchill. Her  
11 understanding was they are separate discussions from the grade separation and will be  
12 done outside of any grade separation for the crossing. Commissioner Cribbs said this was  
13 one of the things the Fund Development committee looked at for two years. She wondered  
14 if they could invite her to their Ad Hoc Committee so that she could learn how those things  
15 intersect, since their recommendations are very connected, but she wasn't sure how to do  
16 that in light of the Brown Act. Chair Greenfield responded if there are more than three  
17 Commissioners involved it would need to be discussed as part of a regular meeting, so it  
18 would be agendized as a discussion item. Commissioner Cribbs wondered if it would be  
19 better to agendize suggestions for the website for their next meeting, as she felt they might  
20 be repeating the same task. Chair Greenfield clarified that the website changes the Fund  
21 Development Ad Hoc is talking about are specific to fundraising, and he thought there was  
22 probably not overlap at this point. The website refresh plan is to look at more general  
23 aspects, such as layout and function and getting an understanding of what they can and  
24 can't change, and then coming back with recommendations. It would not be at the detail  
25 level of fundraising items.

26 Chair Greenfield reported the Electric Conveyances/e-Bike Policy Ad Hoc met with staff,  
27 continuing efforts begun last month. There were no specific updates, but they look forward  
28 to coming back to the Commission with some recommendation within a few months.  
29 Commissioner Freeman said each time they have a meeting they seem to add more items,  
30 such as electric wheelchairs and other things. It is developing into a good meeting,  
31 encompassing many things they had not thought about. There are other cities and  
32 municipalities faced with similar issues, so they hope to be as uniform as possible while  
33 also listening to all sides from the stakeholders, to try to address everyone's needs. Chair  
34 Greenfield said part of what they are doing is looking at policies that other local  
35 jurisdictions, municipalities or open space districts have in place and get ideas from them.

36 Chair Greenfield noted that an action item to appoint Commissioner Oche to an Ad Hoc  
37 committee is something the Chair can do, based on clarification obtained from staff. He  
38 invited her to share her interest in Ad Hoc committee(s) to serve on. Commissioner Oche  
39 was interested in Funding Opportunities and the Youth Council Liaison role.

1 Commissioner Cribbs thought they could share the liaison role for six months or so. She  
2 had promised the Youth Council that she would be back with them in October when they  
3 start up again, but said it would be great to have Commissioner Oche with her, and she  
4 could then withdraw from the role mid-year. Chair Greenfield reported there are currently  
5 only two members on the Funding Opportunities Ad Hoc, so Commissioner Oche could  
6 easily be added, as well as sharing the Youth Council Liaison role with Commissioner  
7 Cribbs. With no further discussion, Chair Greenfield appointed Commissioner Oche to  
8 both the Funding Opportunities Ad Hoc and the Youth Council Liaison role.

9 **5. Review of the Baylands Comprehensive Conservation (BCCP) Plan**

10 Mr. Anderson introduced Diana Edwards, Project Manager and Climate and  
11 Environmental Planner at AECOM. Work on the plan started in October of 2017. A  
12 number of public meetings were held in developing the plan. Progress was made, with  
13 Commission review in both December of 2018 and May of 2019. At that time, the  
14 Commission expressed support for the plan and staff had planned to complete the CEQA  
15 and come back shortly thereafter. Due to a combination of challenges, including COVID-  
16 19, numerous staff vacancies, competing priorities and lack of a Planning Department staff  
17 person to assist with the CEQA element, the project got put on hold. Work on the project  
18 has started again, and this presentation it intended to bring it back to the Commission's  
19 attention and awareness. The City has been working on the draft initial study and mitigated  
20 negative declaration for the BCCP. It is intended to be released for public review prior to  
21 the June 28<sup>th</sup> Parks and Recreation Commission meetings That meeting will provide an  
22 opportunity for the Commission and the public to comment on the draft.

23 Ms. Edwards presented an overview of the plan, which is a holistic plan for the Baylands  
24 that aims to balance resource protection, environmental education and recreation use,  
25 taking into consideration future projects and current trends such as climate change and sea  
26 level rise. It includes site-specific aspects including the former ITT property/Renzel  
27 Wetlands and Byxbee Park. The plan was initiated in 2017 and the current planning project  
28 builds upon the 2008 Baylands Master Plan. It incorporates new trends, new projects and  
29 new data, and stakeholder outreach and input have occurred as part of the process.

30 Steps to date have included developing a work plan, documenting existing conditions, and  
31 developing a stakeholder engagement plan. The first stakeholder meetings were held in  
32 October of 2017. A tour of the Renzel Wetlands was conducted in November of 2017, and  
33 later in 2017 a robust project website was developed, and additional stakeholder meetings.  
34 In the following winter, a user survey was conducted of people using the Baylands to get  
35 an idea of how the plan could serve them, and future planned projects in and around the  
36 Baylands were documented.

37 Activities in 2018 included a stakeholder meeting in February, a User Survey in April and  
38 May, documentation of future planned projects and development of vision, goals and



1 objectives. A status report was presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission in June  
2 which developed concepts for the ITT/Renzel Wetlands, looking at opportunities and  
3 challenges within the Baylands and completing a climate change and sea level rise  
4 assessment. In the fall, they held a stakeholder meeting to talk through some of the  
5 challenges in the assessment. A draft action plan was developed, which serves as a basis  
6 for some of the actions that the City could take. A draft Byxbee Park Design Plan was  
7 developed. All of this was compiled into the draft BCCP and presented in May of 2019.  
8 Feedback was received from the PRC and Ad Hoc Committee from which an update to  
9 the BCCP was developed. It was then handed over for the start of the CEQA process. The  
10 process has been on hold, and they are now working with the City to complete the plan  
11 and CEQA process, which is to be released in the summer of 2022.

12 Ms. Edwards shared an overview of the stakeholder and public outreach process. There  
13 were four focused meetings in Palo Alto. A project website was developed. There were  
14 site tours of the ITT/Renzel Marsh. A user survey was conducted, and stakeholder group  
15 reviewed the draft deliverables. Throughout the process, five main themes emerged:  
16 Natural resources, public access and facilities, public engagement, public art, and  
17 operations and maintenance. Two specific key areas for planning were Byxbee Park and  
18 the former ITT/Renzel Wetlands.

19 Natural Resources was identified as an important theme in the RFP and by stakeholders.  
20 Existing conditions of natural resources, development of specific visions, goals and  
21 objectives for natural resource management, including habitat and wildlife were  
22 developed. This was included as a main topic in the “Opportunities and Challenges”  
23 analysis. Natural resources was a main topic within the climate change/sea level rise  
24 assessment. Action plans for habitat conservation and restoration as well as climate  
25 change and sea level rise were developed, which provide a prioritized list of actions that  
26 the City could take and also provides a framework that the City could use at a later time  
27 as projects get completed within the Baylands to re-prioritize different areas for habitat  
28 conservation and wildlife protection.

29 Ms. Edwards pointed out that wildlife habitat and natural resources are specifically called  
30 out as the main objective in the Byxbee Park plan, including plans to leave contiguous  
31 areas for habitat and building up additional areas including ecological wildlife corridors  
32 that have not previously been planned for. The ITT/Renzel concept specifically addresses  
33 natural resources, and natural resources/ecology is a major theme coming out of the  
34 overlay of what is developed in the plan.

35 Ms. Edwards shared an example of incorporation of stakeholder feedback into the plan.  
36 Through outreach they heard that hydrologically connecting the remnant marsh in the  
37 former ITT/Renzel is very important to stakeholders, who wanted hydrologic connectivity.  
38 Concerns regarding impacting existing wildlife were addressed, and a revision was made



1 to include a recommendation to conduct feasibility/impact studies. Since art is important  
2 to the City, a public art overlay was envisioned and specified in the BCCP RFP and scope.  
3 Two artists were hired as a project parallel to the BCCP. The art overlay is envisioned to  
4 be complementary to the ecology of the Baylands. Ms. Edwards concluded her  
5 presentation stating that the next step for the BCCP is that, following the CEQA process,  
6 will be the final adoption. .

7 Chair Greenfield invited clarifying questions from the Commissioners.

8 Commissioner Cribbs asked what the end date for the 15-year plan is since there have been  
9 some interruptions. Mr. Anderson was not sure of the answer but said in some ways while  
10 it's a 15-year plan, it is iterative along the way. With learning new things and new  
11 resources becoming available, things that were long-term visions become near-term, with  
12 the ability to move forward. He felt the plan probably needs a completely fresh look, in  
13 the 12-year range, but along the way it will probably need updates.

14 Commissioner Kleinhaus said since some of the existing conditions have changed, she  
15 wondered how they will deal with the changes to some of the projects that are no longer  
16 feasible or where things have already been built. Mr. Anderson said this has been  
17 discussed. Mentions of the Tide Gate are more hypothetical or the wrong dates have been  
18 listed where they thought the project would happen earlier but is actually going to be later  
19 than originally speculated. Updates to the plan can be made to reflect those changes. Other  
20 examples are the Highway 101 bridge, which is now complete. One of the bridges, the  
21 pedestrian bridge, comes over the Baylands but now there is another one which gives more  
22 trail connections, and that will be mentioned, as well as a few others.

23 Ms. Edwards added that they have updated some sections about future planned projects  
24 which are now completed projects, or future planned projects that are no longer feasible.  
25 A few of those have been edited out, and they can make updates. Commissioner Kleinhaus  
26 commented that changes that have happened, and there have been changes to some of the  
27 nesting birds and other biological assets. Ms. Edwards responded that the way the plan is  
28 currently written is high level to the point that they don't get into a lot of specifics about  
29 such details. As far as she is aware, the species mentioned in 2017 have tended to remain  
30 the same. However, she said if anyone is aware of updates that should be included in the  
31 "existing conditions" section they would be happy to include them. Commissioner  
32 Kleinhaus asked if the gull colony is included. Ms. Edwards said she would double check.

33 Chair Greenfield suggested, since this was something that was started four-and-a-half years  
34 ago, it would be helpful to make sure there was understanding of what the purpose of the  
35 BCCP project is and what the Commission's overall function was for the evening. The  
36 overarching goal is to adopt the BCCP. The Commissioners are to explore whether this is  
37 something that they would be able to vote to adopt next month, or if there are any concerns  
38 that require further consideration, to raise those concerns so that the staff and consultant



1 have an opportunity to address them before returning to the Commission next month. He  
2 said it would also be helpful to understand general restraints and implications in terms of  
3 funding for a project, competing priorities and things like that, to frame the discussion and  
4 options for the evening. Mr. Anderson said they were good questions, but it is difficult to  
5 make any substantive, deep changes to a plan that is this far along, although he welcomes  
6 the responses from the Commission. If there are ways to make the plan better, those can  
7 be made, keeping in mind there are also the efforts put into the CEQA planning. He asked  
8 Ms. Edwards to speak to the extent to which changes can be made and where they can't.

9 Chair Greenfield added that part of the concern is the timeline, the starting and stopping  
10 of the project. As they resume the project, he asked if it is appropriate to move forward  
11 with understanding that there have been changes, and the 15-year timeline is now adjusted,  
12 or is it appropriate to move forward as they are? He thought those were questions they  
13 have as a Commission. Mr. Anderson said this was to some degree probably a judgment  
14 call for the Commission to make. Ms. Edwards said there is a lot in the plan in terms of  
15 management actions that the City could take, which are still applicable a few years later,  
16 especially some of the habitat preservation protection actions. Starting on them now would  
17 still be beneficial. She did not think that there is anything in the plan that has aged out, but  
18 being able to move forward would be beneficial.

19 Chair Greenfield invited public comment.

20 Rashi Sharma, high school student, intern at Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, said  
21 she loves visiting Byxbee Park and the Palo Alto Baylands. Last winter she saw a  
22 burrowing owl at Byxbee Park, and it was exhilarating, so she was disappointed to learn  
23 that burrowing owls no longer nest in Palo Alto. She had hoped that the BCCP would  
24 include implementable plans for proactive and well-funded improvements to wildlife  
25 habitat, including a realistic plan for bringing back burrowing owls, intentional plantings  
26 for wildlife corridors, a mowing plan that allows wildlife to thrive, more vegetated islands  
27 and nesting islands for shore birds. She had hoped to see protocols that help coordinate  
28 Public Works projects and the protection of nature. Only 36 nesting owls were seen in  
29 Santa Clara County during the last breeding season. Ms. Sharma said there are funds  
30 available to try to recover these species, and Palo Alto should make an effort to help do  
31 that by setting aside the current plan and using artificial burrows, fencing and mowing  
32 programs to allow the owls to breed in the city again. Advocacy with Cal Recycle is needed  
33 to allow California ground squirrels to live at Byxbee Park. Perhaps soil could be added at  
34 Byxbee Park to allow ground squirrels to burrow without impacting the landfill cap, but if  
35 Cal Recycle continues to prohibit ground squirrels, then fencing and artificial burrows  
36 should provide for nesting owls in the absence of ground squirrels. Ms. Sharma added that  
37 coyote brush is not a weed. It provides prime ecological habitat resources in terms of the  
38 number of species that use it for nesting, cover and as a food source. A vegetation  
39 management and mowing plan should be prepared to ensure that this resource is available

1 to the species that use Byxbee Park. People love watching birds, rabbits and other animals  
2 at the Baylands and Byxbee Park, and they will need this cover to persist.

3 Rani Fischer of Sunnyvale said she loves the Baylands and nature. She said the BCCP  
4 language is vague on funding and implementation. It is now four years into the planned  
5 15-year project and the conservation part of the plan is thin on implementation and does  
6 not seek resources to achieve most of the goals related to nature. The plan depends much  
7 on rangers and volunteers but no path to significant investment in biodiversity. The lack  
8 of investment in nature at the Baylands is visible at the new Adobe Creek Bridge, which  
9 is overlit at the Adobe Creek access, despite a promise to protect from light pollution.  
10 There was an opportunity to create habitat by Adobe Creek, and instead an expensive  
11 landscaping was installed with only two trees. Millions were spent for a bridge, but pennies  
12 for nature. One of the goals of the golf course reconfiguration project was to create wildlife  
13 habitat on the golf course, and that seems to have been neglected. A nature park is still  
14 designated for the expansion of the athletic center, and there are no consideration of  
15 alternatives such as planting trees or a nature bird park which was supported by hundreds  
16 of Palo Alto residents. Ms. Fischer said that Palo Alto should take care of nature and  
17 biodiversity in the Baylands. To achieve any conservation goals and support biodiversity  
18 implementation will require a significant amount of work, and should have a dedicated  
19 person with a background in biology, especially plant identification, restoration, invasive  
20 weed management, enhancement of wildlife habitat, mitigation monitoring, permitting and  
21 working with regulatory agencies, grant writing, and report writing.

22 Gita Dev, of Woodside, spoke on behalf of the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club.  
23 She shared comments that were sent in a letter to the Commission by resident, Jenn  
24 Hetterly. The Sierra Club strongly supports the vision and the policy framework of the  
25 BCCP. The goals behind the BCCP are twofold. First, to create an actionable plan to  
26 protect, preserve and enhance wildlife and biodiversity in the Baylands. Second is to  
27 establish best practices to ensure that facilities management and human impacts don't  
28 undermine that goal. She said the draft BCCP action plan seems to over-emphasize the  
29 hard infrastructure and the human facilities and activities. It lacks robust actions, plans and  
30 monitoring for the wildlife and biodiversity. Resource management goals and objectives  
31 predominantly represent only the first steps to conservation planning, identifying habitats,  
32 identifying wildlife corridors and key locations. Creating prioritization and methodologies  
33 is a good start, but it falls short of a comprehensive conservation action. A plan to make a  
34 plan is inadequate for the end result. Ms. Dev said it would be appreciated if the BCCP  
35 meaningfully advanced that main goal, which is the rich, biodiverse, natural resources of  
36 the Baylands which are unparalleled and are an asset to not only the community but to all  
37 neighboring communities, offering beauty, recreation, climate resiliency, pollution  
38 filtration and public health benefits. Their resilience requires more than simply trying not  
39 to harm them, but to enhance them. Without actionable plans to affirmatively support  
40 wildlife and biodiversity, they will continue to succumb to organization and to climate

1 change.

2 Annie Yang, Chair of Environmental Action Committee, Santa Clara Valley Audubon  
3 Society, of Cupertino, stated that the motivation for the preparation of the BCCP was to  
4 protect wildlife habitat and biodiversity; however, the purpose of the plan as stated does  
5 not prioritize wildlife habitat and biodiversity and instead looks for increasing levels of  
6 use as a primary purpose. Her organization finds that very disappointing, as they were  
7 expecting a conservation plan, with projects, protocols, timelines, budget and staffing  
8 needs to allow for adequate protection, monitoring and enhancement of the biological  
9 resources and habitat. Instead, it is policies and programs which amounts to planning a  
10 plan concerning nature, and simple projects that may require mitigation. It seems that the  
11 benefits to nature and wildlife are aspirational and left primarily to nonprofits and  
12 volunteers with some guidance from staff. While the work of local nonprofits is important  
13 and appreciated, it is not enough. In comparison, she said, the City of Mountain View is  
14 working on a wildlife conservation plan that includes monitoring and conservation actions  
15 to protect and enhance wildlife habitat and connectivity, including specific projects to  
16 protect species such as the burrowing owl, white-tailed kite, common yellowthroat and  
17 others. She said this should be used as a model for improving the BCCP. She urged the  
18 Commission to change the language of the plan’s purpose to identify biodiversity and  
19 nature as the primary goal, including funding needs and heavy investment in ecosystem  
20 restoration. She asked that they also identify staffing needs and, importantly, a biologist  
21 or naturalist to be dedicated to the protection and enhancement of nature as there is too  
22 much work for Rangers to implement. A dedicated person with the right background in  
23 restoration and monitoring of wildlife habitat is needed.

24 Dashiell Leeds of unincorporated Santa Clara County, Conservation Organizer for Sierra  
25 Club, Loma Prieta Chapter, echoed previous comments. The Sierra Club supports the  
26 vision and policy framework of the BCCP; however, they believe the current plan lacks  
27 robust planning necessary for wildlife and biodiversity to thrive in the Baylands and to  
28 fully realize one of the plan’s main goals – to create actionable plans to protect, preserve  
29 and enhance wildlife and biodiversity in the Baylands. He requested that the Commission  
30 recommend that City Council direct staff to make improvements to the BCCP. In addition  
31 to those previously mentioned, he said they need actionable strategies for actively  
32 supporting ecosystems and protecting them from climate change and infrastructure  
33 expansion. He requested that they include robust details for budget, staff capacity and  
34 monitoring for these programs and to support the BCCP and Palo Alto’s ecosystems in  
35 general by hiring a dedicated staff person, ideally with a background in biology, restoration  
36 techniques, monitoring and permitting.

37 Eileen McLaughlin of San Jose spoke, representing Citizen’s Committee to Complete the  
38 Refuge, an organization founded by Florence La Riviere, Palo Alto resident and hero for  
39 those involved in wetlands. She spoke in regard to the Don Edwards Refuge and said she



1 has looked at the BCCP and found the Don Edwards Refuge mentioned only once related  
2 to challenges with operations and management and in working on some projects, but  
3 nothing addressing the fact that in 1994 the City of Palo Alto signed an agreement with  
4 the Refuge to manage the Faber-Laumeister marshes and put it under the federal  
5 jurisdiction of the refuge. Since that time protections for wildlife and plans to do so have  
6 been carried out by the Don Edwards Refuge. Nothing in the history of the BCCP mentions  
7 this, but it is a major partner. The Don Edwards also has its own CCP with significant  
8 references to Faber-Laumeister and how they are to be managed. She thought that would  
9 have been a good reference for the BCCP document and thought it curious that there was  
10 no acknowledgment of the longstanding relationship and the dependence that the City has  
11 had on managing the ecological health of the areas over the years. She thought it would be  
12 nice to see something mentioned in the BCCP to acknowledge this. She offered to share a  
13 copy of the agreement from 1994 for anyone who would like to see it, as well as a link to  
14 the Don Edwards CCP.

15 Chair Greenfield thanked the public commentors and pointed out some were speaking on  
16 behalf of the letter Palo Alto resident, Jenn Hetterly, sent to the Commission. He  
17 appreciated the expertise and remarks presented for the Commission’s consideration.

18 Chair Greenfield invited comments and questions of staff.

19 Commissioner Freeman appreciated the work that has gone into the plan over the past five  
20 years. Noting many stakeholders were involved from the beginning, he asked at what point  
21 further input was sought out since the project has been revived. Mr. Anderson said the  
22 public outreach essentially stopped in 2019 when the plan was essentially completed and  
23 ready for CEQA. Commissioner Freeman asked during the five years what tracking has  
24 been done on changes made and where those are recorded. Mr. Anderson said some of the  
25 hypothetical projects such as the pedestrian bridge are now complete and is a big change  
26 in terms of trail connectivity. The timeframe and process for the Tidegate replacement had  
27 been planned for a long time but with an ambiguous start date. There was a guess in the  
28 draft BCCP at the time, and it ended up being a little later than that. Restoration efforts  
29 ongoing for the past 20 years through the main restoration partner, Save the Bay, continued  
30 to grow and expand, so they have moved on to new areas. Save the Bay tracks their  
31 restoration and monitoring efforts, although as per previous comments, there is just not  
32 enough monitoring with the limited staff. Save the Bay is skilled at their areas and are  
33 focused on their areas of restoration. However, in 20 years that point has grown and  
34 expanded to significant parts of the preserve. Their reach is around 10,000 native plants  
35 per year in the Baylands for the last 20 years approximately, a significant number of native  
36 plants added in addition to the City’s Rangers working on invasive species, a significant  
37 element of the plan.

38 Mr. Anderson said, in talking about these things and how it impacts wildlife, he thinks



1 they undersell the value and importance of addressing harmful invasive plants. It is one of  
2 the major contributors to habitat loss and threatened species. Not addressing this runs a  
3 risk of harming wildlife, so through the Save the Bay partnership, since the plan was  
4 completed, they have continued to work on that.

5 Commissioner Brown asked about the CEQA process. She noted there is a CEQA analysis  
6 done for the overarching plan, but it notes that there would be separate CEQA analysis for  
7 any specific projects noted in the action plan. Ms. Edwards noted that is correct and her  
8 understanding is the CEQA analysis that has been done is largely a programmatic analysis.  
9 Any specific projects involving land movement, et cetera, would undergo a specific CEQA  
10 process. Commissioner Brown referred to the “plan to make a plan,” comment and  
11 wondered if it is beneficial for this overarching plan to be more general and potentially  
12 include more items even if there wasn’t specific staffing or funding noted, because as long  
13 as it is included in the overarching CEQA plan there would be more flexibility down the  
14 road. Ms. Edwards said this is correct. She said they want the plan to be actionable and  
15 don’t want to propose plans that there are currently no resources for, so being able to move  
16 with the staffing the City, by including plans to create plans, can leverage additional funds.  
17 Many times funds have to have a dedicated City plan in order to apply for a grant, so this  
18 is one of the first steps they are trying to accomplish. Commissioner Brown added that if  
19 they only included plans in which the City has staffing or funding for at this moment, they  
20 would be severely limited in their ability to go forward with any projects. Ms. Edwards  
21 agreed.

22 Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Anderson to speak to how the plan would be tied into the  
23 operating and CIP budgeting process with the City. Mr. Anderson said the first way in  
24 which it has already happened is the funding for the CIP for the Byxbee improvement.  
25 They have a conceptual plan, and there is a capital improvement project of approximately  
26 \$2.6 million funded towards implementing that. This is one where they do have money.  
27 There are improvements that are focused on a number of things. In the Byxbee plan there  
28 is improvement of existing parking and also a lot of native habitat added around the  
29 periphery of one side of Byxbee and on top of it with vegetated islands, so he felt there are  
30 actions within the BCCP plan that will help achieve some of the goals being discussed,  
31 specifically, improvement of habitat and protection for wildlife.

32 Commissioner Brown applauded the degree to which the BCCP ties back to the  
33 overarching general plans and the priorities adopted by the City Council. She felt it was a  
34 great job of weaving those into the plan.

35 Vice Chair LaMere appreciated the hard work on the plan. He asked in terms of the priority  
36 list and actions, if Mr. Anderson thought some of those are actionable within timeframes,  
37 or how to go about assessing what they can take action on. Mr. Anderson noted Table 7,  
38 on page 101 of the plan and said there is a mix of what they can move forward with in the

1 short term with current available resources. Some of it is ongoing stating things they  
2 already do, such as weed control and native planting. These activities are seen throughout  
3 the plan because of their importance and the need for it almost everywhere in the Baylands.  
4 These are areas they are already acting on and will continue to do so. Other items will  
5 probably require additional funding and hiring consultants to help with certain elements  
6 in which they would have an expert such as a wildlife biologist to come in to assist. He  
7 said the Horizontal Levee is called out. They are at a 60-percent design for this, and it will  
8 be coming before the Commission for discussion in July. The Tide Gate project will  
9 greatly help their ability to manage the value and habitat in the flood basin which is a 644-  
10 acre area. Fixing the existing structure will provide benefits in terms of their ability to  
11 manage that land and get the right amount of tidal flux. Some of the projects can happen  
12 soon. Byxbee is probably around three years out.

13 Vice Chair LaMere asked about reference to grants in the funding section. He asked what  
14 past success has been in getting grants and how Mr. Anderson foresaw that happening with  
15 this project, in order to be able to pay for these aspirations. Mr. Anderson thought prospects  
16 of getting grants was not great, based on his past experience. There is no dedicated staff  
17 grant writer, and a consultant would need to be hired to help. Getting grants is something  
18 they can definitely improve upon and will probably need some outside expertise. Another  
19 element with grants is that although the money comes in for free, or with a small  
20 participation contribution from the agency itself or a partner, there is also the monitoring  
21 and follow-through, which can be pretty significant. He said on a Cal Fire applicant grant  
22 recently submitted he will be on the hook for quite some time to make sure all of the things  
23 in the grant are followed through, and there would be significant staff contribution needed  
24 for that. Mr. Anderson agreed that there is money on the table for important projects and  
25 staff would like to do them, but it is a matter allocating resources to make sure they can.  
26 It is an area he thinks they can improve on.

27 Commissioner Kleinhaus pointed out that the public commenters represented three groups  
28 altogether who have thousands of members in Palo Alto. She referred to Ms. Hetterly's  
29 comment in her letter, that the motivating goals behind the BCCP were to create actionable  
30 plans to protect, preserve and enhance wildlife and biodiversity. She said she was one of  
31 those who advocated for that years ago, and the reason was that there were a lot of activities  
32 in the Baylands that harmed the natural resources and seemed to be happening without  
33 much coordination or protocols or the monitoring and supervision needed to ensure the  
34 projects do not harm the most vulnerable biodiversity and species. However, she said in  
35 looking at Purpose 1.1, on page one, it is somewhat backwards. It says, "Implementation  
36 of a plan will provide continued opportunities for recreation access, education and art  
37 while protecting natural resources such as wildlife and functioning habitat." She felt this  
38 needs to be turned around and should state that what they want is actionable plans to  
39 protect, preserve and enhance wildlife and biodiversity and habitat in the Baylands while  
40 providing continued opportunities for recreation access and education. Commissioner



1 Kleinhaus noted that her opinion is that art does not belong in the statement, and thinks  
2 this was something the Commission conveyed to the City Council in the past. An  
3 assumption was that the art project that was built there is serving wildlife, but she  
4 wondered how they know this it true.

5 Commissioner Kleinhaus brought up the topic of monitoring. The document states there  
6 is limited time and ability to do monitoring and, other than Save the Bay monitoring their  
7 own areas, there is not much understanding of what is happening to the Baylands. She said  
8 monitoring is the basis for any conservation plan, and knowing what is happening, what is  
9 changing, and the rate of change is critical. Without knowing that Palo Alto has the ability  
10 to do the monitoring throughout the Baylands and some levels of reporting and  
11 transparency, then when things are lost they don't know what happened. She said this is  
12 what happened to the burrowing owls. They still show up occasionally in winter. They  
13 normally nest in Washington State and come to Palo Alto to spend the winter, but they  
14 were lost as a nesting species, and the plan they have is not implementable. It's been there  
15 for years. She was one of the stakeholders on it, but it cannot work today, even if  
16 implemented as proposed because there are so few of them left. She said what is needed  
17 is a new plan, and potentially she could recommend some consultants who would do a  
18 good job and understand the situation in Santa Clara County. She noted that the owls are  
19 on the edge of extinction all around the Bay Area.

20 Commissioner Kleinhaus mentioned a mowing plan at Byxbee that she thought would be  
21 part of the plan, but she hasn't seen it. It was a mowing and vegetation management plan  
22 done by Public Works. She also advocated potentially looking at nesting islands and  
23 adding them, as Mountain View and Don Edwards are doing. She said this would be very  
24 helpful to some of the most vulnerable species including shore birds, which are the  
25 experiencing great decline all over the planet. She also thought they need to get the  
26 information from Ms. McLaughlin regarding the history and management plan at Don  
27 Edwards, and areas that Palo Alto owns and manages, and include this in the plan.

28 Regarding suggestions around connecting the remnant marsh and others, Commissioner  
29 Kleinhaus said without monitoring now and knowing what is there, they should not do  
30 such things, because they need to know what is actually happening before deciding to  
31 change something. They do not have the detailed current information needed to make big  
32 changes. Small changes involving planting and weeding, et cetera, are fine, but a strong  
33 understanding of existing conditions is needed before making the big changes. She agreed  
34 with the public speakers who advocated for having a biologist actually look at things she  
35 noted that although there is a forester to look after the city trees, they do not have a  
36 naturalist to look after the city's nature. She added that she sincerely believes that staff is  
37 doing everything they can, but referenced Shoreline where they have a dedicated biologist.  
38 They have very similar circumstances, and have a biologist to monitor all of the projects  
39 happening there, including projects proposed by private entities. For example, if someone



1 is going to putting lighting, the biologist will look at it within a certain distance to be  
2 included in his review. There are checks and balances and tools that Palo Alto does not  
3 have. The biologist also writes grants very successfully.

4 Commissioner Kleinhaus suggested that now with money available for “30x30” they could  
5 get the ITT project done from those funds. They are looking for such situations by the Bay  
6 where there is sea level rise and restoration abilities exist. Other pockets of money are  
7 available from the State for such things. The habitat agency is providing funding for the  
8 burrowing owl, but if there is no dedicated person in Palo Alto to explore these resources  
9 as well as monitor and oversee projects, especially when the Rangers don’t have the  
10 capacity. She observed that projects happen when something is desperately needed, like  
11 the repair of the levees for the Emily Renzel Marsh that were needed because they were  
12 breaking. It was called a maintenance project, and CEQA was not done on it. She said  
13 there were reports that nesting birds were not being taken into consideration. She  
14 acknowledged that there are good projects in the plan and good intentions, but she felt the  
15 priorities need to be changed, with biodiversity being first and then looking for some kind  
16 of biologist or consultant with ability to do the things the speakers mention, from  
17 monitoring to grant writing and supervision of projects.

18 Commissioner Oche appreciated the work done so far. What came to her mind were the  
19 user surveys conducted in April and May of 2018. She wondered if those two months are  
20 a great representation of the data needed, and feedback from the public. She wondered if  
21 there was an opportunity for them to utilize the ISI, Institute of Sustainability, and Vision  
22 Awards to verify some projects. She agreed with Commissioner Kleinhaus’ comments  
23 about monitoring and tracking and being able to show actions done, performance, and  
24 being able to also find ways to verify those projects and get awards for the City.

25 Commissioner Cribbs was happy to be hearing about grants and grant writing and the  
26 purpose it might serve in this project. She was interested in what happens next and asked  
27 Mr. Anderson what his plans are, given the discussion. She thanked the members of the  
28 public who came to speak along with the thoughtful information and comments from the  
29 other Commissioners. Mr. Anderson responded that next he will huddle with consultants,  
30 Diana Edwards and her group, and their partner from MIG who is working on the CEQA,  
31 along with Planning staff and probably the Director of Community Services. They will  
32 discuss the feedback and try to figure out the way to move forward. Commissioner Cribbs  
33 wondered if they would come back to the Commission or if it would just move forward.  
34 Mr. Anderson said the tentative plans are currently to return next month with the CEQA.  
35 He will consult with the team to verify this plan, of if they need more time, or what other  
36 options they need to consider. Either way, he will making sure the Commission is aware  
37 of the process.

38 Chair Greenfield observed there are many competing priorities and limited resources –



1 staff resources, finances and time, since it is a plan they have been working on, off and on,  
2 for five years. He said valid concerns were raised as well as the question of what can be  
3 moved forward appropriately to accomplish something and continue to do so in the future.  
4 He appreciated Commissioner Brown’s question regarding the CEQA study in process and  
5 the level of detail and question of general projects versus specific projects. He appreciated  
6 the comments from the public regarding having a plan for plans. He asked what makes it  
7 comprehensive conservation plan as opposed to an aspirational master plan, or plan for  
8 plans. He remarked that they have a Baylands Master Plan, a City Comprehensive Plan  
9 and Parks Master Plan and questioned what the expectations were for the BCCP in terms  
10 of detailed plans requiring resources that they don’t currently have, either financially or in  
11 terms of staffing. What is the goal of the BCCP, and what is the goal of the Commission?

12 Mr. Anderson responded that the goal of the BCCP was to have a plan that gave guidance  
13 to staff and the community regarding what they expect in terms of how the land would be  
14 managed. He thought it achieves that in many ways. Rangers were doing several things,  
15 mowing along roadsides, planting plants in certain areas with a certain plant palette  
16 recommended by Save the Bay. He said before the plan was implemented there was no  
17 chance for the community or the Commission to weigh in on that. He thought that coming  
18 together on goals for the plan was a vast improvement over what would have been  
19 otherwise. It was robust in terms of different stakeholders providing input. He pointed out  
20 that the plan for Byxbee, which is implementable and is funded, is one of the stars  
21 outcomes of the BCCP, but even ones that are not ready to be implemented, such as the  
22 ITT concepts, are very good. Mr. Anderson said they needed to start somewhere, and there  
23 were many different ideas, even ones that were quite contradictory. Some require more  
24 study. Part of the ITT property is connecting hydrologic connections. There is a lot of  
25 background and deep science that has to happen before doing that. Extensive study and an  
26 understanding of what is out there is needed, which is beyond the scope of what the BCCP  
27 intended to do. He said in his mind it was intended as a roadmap of how to get there, and  
28 they have extra work to do to get across the line for it. Complex situations require  
29 additional research, public meetings and processes.

30 Regarding whether there is a plan for Byxbee, Mr. Anderson said they did do a burrowing  
31 owl plan as part of the 2016 interim plan. That preceded the BCCP, specifically for  
32 Byxbee. They came up with and implemented improvements there that worked out well.  
33 Commissioner Kleinhaus helped advocate for the burrowing owl plan, and it was  
34 launched. There was mention of a mowing plan, which is described in Appendix D of the  
35 BCCP. He said in many ways the plan achieved what they were hoping for, although it  
36 may not be everything. He welcomed supplemental plans going forward, and said to some  
37 degree parts of it are a “plan to plan,” but much is also very specific, instructing on when  
38 to mow, where to mow, what to plant, when to plant, et cetera.

39 Chair Greenfield said there were some good ideas raised. One was Commissioner



1 Kleinhaus' idea of restating the purpose statement with an emphasis on the environment  
2 verses the programs and recreation. This would be appropriate for a natural resource like  
3 the Baylands. He appreciated the comment about the Don Edwards area, and would  
4 appreciate if staff would follow up on it. The question about grants and staff writing goes  
5 back to resource issues. The question about coyote brush being called out as a weed is a  
6 reasonable question. The way he understood it was that it was not a weed, but there can be  
7 concerns based on the location of it. Ms. Edwards agreed that, in and of itself, it is not a  
8 weed, but in thinking about context of where it's planted, it tends to have deeper roots  
9 which can interfere with the cap at Byxbee Park so that is probably why it is not a plant  
10 they recommend for the area.

11 Chair Greenfield commented about the concerns about plans and mitigations not being  
12 implemented or following through on multiple occasions, such as concerns at the golf  
13 course. There seem to be concerns raised about burrowing owls. He said this is a concern  
14 he would like to see addressed and clarified. He asked what they need to be doing to  
15 properly prioritize natural resources of the wildlife and habitat.

16 Chair Greenfield said the question of public art has come up with the Commission before.  
17 In the past there was support for natural items, such as burrowing owls' nests, woven wood  
18 sculptures, et cetera. He thought that there is general support for natural art in the Baylands  
19 and a general feeling in terms of the manmade, less natural, art, there is a lot of it in the  
20 Baylands already. There is a community that appreciates this, but also members that  
21 question the appropriateness of it. He said the Commission was not generally supporting  
22 more art of this type in the Baylands area. Mr. Anderson stated the Director of Public Art,  
23 Elise DeMarzo, was on the call and asked if she would like to comment on this subject.

24 Ms. DeMarzo said in the course of the outreach for the public art overlay, part of the  
25 process of building the foraging islands was their community outreach together and  
26 feedback about what might be appropriate for that corridor. All of that feedback, having  
27 hundreds of volunteers come through on multiple weekends to build the project, was part  
28 of the outreach from the public art end. With the overlay, there are no actual artworks  
29 shown. It would be site-specific as to what might be appropriate depending on the site.  
30 They do understand there is sensitivity around having large metal sculptures, but advocate  
31 having things that are more pedestrian-friendly and in keeping with the environmental and  
32 ecological themes of the corridor, starting from 101 and going all the way down  
33 Embarcadero, having a through line to some public art elements there.

34 Chair Greenfield asked if an example of something they consider more appropriate would  
35 be the metal sculptures of the birds at the Baylands entrance off San Antonio. Ms.  
36 DeMarzo said in some of the discussion they had with the artists who created the overlay  
37 and with community stakeholders, it was pointed out that, as one is approaching the  
38 Baylands, there is no indication of the tremendous beauty and nature that lies ahead

1 through the corridor, so there are perhaps there are way to signal that in subtle ways as  
2 people approach. Chair Greenfield said this sounds in line with what he has heard from  
3 the Commission. He asked if any art installations planned for the Baylands would go in  
4 front of the Parks and Recreation Commission before being approved. Ms. DeMarzo said  
5 they would definitely reach out to the Parks and Recreation Commission to have someone  
6 on the selection panel through that process. They would bring it to the Parks and  
7 Recreation Commission to gather feedback before putting out any call to an artist, to gather  
8 feedback on what kind of project might be appropriate for the site.

9 Chair Greenfield commented that is a definite question about what is appropriate for the  
10 BCCP, what the goals were, what the timeline is. He said what he is hearing is they have  
11 a “plan for a plan” in many ways, and if more detailed plans were put together it would  
12 require appropriate staff resources and an additional CEQA analysis. He advocated re-  
13 prioritizing the environment and adding focus and support for allocation of resources for  
14 a staff biologist. This could perhaps be not only for the Baylands, but also to be used  
15 Foothills Nature Preserve, Arastradero Preserve and for the open space preserves for the  
16 community. He understood there are financial implications for this and competing  
17 resources for it, but it seems like something the Commission may want to advocate for,  
18 but is not something that will happen overnight, just as the additional more detailed plans  
19 and the further CEQA studies aren’t going to happen overnight. Regarding the 15-year  
20 timeline in question, he said the timeline may need to be even shorter in terms of the overall  
21 scope of the plan, or they will need to more vigorously work to enhance the plan with more  
22 details within the specified timeline.

23 Chair Greenfield invited questions from the Commission.

24 Commissioner Kleinhaus said Public Works has several projects right by the Baylands,  
25 within 300 feet. She said Mountain View has a specific planting plan, lighting  
26 requirements, and detailed design guidelines for how to design projects that are near open  
27 space parks, especially the Baylands. She felt there were things to look at with a very  
28 different eye, for every project near the Baylands.

29 Chair Greenfield said over the past few years the Commission has reviewed various plans  
30 for the ITT site , the Renzel Wetlands, Byxbee Park. Some work has been done, and he  
31 asked what discussions were tied to the BCCP and what discussions and work have been  
32 independent of it. Mr. Anderson said the Renzel plan was not in the BCCP. It was a  
33 maintenance job from Public Works’ perspective. It was being choked off by vegetation  
34 growing together and filling it in so that water would no longer flow out of the ponds into  
35 Matadero Creek as intended, so they had to do the maintenance project. The project was  
36 far more robust than some members of the public and staff were aware and ended up being  
37 a process of rebuilding the pond, which became two ponds, upper and lower. It was not in  
38 the BCCP plan, but something initiated as a maintenance project. The ITT site and Byxbee

1 Park were part of the BCCP plan. The plan included funding for the Byxbee part, but not  
2 for the ITT.

3 Commissioner Kleinhaus thought that now that the Renzel project is done, it is possible  
4 that people will have a different vision for ITT. People are enjoying it. She said they might  
5 want to reconsider some of the ITT vision at this time because the people who experience  
6 what has happened there would like to see more of the same. Mr. Anderson said the  
7 fortunate part with ITT is it is not a developed plan. There is more research and analysis  
8 needed, and it is open to that kind of thing. The freshwater component that was recently  
9 accomplished was so successful that it might make sense to make it bigger, so it is  
10 something to look at. Chair Greenfield said, given there is no specific plan for ITT, it isn't  
11 something that needs to be considered deeply as far as the current plan, because any  
12 additional for ITT is going to require further consideration.

### 13 **6. Advanced Water Purification System (AWPS)**

14 Diego Martinez, project lead, introduced the project team and turned the presentation over  
15 to Dan Lopez, Black and Veatch, to discuss the City's Advanced Water Purification  
16 System project, particularly the landscape modifications related to the project. This is a  
17 new treatment facility at the City's regional water quality control plant. The purpose of the  
18 project is to improve the quality of the recycled water produced at the plant by reducing  
19 the salt content of the water. The benefit of the project is that the higher quality of recycled  
20 water for irrigation use will decrease the demand for potable water. The project is in the  
21 northwest end of the regional water quality control plant.

22 Related to landscape requirements, the requirement is to follow the Palo Alto Baylands  
23 Nature Preserve Design Guidelines and also to provide screening of the new treatment  
24 facility. Bob Norbutas, Landscape Artist, continued the presentation. The location is on  
25 the entrance and edge of the Baylands Preserve. He said, having been involved in projects  
26 with the plant and in the area for a number of years, they are familiar with sensitivity to  
27 the space. The portion of the property not developed in previous projects was left natural,  
28 benefitting the wildlife and layering of screening, as well as the ecological background.  
29 The project site is at the back of the business parking lot and the beginning of the walkway  
30 section going towards the Baylands. When the project was started one requirement was to  
31 find a way to minimize the amount of parking on the side of the road as well as  
32 biker/pedestrian safety. The project in 2013 installed the pathway system which meanders  
33 through the natural landscape, creating a planted buffer between the roadway and  
34 pedestrians. Placement of boulders as well as the planted landscape minimized the amount  
35 of traffic parking and using the Baylands area. A portion of the project was irrigated and  
36 planted with the intention to seed a plant palette that was salt tolerant and low water use  
37 thriving in this area, although the invasive and dominant plant species could overcome it.  
38 The intent was that maintenance and care would develop the space. For the current project

1 the first intent is to maintain the purpose of the pathway, the safety and access for  
2 pedestrians.

3 The planting layout will involve installation of plant material both in the lower varieties  
4 for visibility over the top on turns as well as distance back so that they can grow to mature  
5 size and shape without impeding on the pathway system. Priority will be to look at plant  
6 material to set back and also look at the scale and size of the natural habitat of the plants  
7 chosen. Mr. Norbutas said his goal when introduced to the project was to inform everyone  
8 of the value and importance of keeping both trees and shrubs and groundcovers and the  
9 habitat corridor, and safe refuge for wildlife through the space. They looked at pushing  
10 back as much as possible to the facility but staggering and creating pockets for landscaping  
11 that will mirror the natural look of the Baylands and also have plant material of larger scale  
12 back away from the pathway systems, as well as groupings of trees. Black and Veatch has  
13 looked at the needs for function and access to the facilities on the interior of the wall and  
14 the exterior landscaping has been worked to find every bit of landscaping they can, coming  
15 up with the present idea of a wall system with angles that sets back away from the path  
16 whenever possible.

17 One of the requirements is a sound wall along the area of the facility itself. Because of the  
18 flood plain, new equipment will be elevated two feet above the existing grade. From the  
19 inside they are looking at an eight-foot sound wall with gravel surrounding the facility for  
20 vehicle access. On the exterior they are looking at a public view side of ten feet height of  
21 the concrete wall. There is a small 60-foot portion on the exterior that is the section that  
22 would have to be moved towards the roadway while still creating some buffering with  
23 landscape, the tightest point being five to six feet from the nearest point of the facility  
24 corner. The area had been installed with irrigation from 2013, and that system will be  
25 maintained, realigning any main lines that may be disturbed by installation of the wall.

26 There will be an opportunity to supply an educational signboard to explain why the facility  
27 is installed, benefits to the community, and the treatment to recycled water. It will also be  
28 an opportunity to point out drought tolerant, salt tolerant plant material that the public can  
29 both plant in their own neighborhoods and yards and appreciate the sensitivity in what is  
30 being installed. The fence will be staggered as much as possible rather than having a  
31 straight lined fence and wall. Many variations have been produced and the final solution  
32 is ongoing for the aesthetic balance of the wall itself. Currently they are looking at a  
33 weathered wood precast concrete wall system with staining to naturalize the look. Through  
34 discussion with Maintenance, it was decided that at this point the value was not to plant it  
35 and cause further maintenance for the wall itself, but discussion continues on that. At this  
36 point the plan includes a coating, and anti-graffiti coating applied for areas that will remain  
37 exposed. Mr. Norbutas shared photos of the plan to illustrate room for groupings of plant  
38 materials and low grasses and points for larger shrubs and background to screen the look  
39 of the high wall without being a linear, formal design, the intent is to group.



1 Mr. Norbutas explained that in order to install the project a sensitive removal of trees is  
2 required. The area has been left natural and has some dense, multi-trunk systems and trees  
3 currently and a large mix of eucalyptus as well. These must be removed as they are sitting  
4 where the facility will reside. Efforts will be made to protect trees and keep the edge trees,  
5 especially on the business park side. Ongoing communication with Urban Forestry,  
6 Canopy and other stakeholders will continue to create an ideal situation for tree  
7 preservation as well as information on plant material that would be advisable to use.

8 The preliminary layout is at a point of trying to understand the value of the space, and the  
9 scale. There is very limited space for large groves of trees but with further discussion there  
10 may be certain types of trees that would be appropriate along the roadway. Within the  
11 pockets low ground cover and grasses appropriate to the space will be used to create a  
12 safer walkway system, with an introduction to the Baylands as well as plant palette that  
13 works from the Baylands out towards the business park.

14 Mr. Norbutas said in 2010, stakeholder groups with Audubon, Canopy and other groups  
15 were put together to figure out what recycled water can be applied to both residential but  
16 plants in general. There were test plots inside the plant to see how recycled water would  
17 affect redwood trees. They took this current area as a training ground and area to study the  
18 impact of the water and now have a ten-year experience to see how it has reacted with  
19 certain planting and changed recommendations and options for the plant. The  
20 stakeholder's group will be re-introduced for further investigation into appropriate  
21 planting to blend into the Baylands and be appropriate to establish in this transitional  
22 space. A high priority is to work with native plants, and the list currently reflects 60 to 70  
23 percent native plants, but they will make every effort to get that closer to a 100 percent  
24 value, understanding that they must look at the narrow space for certain types of plants  
25 that need more room to grow.

26 In areas where pop-up spray irrigation had been used in mass areas in grasses, they have  
27 found there was more maintenance but also somewhat of a failure of the plant material  
28 itself. In some areas, point source irrigation – thickened tubing dripped to each plant –  
29 proved more effective, so the recommendation is to go to the new planting areas with water  
30 isolated to each plant which will also minimize maintenance and allow opportunity to  
31 adjust irrigation per plant types rather than mass spraying the area, irrigation will be  
32 focused to the plants themselves.

33 Another important topic of interest with the project is the grey fox and other wildlife that  
34 moves through the area in both directions from the marsh towards Embarcadero and the  
35 south side of the facility towards the Baylands. Plant material needs to be dense and of a  
36 variety to promote refuge as well as migration and movement. A comment was made that  
37 inside the plant facility there is awareness that wildlife is both inside and outside the plant.  
38 Certain areas of gates have been situated, allowing wildlife to move through both inside

1 and outside the facility and that process will be followed with the large wall section to  
2 promote key locations with small openings at the bottoms of the wall to allow for that  
3 access and movement.

4 Chair Greenfield appreciated the thoughtful detail of the plan. He invited clarifying  
5 questions from Commissioners.

6 Commissioner Oche asked for clarification of the project timelines. Mr. Martinez said  
7 work on design will be completed probably in November or December of 2022. They are  
8 still working on funding for the project as it is a partnership through Valley Water and  
9 Mountain View as well. Construction may begin in 2024 to 2026.

10 Commissioner Kleinhaus asked if the project goes to CEQA, including the planting. Mr.  
11 Martinez said CEQA was already done a few year ago as part of the larger recycled water  
12 project for the City. Commissioner Kleinhaus asked if it included this project and removal  
13 of the trees associated with it. Mr. Martinez said it was through an addendum because at  
14 the time this project was not identified. Commissioner Kleinhaus asked if there was  
15 opportunity for public engagement on the addendum, or if it is complete. Mr. Martinez  
16 said it was completed in 2019, when workshops were held with opportunity for the public  
17 to comment on the recycled water project and also this particular component.  
18 Commissioner Kleinhaus mentioned that their firm had designed the Adobe Creek bridge  
19 and had outreach about the planting palette. She said there was a lot of outreach to the  
20 public in that regard. Mr. Martinez said that was done by Public Works Engineering.

21 Chair Greenfield asked if the CEQA done in 2019 included identification of all trees being  
22 removed. Mr. Martinez said there was a plan in 2019 with identification of the trees. He  
23 did not think the CEQA had to include the specific list of trees that need to be replanted.  
24 Chair Greenfield said the current plan identifies tree species that will be replanted but not  
25 specific locations for them. Mr. Martinez said that there are only two areas where trees  
26 will be replanted, along Embarcadero Road.

27 Commissioner Freeman inquired on the selection of trees and asked if they are taking into  
28 consideration that at some point the growth and height will cover much of the wall. Mr.  
29 Norbutas explained the concern is for the natural maturing of the trees, so they consider  
30 the growth and filling in of the space in the 15 to 20 years after planting, so understanding  
31 characteristics of the selected trees they understand that there is a point where there is  
32 understory, but for many years the growth of the limbs is low where people are walking.  
33 He said they could plant closer than typical to accelerate that, but they need to watch the  
34 health and structural growth of the trees if too close could actually hinder them later in life  
35 and reduce their lifespan.

36 Chair Greenfield invited Commissioner comments.



1 Commissioner Kleinhaus commented on the planting palette and noted there are species  
2 that are not native. Most of the trees are conifers which don't belong in the Baylands at  
3 all. She suggested that they use the North Bayshore Precise Plan planting list prepared for  
4 the City of Mountain View, North Bayshore Area, and use only species listed in that plan.  
5 It includes an extensive and detailed planting palette which includes for every tree and  
6 shrub, understory, salt tolerance, drought tolerance, et cetera. The recommendation in  
7 areas near the Baylands is using 80 percent original natives. They include a few non-native  
8 plants which have value for wildlife.

9 Commissioner Kleinhaus also commented that the trail now feels very natural and the  
10 current design cleans it up and makes it manicured and bare. She noted they had a water  
11 supply there to create things like vines on the wall, given that some of the water will go to  
12 the Horizontal Levee – a water pollution control plan. There is water available that will be  
13 used, and there is no reason not to use it here as well and have vines on the walls and also  
14 to plant a much denser layer along the wall that the foxes may be able to get through. She  
15 said once it is exposed, and exposed to light at night, the foxes will not use it as easily.  
16 Creating wildlife corridors is one of the goals they were previously discussing as part of  
17 the Baylands Master Plan. Overall, she felt it was too sterile and needs a more dense layer.  
18 She has seen where growth of vegetation onto a trail is allowed to an extent to create a  
19 more natural feel verses a city sidewalk. She said there is a huge loss of habitat, although  
20 the CEQA has already been done. She said in general they see more and more little projects  
21 coming in and removing wildlife habitat, so there is an ongoing attrition of natural  
22 resources. She acknowledged they are doing what they can, but it still removes value from  
23 the Baylands.

24 Vice Chair LaMere echoed the comments of Commissioner Kleinhaus. Much habitat is  
25 being removed, although the tradeoff is the recycled water, which is a good thing, but  
26 using this opportunity to plant native species, keeping in mind the wildlife corridors, is  
27 very important. He asked what the delivery method is for the recycled water and how it  
28 will be distributed. Mr. Martinez said the water is of higher quality than the current  
29 recycled water produced. It will be sent through purple pipe to irrigation systems  
30 both in Palo Alto and Mountain View.

31 Commissioner Freeman commented on the removal of a large number of trees and  
32 advocated adding more back as much as possible. He questioned about the ten-foot sound  
33 wall. He wondered if any measurements had been done to assess sound levels at different  
34 times of the day and night. He asked how the decision was made for a ten-foot wall and  
35 how far back the machinery is that is the source of the noise. Mr. Martinez pointed out the  
36 main sources of pumping noise and said during preliminary design a study was done to  
37 measure conditions of noise in the area over a few days and nights, and the consultant  
38 recommendation the height of ten feet. Acoustic monitors were placed to monitor existing  
39 noise and calculation what reductions will be with the wall. The equipment runs during

1 different times and the project pays attention to the decibels generated and to have the  
2 lowest decibel possible, but in some cases they can't physically do it. The pumps already  
3 exist at the plant so it will not be much different than what is there now. The membranes  
4 themselves do not produce any noise so it is the typical pumps that are already in the rest  
5 of the plant.

6 Commissioner Brown echoed the sentiments of Commissioner Kleinhaus regarding the  
7 habitat removal of the trees and suggested going back to look and make sure there are no  
8 nesting seasons that should be avoided in reference to the proposed timeline. She was  
9 happy to see that the maintenance considerations, costs and staff time were incorporated.  
10 She observed that they are asking a lot of the site – a treatment plant, a transportation  
11 corridor, wildlife corridor – and she thought they had done a great job at balancing all of  
12 that. The wildlife friendly fencing was a nice feature. She said she would like to see more  
13 drought-tolerant landscaping along the side, pointing out that it is a water treatment plant  
14 and, being in a prolonged drought, they are asking every person in the state to conserve  
15 water, stop watering their lawns, so using heavy water landscaping in front of a water  
16 treatment plant flies in the face of the overall mission of the plant itself. Mr. Martinez  
17 responded that all of the existing landscaping around the plant is irrigated with recycled  
18 water from the plant, so their ambition is to appreciate and affirm this type of water.

19 Chair Greenfield said he fully appreciates and supports the goals and benefits of the project  
20 and agrees they are asking a lot, and will continue to do so. The goals of creation of the  
21 treatment plant are very worthwhile. In his understanding of the illustrations of what was  
22 and what will be, it's not great. It is going from a very natural corridor to a very unnatural  
23 and manicured walkway. He appreciated the plan to cover the wall over a ten-year period  
24 and the importance of planting at an appropriate distance so they mature properly and that  
25 starting off with a smaller tree can be beneficial. However, he wondered about going with  
26 more of a staged undergrowth planting approach – covering the walls with some fast-  
27 growing vines and shrubs for the near term while waiting for the slower growth trees to  
28 fill in seems reasonable.

29 Regarding a focus group, Chair Greenfield suggested that Parks and Recreation  
30 Commission have a liaison as part of that group that can keep the Commission abreast of  
31 plans and provide input. He was glad to hear they are working with Urban Forestry and  
32 Canopy on plans. He asked if his understanding was correct that new tree plantings and  
33 the number of trees replanted is consistent with the guidelines in the current *Tree Technical*  
34 *Manual*. Mr. Martinez responded that in the current space they do not have enough space  
35 to plant the same number of trees they are removing. The CEQA plan did not specify a  
36 certain number of trees so their intent is to replant the area where spacing is available.  
37 Chair Greenfield observed that there will then be a net loss in canopy as a result of the  
38 plan. Mr. Martinez said yes, in this area. Chair Greenfield asked staff if there are other  
39 plans to replant elsewhere on City land to prevent a net loss in canopy. Mr. Anderson said

1 it is something they may choose to explore. He thought they would be meeting with Peter  
2 Gollinger to discuss the project and many alternatives will be discussed.

3 Chair Greenfield said he struggled to believe that they could have gotten this far in the  
4 plan without having an approach to avoid a net loss. He said if they are working with the  
5 current *Tree Technical Manual*, it is in the process of a major revision and should be  
6 updated, with the new manual likely out before the project is approved. He asked for  
7 clarification of when the project would be approved by City Council. Mr. Martinez said  
8 they have to secure funding first, so the earliest to start construction would be early 2024.  
9 The plan will likely go to City Council during late 2023. Chair Greenfield said the  
10 guidelines will be updated by then and will need to be considered.

11 Commissioner Kleinhaus asked about lighting associated with the project, either for the  
12 facility or the landscaping and trail. Mr. Martinez said the trail currently has no lighting  
13 except the City street lights, but they are not providing any additional lighting on the path.  
14 The interior of the facility will have lighting like the rest of the plant. Mr. Martinez said  
15 the consultant provided details of this. Commissioner Kleinhaus said one of the concerns  
16 among many is light pollution in general and specifically the types of fixtures and  
17 correlated color temperatures that are damaging to biodiversity in general, from trees,  
18 bugs, birds, to people. Mr. Martinez said they would share those details with staff who can  
19 pass them on to the Commission. He thought this was being considered for other projects  
20 at the entire facility to improve upon existing plant balancing the industrial considerations  
21 with being friendly to the Baylands and works for City staff. Commissioner Kleinhaus said  
22 there are new guidelines available to maintain security, yet create better lighting. Mr.  
23 Martinez said they will follow up on those considerations.

24 Chair Greenfield closed the discussion with appreciation for the presentation and the work  
25 and thought put into the project. He affirmed the goals of the project and hoped some  
26 modifications could be made to better support the natural environment in terms of overall  
27 number of trees and wildlife in the area as well as more near-term aesthetics, focusing on  
28 natives.

29 **COMMISSIONER/BOARDMEMBER QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS OR**  
30 **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

31 Chair Greenfield inquired about the timing of the July meeting as he will not be available  
32 on the scheduled date. Vice Chair LaMere would be available remotely, but not in person.  
33 He also asked Commission members to provide vacation schedules or any conflicts with  
34 meetings during the summer months. Mr. Anderson was fine with Vice Chair LaMere  
35 conducting the meeting remotely in July.

36 For the June agenda, Mr. Anderson said they were looking at the Baylands Conservation  
37 Plan CEQA and the Mitchell dog park improvements for discussion. In July, the



**DRAFT**

1 Horizontal Levee project, which is at approximately 60 percent design, and the Mitchell  
2 dog park Park Improvement Ordinance assuming the previous meeting goes well.  
3 Potentially also in July, the skate park will come to the Commission for discussion. There  
4 will have been the community meeting on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

5 Commissioner Cribbs said the Funding Opportunities Ad Hoc will come back to the  
6 Commission in June or July with a report.

7 **ADJOURNMENT**

8 Meeting adjourned at 10:02 p.m.

