



Planning & Transportation Commission

Staff Report

From: Jonathan Lait, Planning and Development Services Director
Lead Department: Planning and Development Services

Meeting Date: April 26, 2023
Report #: 2304-1242

TITLE

Review and Adopt 2023-24 PTC Work Plan

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) review the draft 2023-2024 Work Plan (Attachment A) and provide staff direction for refinements.

BACKGROUND

On March 29, 2023, the Director of Planning and Development Services (PDS), Office of Transportation (OOT) staff, and the PTC discussed the accomplishments related to the 2022-23 PTC Work Plan the prior PTC adopted on April 27, 2022. The PTC discussed the status of the 18 projects/goals in the 2022-23 plan. The PTC noted that/recommended to:

- Be realistic with goals in the 2023-24 year work plan, with a note that some goals had no action from the PTC during the work plan period
- Clarify whether the plan is for Fiscal Year or calendar year
- Use letters instead of numbers to minimize the impression goals are prioritized
- Focus could be given to the Council priorities
- Delete the work plan 22-23 Goals #4, 5, 6, 15, and 17 to not carry forward in the 23-24 plan (Goal 4 was a Cal Ave study session; Goal 5 was Wireless standards; Goal 6 was Downtown in lieu parking; Goal 15 was an ADU update; Goal 17 was a Cal Ave subscription in lieu program)
- Merge/combine goals 2 and 7, and parking goals 11-13
- Refresh or expand other goals (Goals 8, 9, 14, 16, 18)
- Add new goals: rental registry and bird-safe glass/dark skies ordinance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Incorporating the PTC's feedback, staff has prepared the attached draft work plan for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, to cover the period July 2023 through June 2024. The draft plan uses an alphabet letter for each goal, as one PTC member suggested (so as not to imply prioritization).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/DISCUSSION

The PTC's March 29th discussion resulted in direction to merge several goals, delete others, and add new goals to the list for FY beginning July 1, 2023 through June 2024. The below brief summary is intended to be an overview of the draft plan for 2023-24 as discussed on March 29th, with a crosswalk to the 22-23 work program goals. Additional potential goals are noted below but staff did not add them to the attached draft plan; if PTC wishes to add them staff will do so prior to sending the plan to the City Clerk for inclusion in the Council packet.

Road Safety: Goal A (PRIOR Goal 1 reworked)

- On March 29th OOT staff noted that this goal had been accomplished in the prior year's workplan via the October 26 meeting that reviewed the Local Road Safety Plan for Palo Alto compiled by VTA.
- Staff suggest retaining this item for the new workplan, noting that several safety-related reports will come to PTC, specifically the Crescent Park Traffic Calming pilot, the Caltrain Corridor Quiet Zone Project, and a Federally-funded Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan.

Retail Recovery: Goal B (PRIOR Goal 2 merged Goal 7 CUP Thresholds and reworked)

- This goal aligns w/Council priorities, to resume CUP thresholds discussion from August 31st; the retail study report was not published in 2022; the scope was revised, and work is in process.

Coordinated Area Planning: Goal C (PRIOR Goal 3, Neighborhood Planning Study Session)

- Council directed staff to construct a preliminary schedule by end of 2023 calendar year for starting new coordinated area plans (CAP) for San Antonio Road; California Ave; Downtown; and El Camino Real. This macro discussion will likely involve study sessions with the Architectural Review Board (ARB) jointly with the PTC about the work scope.
- This goal will include process analysis – to study how a CAP process can be different (more efficient) than the NVCAP process

*NVCAP: Goal D (PRIOR Goal 8, refreshed)**Housing Element Implementation: Goal E (PRIOR Goal 9 refreshed)*

- Zoning changes to meet RHNA
 - Upzoning RM & GM/ROLM (density)
 - Carry-over sites (by right approvals w/20% affordable housing)
 - Stanford owned land (3 sites)
 - Housing Incentive Program expansion & adjustments

State Law Implementation/ Policy Updates: Goal F (PRIOR Goal 10 updated/refreshed)

- Goal F-1 relates to:

- the 2021 law SB9 (completing review of standards/updating standards, about which the ARB is conducting ongoing study sessions) and ordinance adjustment if a new SB9 clean up law is signed in fall 2023, and
- the January 2023 law AB2097 which necessitates a parking ordinance modification
- Goal F-2 relates to the July 1, 2023-effective legislation AB2011 and SB6 and any other 2023 legislation that may pass in the fall of 2023 and go into effect January – June 2024

Parking Programs: Goal G (PRIOR Goals 11-13 combined)

The PTC will receive an update regarding options for improving the City's parking programs. This includes a Roadmap for Residential Parking Permit Program improvements and commercial parking improvements. PTC will receive an update regarding parking availability data, to be provided on the City's website, on a Parking Data Portal page. The new license plate reader technology allows for regular collection and reporting of parking availability.

On-Demand Shuttle Program: Goal H (PRIOR Goal 14 refreshed)

Staff expects to bring a one-year evaluation of the Palo Alto Link on-demand transit service to PTC in Spring of 2024.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan (BPTP) Update: Goal I (PRIOR Goal 16 refreshed)

The BPTP Update will identify opportunities to enhance and connect the City's bicycle and pedestrian networks. Meetings to garner PTC input for the plan update are included in the scope of work for this project.

Car-Free Streets: California Ave and Ramona Street: Goal J (PRIOR Goal 18 refreshed)

Council tasked staff to study, plan, and design alternatives for permanent closures on California Avenue and Ramona Street, including demonstration projects that are underway. Based on input from initial public engagement, the City will bring on a design contractor to develop alternatives which will be brought to PTC.

Renter Registry: Goal K (NEW Goal)

Staff intends to bring this effort forward in June to the PTC, and in September to City Council.

Bird Safe Glass/Dark Skies Ordinance: Goal L (NEW Goal)

This was noted as a Council priority/objective.

Additional Goals/Projects Staff Identified: Goal M (NEW Goal)

Comprehensive Plan Policy Implementation – this includes several existing policies and programs in the Comprehensive Plan that need to be implemented, such as stream corridor regulations.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Environmental Review The subject project is not subject to review according to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Thus, no CEQA review has been performed.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS

The Council is anticipated to review the board and commission work plans in June. If the PTC continues the review of the 2023-2024 work plan to refine the verbiage, the May 10th PTC meeting would be the final meeting to discuss the work plan.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Draft 2023-24 Work Plan

AUTHOR/TITLE:

Amy French, Chief Planning Official



Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC)

2023-24 Workplan and 2022-23 Workplan Overview

Date approved by PTC April 26, 2023

Staff Liaison: Amy French, Chief Planning Official, Planning and Development Services (PDS)

Lead Department: Planning and Development Services (PDS); Office of Transportation (OOT)

About the Commission

The Planning & Transportation Commission's work plan covered April 2022 - April 2023. The members and chairs are listed below. Members serve 4-year terms. The PTC has 7 members. For more information about Planning & Transportation Commission (PTC) please visit our webpage, go to <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/boards/ptc/default.asp>

Current Commissioners

- Doria Summa (Chair)
- Bryna Chang (Vice Chair)
- Bart Hechtman
- Keith Reckdahl
- Carolyn Templeton
- Allen Akin
- George Lu

Mission Statement

The Planning & Transportation Commission advises the City Council, Planning Director, and Transportation Director on land use and transportation matters, including the Comprehensive Plan, zoning, transportation programs, and related matters. The Commission's primary responsibilities include:

- Preparing and making recommendations to the City Council on the City's Comprehensive Plan and applying the Comprehensive Plan to proposed development, public facilities, and transportation in Palo Alto
- Considering and making recommendations to the City Council on zoning map and zoning ordinance changes; any changes to Title 18 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code must be reviewed by the PTC and the City Council
- Reviewing and making recommendations to the City Council on subdivisions and Site and Design Reviews, on appeals on variances and use permits
- Considering other policies and programs affecting development and land use in Palo Alto for final City Council action
- Reviewing and making recommendations on individual projects as described in the Municipal Code, and Open Space development;
- Reviewing and making recommendations to the City Council on transportation, parking, and other related mobility issues
- Ensuring robust community engagement and dialogue regarding planning, land use, and transportation and providing recommendations to the City Council regarding these matters and incorporating the public discussion. The PTC hearings provide a forum for public comment and public interaction

Prior Year Accomplishments

The PTC addressed many items on the 2022-2023 PTC work plan including considering ordinances, providing feedback during study sessions, and recommending policy direction on a variety of topics. That plan can be found here: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/planning-and-transportation-commission/planning-and-transportation-commission-2022-work-plan.pdf>. Accomplishments the PTC contributed to include Housing Element draft and EIR addendum, completing Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance Amendment, NVCAP preferred plan Council endorsement, Admin draft NVCAP, ADU ordinance update to align with SB897 and AB2221, SB9 ordinance, electrification ordinance, retail interim ordinance extension (CUP thresholds), Project Homekey Comp Plan amendment, 3200 Park Boulevard, 1700 Embarcadero, 660 University Comp Plan and PHZ, traffic safety, annual reports.

Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) 2023-2024 Workplan

Staff Liaison: Amy French, Chief Planning Official, Planning and Development Services (PDS)

Lead Department: Planning and Development Services (PDS); Office of Transportation (OOT)

Item 3

Attachment A Draft 2023-24 Work

Plan

PROJECT/GOAL A: Road Safety

Several safety-related reports will come to PTC, specifically the Crescent Park Traffic Calming pilot, the Caltrain Corridor Quiet Zone Project, and a Federally-funded Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan.

BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
Opportunity to investigate an area of considerable public concern.	Reports will be shared as they are drafted or completed.	The Police Department may need to provide additional data/information.	Substantive and informative discussion.	No
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE
Safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists is important. Reducing and/or eliminating injury and death resulting from collisions is an important priority for many residents. A public dialogue at the PTC is welcomed by those concerned members of the public.		The challenges in this area are addressed through existing committees and active projects. The work continues regardless.		No

PROJECT/GOAL B: Retail Recovery

Retail Recovery, the Future of Retail, and Retail Preservation: This project consists of several interrelated and overlapping topics and council assignments.

The high-level study contract PDS is overseeing has an expanded scope for 2023 to consider state legislation AB2097 and include further outreach beyond the efforts in 2022.

The PTC will eventually resume discussion of a permanent ordinance regarding conditional use permit thresholds and may take up the Council referral to evaluate the retail preservation ordinance. The City's economic development staff oversaw a contract to develop an economic development strategy which was presented to City Council in March 2023. Efforts are aligned and done in coordination with broader economic development efforts. The PTC is slated to discuss the changes to Title 18 this summer, to implement the permanent parklet program for recommendation to City Council.

BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
Overall, this project aims to ensure a strong climate for retail businesses in Palo Alto that can allow Palo Altans to meet their daily needs and have a high quality of life.	The high-level reviews of trends and best practices in retail are underway; In March, Council reviewed a retail strategy document and parklet standards. The PTC review of CUP thresholds in 2022 resulted in the extension of the interim ordinance.	Consultant work, staff oversight and meetings preparation, and participation from the local retail community.	These interrelated projects may result in the development of new ordinances and/or broader policy recommendations to the City Council.	Yes - Council assigned.
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE
The recovery from the pandemic as well as any shifts in retail trends that will endure beyond the pandemic are occurring and can benefit from further and refined action by the City.		While this is an impactful body of work, the need to get it right and coordinate with existing and new resources outweighs the need to quickly pursue the work.		Yes

Coordinated Area Plan Planning – This updated goal carries forward the prior year goal regarding neighborhood planning approaches and overall effectiveness of various approaches to neighborhood planning. The staff and PTC will consider new neighborhoods that may result from the 6th cycle Housing Element sites and demand for public facilities/services. Council directed staff to construct a preliminary for starting new coordinated area plans for San Antonio Road; California Ave; Downtown; and El Camino Real. This macro discussion will likely involve study sessions with the Architectural Review Board jointly with the PTC about the scope of work. This w will include process analysis – to study how a CAP process can be different (more efficient) than the NVCAP process,

PROJECT/GOAL C: CAP Planning

BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
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Development of preliminary schedule for new CAPs will enable City Council to provide direction	By December 2023	Staff time to research and prepare a staff report to PTC and ARB	Successful conversation and possible identification of an approach (approaches) to guide the City's future.	No	Attachment A Draft 2023-24 Work Plan
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE	
Council directed work on a preliminary schedule by the end of 2023		It would be timely to hold study sessions after the Housing Element has been certified		Yes	
PROJECT/GOAL D: North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan – Finalizing the plan to return to the PTC and City Council for adoption					
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED	
Transit oriented neighborhood	June 2023 is targeted for return to PTC	Consultant resources to complete the project	An adopted area plan.	Yes	
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE	
Per grant requirements, the project must be completed by June 2025. However the goal is still to complete the plan in 2023 in part to keep within budget.		N/A		Yes	
PROJECT/GOAL E: Housing Element Adoption and Implementation					
The PTC reviewed the draft Housing Element the city submitted to HCD on March 8. Council and PTC will jointly review and potentially adopt the 6 th cycle HE incorporating responses to HCD comments on May 8, 2023. Then staff begins preparing the required zone changes and Comp Plan amendments to achieve the RHNA housing yields. Housing Incentive Program expansion & adjustments The next step is the phased implementation of the Housing Element programs that include implementing ordinances - Citywide rezoning, by-right housing, allowing/increasing residential density in GM/ROLM, Housing Incentive Program ordinance – expansion to other zones, Objective Standards in SOFA ordinance.					
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED	
Compliant housing element and programs to encourage housing development	PTC and Council review May 8 th , submittal of final draft for HCD certification	Staff and consultant resources employed	Compliant Housing Element that meets the needs of current and future Palo Altans	Yes - State Mandated Policy Development	
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE	
City subject to Builder’s Remedy - Compliance with state law is necessary to prevent invalidation of the local ordinance.		N/A		Yes	
PROJECT/GOAL F-1: State Law Implementation - 2021-2023 Laws					
SB9 and AB2097 Implementation and related policy considerations. SB9 standards - Standards will be further studied in 2023 with PTC assistance and SB9 adjustment legislation at state level in process may be acted upon and further adjustments to standards or the ordinance may be needed. AB2097 policy related discussions and including development of map, handout, and amendment to Title 18 parking regulations. Development of policy considerations related to TDRs in Downtown and SOFA, parking district policies and in lieu parking fees, alternative parking facilities, loading zone and ride-share passenger loading; AB2097 went into effect January 2023.					
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED	
Provide clarity to property owners and potential developers.	Spring 2023 through November 2023	Staff resources have been assigned.	Adoption of ordinance amendments	Yes - State	
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE	
		N/A		Possibly - direction in April	
PROJECT/GOAL F-2: State Law Implementation - 2023 - 2024 Laws					
AB2011/SB6 Implementation: July 2023 effective, Ordinances implementing affordable/mixed-income housing by-right in commercial zones, other state legislation to pass in fall 2023 becoming effective in 2024					
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED	

Meet state law regarding housing development.	Draft ordinance AB2011-SB6 should be considered by the PTC in summer 2023	Need to assign resources (staff)	Adopted ordinance	No	Item 3 Attachment A Draft 2023-24 Work Plan
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE	
Prior to July 1, 2023 effective date for state laws AB2011 and SB6		Laws adopted fall 2023 that may have a July 2024 effectiveness date		No	
PROJECT/GOAL G: Parking Programs					
The PTC will receive an update regarding options for improving the City’s parking programs. This includes a Roadmap for Residential Parking Permit Program improvements and commercial parking improvements. Parking Data Portal - PTC will receive an update regarding parking availability data. The new license plate reader technology allows for regular collection and reporting of parking availability.					
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED	
Improved parking operations.	Ongoing.	Ongoing.	Feedback from PTC and continued engagement from the public.	Yes	
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE	
The staff work behind the project continues; proposed updates help advance the work. Additionally, the public welcomes opportunities to engage w/the PTC on this topic.		This project represents a large body of ongoing work to manage parking supply and parking policy.		Yes	
PROJECT/GOAL H: On-Demand Transit Program					
Staff expects to bring a one-year evaluation of the Palo Alto Link on-demand transit service to PTC in Spring of 2024.					
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED	
On-demand transit program to provide service, understanding, and insight into future transit programs.	Spring 2024	Grant money has been awarded for the project. Additional funding is needed to extend the service and is being pursued.	Feedback, knowledge, and insight.	Council accepted grant award.	
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE	
Grant project to be executed w/in prescribed timeline.		Must unfold as resources are procured.		No	
PROJECT/GOAL I: Bike and Ped Transportation Plan Update A citywide evaluation of the bicycle network and pedestrian network. The plan will identify opportunities to enhance and connect the network.					
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED	
Updated bike and ped transportation plan	Study sessions on visioning, needs and concerns in 2023. Final plan update in 2024	Consultant resources are being procured.	Updated bike and ped plan.	Yes - Council	
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE	
N/A		Update is timely, but not mandated by any state laws.		No	

PROJECT/GOALJ: Car-Free Streets: California Avenue and Ramona Street. Planning and design of alternatives for permanent closures.

BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
Evaluate alternatives for street closures to improve placemaking and provide economic benefit to local businesses.	2023-2024.	Funds for consultant resources must be appropriated and a consultant procured.	Recommendation made to Council.	Yes - Council
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE
The study and subsequent recommendation/decision needed for local businesses to plan effectively.		The temporary closure can continue while the study takes place.		Yes - Council

PROJECT/GOAL K: RRP Rental Registry Program

BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
The ordinance enables the city to establish a rental registry to learn about the Palo Alto rental landscape; make data-informed policy decisions that protect public health, safety and welfare of residents and support stability, certainty, and fairness in the rental market for renters and landlords. In addition, the program would provide awareness to the public of renter protections.	PTC to review in late May 2023	Staff time to draft reports to the PTC, HRC, Policy & Services Committee and City Council Will need budget for implementation of registry software and ongoing maintenance of program.	Adopted ordinance enabling registry program. Procurement of vendor to establish registry software and launch of registry by end of year.	Yes - Council
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE
Adoption of an ordinance.		Other aspects of the project are occurring concurrently, such as the request for proposals.		Yes - Council

PROJECT/GOAL L: Bird Safe Glass/Dark Skies Ordinance

BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
A Council objective is to protect birds in Palo Alto; set new standards for development, rather than rely on general policies or subjective guidelines	TBD	Staff is reaching out to consultant to perform this work	Ordinance adoption	No
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE
Meet with a consultant and identify budget, prepare draft ordinance for PTC review and recommendation to City Council		Complete the work with Council adoption of ordinance		Yes - Council

PROJECT/GOAL M: Comprehensive Plan Policy Implementation. This includes Streamside Corridor changes in Title 18 and other Comp Plan policies that lead to Title 18 revisions.

BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED/LOCAL LAW/COUNCIL APPROVED
Work through the relevant remaining Comprehensive Plan policies and programs to completion	TBD – need to work through the list and identify priorities; Staff identifies these tasks in annual reports	Staff and consultant assistance – during a year when staff resources will be focused on implementation of the Housing Element	Adopted ordinances to amend Title 18	No
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL
Some of the programs and policies are higher priority		Some of the programs and policies are lower priority		Yes – Comprehensive Plan