



City of Palo Alto

City Council Staff Report

(ID # 5911)

Report Type: Action Items

Meeting Date: 8/31/2015

Summary Title: 7.7 Acre Area at Foothills Park

Title: Parks and Recreation Commission Recommendation Regarding Possible Uses for the 7.7 Acre Area at Foothills Park

From: City Manager

Lead Department: Community Services

Recommendation

The Parks and Recreation Commission and staff recommend that Council approve the following course of action regarding use of the newly acquired 7.7 acres of park land at Foothills Park:

1. Complete the Buckeye Creek hydrology study before making any specific recommendations for possible future use of the newly dedicated park land.
2. Direct staff to return to the Parks and Recreation Commission to finalize a recommendation for Council on how to use the 7.7 acre parcel after the hydrology study is complete.
3. Direct staff to evaluate the impacts of the recommendation to Council on the Acterra Nursery lease, which includes a provision allowing for termination of the lease with a 90-day notification.

Background

The 7.7 acre parcel was a gift to the City of Palo Alto in 1981 by the Lee family to be used for conservation, including park and recreation purposes. The Lee family retained an estate on the property until 1996 when it reverted to the City. From 1996 to 2005 the City leased the land to a private resident who owns the land adjacent to the 7.7 acre parcel.

On March 24, 2014, Council, on an 8 - 0 vote (Scharff absent), directed staff (Attachment B – Minutes March 24, 2014 Regular Council Meeting, Item 10) to:

- 1) Return to Council with a Park Dedication Ordinance for this City-owned land adjacent to Foothills Park (Attachment C – Park Dedication Ordinance);
- 2) Outline the major options for the best uses of this land and estimated costs of such uses;
- 3) Present to the Parks and Recreation Commission alternatives for public uses along

- with natural landscape restoration for their review and for public input;
- 4) Establish a timeline for permanently opening the land to the public; and
 - 5) Draft a letter of appreciation acknowledging the contribution of the Lee family to the City of Palo Alto (Attachment D).

On August 18, 2014, items one and five were completed with Council passing an ordinance dedicating the 7.7 acre parcel as park land and by sending a letter of appreciation acknowledging the contribution of the Lee family to the City of Palo Alto. Since Fall 2014, Staff and Parks and Recreation Commission have worked closely to facilitate the development of ideas for specific land use options of the newly dedicated 7.7 acres in Foothills Park per Council direction. A Parks and Recreation Commission Ad Hoc committee was formed to help with the process of collecting public input on the issue.

In October 2014, four Ranger-led tours of the 7.7 acres were made available to the public. A total of 9 members of the public attended those tours. On October 18, 2014, a public outreach meeting was held at Foothills Park to collect suggestions and comments from the public on ideas for how to best use the newly acquired park land. There was another Ranger-led tour prior to the meeting. Approximately 10 people attended this tour and 27 people attended the public outreach meeting. At the meeting, and at each of the tours, the history and the challenges and restrictions associated with the 7.7 acres were discussed. (Attachment A - public's comments and suggestions.)

Three major themes were expressed from the public on the tours and the public meeting:

Theme 1: Recreational Activities

Concepts ranged from adding a campground, picnic area, structure for special events, and an off-leash dog area.

Theme 2: Restoration

The public suggestions regarding possible restoration strategies varied greatly. Concepts ranged from simple restoration involving planting native grasses and some trees, to significant restoration involving de-channelizing Buckeye Creek to restoring the original meandering creek flow and removing the overburden soil to restore the area to one contiguous valley.

Theme 3: Sustain the Acterra Nursery

There were numerous comments supporting the Acterra Nursery on the site. There were also some suggestions about providing space for an additional environmental partner.

Challenges for Developing the 7.7 Acre Parcel

There are a number of challenges related to developing the 7.7 acre parcel:

Buckeye Creek

Buckeye Creek originates in Foothills Park at the upper end of Wildhorse Valley and passes through the 7.7 acre parcel. The channelized creek has experienced significant down-cutting resulting in creek erosion. These eroded sediments wash down the creek and deposit in the 7.7 acre parcel during the rainy season. The collected sediments must be removed two to three times every year to prevent flooding. The adjacent Open Space Maintenance Shop in Foothills Park was flooded in 1983. The City created a raised berm along Buckeye Creek, adjacent to the shop, to protect it from the creek overflowing. The shop area occasionally floods during extreme high rain events (once every few years) as a result of poor drainage away from the shop and road.

The amount of sediment that accumulates in the 7.7 acre parcel and needs to be removed varies greatly from year to year. Some years, when it is fairly dry, no sediment is removed from the culverts. On years with average rainfall it can vary between 30 and 100 yards of sediment. On extremely rainy years there can be as much as 500 to 600 yards of sediment removed. Some of the sediment has been used to fill in the slopes of the 7.7 acre parcel, some on the valley floor, and some was taken off site.

The removal is especially important before the creek flows through culverts at the west end of the site. This is the last opportunity to clear the sedimentation before heading into the large culverts downstream. The sediments vary from fine to large sands and gravels. Nearly all of the fine, nutrient rich silts wash downstream and do not drop out in this area.

The private resident whose property borders the 7.7 acres has managed the creek sediment removal process up until now at his cost. The City will now be responsible for that work unless an agreement between the City and the private resident is obtained.

Buckeye Creek Culverts

Buckeye Creek has been channelized in many sections in Foothills Park, including at the (west) end of the 7.7 acre parcel. Buckeye Creek flows into a series of culverts and then flows under private property for several hundred feet. The culverts start as a single seven-foot diameter opening and then reduce down into multiple three-foot culverts. The first large culvert is approximately seven feet below the valley floor of the parcel. Access to the culvert is currently not secured, and it would be dangerous if someone ventured down into it or was washed into it during a rain event. The culvert would need to be secured with fencing and a gate (to allow access for heavy equipment to clear the culvert of sediment) before the site is opened to the public.

Some stakeholders have suggested that Buckeye Creek could support steelhead habitat. Buckeye Creek flows into Los Trancos Creek, which has been documented to have steelhead. Since a significant portion of the creek is channelized and deeply incised, it has an increased slope resulting in a high stream velocity. This accelerates erosion and prevents the formation of

pools and riffles needed for good fish habitat. It is uncertain if there is enough water flow in the creek to support steelhead.

Current Soil Conditions

When the 7.7 acre parcel was owned by the Lee family, the land was used as a place to store the overburden (spoils and rock) from the adjacent quarry. The north hillside (on the right side as you enter the property from Foothills Park) is comprised of highly compacted overburden from the quarry. The approximately 2.1 acre valley floor (flat area without trees) of the 7.7 acre parcel has approximately 5 feet of overburden. The compacted and poor soils do not drain well and make it challenging to grow trees and other vegetation.

The former lessee of the 7.7 acres parcel struggled to sustain and grow trees on the site. The lessee used extensive amounts of compost to establish redwood trees along the hillside and edges of the parcel. The trees are stunted in growth, but they have survived.

Staff investigated the option of selling the 5 feet of overburden soil, and the sediments that deposit in the creek culverts. We shared soil samples from the 7.7 acres parcel with the landfill staff and were informed that the soil is too rocky to use as landscaping fill. The landfill staff estimated it would cost the City \$20 to \$25 per ton to remove from the site.

No Utilities on Site

There are no electrical, water, or sewer lines on the 7.7 acre parcel. Any infrastructure that requires these amenities would need to factor in the added expense to provide the necessary utilities.

Hydrology Study

The Fiscal Year 2016 Capital Budget includes funding in the amount of \$150,000 for a hydrology study of Buckeye Creek to analyze and recommend solutions to the historic channelization and resulting down-cutting and erosion problems. Staff is working to initiate the study quickly so that it can be completed as soon as possible.

The current schedule for the hydrology study is as follows:

Develop RFP– August 2015

Issue Notice to Proceed- November 2015

Draft report – February 2016

Parks and Recreation Commission/Community meetings to introduce project–April/May

Hydrology study recommendation to Parks and Recreation Commission – June/August 2016

Hydrology study recommendation to Council – September/October 2016

Easements and Other Restrictions

There is an emergency ingress and egress easement that runs through the parcel to Los Trancos Road. This easement must be maintained for emergency response and evacuation of Foothills Park.

Development is limited next to Buckeye Creek. Environmental regulations preclude any permanent structures or parking lots within 50 feet of Buckeye Creek. (The 50 feet is measured from the bank of the creek.)

The 7.7 acres is bordered on three sides by a private residence. There is only one public entry and exit point to the 7.7 acres. It is through Foothills Park, and passes through the Foothills Park Maintenance Facility and staff parking area.

The flat area of the parcel (approximately 2.1 acres) is the only viable usable space within the total 7.7 acres for constructing any type of structure. This includes the current .53 Acterra acre nursery parcel. The remaining portion of the parcel is hillsides, exclusive easements and setback from Buckeye Creek. The approximate size of this flat area was ascertained through measurements taken from the City's GIS system.

The Parks Master Plan

The Parks, Trails, Open Space, and Recreation Master Plan (Parks Master Plan) is currently being developed, and will have information that will provide valuable insight to any possible functions that may be currently underserved in our park and recreation system.

Discussion

On January 27, 2015, the Parks and Recreation Commission discussed the possible uses for the newly acquired 7.7 acres of park land adjacent to Foothills Park. Several Commissioners noted that because of the timing of the hydrology study and the Parks Master Plan, we should not expect the Parks Master Plan to identify specific direction on how to develop the 7.7 acre parcel. The Commissioners also noted the Parks Master will provide information about what gaps and needs throughout the City's park system that will be helpful in forming a decision about the future uses of the 7.7 acre parcel.

There was consensus among the Commissioners on three issues regarding the 7.7 acre parcel:

1. The Buckeye Creek hydrology study should be completed before making any recommendations on how to use the land. The recommendations on how to best address the hydrology challenges may alter the City's decision on how best to use the land.
2. The Acterra Nursery lease should be renewed on a short-term basis so that the City has the flexibility to act on whatever options and recommendations develop from the hydrology study.
3. The site should remain closed until after the hydrology study is complete. Investing in

fencing and supervision to open the site to the public before the hydrology study is not prudent.

The Commission noted that there is no need for additional Ad Hoc Committee meetings on this topic, and that staff should return promptly to the Commission with a recommendation. Attachment E includes the January 27, 2015 Commission staff report and minutes from the meeting.

On February 25, 2015, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend that Council approve of the following course of action regarding use of the newly acquired 7.7 acres of park land at Foothills Park:

1. Fund and implement a Capital Improvement Project to conduct a hydrology study of Buckeye Creek.
2. Keep the 7.7 acre parcel closed until after the hydrology study is completed.
3. Renew the Acterra Nursery lease for one year so that the lease expiration will coincide with the approximate timeframe to complete the hydrology study. The lease should include the option for renewal on a yearly basis for four additional years pending mutual agreement and City approval.

Staff agrees with the Parks and Recreation Commission that the hydrology study should be completed before long-term plans for the 7.7 acre parcel are developed. Investing significant funds to construct any facilities on the site might limit some of the possible recommendations and solutions that will be proposed by the hydrology plan. Once the hydrology study is completed (tentatively scheduled for June-August 2016), staff will return to the Parks and Recreation Commission with the results and recommendations from the study, and work with the Commission to draft a recommendation for Council regarding the use of the 7.7 acre site.

Staff informed the Commission that their recommendation would be shared with Council as the preferred option, and that the subsequent Council staff report will also discuss alternative options for Council's consideration. Attachments F and G includes the February 24, 2015 Commission minutes from the meeting and staff report.

Because the Acterra Nursery Lease was set to expire in August 2015, their lease was renewed on April 30, 2015 for an additional five years. The lease renewal includes an option for either party to terminate the lease with a 90-day notification. Staff discussed the issues with Acterra regarding the possible implications of the results of the hydrology study and their lease.

Alternative Option

Direct staff to:

1. Install the necessary fencing and gates to ensure that the 7.7 acre site, including the Acterra Nursery, is safe and secure.
2. Install a simple loop trail and two park benches.
3. Open the site to the public.

The approximate cost of fencing is \$30,000 (this does not include fencing to secure the private residence adjacent to the parcel. The private resident would be expected to provide their own fencing). The approximate cost for a basic 1,800 feet loop trail and two benches is \$21,000.

Staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission do not recommend this option, primarily because the Buckeye Creek hydrology study will inform the City's decision on how best to use the land. The recommendations that come from the study could involve relocating the Acterra Nursery, re-alignment of Buckeye Creek within the 7.7 acres, possible trail configuration alternatives, and fencing alignment among other park design considerations. Staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend the City not invest in new fencing, park amenities, or design work for the area until after the hydrology study is complete. Commissioners also noted that opening the undeveloped site, in advance of the Buckeye Creek hydrology study would not be the best use of resources, as Foothills Park has 15 miles of existing trails, multiple first-come first-serve picnic areas, Boronda Lake, and multiple habitat types that are readily available for visitors to explore and enjoy.

Staff perspective is aligned with the Commission, adding that best management practices for opening new park land involves designing and preparing the area prior to opening it up to the public, whereby recreation uses, public access and areas for conservation and habitat restoration are thoughtfully and intentionally defined. Byxbee Park Hills and the Pearson Arastradero Preserve provide two examples of Palo Alto open space areas that remained closed to public use for a period of time until the areas were designed and constructed.

Staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission greatly appreciate the value of dedicating the 7.7 acre parcel as park land; this action protects the land for park, playground, recreation or conservation purposes. Staff is committed to working expeditiously on the Buckeye Creek hydrology study, and to work further with Parks and Recreation Commission and public thereafter, on a well-informed thoughtful recommendation for use of the 7.7 acres for Council consideration.

Timeline

Buck-eye Creek Hydrology Study	Summer 2015- Spring 2016
Return to the Parks and Recreation Commission with results from the Hydrology Study to determine, with further public input, possible next steps for the 7.7 ares site	Fiscal year 2017

Resource Impact

The FY2016 Capital Budget includes \$149,000 for PG-15000, Buckeye Creek Hydrology Study. There are no further resource impacts for the staff recommendation.

Environmental Review

This project is exempt from provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Attachments:

- Attachment A - Public Comments for Foothills 7.7 Acres (PDF)
- Attachment B - March 24, 2014 Council Minutes (PDF)
- Attachment C - Park Dedication Ordinance (PDF)
- Attachment D - Letter from Mayor to Lee Family (PDF)
- Attachment E - January 27, 2014 Commission Minutes (PDF)
- Attachment F - February 24, 2015 Commission Minutes (PDF)
- Attachment G - February 24, 2015 Parks and Recreation Commission Staff Report (PDF)

ATTACHMENT A

Public Meeting

Subject: Gather community input on how to use the 7.7 acre area

Date: October 18, 2014

Location: Foothills Park

Eighteen people signed the sign-in sheet. There were some late arrivals. Total number of meeting participants was about 27.

Public Suggestions:

1. Open sided building for various special events. Ideally allowing horses. It would bring more people into the park. Possible uses could include hay rides, weddings, etc. The fact that there is a large flat area is a positive.
2. Note that the 5' of overburden soil (this is the material that was excavated from the adjacent quarry) that was placed on the 7.7 acres limits the restoration options. The overburden material is not good for growing plants. Alternatives to restoration should be considered. It would take a lot of effort to restore. Bounded with only one entry is also a challenge. We need to think outside the box.
3. The flat area is good thing. It would be a good location for a primitive campground with limited amenities. We could use the existing amenities, such as the restrooms at Oak Grove and the parking near Oak Grove picnic area.
4. Move the existing park maintenance building into the 7.7 acre area, and restore the site where the maintenance building is currently sitting. The maintenance yard is the entry to this space, and the entry should be attractive.
5. All options considered for this space should retain the Acterra nursery, and build on access to the nursery. The nursery should be instructional, not just commercial. (someone notes that classes of children do visit the nursery).
6. There are numerous benefits of the nursery, and it should be maintained on site.
7. There should be a place holder for option of including a Canopy tree nursery at the site.
8. It would be great if there was public access into this area through Los Trancos Road. Don't do anything that would preclude or prevent future connectivity through this site to the rest of Foothills Park.
9. Restore original creek. Consider removing the overburden soil and restoring the area to one contiguous valley. It would take a long time, but with time and grants it is possible.
10. Leave the site alone. Just add a simple trail.
11. Concern about emergency exit from the park. How is an individual inside the park supposed to escape the area if there is a gate that can only be opened by emergency response staff?
12. Acterra nursery should be allowed to stay on the site because it is a benefit to the City.
13. Make sure this issue is covered by the press (Weekly). It will ensure that more people are aware of the discussion.

14. The Parks Master Plan may identify needs that cannot be met with our existing space in the park system. Keep this area open for needs that are identified in the Master Plan.
15. Keep Acterra Nursery on the site.
16. Support the Acterra Nursery and expand the stewardship and educational opportunities.
17. Use the area for athletic fields.
18. Question about how often the campground and group picnic area are booked? (Staff explained that during summer weekends the campground and group picnic area are fully booked.)
19. Camping could be a great use for this site.
20. Cabin camping with platforms would be a good use for the site. It would increase winter camping.
21. Consider removing the eucalyptus trees from the site.
22. Adding something like the Oak Grove Picnic Area and including some new trees.
23. Include placeholders for connectivity.
24. Restoration could bring lots of grant money.
25. Canopy tree nursery
26. Creek restoration concept. There are lots of grants for this kind of work.
27. Improve the soil and let nature take its course. Remember, this is a nature preserve.
28. Respect the neighbors to this site. Need to take into account noise issues for whatever is considered for this area. You wouldn't put a campground right next to other neighbors' homes anywhere else in the park system, so why would you do it in this situation?

MINUTES

Council Member Holman preferred to maintain a rate of 5 percent. She inquired whether any percentage of the increase could be directed to specific programs.

Ms. Stump explained Council Member Holman was suggesting a special tax, which required two-thirds approval by the voters.

Council Member Schmid noted the Motion directed elimination of the large volume discount paid by nine specific commercial users. The Motion did not eliminate the discount for other future commercial entities.

Council Member Berman agreed to delete the words "nine commercial."

Mayor Shepherd felt there was no reason not to modernize the UUT. She supported elimination of the large volume discount.

MOTION AS AMENDED PASSED: 8-0 Scharff absent

10. Colleagues' Memo From Council Members Burt, Holman, and Schmid Urging Colleagues to Dedicate New Parkland in the Foothills.

James Keene, City Manager, reported in 2011 John Arrillaga approached Staff with an unsolicited proposal to acquire long-term access and use of 7.7 acres gifted to the City "for conservation including park and recreation purposes" by the Lee family in 1981. In January 2012 Mr. Arrillaga expressed interest in leasing the property for 25 years. His expressed interest was to secure long-term access to the property. Staff discussed potential options and requirements for a lease and a purchase. A May 2012 appraisal of the property set a value of \$175,000. The City informed Mr. Arrillaga it would not consider selling the property at that appraised price. Additional offsetting parkland and a higher sale price could be factors in any City consideration of selling its interest in the 7.7 acres. On June 4, 2012 and September 18, 2012 the Council held Closed Sessions on the topic. Staff clearly indicated a policy session would need to be scheduled for public discussion of options and issues as part of any decision to proceed. The City informed Mr. Arrillaga that any sale of public land could involve the Surplus Property Act and would be subject to local bidding requirements. Mr. Arrillaga withdrew his proposal.

Council Member Holman noted the consultant in the first Study Session of the evening indicated that every square foot of parkland was valuable in a built-out community. Many colleagues did not realize this land existed or that it was City owned. She requested coauthors of the Colleagues Memo be allowed to make comments prior to public speakers.

MINUTES

Mayor Shepherd indicated coauthors could provide relevant comments in response to Council questions.

Enid Pearson supported dedication of the 7.7 acres as parkland. She recalled that Mr. Lee offered the City the quarry and additional lands; however, the City opted not to take his offer. She suggested Staff and the Council review other lands for possible dedication as parkland.

Geoff Paulsen, member of the Lee family, was appreciative of the relationship between the Lee family and the City. The land provided a valuable emergency access route. The property was flat and amenable to access by the elderly and disabled, provided a variety of habitats, and allowed connection to the network of Foothills trails.

Emily Renzel was pleased dedication of the property as parkland was presented. The site offered interesting possibilities for consolidating natural areas.

Winter Dellenbach shared stories about Deer Meadow and the lack of dedicating property donated to the City as parkland.

John Lindon was interested in adding a trail that connected the property with trails from Foothill Park. He offered to provide a substantial portion of the cost to construct a foot bridge for the trail.

Herb Borock supported the proposal to dedicate the 7.7 acres as parkland. He provided additional history regarding the City's decision not to purchase additional land from Mr. Lee.

Doria Summa urged the Council to dedicate the 7.7 acres as parkland.

MOTION: Council Member Holman moved, seconded by Council Member Schmid to direct Staff to: 1) return to Council with a park dedication Ordinance for this City-owned land adjacent to Foothills Park; 2) outline the major options for the best uses of this land; 3) present to the Parks and Recreation Commission alternatives for public uses along with natural landscape restoration for their review and for public input; 4) establish a timeline for permanently opening the land to the public; and 5) draft a letter of appreciation acknowledging the contribution of the Lee family to Palo Alto parks.

Council Member Holman felt a letter of appreciation was overdue.

Council Member Schmid was not aware the property was restricted to conservation and recreation until Mr. Arrillaga made his offer to the City.

MINUTES

The property was beautiful. He had no doubt the public would support dedicating the property as parkland and opening it to public access as quickly as possible.

Council Member Klein supported parkland dedication. The deed restriction limiting use to conservation and recreation did not expire and would apply to any owner of the property. Dedication added another layer of protection for the property. The Motion appeared to be inconsistent with the Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan (Master Plan) process. The property should be included in the Master Plan process.

AMENDMENT: Council Member Klein moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Kniss to delete item numbers 3 and 4 in the Motion and add to the end of item number 2, "and estimated costs of such uses".

Council Member Klein felt the Council should move deliberately in order to determine the City's needs. He expressed concern that the public might not be interested in additional parkland, as the usage of Foothill Park had been declining for a long period of time. The issue needed additional study before the City spent funds to develop the land.

Vice Mayor Kniss visited the property earlier in the day. In order to access the property, one had to pass a maintenance yard, cross property leased to Acterra, and then cross barren land. The property should be incorporated into the Master Plan process. She presumed the parking lot and maintenance yard would need to be moved in order to extend the meadow. If the Amendment was not adopted, she hoped the Council would reconsider evaluating the property in terms of the Master Plan process.

Council Member Burt did not believe the Amendment provided guidance to move the issue forward. Recommendation Number 3 did not prescribe an action or an outcome. Recommendation Number 2 could include potential costs. Recommendation Number 4 requested the establishment of a timeline. He would not support the Amendment. The property was located along a valuable riparian corridor and presented an opportunity to restore a rich, natural habitat. Acterra would embrace the opportunity to participate in restoration of the natural area.

Council Member Price concurred with Council Member Klein and Vice Mayor Kniss' comments. The Amendment did not diminish the importance of property.

Council Member Berman inquired whether Recommendation Number 3 would be part of the Master Plan process or a separate process.

MINUTES

Darren Anderson, Open Space, Parks and Golf, indicated the Council would provide that direction. Staff would present updates to the Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) regarding the Master Plan.

Council Member Berman suggested the Motion could be revised to include the property in the Master Plan process without disrupting the objectives of the Motion.

Council Member Holman did not accept the Amendment as an incorporation, because it eliminated the creation of a timeline for the land becoming public. She wanted a timeline for public access to the property. PARC could determine how the property best fit in the Master Plan process. PARC should provide the Council with guidance regarding integration of the property into the Master Plan process.

Council Member Berman reiterated that Staff was seeking Council direction and the Council was referring it to PARC.

Council Member Holman felt the PARC was the lead body in the Master Plan process. She could not state whether the property should be part of the Master Plan process or an independent process.

Council Member Berman referenced an email from Acterra regarding its nursery located on the property and requested Staff comment.

Mr. Anderson noted Acterra used approximately 1/2 acre for its nursery. He did not believe that use was inconsistent with conservation and recreation uses. Any action regarding Acterra's nursery would depend upon PARC and Council decisions regarding use of the area.

Council Member Berman was pleased by the prospect of Acterra being allowed to continue use of the property.

Mr. Anderson wished to continue the successful relationship with Acterra.

Mr. Keene added a firehouse was located in the park. An Acterra shed could be accommodated as well.

Council Member Berman would support the Motion. He encouraged PARC to include the property in the Master Plan process if that was appropriate.

Mayor Shepherd inquired whether the yellow house on the property was the Lee's home when they lived on the property.

Mr. Paulsen believed the house was moved onto the property and utilized as the gardener's home.

MINUTES

Mayor Shepherd understood Mr. Arrillaga was attempting to make the old quarry habitable; however, the property was the staging area for Mr. Arrillaga's work. She expressed concern that the Motion did include a provision for estimating costs. She preferred to retain Acterra's use of the property. The Motion did not address many of her concerns. She referenced problems with maintaining Buckeye Creek. She would support the Amendment.

Council Member Schmid would not support the Amendment. Many issues needed to be resolved. The Amendment would delay any action on the property.

AMENDMENT FAILED: 4-4 Berman, Burt, Holman, Schmid no, Scharff absent

AMENDMENT: Council Member Berman moved, seconded by Council Member Klein to add "and estimated costs of such uses" into item number 2 of the main Motion.

Council Member Holman suggested identification of costs should be a separate recommendation. Costs would be identified after PARC review.

Council Member Berman felt costs should be estimated first to aid PARC's analysis of options.

Council Member Holman would not accept the language.

Council Member Klein believed as responsible stewards the Council should know costs prior to considering uses.

Vice Mayor Kniss felt the costs should be considered in order to best restore and utilize the land.

AMENDMENT PASSED: 7-1 Holman no, Scharff absent

Mayor Shepherd noted one of the neighbors maintained Buckeye Creek, and inquired whether the City could collaborate with the neighbor on that work.

Mr. Anderson suggested opening the property to the public could cause neighbors to fence their properties and, thus, remove the incentive for the neighbor to continue the work.

Mayor Shepherd asked if the City would need additional equipment at the property.

Mr. Anderson responded yes.

MINUTES

Mayor Shepherd inquired whether there was any possibility for neighbors to continue some maintenance on the property.

Mr. Anderson indicated Staff would need to discuss it with neighbors.

Mayor Shepherd believed the City would need a plan for maintenance once the property was opened to the public.

Mr. Keene understood the Council would direct Staff to work through the Commission process regarding options. Council Member comments did not prescribe or limit options; therefore, other resources could be leveraged.

MOTION AS AMENDED PASSED: 8-0 Scharff absent

STATE LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL ACTION

11. Endorsement of AB 1799 - (Gordon) to Modify State Law Governing Funding for the Long-term Stewardship of Mitigation Properties by Public Agencies.

James Keene, City Manager, believed Staff could have proceeded with the item under existing Council policy guidelines. Requiring local jurisdictions to prefund the lifetime care and maintenance of a mitigation would necessitate a significant amount of cash. Assemblyman Gordon's bill included some qualifications to ensure local governments could meet standards and requirements. This was an important piece of legislation to support environmental initiatives and to have them be practicable.

Stephanie Munoz stated the State forced actions onto cities without taking responsibility for funding those actions. The Council should recognize the reasons for the State's demands.

Herb Borock did not believe the Council should take action without having the bill for review. There would be other opportunities for the Council to state its position, after it had reviewed the bill. The summary language was too broad. The bill would be applied retroactively.

MOTION: Vice Mayor Kniss moved, seconded by Mayor Shepherd to direct Staff to send a letter of support on the City Council's behalf to Assembly Member Rich Gordon in support of Assembly Bill 1799 (AB 1799).

Vice Mayor Kniss indicated the law would modify State law governing funding for the long-term stewardship of mitigation properties by public agencies.

Ordinance No. _____

Ordinance of the Council of the City of Palo Alto
Dedicating 7.7 Acres of Land Adjacent to Foothills Park
For Park, Playground, Recreation or Conservation Purposes

The Council of the City of Palo Alto does ORDAIN as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 22.08.410 of Chapter 22.08 of Title 22 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code is hereby added to read, as follows:

“22.08.410 Lee Property – Addition to Foothills Park.

That certain parcel of land known as the Lee Property (addition to Foothills Park), as delineated and described in Exhibit A-28 and attached hereto, is hereby reserved for park, playground, recreation or conservation purposes.”

SECTION 2. The Council finds that the adoption of this ordinance does not meet the definition of a “project” under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 21065; therefore, no environmental impact assessment is necessary.

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SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon the expiration of thirty (30) days from its passage.

INTRODUCED:

PASSED:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT:

ATTEST:

City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Senior Assistant City Attorney

Mayor

APPROVED:

City Manager

Director of Community Services

EXHIBIT A-28

All of that certain real property being a portion of the Rancho El Corte De Madera, situate in the City of Palo Alto, County of Santa Clara, State of California, and being more particularly described as follows:

BEGINNING at a ¾-inch iron pipe at the northeasterly corner of that certain tract of land described in the deed from Russell V. Lee, et ux, to Richard Stanford Lee, et ux, dated December 30, 1956, and recorded December 3 1956 in Book 3696 of Official Records at page 382, Records of Santa Clara County, California; thence S. 15° 24' 19" E. along the easterly line of said tract 1083.65 feet; thence S. 72° 08' 48" W. 595.53 feet; thence S. 38° 48' 32" W. 179.00 feet; thence 48" W. 593.53 feet; thence S. 12° 01' 23" E. 488.00 feet; thence 32° 25' 26" W. 229.44 feet to an iron pipe marking the southwest corner of a quarry, said last-named corner being the TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING; thence S. 68° 17' 19" E. 1048.00 feet to an iron pipe; thence 57° 28' W. 60 feet, more or less, to a fence post marking a corner in the northwesterly boundary line of the lands of the City of Palo Alto known as "Foothills Park," as said lands are described in "Exhibit A" of the agreement between said City and Russell V. Lee and Dorothy Womack Lee, dated December 8, 1958 and recorded December 10, 1958 in Book 4254 of Official Records at page 695, et seq., Records of said County; thence following said boundary line of Foothills Park S. 57° 28' W. (called 55° 54' W. in said "Exhibit A") 435.35 feet; thence leaving said park boundary, N. 32° 32' W. 5.00 feet; thence N. 64° 09' W. 263.50 feet; thence N. 71° 21' W. 117.50 feet; thence N. 29° 16' E. 246.32 feet to the TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING, containing 7.70 acres, more or less, and being a portion of the Rancho El Corte De Madera.

*****NOT YET APPROVED*****

EXHIBIT A-28

APPENDIX A TO CHAPTER 22.08 OF TITLE 22, PARKS
(Record of Survey of 7.7 acre site)

COUNTY SURVEYOR'S STATEMENT

THIS MAP HAS BEEN EXAMINED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 8766 OF THE PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYORS' ACT THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2014.

GWENDOLYN GEE, COUNTY SURVEYOR P.L.S. 6780

BY: WILLIAM F. SLEPNIKOFF, DEPUTY COUNTY SURVEYOR P.L.S. 5701

BOUNDARY NOTE:

THE MAP OF TRACT NO. 9273 DOES NOT INDICATE SETTING MONUMENTS ALONG THE COMMON BOUNDARY; HOWEVER, WE FOUND IRON PIPES AT THE APPROPRIATE ANGLE POINTS, BELIEVED TO HAVE COME FROM TRACT NO. 9273, AND ACCEPTED THEM AS MARKING THE CORNERS. THE LEGAL DESCRIPTION FOR APN 182-46-006 DOES NOT CLOSE BY 4.50 FEET. THE LIMITED NUMBER OF MONUMENTS SHOWN ON TRACT NO. 9273 AND TRACT NO. 7579 WERE SEARCHED FOR AND NOT FOUND.

RECORDER'S STATEMENT

FILED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2014, AT _____ M. IN BOOK _____ OF MAPS AT PAGE _____, AT THE REQUEST OF CROSS LAND SURVEYING, INC.

REGINA ALCOMENDRAS, COUNTY RECORDER
DEPUTY

EASEMENT TABLE

- (1) PARCEL 1, DOC. NO. 8544554: EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT FOR LANDSCAPING, IRRIGATION, SEWER AND FENCING IMPROVEMENT
- (2) PARCEL 2, DOC. NO. 8544554: EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT FOR INGRESS/EGRESS, LANDSCAPING, IRRIGATION, SEWER AND FENCING IMPROVEMENTS
- (3) PARCEL 2, DOC. NO. 8544554: 10' UNDERGROUND UTILITY RESERVATION
- (4) PARCEL 3, DOC. NO. 8544554: 10' NON-EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT FOR UNDERGROUND UTILITIES
- (5) PARCEL 4, DOC. NO. 8544554: EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT FOR INGRESS/EGRESS, LANDSCAPING, IRRIGATION, SEWER AND FENCING IMPROVEMENTS
- (6) PARCEL 4, DOC. NO. 8544554: 10' UNDERGROUND UTILITY RESERVATION
- (7) PARCEL 5B, DOC. NO. 8544554: 15' NON-EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT FOR STORM DRAINAGE PURPOSES
- (8) PARCEL 5A, DOC. NO. 8554194: 30' NON-EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT FOR STORM DRAINAGE PURPOSES
- (9) PARCEL 5C, DOC. NO. 8554194: 30' NON-EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT FOR STORM DRAINAGE PURPOSES
- (10) PARCEL 6, DOC. NO. 8554194: 15' EMERGENCY EASEMENT FOR INGRESS/EGRESS AND UNDERGROUND UTILITIES
- (11) PARCEL 2, DOC. NO. 7128683: 40' EMERGENCY INGRESS/EGRESS EASEMENT

REFERENCE DATA

- (A) G253 O.R. 88
- (B) 7224 O.R. 26
- (C) DOC. NO. 15419869, PARCEL ONE & PARCEL TWO
- (D) TRACT NO. 9273 BK. 738 MAPS PGS. 33 - 36 (MARK THOMAS & CO., INC., JULY 2000)
- (E) TRACT NO. 7579 BK. 548 MAPS PGS. 32 - 34 (MARK THOMAS & CO., INC., JANUARY 1985)
- (F) R/S BK. 835 MAPS PGS. 31-35 (SCVWD, FEBRUARY 2010)

NOTES

ALL MEASURED DISTANCES AND DIMENSIONS ARE SHOWN IN FEET AND DECIMALS THEREOF. THIS MAP IS BEING FILED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 8762 OF THE PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYORS' ACT.

SURVEYOR'S STATEMENT

THIS MAP CORRECTLY REPRESENTS A SURVEY MADE BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECTION IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYORS' ACT AT THE REQUEST OF DAREN ANDERSON, IN JUNE 2014.

KRISTINA D. COMERER-----P.L.S. 6766

DATE: _____

LEGEND

- INDICATES FD. OPEN 1-1/2" I.P., DN. 0.5'± (UO) UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED
- INDICATES SET 1" I.P. WITH PLUG & TACK STAMPED "LS 6766", UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED
- △ INDICATES SET 120-D NAIL WITH PUNCH, DN. 0.5' IN GRAVEL ROAD AS GPS SURVEY CONTROL
- NON-TRIVIAL MEASURED GPS BASELINE.
- INDICATES THE BOUNDARY OF LAND INCLUDED WITHIN THIS SURVEY
- (A) INDICATES REFERENCE DATA AS NOTED
- (NR) NO RECORD OF MONUMENT
- (UO) UNKNOWN ORIGIN
- (1) EASEMENT TABLE DESIGNATION
- S.F.N.F. SEARCH FOR NOT FOUND
- () INDICATES RECORD DATA
- N.T.S. NOT TO SCALE
- * INDICATES HORIZONTAL POSITION HELD IN LEAST SQUARES ADJUSTMENT OF GPS DATA (SEE BASIS OF BEARINGS).

BASIS OF BEARINGS

BEARINGS SHOWN HEREIN ARE BASED ON A FAST-STATIC GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS) SURVEY HOLDING POINT P220 TWO-DIMENSIONALLY AND SCVWD BM 523 THREE-DIMENSIONALLY, IN A LEAST SQUARES ADJUSTMENT OF THE GPS DATA. HELD VALUES ARE SHOWN ON THE RECORD OF SURVEY MAP FILED ON FEBRUARY 16, 2010 IN BOOK 835 OF MAPS AT PAGES 31 THROUGH 35, SANTA CLARA COUNTY RECORDS, PREPARED BY THE SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT, NAD83, EPOCH 2009.0. ALL BEARINGS AND DISTANCES ARE GRID. THE COMBINED GRID FACTOR FOR THIS PROJECT IS 0.99992800, MULTIPLY DISTANCES BY 1.000072002 TO OBTAIN GROUND LEVEL DISTANCES.

RECORD OF SURVEY

LANDS OF THE CITY OF PALO ALTO
BEING PARCEL 1 BK. G253 O.R. PG. 88,
SANTA CLARA COUNTY RECORDS
BEING A PORTION OF THE RANCHO EL CORTE DE MADERA
LYING WITHIN THE CITY OF PALO ALTO

SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
SCALE: 1" = 80'
JUNE 2014

CONSISTING OF ONE SHEET

P220 * CONTINUOUS GPS STATION

"GPS CONTROL DIAGRAM"
N.T.S.

3001

3000

BM523 *
FD. 2" BRASS DISK WITH PUNCH "SCVWD BM 523" FLUSH IN TOP CONC. CURB AT NORTHWESTERLY CORNER OF BAYSHORE ROAD BRIDGE CROSSING OVER SAN FRANCISQUITO CREEK (F)

FD. 3/4" I.P. WITH PLUG & TACK "RCE 149???" UP 0.3' (NR) (I.P.) (B)

(N 61°26'55" E 468.53) (C)
(N 61°31'34" E 468.48) (B)
(N 62°35'48" E 468.63)

LANDS OF CITY OF PALO ALTO
7224 O.R. 26, PARCEL B

SET AT RECORD ANGLE AND DISTANCE ALONG NORTHERLY LINE PARCEL B, 7224 O.R. 26 (I.P.) (A) (B) (D) (E) S.F.N.F.

FD. 3"x5" CHARRED POST WITH NAIL & TAG "RCE 11064", UP 0.9' (NR)

DETAIL "A"
NOT TO SCALE

CROSS LAND SURVEYING, INC.
2210 MT. PLEASANT ROAD
SAN JOSE, CA 95148
(408) 274-7994

COUNTY GRID NO.: 61-03-72, 61-04-72
APN: 182-46-006 PROJECT NO. 14-60

TABLE OF POINT COORDINATE VALUES

HPGN-D NAD83 (EPOCH 2009.0)
CALIFORNIA COORDINATE SYSTEM - ZONE 3
VERTICAL DATUM - NAVD88 (GPS DERIVED)

POINT NO.	NORTHING	EASTING	ORTHO. HEIGHT	CONVERGENCE	SCALE FACTOR	COMB. FACTOR
* P220	1947150.209	6063265.212	18.93	-1° 02' 58"	0.999956032	0.999845521
* 2523	1991375.788	6089082.384	605.51	-0° 59' 48"	0.999942672	0.999946863
3000	1959595.775	6069358.675	591.06	-1° 02' 14"	0.999951818	0.999928003
3001	1960005.588	6068944.057		-1° 02' 17"	0.999951690	0.999928563

* HORIZONTAL POSITION HELD IN LEAST SQUARES ADJUSTMENT OF GPS DATA.

June 2, 2014

Members of the Lee Family
c/o Mr. Geoffrey Paulsen
10557 Randy Lane
Cupertino, CA 95014-2037

Dear Friends –

On behalf of the City Council and citizens of Palo Alto, I wish to warmly thank the members of the Lee Family for the amazing legacy created by Dorothy and Russel Lee in the creation of Foothills Park, and the expansion of the park with the gift of the deed of seven additional acres of land in 1981.

More than just a gift of land, the creation of Foothills Park has helped to establish the deeply held value of stewardship of parks and open space lands that Palo Altoans cherish so dearly.

Since the Foothills Park opened to the public in 1965, an average of 100,000 visitors come to Foothills Park each year to picnic, hike, camp, explore nature, appreciate wildlife and create life-long memories with friends and family. That's nearly four million total visitors since the park opened! The 7.7-acres of additional land deeded to the City by the Lee Family will further enhance the recreational, conservation and stewardship opportunities for visitors to enjoy.

Although this thank you letter is long overdue, please know how truly grateful our community is for the vision and leadership Russel and Dorothy demonstrated in their wish for the Lee Ranch to become a permanently-protected wildlife refuge and park for the people of Palo Alto.

Very Cordially,

Nancy Shepherd
Mayor



Approved

**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
January 27, 2015
CITY HALL
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California**

Commissioners Present: Deirdre Crommie, Jennifer Hetterly, Abbie Knopper, Ed Lauing, Pat Markevitch, Keith Reckdahl

Commissioners Absent: Stacey Ashlund

Others Present: Council Liaison Eric Filseth

Staff Present: Elizabeth Ames, Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus, Lester Hendrie, Peter Jensen

I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY: Catherine Bourquin

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:

Chair Hetterly: Now that I've read the packet, Item Number 5 on the Master Plan we have scheduled for 45 minutes. I imagine that'll take at least an hour, so let's plan for that. Also, everyone try to be efficient in your comments so that we can move things along.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

IV. BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the Special Meeting of December 9, 2014.

Approval of the draft December 9, 2014 Minutes as written was moved by Vice Chair Lauing and seconded by Commissioner Markevitch. Passed 6-0



2. Selection of Chair and Vice Chair for 2015.

Chair Hetterly: Every year we select a new Chair and Vice Chair. We start with the Chair. I can describe the role of the Chairperson and then the process for nominations and elections. You know most of what I do here at the table, but also there's a lot of coordinating with city staff, with other commissions, with Council liaison, coordinating meetings, setting agendas, checking in with Commissioners about any issues that they want to add to the agenda, prioritizing work, keeping things moving forward, staying on top of Council action and action in other commissions that's relevant to our work, managing meetings, identifying and building consensus, trying to keep us on message as we're sorting through issues and managing our time, and also keeping on top of the ad hoc committees. We have a lot of ad hoc committees doing work on their own. Checking in with them and figuring out where they are and keeping that work moving forward as well. Another big job for the Chair is planning and directing the Retreat and the joint Council session. Finally, speaking on behalf of the Commission to the Council or to media or whoever. Skills it requires are basically organizational skills, attention to detail, initiative to keep track of what's going on and keep us moving, communication skills, tact and diplomacy, trying to keep track of who has an interest in what and making sure they get heard. That's kind of a nutshell of what the job looks like. For the election, it's pretty simple. I open the floor to nominations. Commissioners can nominate one Commissioner at a time, and each nominee must get a second. A Commissioner can enter your own name into the nomination as well. After each nomination, I'll ask the nominated person if they're willing to accept the nomination. If yes, we continue on to the next nomination. Once there are no further nominations, we'll close nominations and take a vote. There's a ballot in front of you with a list of names, and you pick the one name that you want to elect. Catherine will tally the votes. The newly elected Chair will assume responsibility for chairing the rest of this meeting including election of the Vice Chair, which follows the same protocol. I'll open up to nominations. Are there any nominations? Commissioner Markevitch.

Commissioner Markevitch: I nominate Commissioner Reckdahl for Chair. I've watched him over the last year really grow into his role. He's very detailed oriented and asks the right questions. I think he'd be a really good Chair. I think it's time for him.

Chair Hetterly: I'll second that. I think Keith will do a great job. Any other nominations?

Vice Chair Lauing: You need to ask him if he's going to accept.

Chair Hetterly: Are you willing to accept the nomination, Commissioner Reckdahl?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I'd be willing. It's not optimal for me; I've got a lot of work commitments. If there's others that would be interested, I would support their interest.

Chair Hetterly: Any others?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I'd like to nominate Jen Hetterly. Is there a second?

Commissioner Knopper: I forget from last year. Are we allowed to ask you if you're interested or do we have to nominate?

Chair Hetterly: Officially the nomination happens and then we have to say. It's a very awkward process.

Commissioner Knopper: It is. It's terrible.

Vice Chair Lauing: I think every nomination should be seconded. I'd be happy to second that and get a response from our current Chair.

Commissioner Knopper: Yeah, okay. I was going to say it also.

Chair Hetterly: I would prefer not to do it this year. I have some family situations that need my attention for the next few months at the very least. I don't think I can give it my full attention either. I would decline.

Commissioner Knopper: Ed.

Vice Chair Lauing: That died for lack of a second. I think the question is if you can do it. If you're going to be absent half the time, then you're not going to feel good about that. The nomination's there.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Deirdre, would you be interested in being Chair?

Commissioner Crommie: I guess I would be, if you don't want to do it or Jen doesn't want to. I guess I would be if no one else wants to do it.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I nominate Deirdre Crommie. Is there a second?

Chair Hetterly: I'll second. Any others? We have Commissioner Crommie and Commissioner Reckdahl on the table. If there are no others, we'll close the nominations and go ahead and vote.

Catherine Bourquin: There's four for Reckdahl and two for Crommie.

Chair Reckdahl: Next, we'll move on to election of a Vice Chair. Commissioner Lauing, could you explain the roles and duties of the Vice Chair?

Vice Chair Lauing: Yes, and I plan to spend at least 5 minutes in this administration. The Vice Chair role has the obvious responsibility of serving in the absence of the Chair and on any of the things that Jennifer discussed including chairing the meetings. That's happened but rarely in my five-year tenure. Beyond that, it's really up to the Chair to involve the Vice Chair in any way, shape, or form that he or she wants. It can be a very close partnership to do a number of things including planning and organizing issues to come before the Commission. Divide up the workload to help share that workload a little more than just give it all to the Chair. Certainly interface with city staff and also just being a consigliere to the Chair about what should we do, what do you think, etc. That's how the last two Chairs and Vice Chairs have operated, but it doesn't have to be that way. Overall, that's what it is.

Chair Reckdahl: Okay. We'll open the floor for nominations. Any nominations for Vice Chair?

Vice Chair Lauing: I'd like to nominate Commissioner Markevitch.

Chair Reckdahl: Do we have a second?

Commissioner Knopper: I'll second.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Markevitch, are you interested?

Commissioner Markevitch: I kind of put you on the spot there about workload, so I guess I'll back you up.

Vice Chair Lauing: My nomination of Commissioner Markevitch is that she has very long experience on this Commission, knows the issues and the process inside and out. She's in the last year of her current term. She also has very specific experience as the Chair, a few years back. As a mentor to a new Chair, that's kind of interesting and very helpful. She knows a lot of the city staff very well and has worked with them in and outside the recreation group. She has very good experience and relationships with multiple Council Members as well, which is helpful. Given our new liaison, maybe she can be a mentor to our new liaison and get him up to speed. That's my statement.

Chair Reckdahl: Very good. Any other nominations for Vice Chair? Okay. With no other nominations, we'll now vote for Vice Chair.

Ms. Bourquin: Six for Markevitch.

Chair Reckdahl: Before we start the business, we really should thank Commissioner Hetterly. Last year was her first year as Chairman, and it didn't seem like it. She ran the Commission very well, and we all owe a big debt of gratitude to her because she really took a lot of the load off of us organizing meetings. The meetings were organized and productive, so we thank you for your service.

3. Report on New 7.7 Acres of Dedicated Parkland at Foothills Park.

Chair Reckdahl: We have Peter Neal as our first speaker, followed by Claire Elliott.

Peter Neal: Good evening. I'm Peter Neal, a Palo Alto resident and a long-time volunteer at the Acterra native plant nursery. I actually helped move the nursery into the Foothills Park site in 2003, and I've been there about two days a week for more than 11 years since then. I have a pretty good understanding of the nursery operation. I'm also quite familiar with the 7.7 acre parcel. I can offer to make myself available as an information resource any time if necessary during the discussion of these topics. I'd also like to say I recall distinctly the difficulty that Acterra had in finding a suitable location for the nursery. We looked at many potential sites and rejected many potential sites until finally this wonderful place at Foothills Park became available. Since the nursery relocated there, it has expanded dramatically and has become a real focal point and primary supplier for native plant restoration in the local area. It's highly respected within the restoration and native plant communities, not only for the quality of the plants it supplies but also for the professionalism of the service. I might also add that the nursery is an indispensable part of the Acterra Stewardship Program. All plants used in Acterra stewardship activities are grown at the nursery. I would really like to see the nursery lease renewed and the nursery be allowed to stay at this great location for a long time to come. I'd also like to comment on two other proposals, that being the hydrologic study of Buckeye Creek and incorporating the 7.7 acre parcel into the Parks and Open Space Master Planning process. I think it's very important to do those things. I also suggest that no kind of alteration, construction or development be undertaken on the site until the results of those studies can be completed. I just urge us to take a slow but thorough approach to deciding the best thing to do with this property. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Claire Elliott is up, followed by Alex Von Feldt.

Claire Elliott: Hi, I'm Claire Elliott. I'm a resident of Palo Alto and have enjoyed using Foothills Park for a couple of decades. Full disclosure, I'm also an Acterra employee, and I work with the Stewardship Program. I support whatever we can do to incorporate that land as parkland, especially if there's a way to restore Buckeye Creek. I think we need to look at the environmental impacts of removing all the sediment that's there, but I

think that's doable. I think the nursery is a very low profile, low impact use that has a lot of positive benefits especially that we're also helping to steward Foothills Park. Some of the plants for the restoration could come from very close by and they'll be locally specific native plants, which is really important for the co-evolution with local wildlife. That's something that people are understanding more and more, that we're not providing that link between our plants and our wildlife, because there's nothing that can eat the plants. The non-native plants don't support insect life. For example, 96 percent of birds are eating insects when they're feeding them to their young. That's very important for us to have that base of the food chain be moved up through the insect population. The only way to do that in any healthy way is with native plant species. I also think that the nursery could be accessible to the public. It already is at certain times. There's no need to have it closed off to the public. There's not really anywhere to go from there, so I don't see any need to have trails going through the area. On the other hand, I think it would be possible to do. Thank you very much.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Next is Alex Von Feldt, followed by Jerry Hearn.

Alex von Felt: Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Alex von Felt, and I'm the program director for Acterra Stewardship Program. I know several of you were out at the site when we had the site visit. For those of you that weren't, Acterra is a Palo Alto based environmental nonprofit that engages and educates the community to restore our local open spaces, parks, and creeks. We've been partnering with the City of Palo Alto to assist with land stewardship since 1996. Basically we get people out to enjoy and restore our valued open spaces. We educate our youth about the importance of preserving these places and the services they provide, so that they can be environmental stewards and make informed decisions as adults. Last year, we worked with over 3,500 volunteers on Palo Alto sites alone including Arastradero Preserve, Foothills Park, San Francisquito Creek, Matadero Creek, Barron Creek, Adobe Creek and also several sites within the Palo Alto School District. Over half of our volunteers are youth. Also this past year, the dollar value of this labor was estimated to be about \$250,000. On top of that, Acterra secured about \$115,000 in other grants that went to the direct benefit of Palo Alto sites. Our nursery supports all of our projects as well as it is a regional provider for other agencies such as the Santa Clara Valley Water District and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. We also provide an educational resource. In fact, the California Native Plant Society just had a large conference recently, and one of the sites they went to was our nursery. As Claire mentioned, we are the steward for Foothills Park, and we just recently secured some additional funds to help restore Buckeye Creek. I'd like to voice my support for the staff report, specifically the part about keeping the nursery. We appreciate that. We also support the restoration theme concept and funding the hydrologic study as well as postponing the investment in the infrastructure until we know what the hydrologic study shows us. We are at the nursery site Monday through

Thursday at least. We'd be happy to keep it open so that people can come visit the site, visit the nursery in the interim until the city decides what to do. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Next is Jerry Hearn, followed by Emily Renzel.

Jerry Hearn: Thank you. Good evening, Commissioners. Jerry Hearn. I'm a resident of Portola Valley. I've been associated with Acterra since its inception. Like Peter, I've been involved with the nursery since it was in the backyard of our stewardship manager's home many years ago. Peter also mentioned how difficult it was finding a place, and we really appreciate having the site that we have right now. We work very well with the multiple entities in the Palo Alto system to stay there. I wanted to compliment Daren and the staff on this report. I think it's excellent. I think it was well done and very comprehensive. I wanted to add a few things to what you've already heard tonight. I have worked in the Stewardship Program for many years. Through that I get to know a lot of the kids who are actually doing the work. Let me tell you that the work that they do here leads them into fields well beyond what we would normally expect kids of that age to do. Many of them move on and become conservation biologists. I know some that are climatologists. Some of them are field biologists. All this because of their experiences with Acterra, and that's supported by the nursery. The effect of what's happening here goes far beyond just the community of Palo Alto. As a matter of fact, hopefully it's changing some of the ways that we operate as humans in the world. Turning to the report exactly, I would also strongly recommend that you extend the lease for Acterra for obvious reasons. The hydrologic study is an excellent idea. I also happen to work a lot in the watersheds, the watershed right around San Francisquito Creek. There is definitely steelhead in Los Trancos Creek. Were it possible, they would also be coming up in Buckeye Creek. There is a possibility of some fairly extensive and important restoration to happen there. The study has to happen first. I also happen to side on the committee that's working with the Master Plan project for the parks. I've heard a lot of things that could possibly go on in that area. That 7.7 acres is not an easy area to either restore or to put amenities in for a lot of reasons. However, there have been some relatively interesting ideas. I think before making any changes to the current status beyond opening it up when the Acterra nursery people are there to sort of steward people who want to come in, I think the hydrologic study should be completed and the Master Plan process should be completed so it can inform how that area would be used in a very thoughtful and comprehensive way. Like Peter, I know a lot about this area, and I remain open to any questions or any problems you want to bring up. I'd be happy to be engaged in those. Thank you very much.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Next is Emily Renzel, followed by Shani Kleinhaus.

Emily Renzel: I also think staff did a very thorough job on this staff report. It seemed to me that repeatedly the issue came up of the need to deal with the hydrology of the site

before doing anything else. The hydrologic study is something that I hope you will get solidly behind. I think it should be the driving force of how this site is worked on over time. We tend to think of doing projects in short timeframes, 5, 10 years. This might be a 50-year project. The first step is to understand the hydrology of the site and to make a long-term plan for how it works before trying to do anything else. Just looking, without knowing all the ins and outs of how things are done, it would seem to me since much of this site has been disturbed, that it might make sense to explore moving the maintenance yard to a portion of that site and use the part that's more contiguous with the current Foothills Park for the kinds of activities that have been requested of group picnic areas and so forth. Primarily if you look at the left side of that picture, it's open space and that's probably what this whole area looked like at one time. Over a longer term it would be worthwhile to look at how to make that work both hydrologically and naturally. While I think it's important to have some concerns about adjoining neighbors, our first process is to protect and enhance the park. As far as Acterra, up until this was park dedicated, there was no issue about temporary use of the site. Over the long term it should be explored whether there are other non-park sites for this kind of activity because it's just like a camel's nose in the tent. When people want to do things, they always want to look to parkland because it's the only land left. I think it's important to treat this as a park first and to deal with the hydrology first. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Our last commentator is Shani Kleinhaus.

Shani Kleinhaus: Good evening. I'm Shani Kleinhaus with Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. Our members frequent the park, and we have some bluebird trails there that our stewards monitor how the bluebirds are using them. Children have the opportunity to bring the box down to look inside, to see the bluebirds as they grow. It's a great thrill for a lot of our people. Some of our programs are with Acterra together. When I visited that site, I remembered Daren was there and he said, "Just imagine if all of this was a restored meadow." I think he was right on. I think the hydrological study is needed to see how this could potentially become a restored meadow. It would be lovely to have Acterra and other groups like ours work on that. I also think that the nursery is a regional resource that we should not give up. Acterra's nursery is really important to a lot of restoration efforts throughout our county. They have a frog pond. One of the things that came up in one of the meetings of the Palo Alto Parks Plan was people said, "Where are the frogs? Bring them back. We want to see the tadpoles. We want to see the frogs. Where are they?" Here is your opportunity to show. Emily's concerned that other organizations will also want to do things there, but there is a possibility of saying this is grandfathered in and no more. I would think that this should be a recommendation, so there wouldn't be a proliferation of all sorts of other activities or maybe just carefully consider any more that want to come in. To me, it would be wonderful to realize Daren's meadow. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. That is the end of public comment, so we'll move onto the presentation. Technically this is the ad hoc committee. Daren, I assume you're the president presenting.

Daren Anderson: Is the ad hoc committee okay with me presenting this? Great. Good evening. I'm Daren Anderson. I'm with Open Space, Parks and Golf. Tonight I've got my colleague, Lester Hendrie, Supervising Ranger at Foothills Park, with me as well. We're here tonight to discuss that 7.7 acre parcel of parkland up at Foothills Park and to receive guidance from the Commission on how best to use this land, help us chart our way forward through the process, and guidance on concepts that you think should be further developed to include cost estimates, if that's the way the Commission would like to move forward. A quick background. In August 2014, Council dedicated this piece of land as parkland and directed the Commission to guide the process through developing options for land use. We hosted ranger-led tours up at the site and held a public meeting to collect suggestions on what the public wanted to see at this location. There were three major themes that came out of this public meeting and outreach that we had done. Primarily there were recreation activities, and there was a variety. All this is in the staff report. Restoration themes. The third being sustain the nursery; it's a vital part of the park, and we'd really like to see it stay. The staff report lists a number of challenges associated with developing this particular parcel. They range from the very poor soil which is about 5 feet deep. It's overburdened; that came from the adjacent quarry. Buckeye Creek flows right through the property and associated sediment, flooding, culvert issues and creek setback limitations. All part of the creek passing through this piece of property. The need for the hydrologic study to address those aforementioned creek issues. The lack of any existing utilities on the parcel. The easements, such as the emergency ingress and egress easement. The fact that it's a one-way entry and exit that passes through a maintenance area. In November 2014, the ad hoc committee provided an update for Council at a joint meeting. The Council had a number of suggestions and questions, all enumerated in the report. The staff report includes a section on feasibility and needs assessment associated with these themes that were generated. I just want to highlight this. This assessment was done by staff; this was not part of the Master Plan. It was predicated on an analysis of our existing facilities, such as our campground. We looked at our reservations and confirmed when it's busy, when it's booked, and when we had extra requests. This is staff analysis and analysis of our existing reservations. For example, on the recreation theme we looked at camping. This was one of the elements we looked at. The demand on camping is there. We've got our existing Towle Camp. When we look at reservations, we know weekends during the summer we always book out. There is demand for more camping at our park, and we could definitely fill additional requests if there was another campground. The feasibility section lists a number of issues that make camping problematic in that area. Likewise for restoration, it's fairly clear the site would definitely benefit from restoration. The need is very clear. It's bare soil basically, compacted, with a few weeds. You can see in the photo of the site

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the adjacent area is heavily treed and wooded. There's a variety of options for restoration. The feasibility of restoration, however, is challenging but not impossible. I've been to restoration workshops where I've seen very compacted, poor soil eventually made proper, healed basically. There's a variety of different ways that could happen, but it would be long and involved. The last page of the staff report includes a list of nine options that the staff and the ad hoc committee have put together, that we thought might foster discussion and help guide the discussion a little bit tonight. Attachment C, there's a number of aerial photographs. If there was a particular amenity that you saw that was generated as part of these suggestions that you thought was really important to add to Foothills, let's say camping or a group picnic area, but you thought it might not be appropriate for the 7.7 acre spot, but you did think it was necessary, Attachment C was to help illustrate there are other areas in Foothills that might be an option to consider. This particular one is a little spot below Station 8 up in Foothills. It's flat, small. You'll see the depiction of what it would look like if you put one of the amenities there. I believe this is a group pavilion area and what it would look like with the Acterra nursery in that spot. Only to illustrate that if there was a particular amenity that you really wanted to have and you didn't think it would fit in the 7.7 acres, this was just another option to consider. There is an aerial photo that shows what it would look like if you placed the group picnic area and a parking lot in the 7.7 acres. This was just an example we took from a Santa Clara County park. This is a group picnic area that would probably accommodate about 100 people. It's covered and a parking lot that would accommodate about that many vehicles is associated with it. Again, it's rough estimates; just strictly to give you an idea what it would look like with these amenities on this property. That concludes the staff presentation. I defer to the ad hoc committee if there is anything else to add. Lester and I are available for questions.

Chair Reckdahl: Anyone from the ad hoc committee?

Commissioner Knopper: Thank you very much, Daren and Lester, for leading the group meetings. Obviously this is a hot issue. A lot of people have opinions about it, and there's a lot of different elements that go into making the appropriate decisions as to what this parcel of land could or couldn't be. I wanted to say thank you very much for that. This staff report was extremely efficient and laid everything out so everybody understands all the different parameters and all of the different issues that might preclude us from going in one specific direction. We obviously want to open it up to the Commission for discussion.

Chair Reckdahl: We'll open it up for questions or comments. Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: Thank you for the report, Daren, and thank you to the ad hoc committee for your work. I think it's a really well thought out report. I have a couple of comments. First of all, I think what has been missing is the hydrology study. That is of

paramount importance. We know there are problems there. Despite some kind of attempted remediation, the creek channelization has gotten worse. Those things are definitely deteriorating rather than getting better. For us to make the best use of our natural resources, we need to invest in the study. It just seems like a no-brainer to get this study done. I appreciate you, Daren, having worked on this previously. The last time you proposed it, this wasn't yet dedicated parkland. There's a lot more interest in this now. I hope that will gain traction. I wouldn't ever want to see a parking lot go into that area. Any activity that needs a parking lot should automatically be crossed off the list. The beauty of this land is it's a continuation of this valley. I don't see why we would want to mess it up with a parking lot. Something that is undervalued in this report is the interest in hiking trails. There's a comment here that it wasn't stated in public meetings, but I do recall people mentioning it. There's a couple of line items, Number 7, it's mentioned in your list of public comments. Line item number 23 for connectivity. I think people are interested also in trails with respect to this idea of it being a rustic campground. The idea is that you would hike in there. I don't think anyone, aside from using it maybe as some children's activity center, was really contemplating having people drive into this area. I don't really support camping at this site, but I do support trails because I support connectivity. Connecting this as one continuous valley, it doesn't have to be some extensive trail system. In supporting the hydrology study, I very much support restoration in whatever way we can do it. It'd probably have to be done quite slowly. The hydrology study would help plan that all out. As far as Acterra goes, I know they provide essential activities for the city, but I do not think it should be assumed that Acterra should be on this site. It's parkland. There are other places Acterra can go if the hydrology study shows that they're in the wrong place. I feel the same way about the maintenance yard. That was recently remodeled, so obviously we wouldn't want to do anything to it too soon. Again, there wasn't a big picture. There wasn't a comprehensive look at this land the last time that maintenance area was remodeled. I think it is in the way, but it happens to be there and I know it was really expensive. Just in terms of long-term thinking, maybe it should go somewhere else. The same with Acterra. I would not support renewing their lease for 5 years, not until the hydrology study is done. Maybe some shorter term renewal. That's not to say that Acterra is not incredibly important to our city. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Lauing.

Commissioner Lauing: Just a few questions before getting to the options that were discussed. Is it fair to say that under almost all circumstances, unless it were a parking lot, that that 5 feet of stuff has to come off? I didn't quite get if you can put stuff on top of that and get habitat going in there.

Mr. Anderson: Again, I think that's partly predicated on the outcome of the hydrologic study. That'll dictate some of that. The other part is there are lots of options that could

456 go on top. That wouldn't necessarily have to be removed. I was talking with some of our
457 Public Works staff who have talked about you could get rid of some of it. You could
458 reshape and contour parts, bring in new soil for a portion. There are lots of options to
459 consider that don't involve necessarily removing all of it.

460
461 Commissioner Lauing: Okay, that's going to be a huge cost. I just had a detailed
462 question. The water goes through there, and you were talking about how the sediment
463 settles out at the end of the acreage. This is the last opportunity to clear that before
464 getting into the large culverts. If it goes in there, does it just settle in there and that's
465 where it mostly has to get cleaned out of?

466
467 Mr. Anderson: Ideally you're doing the clean outs before that. There are multiple points
468 where you've got access. The adjacent landowner does have his staff person come in and
469 do those clean outs. If you didn't and you had an accumulation of those heavy sediments
470 and you had a big rain flush, yes, it could back up there and eventually clog certain
471 elements either downstream or right there in the 7.7 acres and cause overflow.

472
473 Commissioner Lauing: Thanks for adding that information that that cost has been
474 covered by the owner there. That's important for Council to understand. The hydrologic
475 study, Keith and I are both on the CIP committee, and we battled for that last year. I
476 think there's going to be more receptivity to that. We've got to do first things first, and
477 that's clearly one of the first things. Also, it's great that you just point out that whatever
478 need comes up, it doesn't have to go in that area. There's other places at the park. I think
479 that was really helpful. I don't think, in terms of the context of this report, that we should
480 be too optimistic that the specifics for the 7.7 acres is going to be forecast or identified by
481 the Parks Master Plan, because they're looking at a gazillion acres, and the specific uses
482 of that one is not likely. They might come up with "we need an outdoor place
483 somewhere for meetings," and that's one of ten options as you said. I want to be on the
484 record for that. In terms of general comments, that's it for me.

485
486 Mr. Anderson: I was just going to tag onto one point you mentioned. To highlight again,
487 the Master Plan will be completed November 2015. If we got approval for the hydrologic
488 study, the earliest it could start is July 2015. It would not be completed by the time the
489 Master Plan is. Any studies or any analysis done by the Master Plan would be absent the
490 information from the hydrologic study.

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492 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Hetterly.

493
494 Commissioner Hetterly: Thanks. First, I want to thank all the speakers for coming
495 tonight. I really appreciate that every time this is on the agenda, a lot of you show up and
496 tell us about what it is that you love about that spot. Just as a lot of folks didn't know it
497 existed, we also don't know much about what Acterra's doing there or what the nursery's

all about. It would really be helpful for us and for the public to reiterate that at every opportunity that you get. Looking at the ad hoc recommendations, I think we would likely have consensus up here about supporting the hydrology study, and that should come first before anything else. I agree with Commissioner Crommie that five years is probably too long a lease, given that we haven't done that study yet and we don't know what our options are or how quickly we may or may not want to act on something. I would renew the lease but for some period shorter than the five years. I would also not support expanding the scope of the Master Plan to include a lot of work on this topic. Simply because of the timing, I don't think it's very effective. I also don't think it makes a lot of sense to try to invest in fencing and supervision to open up the site to the public in the interim. We've had numerous opportunities for the public to go there. There hasn't been a public clamoring for information, to see what's going on. I don't feel a compelling need to jump through hoops to open it for people to look around.

Chair Reckdahl: Any other comments? I have a few comments and questions for you, Daren. What was the native condition, say 200 years ago? Would this be a grassland or would there be shrubs there? Do we know?

Mr. Anderson: I don't have that information. Perhaps Lester Hendrie can comment.

Lester Hendrie: I showed the pictures to Peter. I did some research just to see the oldest aerial photos I could find, back into the '50s. Excuse me, not the '50s, the 30's I believe, before the quarry was excavated. It was contiguous valley, Los Trancos Valley, where the picnic and the Interpretive Center are. Buckeye Creek had always meandered across it, about in its existing location. It wasn't channelized.

Chair Reckdahl: That valley was covered with wildflowers or would it be shrubs?

Mr. Hendrie: The valley had been used for pasture land for quite some time. Just looking through the aerial photographs and the history information, we could not find when Buckeye Creek was diverted against the hillside. It used to flow right down the middle of the valley. In the oldest aerial photographs we could find, it had already been diverted. It was probably diverted at the turn of the century.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Also the bathrooms right now that we have at the Interpretive Center and by the picnic areas, are those septic or do we have a sewer system or how do they get rid of the waste?

Mr. Hendrie: The Interpretive Center at Foothills Park is the last restroom on the sewer system. It ends at that point. The Oak Grove picnic area, the one that's closest to the 7.7 acres, is on a septic system.

Chair Reckdahl: If we put a new picnic area in where we wanted a bathroom, would we use septic or would we try and hook up?

Mr. Hendrie: Yes, it would have to be on septic.

Chair Reckdahl: How about that alternate location, we'd septic that also?

Mr. Hendrie: The location below Fire Station 8, that cut slope, would be accessible to sewer. The sewer is between that site and Boronda Lake. It flows along the turf there.

Chair Reckdahl: If we were to put camping in, would that be a big financial impact? To be able to hook up the sewage versus septic.

Mr. Hendrie: I don't know what the costs would be, but it's not that far of a run. 75 yards approximately from the flat below Fire Station 8.

Chair Reckdahl: In the past, have we considered adding camping at all to Foothills Park.

Mr. Anderson: Many years ago, the former director had considered different options to increase revenue. One of them was adding yurts in and around the existing campground.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. That's it.

Commissioner Hetterly: One more comment?

Chair Reckdahl: Yes, please.

Commissioner Hetterly: I meant to comment on the theme concepts that you had outlined in the staff report. Generally speaking, I'm probably leaning most supportively towards the habitat restoration. Buckeye Creek dechanneling is a really interesting prospect. I think that if we were to displace Acterra, I would want to make it a priority to find them another suitable location. Just for the ad hoc's benefit as you keep thinking about that. Thanks.

Chair Reckdahl: What? Go ahead.

Vice Chair Markevitch: I don't know what our next steps are for this report. Do we take this to Council with our findings?

Mr. Anderson: I'll be looking to the Commission for guidance on that. Specifically we have to come back for a recommendation from the Commission before we come back to

Council for something. If that's what you want to do. If you wanted to do a study session with Council, whatever the Commission would like, I'd be glad to help facilitate.

Vice Chair Markevitch: If I recall, I think we did want to do a study session with Council at some point. I'd also like to see, before we do that, a "back of the envelope" on the groupings. If it's a campsite, what would the rough costs be? If it's restoration of the site to wild lands, what that would be. That type of thing. I know, for example, we can't relocate the maintenance yard because of the fact that there's an underground gas tank there, and that would be prohibitively expensive. It would be nice, because it gives us more to think about and to discuss with the Council.

Commissioner Lauing: I'd like to put a question back to the ad hoc. Did you guys give any weight to any of these or are they equally weighted? That's the first question. The second question is, because of this good work of saying there are alternative spaces, it seems like that's another level of analysis that should be—come to think of it, now that we see that, it'd be better to be away from the personal residence of Mr. Arrillaga and stuff like that. Maybe three of these go off of here relative specifically to the 7.7 acres.

Commissioner Knopper: Before I address what you said, I want to slightly disagree with what you just said. I know that there was a possibility of a discussion/study session with Council that was requested at our joint meeting in December. That's almost putting the cart before the horse. Until we do the hydrologic study and find out what is possible and what are the environmental impacts, it's almost impossible to make suggestions as to what should actually happen there. There's a lot of creek setback requirements, the channelization, the sediment, if we get rain again and it floods. There's so many things that would have impact, that if we make a suggestion and people just sort of lock into, yes, we need a picnic area, and then we realize after we do that study, well, you know what? That just doesn't make sense now. Then we have to sort of backtrack.

Vice Chair Markevitch: I agree with you on that. The two things that are going to drive these decisions are the hydrologic study and the costs of each option. Getting back to what Ed had asked, we did not weight these. We just put them all out there, because we just wanted a discussion amongst the Commission members to get their ideas. We didn't want to sway them one way or another. These pictures of the other options for the campgrounds and other areas of the park, I don't want to start getting into a "let's redesign the entire park." We need to stick to the 7.7 acres. It's comforting to know that if there are other options out there, it could be done. It's just something to think about.

Commissioner Knopper: The other issue that I wanted to bring up is I too agree that we shouldn't dive too deep into the MIG because of the weird timing of the report. However, the benefit of having all of that download and that strategic information is that we will see what gaps are in our programming as a city overall. From a broad analysis

perspective, if we see that we need more campsites in the City of Palo Alto, that could help drive this conversation. It doesn't have to be specific to the 7.7 acres.

Chair Reckdahl: Rob, do you have a comment?

Rob de Geus: I just wanted to mention about the study session. Sometimes when we have study sessions with Council, you get nine different opinions about something. This was one of those things. It may have been mentioned by one or two Council Members that a study session might be helpful, but I don't think that was a consensus or direction necessarily from Council. If the Commission or staff are generally in agreement as to what the recommendation is, then a study session probably isn't necessary, rather a staff report that's written together with staff and the Commission should be forwarded to the Council. They can decide, if they agree or disagree, whether they want to engage the Commission in a study session or something else.

Chair Reckdahl: I'll make one comment here. It seems to me like this is a new toy, and people really want to use this new toy. We have to be careful of saying we want to put a campground here as opposed to putting a campground in the best spot in Foothills Park. If that happens, then we'd choose the spot. If it's not the best spot, we shouldn't do it just because it's our new toy. Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: I think that the ad hoc has done its role. They met with staff. They studied it. They held a public meeting. They got public input. I don't think there's anything more the ad hoc needs to do other than write a draft of a recommendation to City Council. Having the ad hoc spin off and do anything more would be an inappropriate use of an ad hoc. I picked up on that at our Council meeting. I heard a couple of comments saying, "Is this behind the scenes work or is this your full Commission?" People were asking that. The ad hoc has reported back to us, and we're all fully capable now of commenting on a report they write and suggesting edits, coming together as a Commission and doing that. That's what we've done in the past. We did that when we had our creek and urban trails ad hoc that led to a recommendation. We did it on El Camino Park.

Commissioner Lauing: I don't mean to interrupt. It may be that the consensus is already here right now from what we've heard. We're ready to recommend that we do the hydrologic study and put the rest of it on hold.

Commissioner Crommie: In that case, it would just be a step-wise recommendation. There's a lot of meat in this document that we've mulled over. Do we want to say just the hydrologic study or do we want to write a memo saying what we think is important there? Just like in categories.

Commissioner Lauing: I was just trying to summarize what I heard around the table so far. It seems like everything is dependent on that study, before we can prioritize anything. On top of which a lot of this stuff needs fleshing out in terms of cost and so on.

Commissioner Crommie: We might also give a recommendation on the Acterra question, because we probably should weigh in on that. I didn't hear everyone's opinion on that. I'd like people's advice on whether we think we need to weigh in on that or not. I have an opinion on it.

Vice Chair Markevitch: I have a point of order on that one. This is a discussion item, not an action item. I don't know if we can take a vote tonight.

Commissioner Crommie: No, you're right. I meant for that to come back to us; make it an action item next time. We have to decide the scope. You just presented hydrology only. I'd say maybe broaden it out just a little bit.

Commissioner Knopper: I think that it should be hydrology only. We've been working on this for several months now. Any future decision really is dependent on that. Any element that we pull apart out of the staff report could change based on what the hydrologic study comes back with. That would be very useful information for the Council. It would be definitive. To the point earlier, it does feel a little bit like a new toy that everybody's really excited about and it's fantastic because it's so rare. In a geographically stressed area like Palo Alto, to all of a sudden find new acreage, it's pretty awesome. A thoughtful, scientific, definitive study would provide much needed information. Next steps would logically flow from that.

Chair Reckdahl: Let's break this off now, and we can talk more about it when we set the agenda for next week at the end of the meeting. Any final comments, Daren or Rob?

Mr. Anderson: I could use just a little guidance. I heard some suggestions that we start with the cost estimates. That was one of the original ideas from Council, and we've heard it in various different iterations throughout the process. What I was hoping to have is maybe a little guidance on what to get cost estimates on. It's fairly time intensive to get cost estimates for everyone of those. If there was anything that you felt strongly about or guidance or do you want cost estimates for everything? I just need a little guidance there.

Vice Chair Markevitch: That's going to come after the hydrologic study. It's a waste of time to do it before. It's just something that I felt was important when it was presented later on. If it looks like next month we're just going to vote on the hydrologic study, then it's not necessary now.

Mr. Anderson: Great, thank you. Did you want to see in combination with the hydrologic study a recommendation regarding the Acterra nursery lease renewal?

Commissioner Lauing: I would say yes. In connection with Commissioner Crommie saying broaden it, we might also want to include what Jennifer suggested about making a statement that we do not think it should be open to the public at this point.

Commissioner Knopper: I would agree with that.

Commissioner Lauing: That's an issue that more than one person was supporting, so we need to be clear in our recommendation in that regard.

Chair Reckdahl: We'll talk about this at the end when we set the agenda, figure out what we want to do next week and what we want to put off. Next month.

4. Update and Discussion of the Design Competition for the 101 Highway/Pedestrian Bridge Project.

Chair Reckdahl: We have four speakers. Each speaker gets three minutes. Since we do have a lot of speakers, please try and keep it brief if possible. We would like to keep the meeting going. The first one is Alex Von Feldt, followed by Claire Elliott.

Alex Von Feldt: Hi again. As I said early, I'm Alex Von Feldt with Acterra. The reason why I'm speaking on this agenda item is that Acterra is one of the seven or eight environmental nonprofits that actually reside in the Peninsula Conservation Center. That is a building that was purchased with funds from generous donors in the late '70s or early '80s with the intent that they would rent out the space very cost effectively to local environmental nonprofits. We are in the building. Canopy, Committee for Green Foothills, California Native Plant Society and others. Our building is very close to this, and we actually have many people that work for our nonprofit as well as other nonprofits that bike to work all the time. Having this option is wonderful because, as you all know, when it rains they close the undercrossing from Adobe, so it makes a much longer ride. In looking at the three options that were presented, I'd like to voice my support for Option C for a few reasons. One is just that the profile is much more understated than the other ones. I think it reflects Palo Alto's ethic, if you will, of respecting the land, where manmade structures should be sub-serving, especially in a setting like this with the beautiful Baylands around. It's also, compared to the other options, much more friendly to wildlife. Birds are all around this area. This is a very important estuary as you probably all know. So many birds are migrating around. You see herons and eaglets all the time around here. The other structures look like they would pose a bigger threat to them. I would say I support Option C. Lastly, the way that it interfaces with the

Baylands, using a native plant pallet. I know the landscape architect that is on that plan. I have confidence that it would be done sensitively. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Next is Claire Elliott, followed by Emily Renzel.

Claire Elliott: I'm Claire Elliot. I'm a resident of Palo Alto and a frequent bicycler to work at the Peninsula Conservation Center, because I work at Acterra. I'm absolutely delighted that we're getting closer to having a year-round overpass. I would be curious to hear, I didn't see it in the staff report but I didn't read every word of it, whether anybody actually considered making it less expensive perhaps by using an underpass that was watertight. I don't know if that's done anywhere. We go under the Bay in BART, and it's probably a little late to bring up that option. It seems like it might be cheaper to go that route. It might be kind of cool. It could be translucent, so you could see the fish swimming upstream. That would be one option that maybe no one has considered. I would love to see it connect to Adobe Creek Trail, so that people can avoid going out on West Bayshore. That's very treacherous as you're bicycling down Fabian and have to crossover to get to that underpass. It's a really dangerous spot. If we could have the water district's support and Palo Alto's support, I don't know what it's going to take to be able to bicycle up along Adobe Creek and avoid that road crossing. That would be fabulous. Like Alex, I like the lower profile look if we're going for a bridge, to do something with less bird entrapment and lower expense if possible and lower profile. I've also worked on creek cleanup days along that stretch of Adobe Creek. There's a lot of wildlife in there. I was delighted to see and hear a kingfisher fly up that stretch of creek. It's a really special place, and it's delightful that we're going to get people out there on foot instead of driving to go visit the Baylands. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Emily Renzel, followed by Irene Steves.

Emily Renzel: Well, I concur with the last two speakers with respect to preferring Option C, which is the low profile proposal. It's very exciting to see the other proposals, but I think they would be a huge distraction from the beautiful natural areas that we have there. Also they're not consistent with the idea of just enjoying that natural area rather than to be distracted by being in the McDonald's arch or whatever. As I looked at the different videos of these things, the one that's like a canoe kind of lost me. The large one that is the choice of some of these other commissions struck me as being a real traffic hazard. I listen to 740 traffic all the time when I'm driving, because I want to know where I can go and when. We have a lot of accidents along this stretch in Palo Alto; San Antonio, Embarcadero, Oregon. All the time there's traffic backups due to accidents. I worry that putting something that has all these sparkly disks or whatever they are is going to distract drivers and make it an unsafe thing. It's secondary to my concern about having a profile that fits with the concept of Baylands which are low and flat. I urge you to support Option C.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Irene Steves, followed by Shani Kleinhaus.

Irene Steves: Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Irene, and tonight I'm here to speak on behalf of the Sierra Club. At its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on January 26, 2015, the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter Conservation Committee took up the issue of the proposed Palo Alto bicycle bridge. The chapter's headquarters is located near what is to be the bridge's Bayshore landing point. The chapter has been following the public process, having previously commented in tandem with the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. The Conservation Committee unanimously agreed on three points. First, a signature bridge that incorporates aesthetic design features that pose peril to wildlife is a bridge signature that a progressive city such as Palo Alto should have no part of. We see in Options A and B unjustifiable and unmitigable risks to birds. Second, as a national club that is very invested in furthering environmental transportation such as bicycling, we would prefer that bicycle transportation funding be used economically in order to achieve more bicycle infrastructure. We have a long way to go before we feel that we have so much bicycle infrastructure that we can start spending large sums to turn our bridges into public art over freeways. Please consider using half the money to fix the Embarcadero Bridge. Third, our Conservation Committee recommends that Palo Alto proceed with what we perceive as the only Baylands-compatible design, Option C. Option C is humble and brings nature to the city rather than the city into nature. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Our last speaker is Shani Kleinhaus.

Shani Kleinhaus: Thank you. Shani Kleinhaus with Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. I also live really close to the bridge, and I use the underpass when I walk my dog sometimes. It's near home. Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society together with the Sierra Club sent a letter saying that we really worry about birds and risks to birds and how the bridge designs will interact with nature in the Baylands. As we looked at the three designs, we find all of them have issues, but some of them have issues that we think are unmitigable, no way to deal with them. There are two things that kill birds in general in terms of structures. One of them is collision, and collisions occur with transmission towers, with wires. Wires is a big thing, bridges included. And with buildings. Some cities around here started looking at bird-safe design for buildings. There is no reason to put wires in one of the most used areas for birds of this kind. The other thing that causes mortalities is lights. Light pollution is a huge issue, and cities are starting to adopt ordinances for dark sky during migration season and other times. Bridges that have something that includes a lot of light, like the second option, are really dangerous. Even Option C, which we favored because it's lower and it doesn't have those protrusions and a lot of wires only some, has lights at night. We would like to see a change in that. Option A, which looks to us as the most hazardous to birds because of its size and because the

incompatibility with nature or the sense of space of nature in Palo Alto, if you look at the handouts that you were given, the lights during the evening or during fog can actually, those reflective things that are supposed to mitigate the problem, will probably be not effective. During the night, you don't see anything and birds migrate during the night. That's the time they fly. Only the largest birds actually fly during the day. Most of the birds fly at night. There's energy conservation and many, many other reasons, I don't want to get into it, but almost all the shore birds fly at night. Those are the birds that will fly through there. This is a real, huge risk to them. The other thing is those disks have not been tried. I have seen them used at McClellan Ranch. A different type of disk but still the same idea of a reflective disk that moves around to prevent birds from nesting during construction. We found them to be non-effective in terms of how the birds respond to them. People on the trail and people in the offices are really annoyed. Thank you. I hope you move with Option C recommendation with some modification in terms of lighting and potentially a few others. I'm sure there will be a lot of work with the designers later on. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Elizabeth Ames is here from the Public Works Department. She's been heading up this study, this contest. I'll turn it over to her then.

Elizabeth Ames: Thank you. Good evening. I'm Elizabeth Ames, Senior Project Manager with the city in Public Works. I also have Hung Nguyen, he's our project engineer, sitting over here. I was hoping that we could try to structure this meeting where we could show the YouTube videos and then potentially have the design—there's one design team here. Do I have two design teams? We have one design team here, the winning design, Submission A, here. They can talk about their design after the YouTube video. What we've been doing is structuring these as a study session. We would present the YouTube videos and then segue into the design team discussion, if they are here, and then we would have more discussion with the Commission. If you're okay with that.

Chair Reckdahl: Yeah, I'm okay with that. Go ahead.

Ms. Ames: I also wanted to highlight that Judith Wasserman is here. She is the chair of the design competition. She's also here and available for questions. I wanted to just draw your attention to this comments matrix. I think this is the first page in Attachment F. I don't know if the Commission got the latest—oh, you did get the latest one that has the Public Art Commission comments.

Chair Reckdahl: We received that by email.

Ms. Ames: Do you want a hard copy?

Chair Reckdahl: If you have copies, please pass them around.

Ms. Ames: Yes. I also have the latest comments we had from the public via the city's website, cityofpaloalto.org/101. We have the YouTube videos and then this way to comment on the designs. That's another attachment. Those two documents are relatively hot off the press, so to speak. We have an updated comments matrix, which is the first page of Attachment F in the packet. I was basically taking comments from all the boards and commissions in the month of January on the pros and cons of each design submission. I will forward this over to the City Council. The City Council would then decide on potentially a design on February 23rd. That's the tentative Council meeting. That's the emphasis I was hoping to gain from the Commission. I'm not asking for a vote. Unless you feel compelled to vote, that's fine. We can do a straw poll. I was trying to get comments in general and fill in the matrix, pro and con for each design submission. That's really what I was trying to do tonight, and forward this to Council. The last time I saw this Commission, we talked about the guiding principles with the Park and Rec Commission and we formalized the guiding principles with this Commission, and then I forwarded that over to the City Council. Those guiding principles, I believe, are an exhibit or attachment in the packet. We used those guiding principles and the design guidelines as the guide, so to speak, for the design competition. The City hired AIA California Council to manage the competition. With those materials, they solicited design teams internationally and locally. We got 20 proposals, qualifications, and a design intent. Those 20 proposals were narrowed down to three. Those three teams received a \$20,000 stipend to develop the designs that you see now, which are on the YouTube videos. The boards are here as well. We have the design boards and a YouTube video, which was made available to the competition jury, which was the five member jury and the four member ARB panel, so it was a nine member group. This information along with the design competitors, they were all presenting their designs via PowerPoint. The competition jury decided the winning team was Submission A, which is the confluence or arch design, which is over on the far left. Judith Wasserman's the chair of the competition, and she could recap a little bit more about what happened there. With that, we're just taking this information forward to the boards and commissions and we're hoping to get comments from this Commission tonight.

Chair Reckdahl: I have a question. You said on February 23rd the Council will be talking about this, voting on which design to pick. How is all the board and commission input being transmitted? Are they just getting the same type of thing that we got from the notes? Is there going to be some staff report summarizing it or is it just going to be raw results like we had?

Ms. Ames: There will be a staff report, and we'll try to generally summarize what we've heard at the boards and commissions. If there's meeting notes, we're going to incorporate those. We have, for example, verbatim meeting notes of the competition itself. I don't know if we get any meeting notes from study sessions. If we do ...

915 Rob de Geus: We'll have meeting notes on this.

916
917
918 Ms. Ames: I was going to include the meeting notes from all the boards and commission
919 if possible and a high level recap in the staff report.

920
921 Chair Reckdahl: Very good. Do you want to start with the videos now or do you have
922 more content you want to talk about?

923
924 Ms. Ames: I think that's self-explanatory. The videos say a lot. Then we can go into
925 questions and answers after that. First will be Submission A, which was the winning
926 design.

927
928 [Video presentation]

929
930 Ms. Ames: I believe we have some of the design team members here tonight, so they can
931 speak roughly five minutes on the design. That's what we've been doing on the other
932 commissions and boards. If that's okay with you.

933
934 Commissioner Crommie: Are you going to show the other videos too? Okay.

935
936 Ms. Ames: Just to simplify, we were thinking of having the design team speak now or
937 we can wait. It's up to you.

938
939 Chair Reckdahl: I'd like to see all three videos and then go into comments. Otherwise, I
940 think it'll break it up and stretch it out too much.

941
942 Ms. Ames: Okay, sure. Sounds good.

943
944 [Two video presentations]

945
946 Ms. Ames: We can have the design team ...

947
948 Chair Reckdahl: My preference, unless Commissioners object, would be not to have
949 them give a talk right now. If each individual Commissioner has questions that they can
950 answer, then we'll have them answer at the time as opposed to a presentation.

951
952 Ms. Ames: Okay, sounds good.

953
954 Chair Reckdahl: Any comments?

955

Commissioner Hetterly: I have a couple of questions to start with. On the last one we saw, "C", the touchdown area on the west seemed to spend more time on what happens when you touch down on the west side. We don't have very much information in our packet on "B" or "C" frankly. It was hard to tell what the surfacing is, whether there's landscaping there. From the video, it looked like it was just a hardscape all along the road there. Can you tell us a little more about what that looks like on the west side?

Ms. Ames: The west side near the Adobe connection, where it converges there at the Adobe Creek Reach Trail, is very constrained. It's difficult to landscape that area, so we've highlighted that issue in the design guidelines which, I believe, is Attachment E.

Commissioner Crommie: Can you give us page numbers.

Ms. Ames: Maybe I highlighted that. Hold on. On page 24 of Attachment E. It shows this constrained area where you've got a small landscape buffer and then you've got the sidewalk. You have a stairwell leading down over by 3600 West Bayshore. Do you have all the that? Do you have the picture of that?

Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah.

Ms. Ames: Essentially it's constrained because we have to put the ramp next to the sidewalk. Right next to the sidewalk would be theoretically the curb. That area still needs to be designed. We only gave the design teams a month essentially to come up with these concepts. Those touchdowns or those tie-ins still need to be more refined. This highlights that we still have constrained landscaping area, and we also are showing the bicycles sharing the vehicle lane at that location as well, where the ramp ties into (inaudible).

Commissioner Hetterly: Given those restrictions and the extent of the design, there's not much variation at this point in what the west side looks like. Is that what you're saying? Between the various plans.

Ms. Ames: Correct. There's not much variation where the tie-in occurs.

Commissioner Hetterly: Another question about that last one. The plaza on the west side that's below the loop, what is the surfacing there for the plaza?

Ms. Ames: I believe that was cement or pervious. They could propose pervious pavement, but I believe it was cement.

Commissioner Hetterly: It's some kind of hardscape?

Ms. Ames: Yes.

Commissioner Hetterly: My other question was whether Submissions A and B have stair access on one or both sides?

Ms. Ames: I believe Submission A has the stairs on the west side. I don't believe it was located—no, I think it was on both sides. Submission A does have it on both sides. I'm not sure about "B"; it wasn't clear.

Commissioner Hetterly: Those are all my questions. Thanks.

Commissioner Knopper: For Submission A, since that was the chosen submission, I'd like to focus on that particular one. Can you address the bird issue that came up a few times during public comments? Since we are the Park and Rec Commission, I thought that was important for us to talk about.

Ms. Ames: The design team was really charged with innovative design. I just wanted to point out that we did have these guiding design principles, Attachment D, which is innovation, versatility, interconnectedness, and conservation. With this kind of challenge, the design teams came up with what you saw in the YouTube videos. Part of that was those bird ...

Commissioner Crommie: That's on page 13. I'm sorry to interrupt. I just wanted to let the Commission know the guidelines are on page 13 of our handout.

Ms. Ames: This is Attachment D, guiding design principles. Yes, thank you.

Commissioner Crommie: It's really hard to leaf through and find all the attachments in a moment's notice. Any time you can give us page numbers, it's really helpful.

Ms. Ames: Okay, sorry. Thank you. Page number 13 in the staff report. With that challenge, each design team came up with the unique concept. Submission A came up with these disks, these brushed stainless steel disks. That design needs to be studied further. We would have to ask the teams to provide studies and more evaluation, more research if that can work as a bird-friendly design. It was an innovation as part of this submission. It's not something that we got research on or it was proven.

Commissioner Knopper: I think it would be important moving forward to meet with stakeholders like the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club, organizations that work, study, live, breathe, eat saving and conserving the creatures that would have the greatest impact for this particular structure. I did like the lighting. That was very unique, that it was motion. I read that people were concerned about the lighting, and that it was motion

driven. If no one's on the bridge at night, it's dark. I thought that was terrific. The bird issue is something that I would have experts in the field really flesh out to figure out what kind of material would work best, so we don't hurt anybody in the process. When I mean anybody, I mean feathered people.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Lauing, do you have comments?

Commissioner Lauing: Are we at the stage where we're also weighing in for comments that she writes down or are we just asking questions at this stage?

Chair Reckdahl: At this point, let's go with questions and then we can summarize to give her material.

Commissioner Lauing: I don't have any questions.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: I have a question for Chair Wasserman, if I'm saying your name correctly. I watched the entire video and read the transcripts. I really digested what went on in your December 17 meeting. I thought you handled everything really well. I was a little bit disappointed when the jury was getting ready to vote. The ARB got to speak first, and I thought they gave some really interesting—I'm addressing this to you too, Elizabeth, thank you so much. I should have started out by thanking everyone. This project has been so long in coming. It's just been amazing to watch this evolve. I've been pleased that I've been able to support it along the way. I think I was probably the first person to bring this to our Commission's attention. I'm an avid cyclist and environmentalist. I spend a lot of time in the Baylands, and I had a connection with PABAC, the Palo Alto Bicycle Advisory Committee. Richard, I can't remember his last name, who was two or three Chairs ago, fought so hard for this project. It almost died many times. He really kept it going. I think our Commission actually brought some visibility to this project. I'm really happy you've come to us. Getting back to that December 17th meeting, before you guys had your vote, I noticed that the ARB got to discuss things. It was a joint meeting with the Architectural Review Board sitting there and also the jury. I didn't get to attend it, but again I got to watch it and read the transcript. When it came time for the vote, I think that people were a little perplexed by "B," and people were leaning to Proposals A and C. I was a little bit disappointed because when it came time to vote, there was an over-emphasis on innovation. Let me ask this as a question. What did you feel about your purview in terms of looking at these four categories? You're judging these bridges on four different categories. The first being innovation, the second versatility, the third interconnectedness, and the fourth conservation. The conservation stipulates bird-friendly design. Interconnectedness is just to respect the ecosystem. Versatility is engineering and art and useful for everyone.

Innovation is contemporary, creative, original, maybe identifiable as a landmark. I want to know if you can speak to us on how you as a jury balanced all of those criteria.

Judith Wasserman: That is a very good question, because I don't think that we addressed them all individually and said, "Okay, which bridge do you think is the most innovative? Which bridge has the best conservation attitude?" I think we just looked at the bridges as a whole and discussed how they met the various criteria in the ways that they did it. On the bird issue specifically, everybody had a case to make. Everybody addressed the question. It was taken seriously. We felt that since each of them addressed it, that they were all equal in that range. The team with the flashing disks is here and can answer your questions about how they're intended to work. They introduced it to us by saying that they were modeled after the Mylar strips used in vineyards to keep critters, birds in particular, out of the grapes. They thought that a similar design would keep birds out of the bridge. I don't know a whole lot about birds, so I don't know whether they would do that. There was a landscape architect on the jury. People had different points of view, but we really did look at each one as a whole. If you want me to go into why we ended up where we ended up, I can do that, but I don't think that's what you want to do.

Commissioner Crommie: No, that's good enough for me. I just wanted a general idea. Thank you so much.

Ms. Wasserman: I think it might be instructive to find out why these people did, since that seems to be the biggest argument against that.

Commissioner Crommie: Yes, I will bring up one of them. I'll ask a question. I'm really concerned with creating something that you have to mitigate. What is bothering me about "A" is it's creating this problem and then trying to address it. Whereas, "C" doesn't even create the problem at all. I know "A" is a very talented group. Did you guys do the Mary Avenue crossing. Many of us have driven under that bridge on Highway 280, which is a very cathedral-like bridge. Have you done a pedestrian bridge over a waterway? Did you do anything in Missouri? I don't know if I got that right. Can you come up a minute? I have a question. I want to know if you've ever designed a bridge over a waterway or in an estuary. I also want to know why you came up with a design that you have to spend so much time mitigating for bird safety. Those are my two questions.

John Litzinger: My name's John Litzinger with HNTB. First off, we'll take responsibility for Mary Avenue Bridge whether it's good or bad.

Commissioner Crommie: (crosstalk)

Mr. Litzinger: It seems to get a lot of positive critique and is still talked about in engineering circles and even in the communities. As far as bridges over estuaries and wildlife environmentally sensitive areas, we designed the twin bridges at the Happy Hollow Park and Zoo that go over the Coyote Creek area. That was using the same bridge type as what was proposed here as a concept. The whole corridor from the east side of Happy Hollow, from the parking lot area going across the Coyote Creek area was all an environmentally critical area. Through that area, the same bridge type, same type of cable arrangements. We worked with the City of San Jose on that particular project. Over the course of the design process, we were able to address concerns like that. The cables that are supporting the bridge, the spacing between the cables can be adjusted, but then you enlarge the size of the cable to support the weight. There's a balancing act between art, environment, birds, etc. That's one location in a wildlife area. A second location is the Lake Champlain Bridge, same type of bridge over a waterway. It's on the border of Vermont and New Hampshire. So far for the number of years that it's been there, we've heard no complaints or comments on wildlife and structure conflicts. What we heard from Elizabeth is through the design process, we could provide studies that would either address it or mitigate it or show that there's not an issue. It's an issue that we need to make sure that is addressed with whatever type of bridge used.

Commissioner Crommie: Thank you very much.

Mr. Litzinger: Sure.

HNTB Team Member: May I add to that comment?

Commissioner Crommie: Yes.

HNTB Team Member: I'll be quick. We took the conservation objective very seriously. In thinking about the project as a whole, not just about the span, the greatest threat to bird species as well as many other species is actually the loss of habitat. When we're talking about conservation, I think it's fair to talk about the whole project and the way it affects bird species, not just about the way it passes over the highway. Our scheme is differentiated in that we do not place any fill in the Baylands. We actually create Bay volume. Our scheme anticipates sea level rise, anticipates habitats that these organisms will need in the future. We reactivate the ecological properties of Bay mud, which lies underneath the fill that is placed in the Bay with storm water and removing that fill. There are many ecological components to the design as a whole, looking far into the future that assures we can do all we can for the species. You asked a very specific question about why create something that you have to go through a lot of trouble mitigating. A simple answer to that is that bridge design is very complicated. In this situation, it's even more complicated. In a larger context, the topic of cost is a driving consideration. The most structurally efficient, cost efficient way to negotiate this very

1165 complicated situation is with an arch. The jury member and engineer on the jury, Steve
1166 Burrows, said the Romans did it pretty well, and it's a very time-tested method. That's
1167 very true. The arch accomplishes all of these challenges very effectively in terms of cost.
1168 It does create a cable-suspended deck. We're showing you one approach. As John said,
1169 that approach can be modified. There's other ways to support that deck with cables. In
1170 the Bay context, it is not an unprecedented structural approach. If you look at the
1171 Berkeley Pedestrian Bridge, equally wide, in a more Baylands condition than this because
1172 it is an active tidal flat and this is really upland areas and it's a flood control basin and so
1173 on. That structure has been in existence for over ten years. It's a cable-supported deck.
1174 As a precedent, it should be looked at closely if you're serious about involving
1175 professionals who study patterns of birds and strike incidents.

1176
1177 Commissioner Crommie: Thank you.

1178
1179 Chair Reckdahl: Do you want to say anything?

1180
1181 Vice Chair Markevitch: I don't have any questions.

1182
1183 Chair Reckdahl: I have some questions to go through first, and then everyone gets their
1184 elevator speech of which design they prefer. I first have some questions for Palo Alto
1185 City. On the east side right now, do we have the pictures of east side? As you come off
1186 the bridge, you end up in a "T" right at the current bike path on the west side. Anyone
1187 coming off the bridge is going to have to take a sharp left turn, go across the bridge, take
1188 another sharp left turn to get back on the path. Considering that the bulk of the people
1189 are going from the west side over to the Baylands, why isn't it optimized for someone
1190 going to the Baylands as opposed to dumping you off right next to the freeway there?
1191 Rob, can you bring up the picture? (crosstalk)

1192
1193 Ms. Ames: Are we talking about the west side?

1194
1195 Chair Reckdahl: I'm sorry, east side, on the east side.

1196
1197 Ms. Ames: The east side. The Bay side.

1198
1199 Chair Reckdahl: Yes. When you get off the bridge, there will be a "T" there. Anyone
1200 coming off the bridge now will have to slow down, take a sharp left turn, then go across
1201 the current existing bridge across Adobe Creek, and then take a sharp left going out to the
1202 Baylands.

1203
1204 Commissioner Crommie: I think page 48, sorry, page 28 has a picture of that, of the east
1205 side if our Commission wants to look at it.
1206

Chair Reckdahl: Initially when they were looking at possible layouts, there was one layout that went across the bridge. When it went to the east side, it didn't stop right there, but it continued going across and crossed Adobe Creek and then dumped you out on the way to the Baylands. I was wondering why we removed that as an option.

Ms. Ames: Maybe we can look at page 9 of the packet. Attachment B shows the location of the bridge and the alignment that has this "T" intersection at the San Francisco Bay Trail. Where the approach ramp meets the Bay Trail, it's like a "T" intersection on the east side of the Baylands. We had looked at various alignments in the past, namely the one you mentioned that goes along the creek. We realized that a lot of the users weren't necessarily going in that direction, towards the Bay. Rather, they might be commuting. If you're a recreational user, you might be going towards the Baylands. If the bridge ramp was going parallel to Adobe Creek and terminated by Adobe Creek, that was one specific direction. This direction where there's a "T" intersection seemed most versatile, where somebody going north or south could decide at that point and not have to backtrack if they were going to the north.

Chair Reckdahl: Have we done surveys? I take that route to work, and I see everybody going back into the Baylands and then heading over to the Googleplex and the Shoreline Business Park. I hardly see anyone going north. Before we make a decision on the layout like that, you'd want a survey of where people are going when they cross the bridge.

Ms. Ames: Most of the users we looked at given the build out of this whole area, say that's 20 years from now, there's a complete build out on the east side and the west side. Alta Planning and Design looked at the potential uses and did find that they would mainly go towards the south. Given that though, we also had issues with the Santa Clara Valley Water District. They didn't want us crossing over the Adobe Creek channel on the east side of the freeway. They had a lot of maintenance concerns. With the Santa Clara Valley Water District concerns along with the desire to have connections both north and south, leaving it open for the user to decide, the design team came up with this approach. The design team meaning Alta Planning and Design had done these alignments and presented these alignments to the commissions and the boards previously, and we came up with this kind of connection instead of the one that you saw in 2011, which was parallel into the Baylands and went by Adobe Creek on the east.

Chair Reckdahl: What's problematic is that we're making this bridge with a nice turning radius so you don't have to slow way down. Then at the end of the bridge where it's flat, you're off the bridge now. The expensive part is done and we have a "T." Everyone's going to have to stop and slow their bike down and take a sharp left turn. If you're making the big arching turn on the expensive bridge and stopping at the end, then keeping up speed is not nearly as critical on the bridge.

Ms. Ames: I could say that we are going to potentially go through site and design review, and maybe there can be some design considerations to slow down the bikes and maybe do a better integration and not have this abrupt "T" intersection. There might be a way to have more of a gradual transition.

Chair Reckdahl: Some type of "V." Another question is on the west side. All the designs dump you out away from the freeway. If you now are going back northbound, you're going to have to cross over West Bayshore Road at that point. Are we having a crosswalk there? Are we just going to have the people play Frogger and jump across the traffic? There is quite a bit of traffic on West Bayshore.

Ms. Ames: The west side is complicated. When we had our public scoping meeting, which seems forever, like two years ago, the community asked to open up the Adobe Creek Reach Trail.

Chair Reckdahl: Which I think is a marvelous idea. I like that a lot.

Ms. Ames: Mainly because this access point on the west is so constrained, maybe West Bayshore isn't the best connection to the bridge. The community at the scoping meeting was saying, "Let's open up that maintenance road," Santa Clara Valley Maintenance Road which we're calling the Adobe Creek Reach Trail. That could be a main entrance to the west side of the bridge. Yes, this design crossing, if somebody's going north on West Bayshore, would have to cross over to get to this ramp. There's probably going to be some kind of crosswalk or some kind of crossing that's safe. That's not part of the competition.

Chair Reckdahl: At this point, it's irrelevant because all the designs are in the same boat. Let me move onto some things that are relevant. We have cost estimates for all these. How real are they? Did all three groups have to submit bases for all their costs or did they just do their best guess estimates? Are they based on previous built bridges?

Ms. Ames: At this conceptual stage, we still asked for cost estimates. All the design teams did that. They were roughly in the \$8 million range, which included a 10 percent contingency. The jury also thought that the numbers looked adequate. We don't have engineering drawings, but we did ask for the teams to have design experience. They had to have designed and constructed a bridge in the last ten years. The staff feels and the jury felt that the estimates were okay for now. We'd need to get more cost information later on. Once you do engineering drawings, you know how deep the piles or columns need to be. At 35 percent design roughly is usually when you get a solid estimate and can verify the numbers. At this stage, everybody is saying it's roughly in the \$8 million range.

Chair Reckdahl: The experts on the jury concur with that?

Ms. Ames: Yes. The technical advisory panel, which looked at the cost estimates prior to the competition, didn't have the benefit of seeing the presentations, but they looked at these estimates prior to the competition, had some commentary on the cost estimates and had questions. I think the technical advisory panel memo is also in your packet.

Commissioner Crommie: Yes, it is. It's at the end of the ...

Ms. Ames: It's part of Attachment F I believe.

Commissioner Crommie: Yes. I think it's at the very end after the jury makes their decision.

Ms. Ames: Roughly everyone thought they would basically meet the \$8 million threshold in construction only.

Chair Reckdahl: If we tried to be as cheap and no-frills as possible, what would be the cheapest bridge that we could put over that spot? Do we have an estimate of that?

Ms. Ames: When we did the feasibility study, which was approved by Council at the December 2011 meeting I believe, we had an estimate range between \$6-\$8 million for a bridge. The \$6 million construction estimate was really based on a simple, Caltrans-related bridge. I think it was only 10 feet wide. These bridges are on the magnitude of 18 feet wide, the ones presented tonight.

Chair Reckdahl: If it is only \$2 million over, then we are getting some value. I worry that these \$8 million bridges will become \$16 million by the time they're built. That's outside of my pay grade. I have some questions for the designers. These wires on the network arch are very thin. They're 1 millimeter. Have you worked with that type of wire before? Have you built an arch like this before?

Mr. Litzinger: Yes. We have several designs that we've done that have been constructed within the engineer's estimate from the start. We have a lot of confidence in the bridge type. It's a proven bridge type with low risk of cost escalation along the way. As the spans change, then you have wires of different sizes. We've done a variety of these with different wire size types, different densities of the mesh. If you think about the mesh that way, that kind of balances it. It comes down to the point of aesthetics and other considerations.

Chair Reckdahl: You mentioned Happy Hollow. That's a network arch?

Mr. Litzinger: Yes, it's a network-type arch, very similar to the concept we have shown here.

Chair Reckdahl: They have 1 millimeter wires there?

Mr. Litzinger: Those may have been a little bit larger. In fact, I had some notes that I was taking down to go back and look and see how many wires we were using. The spans were very similar. We might have gone to a larger diameter cable, so we would have fewer of them rather than a small diameter and more frequent.

Chair Reckdahl: But that's going over a creek, so there's birds in that area.

Mr. Litzinger: Correct.

Chair Reckdahl: Have we had any bird hits? Are you familiar with ...

Mr. Litzinger: We've heard of no complaints from the City of San Jose, from their parks and rec group on that issue.

Chair Reckdahl: That has no mitigation? That has just plain wires?

Mr. Litzinger: That's correct.

Chair Reckdahl: I would assume that if you made the wires thicker, it'd be easier for birds to see the wires.

Mr. Litzinger: I think so. I'm not a bird expert; I'm just a civil engineer. We have experts on the team that could address that.

Chair Reckdahl: What would happen if you do some testing now? Maybe I should back up. What testing do you plan to do for these little flappers, the mitigation? Are you building a scale model?

HNTB Team Member: We have a working prototype already.

Commissioner Crommie: He has to go to the mike.

HNTB Team Member: The disks are a collaboration of our teams. We have an artist on our team. His name is Ned Kahn. He's an internationally renowned artist known for the merger of art and science. We've built a working prototype of one of the disks. There

would be many steps to determine their reflectivity and their durability. Would they work with larger cables? Yes. If that's the question.

Chair Reckdahl: Let's suppose you do some testing and find out that these disks don't repel the birds. Now what do you do? Do you change the design or do you just go to thicker cables and have less of them?

HNTB Team Member: I'd leave that question to the engineers in terms of the structural systems. The conservative case would be to go to precedented structural types in the area, like the Berkeley Bridge which I believe is an orthogonal arrangement of cables. That would be the base case, let's say. This would be what we presented to really address the innovation and the signature quality of the bridge. Would it work with a conventional type? I believe so. I'd leave it to John to answer the question.

Chair Reckdahl: By conventional, do you mean vertical?

HNTB Team Member: To vertical or let's say tested and established. Using dimensions and cable types that have been proven to work in other similar conditions such as the Berkeley Pedestrian Bridge, which is a cable-supported span and the cables are orthogonal to the arch and the deck.

Chair Reckdahl: Why is the arch canted? Was there a functional reason for that or was that aesthetics?

Mr. Litzinger: It's an aesthetic.

Chair Reckdahl: One of my concerns is that there's going to be perching spots above that, and birds will sit on there, and there will be bird droppings on 101 and bird droppings on people going across the bridge. Should I be concerned about that?

Mr. Litzinger: It's a concern. I think it's something that we would look at, the path. One of the features of this, where the path swoops out away from the plane of the arch, is to keep the path out of a landing spot or a perching area for the birds. That certainly is something that we would work out in a collaborative manner through the design process.

HNTB Team Member: The condition that you're referring to and most people have experienced commonly occurs when there is ample food source and ample water supply very close by, like food vending situations or college campuses or urban streets where all those things are present, ready and available. Over a freeway, that condition doesn't exist and it's different types of bird species.

Chair Reckdahl: It still makes me nervous. If we're looking to get a black eye, having either dead birds or bird droppings cast down on 101 would not be good for Palo Alto. We do have to look at that. One more thing. You mentioned about the transporters. Where would you anticipate building the bridge and moving it? Would that be on other parkland or would it be somewhere else?

Mr. Litzinger: There are a few options in the area. There's one location that we looked at. As you go up East Bayshore, there's a little bulb-out maybe a quarter mile up the road that seems to have a sufficiently wide area and that could be used as a construction zone for the bridge to be assembled. Once it's assembled there, then you have the transporters that are supported on either end that would travel down East Bayshore, come to a point where the bridge would be located across 101, have some temporary holes in the barrier on an overnight closure with Highway 101. The transporters would rotate and the bridge would rotate into place.

Chair Reckdahl: The assembly actually would be blocking East Bayshore and all assembly would be done on the road? I just want to make sure that we're not anticipating using any parkland for the assembly, because I think that would be a big impact.

Mr. Litzinger: Right. Right now we're not looking at any parkland. What other work areas are available that are in the public area? Either public roadways, side streets, parking lots. There's a number of different options that could be investigated that is in close proximity to the location. You have the advantage of this bridge type with the assembly being done, then it can be wheeled and dropped into place.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. If there are no more questions, we'll express our comments. This is our message to the City Council, what you think, what you like, what you don't like.

Commissioner Lauing: Want me to start?

Chair Reckdahl: Yeah.

Commissioner Lauing: First of all I think that our comments, as everyone's should be, are coming off this page 13 which is the guiding design principles. Clearly the judges have decided that all three make that cut. This discussion of birds is appropriate but, even as a couple of the speakers said, we're going to lose birds. You put up a bridge; you're going to lose some birds. That's not the driving force of all things. There's probably thousands of things that come into account in this whole bridge. Just looking at the four criteria, I guess you just want to get some specific comments down here. Talking about innovation and inspiring, I do think that the first one is inspiring as a work of art, elegant and really a lovely statement without being over the top. It really meets all

of the criteria. I would rate that the highest. I also think some of the previous comments are worth pointing out, which is the separation of pedestrians and cyclists. Obviously we just talked about this to death, but they attempt to make it as unobtrusive to bird species as possible. As they point out, which was helpful, the habitat and the connection areas are equally important. I would say a close second—I appreciate the public comments on this—is Submission C. There's one comment on the jury side where they said it's actually too subtle, which I would agree with. It's not quite enough of a statement in spite of its elegance and connectivity and getting the job done. The third one, "B," visually it looks too temporary. It almost looked like a tent and like it's not really structurally sound in some cases. I know that's not true, but visually that's the case. It's so understated as to blend in too much as opposed to addressing the issue of inspiration, engaging the community and maybe even drawing more visitors there, which I think it ought to do. Thank you.

Vice Chair Markevitch: I think it was 2005 or 2006 I went to the VTA Board and said that we need to have a pedestrian bike bridge there. It should have been built when they were doing all of the construction that they've doing for the last four years or however long it's been on 101. They didn't hear me. I'm glad to see it's finally here. I'm looking at all three of these, and I'm thinking there should have been a fifth criteria and that was cost effectiveness. When I was speaking to the VTA Board, I envisioned a very simple bridge that's cost effective, safe, and simple. None of these are. I looked at them, and two of them under the submissions say construction costs are likely to increase. I know that's true. I'm the daughter of a civil engineer. It's not going to be \$8 million on any of them. I would be shocked. The one in the middle, the wood bridge, we're in Palo Alto which is the land of termites. That's just not a good thing especially if it's built over a freeway. My vote is for none of these. It needs to be simple, safe, and cost effective.

Commissioner Crommie: Well, let's see my notes. Looking at the criteria on page 13, of these three bridges Number C meets the criteria the best. I disagree with the jury saying that all of them meet it equally. I just simply don't think that's true. 25 percent of the criteria has to do with bird safety, integration into the ecosystem. That's 25 percent of the criteria. There's no way you can ignore that. I appreciate "A." The design as a suspension bridge is very beautiful. Suspension bridges make a big wow statement, and they've done a beautiful job with it. I just don't think it's in the right place. That's my only hesitation with it. I think there are too many unknowns in this particular location. Going to our website on the Baylands, it says, "The Baylands Preserve is one of the largest tracts of undisturbed marshland remaining in the San Francisco Bay." Palo Alto has been a leader in preservation, conservation of that land, so we need to have a bridge that speaks to that. "C" speaks to that. "C" is innovative in terms of the floating technology, how it uses the cable. That's why it could satisfy innovation. It's not as much of a wow; I agree with that. It's a more subtle statement which is the look of the land. I would draw everyone's attention to how the Lucy B. Evans Interpretive Center is

designed, that sits in our Baylands. It's a very elegant, subtle structure that blends right in with the marsh. The designers had that right. Under the pros for "C," I said innovative in terms of the floating technology, integrated with nature, safest design for wildlife, lowest impact, possibly the shortest route which is important for cyclists. Between "A" and "C," "C" has a shorter route. That's it.

Commissioner Hetterly: In terms of innovation, "B" was the most innovative for its sustainability. It's clear it's the most sustainable plan of all of them. I didn't like it as much. "C" was probably the least innovative, but the simplest and cleanest. "A" probably did the best job of balancing the four criteria and being fairly strong in all of them. The bird issue obviously needs some more consideration. I don't have the expertise to opine on that, so I'll leave that to you all. If the bird issue can be addressed satisfactorily, that would be my preference. I preferred "A" over "C" for the viewing station on the east side overlooking the Baylands to one that's in the middle of the freeway looking straight out on the freeway. I also liked the idea of the water reclamation on the east side as opposed to a cement plaza or hardscaped plaza, whatever the surfacing is. Thank you.

Commissioner Crommie: I just wanted to speak to the east side. I forgot about that, because we haven't really dug into that because it's not very well developed. I'm really worried about that water reclamation scenario. It's a way that "A" is trying to be more environmental as an afterthought. I wanted to voice my concern because it's different from Commissioner Hetterly. I'm just really concerned about how that's going to work. There's not a tidal flow there, so they want it to be standing water. They're going to uncover the mud and create this brackish water spot. It has so many unknowns, and environmentalists are not embracing that. I'm very appreciative that we have many in the audience tonight. I see it as an afterthought.

Commissioner Knopper: I liked "A." It's beautiful and it met the criteria as far as I'm concerned. I already discussed one issue, just making sure that the habitat that lives in that area—thoughtful consideration with regard to reflectors or cables, etc., which I'm sure this will be discussed infinitum for the next however long this takes. It will be addressed. I'm very happy that there will be a bridge there. I'm very happy that it's artistic and interesting and that it has looked at all the criteria from an environmental perspective and has been sensitive to that. Thank you for the examples of the other bridges. I appreciate that.

Chair Reckdahl: When I first saw Design A a month ago, six weeks ago, I thought, "Oh, it's just too gaudy and out of place." I didn't like it initially. Now I've looked at it and grown to like it. I think people get used to it. It is beautiful. There's that wow factor. It has a big risk, the birds. I don't think we've proven to ourselves that it won't hurt the birds. It comes down to whether Council wants that wow factor. They're going to have

to do some studies and convince themselves that there's not going to be bird problems. If they want the wow factor and they're willing to take that risk, then Design A. If they're not willing to take that risk, then it's clearly Design C. Wow factor aside, "A" did have a little better design. I like the separation between the pedestrians and bicycles. It was nice. You have seniors walking. You have young kids walking. Having a separation between the bikes and the pedestrians is a very good idea. I like the water filling and the bathrooms on the east side. Their design was a little more polished. All in all, "A" is a good design, but it has the bird risk. We're going to have to work at that; we can't just cross our fingers. We're going to have to get some evidence to show that the birds are going to be safe. All the designs do have a big risk on money. I agree with Pat that it's unlikely that any of the designs could be built for \$8 million. I'm not sure if the Council wants to get independent people to look at that and price it out or if they can start the process and make decisions along the way. I don't know.

Commissioner Hetterly: Can I add something? Aesthetically speaking, I'm really uncertain about how that wire mesh is going to seem. It seems to me that this whole Commission felt previously concerned about costs. If we're going to go with the bare bones, it shouldn't be an \$8 million bare bones option. If the City decides to reject "A," then it should consider whether "C," if that's the second choice, merits the cost or if we should go back to a simple, basic, utilitarian plan.

Chair Reckdahl: Elizabeth, do you have any final questions or comments or are you ready to move on?

Ms. Ames: Thank you very much. I really appreciate your input. The Commission was instrumental in leading this project and making this a top priority and the Bike and Pedestrian Plan that was adopted by Council in 2012. I really appreciate the Commission's support. Hopefully, you will be there at the February 23rd Council meeting. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.

5. Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.

Chair Reckdahl: We have no speakers for this, so we can directly in as soon as Peter's ready to go.

Peter Jensen: Commissioners, good evening. Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect for the City of Palo Alto, here in our monthly address for the Parks, Recreation Master Plan. As the progress goes along, the information and the materials build. I'm happy to say that we have the consultant with us tonight, Ellie on the MIG project team, to go over some of

the handouts that we got this week and discuss those things. Because of time, I'm just going to let her get into it. Then we'll have questions at the end.

Ellie Fiore: Hi, good evening. For those of you I have not yet met, my name's Ellie Fiore. I work for MIG; I'm a deputy project manager on this process. I work closely with Ryan and Lauren who've been to meetings before me. I'm here tonight primarily to field questions and comments on several work products that we've put in front of you. I think there were five in your packet. I don't know if you have a preference for where we start. To frame the discussion big picture wise in terms of where we are in this project, we're pivoting from the information gathering and data analysis phase into recommendations. As you know, our big push at the end of 2014 was the online survey. We got over 1,100 responses which is really remarkable. We're in the process of crunching and summarizing that data. That's a big input that we'll see next month. It'll be in front of you and the ad hoc committee. Then we'll be developing recommendations and a project list, and then going quickly into prioritization in March with an adoption target deadline of October. The five pieces that were in your packet and that we want to discuss tonight were the existing system summary, which might be a good place to start because this encapsulates the work that we did last year and summarizes the pieces that make up that existing system analysis. It has a date of December 22nd. I apologize; they all look alike because they have similar headers. It is to Peter and Elizabeth from Ryan and Ellie. It's formatted with a memo heading.

Vice Chair Markevitch: Page number?

Chair Reckdahl: They're not contiguous.

Commissioner Lauing: This is the one. Does everybody see it?

Ms. Fiore: This is essentially an update on where we are in the scope of work. We've completed most of phases 1 through 5 as I said, the existing system analysis, data analysis and several elements of our community engagement approach. This outlines what we've done, what the work products are, all of which you should have had or do have now, again with the exception of the online survey summary which is underway. I just want to confirm that you've seen all of those pieces and see if there's any outstanding questions or concerns.

Commissioner Lauing: Can we make comments on this?

Chair Reckdahl: Yes.

Commissioner Lauing: I thought this was going to be up third, but I'm glad it's up first. It's actually the most important. Starting at the beginning of your memo where you say,

"MIG has collected and generated a foundation of data" and then "community input." Consistently we've been saying we want data. We're speaking for Council, and they want data, hard data on what the strategic direction of this thing needs to be. The community stuff is very interesting. It's beyond anecdotal, but it's not quantitative. It's qualitative data. The real data is what's going to have to drive the strategic aspects of this. Just repeating that theme, because that's what we're going to need. When we got over to page 4 of this memo, demographics and trends, you guys did some research on local and regional population and demographic trends from the past several decades. This work product went to the City in September of 2014. At our next meeting, Peter, we should revisit that in some level of detail because that's the basis of it. Again I'm contrasting data versus community input. When we're hearing that people want cricket or archery or more baseball fields or whatever, that's one thing. We really would love to have trend data. For example, and I hope I'm making this up, is golf going to die, so we don't need golf courses anymore? We would make decisions like that. Is cricket going to take the world by storm? We need to know about that. We're not going to hear that, with all due respect, from just asking even 1,000 people in our community. That kind of trend data. Also, local data. We were told you were going to look at data from school districts. I'd like to know in the next 10, 20, and 30 years if our 8 to 15-year-old kid group is going to go up by 50 percent or down by 10 percent. Those are the ones that are mostly filling up our fields. We really need that hard approach to this. I don't recall that we dug into this very much in September of 2014. I, for one, would like to see that come back to us next month, so we really have something that's quantitative. Just to put a point on it, the credibility of this whole Master Plan is dependent on that kind of work. For us, for you, for the Council, for the City, for residents. The other item that you guys already know about which is that five-point plan of what everybody wants in parks, geez, we'd really like to have something more than that. Throw a ball, walk around, sit around, look at the sun. It's like that commercial says, we already know that.

Ms. Fiore: Right. Those are the basic elements. Thank you.

Commissioner Lauing: Other comments on this?

Chair Reckdahl: I've got Hetterly.

Commissioner Hetterly: I agree about the need for more data. We're sounding like a broken record; we keep saying that over and over and over again. We need harder data or more quantitative data. For this particular document, I just had a couple of comments. On the top of page 3, you talk about the recreation program review and analysis is going to review the division of responsibility for recreation programs across the Community Services Department and by private and community providers. We'll discuss the program analysis later on. I don't feel like it does review the division of responsibility. It just notes that there are services provided by different providers. Maybe there it would be

nice to know something more, like what percent of offerings in a certain category or categories X, Y and Z are provided by the city as opposed to provided by the City's partners or nonprofits or private organizations. That kind of data helps us understand what is our market share in martial arts or in teen programs. On page 6 under the City Council update, you tell us that you provided City Council with a review of your work completed to date on November 17th, but we haven't seen any feedback from that. We'd like you to provide us feedback about what you heard, what you learned from that interaction with the Council. That would be helpful for our discussions. Also the revenue analysis we have not seen yet, I believe. It's also not described in the summary of work products.

Ms. Fiore: That's correct. That one is in process, but there was a glitch in verifying the data that we should be using. It's been on hold for about the last six weeks. There's a meeting today that either Peter or Rob can speak to better than I. We're moving that forward.

Commissioner Hetterly: My last comment on this document. The prioritization process, you say that you're going to develop preliminary recommendations and a project list and that there will be dedicated prioritization meetings with stakeholder groups and other groups. I just wanted to make sure that those preliminary recommendations and project list is going to be the subject of those meetings as opposed to them happening in a vacuum from the work that's happening behind doors.

Ms. Fiore: I'm not sure I follow you.

Commissioner Hetterly: The prioritization meetings with the stakeholders and the public and the Commission, those meetings are intended to discuss the preliminary priorities that you will identify and (crosstalk).

Ms. Fiore: Exactly. The project list is what will be reviewed in those meetings.

Commissioner Hetterly: Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: Are we discussing this whole document through the following—oh, just this one. I ditto the comments that have been made. I'm really worried about what we're going to be able to do with this report once we get it, quite frankly. It doesn't seem data driven enough. It just looks like a boilerplate report when I look at this. I don't know what to do about it. When it comes to prioritization, it's so difficult to do that. The only way you can make your arguments is to try to use the data. I'm just not sure how we're going to do that. When I see you guys processing the data, it

doesn't reflect my memory of the meetings, which I'll say when we get further into this. I wish I had a better concrete suggestion.

Chair Reckdahl: Are we ready to move on?

Rob de Geus: Chair Reckdahl. I'm concerned about this too, about this question of data and what we're going to do about it. We're moving along here and we're going to get into prioritization. If the Commission's not comfortable with the material or at least the data that we have, then maybe we need to take a pause here and think about how do we get that data and what does it really look like. MIG's done a lot of this work before, and I appreciate what they're doing in trying to get data in a lot of different ways. From the intercept surveys to the electronic survey they got a lot of responses, the workshops, Commission feedback, staff interviews, and other things. I actually think there's a lot of good data there. Maybe it's not sufficient. I don't know. What I would like to hear, and I suspect these guys would like to hear, is what specifically does the Commission want to see in terms of more data. Is it a specific survey that you're looking for, additional workshops, regional trend analysis for park and rec programs? Something specific that we can then work with.

Commissioner Lauing: That's why I brought up number 4 on page 4 first. If you've already done that, refresh our memory and make sure that we're not missing something. You say there, "local and regional population and demographic trends from the past several decades and projections for the coming decades." That's the kind of stuff that I think is more actionable and strategic than 25 people at the community center saying what they think we could do new, which comes up with some interesting ideas that can be incorporated, but it's not the basis for a 25-year strategic plan. That's the kind of data. We talked from the get-go about school board data, about projections of school-aged children. If there's any way that someone here is predicting our own population and what the demographics might be, we should see that too.

Chair Reckdahl: The city does have its own projections on the population of Palo Alto going to the (crosstalk).

Mr. de Geus: Yeah, we do and the school district has it. It's readily available. If some of that is in the demographic report—I know that the school district struggles with these projections though. They typically don't project much further than five years, because it's so unreliable. We certainly can get what they have.

Commissioner Lauing: Even that's instructive. Right?

Mr. de Geus: Yeah.

Commissioner Lauing: If we say, "Well, we think we need fields at the Baylands," so we put in a bunch of fields. The school board doesn't know what kind of kid population we're going to have five years out. We can't do something that's going to impact the city for 75 years. Maybe that causes us pause on some of those issues. Even not doing something is of value for this whole strategic plan that we're doing.

Mr. de Geus: That's helpful. Maybe others have input here.

Commissioner Crommie: I'm struggling with this. I'm just going to brainstorm. I personally would like to see more information from our stakeholder groups in a more succinct way. We can develop a list of stakeholders that as a Commission we're interested in, and all of us have contacts with various stakeholder groups. Then develop a list of questions that we give to those stakeholders. We have a lot of interest in the city that funnels through stakeholders. I know we did the wide community survey with 1,000 respondents. A lot of us on the Commission weren't completely happy with those questions, so we have a little bit of hesitation. I'm sure we'll get some really good information from that. I'm just throwing this out. I really value our stakeholders. We can't be overpowered by any one group of them. It's our job to balance that out. As we look at them, we know the forces that be. I worked on the field use policy that our Commission reviewed. Our soccer leagues are very vocal, but we know how to place that in balance. I would like to hear what they have to say. I don't know if other people on this Commission would agree, so it'd have to be a consensus. I would never want to go forward unless other people thought it was going to yield good information. I don't want to keep doing information that people aren't excited about. I just feel like there's such a gap in understanding what the schools want. When I see on this list getting a new community pool, we have all these school pools, and I don't know anything about it and how that fits in. I didn't hear a single community member bring up a pool ever; yet, it's on this list.

Ms. Fiore: What list are you referring to?

Commissioner Crommie: We're going to get into that. I'm just saying that I don't know what's going on in the schools. They seem like a black box. They seem like they're profit motivated to me, that they're holding onto turf to sell it. That's something I don't understand. I've heard our Commission ask for information on that, and I haven't seen any of it yet.

Mr. de Geus: The school data, we've heard that several times. MIG staff and us have met with the schools on two occasions related to this plan, but maybe there's more that we can do there, more data, more feedback. The question about the stakeholders, I think there is a large stakeholder group that's been assembled for this work. I think they've met once, and they have two more meetings.

Commissioner Crommie: I was at the meeting. Keith was there.

Mr. de Geus: That's, I don't know, 20 or 30 of our stakeholders. Is that ...

Commissioner Crommie: No, I don't mean that kind of meeting. It was very hard to get useful information, I found, from that kind of meeting. You need to give them a list of questions and have them respond to it. It's always apples and oranges. One person saying this. We have a report on that meeting. Daren did write it up. Just having been there, my head was spinning with all the different viewpoints. I want something I can bite into, where there's similar questions being asked of people, like a script.

Chair Reckdahl: When Ryan was here, initially the plan was to mail the survey out to everyone in the whole—maybe I should back up a second. In my mind, there's two separate issues. One is the current assessment, what do people need and want right now. Then the projection going forward. You can break those into two. For the current needs assessment, we were originally planning to mail out a survey to everyone who had a utility bill. The question was what kind of return rate would we get. That was the only concern. Then we went away from that and just went to an electronic survey. Now you have sampling error. Ryan said in the past he had ways of, when they'd done electronic surveys like this, to reduce the sampling error. I don't know what methods he uses, but he said in the past they had addressed that. It'd be useful to hear how MIG can massage the data to reduce the effect of the sampling of the electronic survey. That's one issue. The second issue then is how do you go forward. Jen, did you have a question?

Commissioner Hetterly: I did. I think we're a little off track. Now we're looking more at the big issue of what are we wanting to get and how do we get there. There's a lot of details in the packet where we could give you more reaction about what we think is missing. For the big picture view, fundamentally what we're looking to learn from this study is do we have the right mix and supply of parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs to meet the needs of our community now and into the future. That's the fundamental question. The inventory and the matrix is supposed to provide us a starting point to understand where we are. The demographics information and the surveys and all that stuff is supposed to help us figure out where we should be. Right? The problem is there doesn't seem to be any information that we've seen yet suggesting how we get from where we are to where we might want to be. The demographic trends information is generalized. We're going to have more seniors. We have a more diverse cultural population. We have a growing population of kids. It doesn't go into specific detail about how our resources should change to reflect those trends. That's a big gap that we stumble on every time. That's part of why we're looking for more data, so that we can start putting the pieces together as we think about prioritization. There's a fear that we're going to jump from here, where we have a start, to a vague generalized end but nothing in

the middle. March is two months away. How are we going to be able to prioritize anything by then if we don't have any of the middle? I think that's the problem that we're struggling with.

Ms. Fiore: Thank you. That's a valid concern and it's completely understandable, based on the work we've put in front of you to date. The short answer is we're working on it. As I said, we're about to make that pivot into recommendations, all of which will be based on these many pieces that we've been gathering. I know it seems probably like it's been a slow process and that a lot of the information we've put in front of you you may already know because you are Parks and Rec Commissioners. Again, that is part of the systematic analysis of the system. We are generating recommendations, site specific. Another work product that you haven't seen yet is existing conditions maps with detailed analysis of all of your parks including photographs, and the ways they're used, and key features. Our next step is applying recommendations to each of those sites as well as the system.

Commissioner Crommie: When you give us your recommendations, I really want to see the data that you're working with. Not everyone needs to look at it, but I want to see it all. I just want to have complete transparency of what you looked at and what you got from that. If we are questioning any of your decisions, we can go right back and look at it. I'm asking for that right up front.

Commissioner Hetterly: Other kinds of data. Two of the questions we have all hoped to answer through this plan at a very basic level is do we need more fields, as Commissioner Lauing raised. Where is the best suited location for more dog parks? There doesn't appear to be a source of data that you all have been working on that would generate the information to reach those conclusions. If there is and we just aren't getting it, then it would be helpful for you to explain that to us. We're not seeing how you're going to make the leap from what you have so far to provide that kind of recommendation.

Chair Reckdahl: If there are no other comments, we'll move onto the next section.

Ms. Fiore: Thank you. Why don't we move to the sustainability review, which was the first product in your packet. This is a high level analysis of where the department and your system is in the context of sustainability. What policy guidance exists, what current practices and programs exist, which of these elements of sustainability and policy areas generally are most directly relevant to the work that the department does and which can be supported but are really the purview of other departments in the city. Starting on page 8 of this document, we have a list of options. This is not intended to be incredibly directive, but we're imagining this as a menu of options that staff can take as potential directions. If you do want to make increasing sustainability of the department a focus, there's some case studies in there that illustrate where principles of sustainability have

1876 been done very well in parks, including one here in Palo Alto. Then some next steps,
1877 should you want to take this effort further. This is intended as a snapshot in time of
1878 where you are, what the policy framework is, recognizing that there's many other similar
1879 efforts going on that's citywide, but none would be focusing necessarily on parks and
1880 recreations and programming. There is some good news in here in that there are a lot of
1881 really strong, sustainable, and resource efficient practices and programs going on even
1882 where there's not strong policy direction. That was one of our key findings. I should add
1883 this can function as a standalone document should staff want to run with any of these
1884 recommendations. This menu also may be pulled forward into the recommendations that
1885 are elevated in the Master Plan as action items.

1886
1887 Commissioner Crommie: I just have a question on this. Where would we find rain
1888 gardens in here, collecting water more efficiently? I just couldn't find it.

1889
1890 Ms. Fiore: It should be under water.

1891
1892 Commissioner Crommie: Under water conversation maybe.

1893
1894 Ms. Fiore: Yeah, under water conservation and water quality. Number 9 on page 12
1895 mentions rain gardens specifically.

1896
1897 Commissioner Crommie: We have a sustainability piece in our city Comp Plan. Did you
1898 pull a lot of this from that?

1899
1900 Ms. Fiore: We reviewed that as part of the policy context. We did not pull these
1901 recommendations from that. We pulled these from national best practices of
1902 sustainability plans that were specifically done for parks and recreation departments,
1903 which can be \$50,000 standalone products on their own. This again was a snapshot, a
1904 high level report. We did have your Chief Sustainability Officer, Gil Friend, review this
1905 document before it went to you.

1906
1907 Commissioner Crommie: Thank you.

1908
1909 Commissioner Hetterly: I have just a few comments on this one. At the top of page 2,
1910 further sustainability goals if they result in a positive change to one of the following
1911 indicators, and then you list the indicators. I found it notable that there's no mention of
1912 the balance or interrelationship between the indicators. Not all indicators are necessarily
1913 created equal. Improvements in one area can sometimes prove detrimental to other areas.
1914 That's something that should be addressed one way or another here. For example,
1915 transportation is something that could easily conflict with natural resources and habitat.

1916
1917 Ms. Fiore: Yep. Very good point.

Commissioner Hetterly: On pages 7 and 8, public health and safety is indicated as a primary consideration on page 7, but then on page 8 it's pulled out as a secondary. That's just an error I suspect. Public health and safety should certainly be primary. We have a lot of policies and practices in our strategic plan and our programs that address that.

Commissioner Crommie: Where is that one?

Commissioner Hetterly: I don't know. You'll have to find it. Page 9, one of the suggestions at the top, create green ambassadors within a department to support sustainability initiatives. I'd like to be sure that that's not just about recycling and greenhouse gas emissions. Maybe they're ecology ambassadors who present the fuller view of impacts. Page 10, natural resources and habitat. There are six recommendations there and many of them, to my recollection, we are already doing. Is this supposed to be exclusively a list of new things that we should do? In other areas, it seemed like new ideas. Many of these we seem to already be doing. One of the things we aren't doing is developing metrics for how we measure benefits to the natural resources and habitat. On page 11, transportation section, it was unclear to me why some of these were in here. Coordinating improvements like showers for employees and ride share services do not seem like something that would be within Community Services. Similarly, alternate work schedules to avoid travel peaks, encourage telecommuting and other practices. Is that about the employee structure or is that something that you're proposing be a policy that the Community Services (inaudible).

Ms. Fiore: Our intention was that this is one of the supporting functions of this department. You work with a transportation management agency, which is under formation right now. Whether it be Planning or Public Works, whatever the lead agency is in the city who has primary responsibility, you coordinate and work with them on that, but then keep an eye towards the staff of this Department and the telecommuting and the showers and the amenities that support their own behavior. In essence it's both.

Commissioner Hetterly: Number 1, install electric vehicle charging stations at park facilities with parking lots. I would like to know a little information about whether that attracts nonusers to park there just to use the charger. What the experience has been in that regard would be helpful to know more about. Finally on page 15 and 16 under education and training and natural resources and habitat, there are a lot of programs and practices that are missing from this table. I'd be happy to shoot you an email about them if you'd like.

Commissioner Crommie: We have an element of our Comp Plan called the Natural Environment Element (NEE). We're up in the air with the Comp Plan, but that's where a lot of really good material is, that the sustainability person might not be aware of. He

might not know that whole section, because sustainability is a part of it. It really does encapsulate habitat preservation, which is a piece that's not as well developed in here.

Commissioner Lauing: I have just a couple. I was pleased to see on page 8, getting into the detail there. There's such a good emphasis on maintenance, where we say maintain trees for a 100-year permanence. That recognition is really important particularly in light of some of the history we've had in the last year about mitigation for trees. You've got to fund the maintenance too or what's the point. I was really glad to see that in there. There's other places there, for example, retrofitting for solar power, not quite maintenance but it's in the same general direction. On your equity point on page 9, I wasn't quite sure what you meant by underserved neighborhoods. On point 3 under equity.

Ms. Fiore: That could be defined a couple of different ways. It could be geographically underserved, parts of the city that have fewer parks in their geographic area. It could also be underserved neighborhoods, low income populations, or cultural groups who aren't necessarily active participants in your current system.

Commissioner Lauing: The top of page 11, you talk about true cost pricing. Whatever the definition is, it's good that we're actually taking everything into account. We don't always do that. Overall, generally, that was pretty well constructed for what we're trying to do.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Markevitch.

Vice Chair Markevitch: On page 6, align Community Services mission statements, budgets, and operations with city sustainability goals. I almost feel like it should be the other way around. The sustainability goals should fit into what we already do. We do quite a bit already. I'm afraid that if we are held to a certain level of rules by this sustainability section, we're going to start losing a lot of the flavor of our city, parks, services, classes. It's all going to get compressed into this bland thing. That seems to be happening in other cities. I don't quite know how to put it. That one statement just didn't sit well with me all afternoon. I kept coming back to it. Yes, it's important, but it's not the end all for what we do.

Chair Reckdahl: I have one comment that this seems to be a collection of good ideas. I would like to echo Commissioner Hetterly. You can't always do this, but whenever possible you should use metrics. For example, energy efficiency, when it talks about retrofit facilities with energy efficiency and select energy efficient products. That's just a nebulous good thing to do. It would be nice for us to say, "Well, we're getting some recommendations." If you can say, if you do this, invest this much money, you'll get this much return. Have some type of either money or energy use return and say, "Are these

six good ideas? Which one is the best?" That all comes down to metrics, and whenever possible we need metrics. If there are no questions, let's move to the next section.

Ms. Fiore: Let's move to the recreation program analysis, which is the last piece of your packet. The one that has draft stamped all over it. This again is a piece of that existing conditions summary, a snapshot of what exists on the ground, what the layout is. We wanted to focus on getting the full picture of programs that are available to Palo Alto residents, whether or not they were provided specifically by the city or specifically by the Community Services Department. We took a look at what the private providers are doing in the city and what the full range of programs available to your residents is. We have been working with staff. We've identified some areas where we want to beef up the detail behind a lot of these and learn more about, not just what programs are in demand, but how in demand are they. We are going to get some data to back this up, which is why it has draft stamped all over it. Key findings from my perspective are that you are a community with excellent resources, and there are a lot of things that are in high demand which is good to know. You have a strong and well administered strategic plan that's guiding the department and that's still of value and can be used in the years going forward. There are probably some opportunities for streamlining communications and possibly departmental organization. That's something we'll look at when we get into the recommendations, and that will be augmented by this revenue analysis which is happening in parallel.

Commissioner Lauing: How do you want to process this? Do you want to go through the whole thing here or the pros and then the graph? There's findings at the end, so there's a lot of sections. We could just blast through it if you want.

Chair Reckdahl: Let's just blast through it. Any comments you have.

Commissioner Lauing: The first five, six, seven, eight pages, I think the conclusion is we're doing pretty well already and we've got amazing resources here. As a consultant, you don't have to find stuff that's broken. It's okay to say, "Hey, this is already a pretty good place." The breadth of public and private opportunities is really pretty cool. I'm sure a number of people are going to have comments on this grid. First, I want to make sure we understand it, this two-page grid here. They're both called recreation and programs matrix. Is it just the sort that's different in terms of the x and y axis, because you're taking demographic market segments and cross-tabbing it to stuff that's available?

Ms. Fiore: Correct.

Commissioner Lauing: The other page is the reverse. Right?

Ms. Fiore: Correct. It's two different ways of looking at the same information.

Commissioner Lauing: A few things on this conceptually. Are you using things like Equinox Gym and University Club as examples of private stuff that's available? One argument could be we shouldn't list private stuff on here at all, because it's not in our purview. The other answer is people could take advantage of it, but they've got to pay a lot of money for it because they're really private clubs. They're not necessarily shi-shi clubs but private clubs. Should that be on here or not?

Ms. Fiore: The intent behind including that was to see universally where the gaps or overlaps were, recognizing again that the city is not the only provider but that some people have different levels of access to these different things. If we somehow looked around and uncovered that no one was providing aquatics, even the private providers, that would be a key finding. That's obviously not what we found, but that was the intent of including those private organizations.

Commissioner Lauing: Some of the examples that you have used and could use are pretty inaccessible to a lot of segments. I'm not sure that that's really valid on here. Pardon?

Commissioner Markevitch: Because they're private.

Commissioner Lauing: Yeah, because they're private and expensive. That seems a little bit of a skew to me. It's probably not necessary. I've heard in a number of groups, as we've gone through this process, that we probably don't have enough going on for seniors. That's one of the things we want to prove, if we do or we don't. Just taking that as an example, I could just go down there and check a lot of boxes that aren't checked here, if I'm using the same methodology that you are. For example, seniors can go to Brad Lozares' golf shop and that wasn't checked. They can do master gardening. They can go to a gym. They can play some community sports. They can go to the Oshman JCC which is private. They can go to the YMCA. I'm wondering why that wasn't checked. Similarly, maybe this is a different answer, when we got to people from diverse cultures nothing was checked over there. I don't know what you were saying. That's the question. Why are these not checked? What are we trying to do?

Ms. Fiore: The intent behind the check marks was that it was targeted towards those populations or marketed to them. It's obviously a subjective analysis. This was intended to, at a glance, identify those gaps and overlaps. Certainly it doesn't preclude that seniors could take advantage of those programs, but our read of it was that it wasn't necessarily intended for or marketed towards them primarily.

Commissioner Lauing: For time considerations, I would encourage you to review that and see if those make sense. There are senior rates at the golf course, for example. If

we're trying to come up with gaps, what this graph tells me right now is that it's only—what do we call this again?—people from diverse cultures and young adults that aren't currently served. That's okay if we have actual data to support that. I'm just taking the summary here from your grid. I'm making a methodological comment. If that's what this says and that's what you need to support, then we need to see how you support that. That everything else is taken care of, but the other two are in pretty bad shape. That's how I read this graph. Some other people should jump in on this because (crosstalk).

Commissioner Hetterly: Can I jump in on that point? That's where we have a data disconnect. What this tell us is that, yeah, at Recreation Services they provide some services in all these areas, but it doesn't tell us anything about how much, what the adequacy is, how accessible they are, how affordable they are. It doesn't tell us anything about how they meet the needs of our community. It only says you might be able to find a ballet class somewhere in town either through the city or one of these millions of other providers. That's not really useful information for us as we're trying to develop programs and services.

Ms. Fiore: Yes, understood.

Commissioner Hetterly: That's the data disconnect that we keep struggling with.

Ms. Fiore: Yes, I had the same conversation with Rob last week. That's the second level of detail we want to add to this document.

Chair Reckdahl: In general in the document, most of the work is qualitative. We don't see many numbers. In this case, I think there's two outages. We have the dots here as opposed to having some number that quantifies how many people they serve or how many rooms they have for rent or whatever. Also, we need to marry that with a needs assessment. If you have one community pool, is that enough? I don't know what the needs assessment is for swimmers. Is it met or not? We really need a comparison of those two.

Commissioner Knopper: Also from a geographic perspective, like for over-serving in one specific area with one specific programming, like north Palo Alto is clustered with X amount of facility. Knowing that overlap too. With regard to ballet, all ballet is happening in south Palo Alto, right? That's the kind of information that would be helpful.

Commissioner Lauing: I have a number of comments on the key findings, but maybe we should leave that to last, just as a suggestion until we get through all the other stuff.

Commissioner Crommie: Even the comment on ballet classes, I don't even see how you'd figure that out, where ballet classes are. There's no heading for ballet classes. We don't

2128 have that granularity. I don't know if we could mentally process it in a table like this.
2129 Are we going to know how many ballet classes we have and where they are and who's
2130 providing them at the end of this process or is that something we're not going to know? I
2131 just want to set expectations here. This is such a general table. One thing that caught my
2132 eye were disability services. I now can't find it. I'm having trouble with my glasses. It
2133 seemed like we weren't providing any. On the table, the second row from the bottom
2134 says people with disabilities. What caught my eye were camps. Camps is the second
2135 column from the left on page 10. I'm looking in the matrix at people with disabilities,
2136 how are they doing with camps. I don't see anything checked there. I've had friends who
2137 have teenagers that have volunteered to help camps with disabilities at the Junior
2138 Museum. I've seen them standing there and asked them what they were doing. I don't
2139 know what they were doing, but they told me they were working in camps with kids with
2140 disabilities. I don't know if it was private. These were teenagers volunteering at
2141 something during the summer. Rob, do you know?

2142
2143 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, it's a camp called Summer's Excellent Adventures. Recreation ran
2144 that camp with Abilities United in partnership for many years. They take the lion's share
2145 of coordinating that camp now. We have lots of volunteers to support that program.
2146 That's right.

2147
2148 Commissioner Crommie: The reason it catches my eye is I'm always looking for ways
2149 that teenagers can volunteer. It's a really nice service that we provide. Why isn't that
2150 checked?

2151
2152 Ms. Fiore: It sounds like that was just an oversight.

2153
2154 Commissioner Crommie: Rob, do you think it's an oversight or this isn't set up to check
2155 it?

2156
2157 Mr. de Geus: I have the most concerns about this report of all the reports as well. As I
2158 looked at the information and thinking about how do I use this information to decide
2159 where to emphasize or invest versus not for programs and services, we really don't have it
2160 with this information.

2161
2162 Commissioner Crommie: I'm wondering what this is useful for, quite frankly. Can you
2163 give me the party line on what we would do with this?

2164
2165 Ms. Fiore: Again, this is the understanding of what's on the ground, what's the universe
2166 of available recreation programs for Palo Alto residents. It provides some very
2167 preliminary thoughts on directions you could go for looking at augmenting or changing
2168 program investment at the city level. This is absolutely not intended as a decision
2169 making document. That was never the intent of it. That will be a future product. We

2170 have gotten feedback and I think it's well understood that this is not robust enough to
2171 even get us to that middle point where we're going to base recommendations on it, which
2172 is why it's still a draft product, work in progress.

2173
2174 Commissioner Crommie: The issue I have is martial arts is broken out. Someone
2175 decided to break that out, martial arts. I don't know why that has been broken out over
2176 ballet classes. I really don't know the thinking behind it, like how it ended up there, even
2177 though I think it's important. Not a lot of things are broken out, but martial arts is
2178 considered its own category for some reason of exercise.

2179
2180 Ms. Fiore: I wasn't the primary author of this document, so I can't answer all of your
2181 questions. I apologize for that. My guess is that these were areas of concentrated
2182 programming that rose to the top because there was a certain magnitude of offering.
2183 Ballet is in fact on there; it's the second one down in the third section. What I'm hearing
2184 is that this table is not particularly useful. It may not be worth reinvesting our time in
2185 fixing it. It may just be worth revisiting our approach to this entire product, so we can
2186 move more efficiently towards recommendations. It seems to be causing more confusion
2187 than helping.

2188
2189 Commissioner Hetterly: I have a bunch of comments that are organized by page. Do you
2190 want me to just go through them?

2191
2192 Chair Reckdahl: (inaudible)

2193
2194 Commissioner Hetterly: Page 1, recreation program guidance. You mentioned the
2195 recreation strategic plan, but the Comp Plan should also be prominently present there.
2196 Commissioner Lauing already addressed the University Club issue. Page 5, where you
2197 start talking about the program areas. I couldn't figure out the rhyme or reason for what
2198 is included under each section. Some things are included everywhere, but no single
2199 section is all inclusive. I can't figure out why you chose some versus others, if there's a
2200 reason for why you want to highlight certain things. There were some notable omissions.
2201 Avenidas should figure much more prominently in every part of this, including that
2202 confusing matrix. They are our primary source for senior services, and we partner very
2203 intimately with them. Without them, we show a huge gap that maybe isn't real. Also,
2204 Peninsula Youth Theater is a huge arts provider for youth. Palo Alto Neighborhoods is
2205 one of our prides as a city for emergency preparedness, and there's no indication that the
2206 city has any role in emergency preparedness in that section. All of these program areas
2207 need to be refined, and I think you need to figure what you want to say with them. Page
2208 7, youth and teen support services. Project Safety Net isn't really a program. It's a
2209 collaborative. Sort out the details for those is what I would suggest. You have this
2210 section on hours of operation and peak use with some notes about what are the peak
2211 times. There's no data to support that. We don't know the take up rate for rental space in

community meeting rooms during those peak times or during the non-peak times. We don't know if we have a lot of vacancy at any point during the week or during the day that we should be trying to figure out how to fill. That kind of thing. That's more of that middle data that we really need. Are there any categories of classes that are over-subscribed or under-subscribed? There's mention of things getting busy and having more popular classes. Does that mean we have classes that are so popular that people can't take them? We don't know that from here. That's more the kind of notes that would be useful related to peak use. Of course Mitchell Park is now open, so this should be updated to reflect that. Page 13, under user groups and partner organizations. This second sentence about Cubberley, I didn't really understand what you were saying there. It got lost in the editing, so reword that. The sampling of partners below appears to be primarily folks who are located at Cubberley. Is that supposed to be a sampling of Cubberley partner groups or is that supposed to be citywide partner groups? We also have Audubon Society there. I don't know if they're in Cubberley or if that's on here.

Ms. Fiore: It was intended to be citywide, but it may be biased towards Cubberley.

Commissioner Hetterly: It's a little bit confusing coming right after Cubberley, so maybe clarify what that's supposed to represent. Page 16 and 17 is key findings, which I'll let Ed go first since he was saving his energy for that one. Before we get to key findings, at the top of page 16, these two paragraphs talk about low income groups that we may not be making our programs sufficiently accessible for them. Later it says conflict may exist with respect to program scheduling or overcrowding. In the next paragraph, you talk about financial hardship may mean we need more scholarships. There are all these may's and might's that we could say about probably any community in the world. This may be a problem, that may be a problem. We want to know is it a problem and should we do those things. Is this specific to Palo Alto? Do we have sufficient financial assistance to provide access? Does it or doesn't it is what I want an answer to, rather than just raising the question. Though they're good questions, it's more useful to know the answer. I'll save my key findings until everyone's had a chance to comment.

Chair Reckdahl: Any more questions or comments apart from key findings?

Commissioner Crommie: I read this, and then I started to go back to see if I could find information if I was curious about it. Maybe you can help me or someone can help me. I wanted to look and see the swim leagues, how they're listed in this document. We have PASA swim league. Can you help me find where that would be listed? It might be here somewhere. It might be in the ...

Commissioner Hetterly: It's the first thing under program areas, aquatics.

Commissioner Crommie: What page is that on?

Commissioner Hetterly: Page 4.

Commissioner Crommie: Is that listed as a provider?

Commissioner Hetterly: No, every provider is not listed.

Commissioner Crommie: That's what we're pointing out here. That's a huge swim program. When I hear people talking about new pools, we need to know how our pools are currently used. We have a private organization that uses Rinconada. I know because my kids swam in it. That's not run by the city; that's a group coming in and using it for competitive swim league. I want to see some analysis on that. Maybe they need to clear out and make room for residents. Those are the kinds of questions I ask. I don't see that I can get that kind of information in here. It's just a glaring gap for me in the aquatics analysis.

Chair Reckdahl: Ed, you can start with the key points. You've been on deck for a long time.

Commissioner Lauing: I'm very confused by this entire section. I'm sorry to say. I don't think this is just a semantic point, but I don't see a lot of these things as being findings. First is the strategic directions. The first point, that's fine. The second one, I don't think I actually understand. We need to revise things a bit. We're always doing that, so I don't quite get that. The third one, I also don't understand, because we need an appropriate role for recreation in addressing recreation trends. I just don't follow what that is. I don't want to wordsmith each one of these and take the time, so I'm trying to buzz through it. In the programming section, I'd take out three of the five. The only things that are findings are something like this emergency preparedness and gardening are called out separately and there's a gap in programs and services targeted at young adults. The specialized divisions that have used outside funding, that's not a finding; it's a fact. It's good, but I don't see that that's a conclusion. Similarly, something like special events have been underfunded for the last few years. That's just a piece of history; that's not findings. This needs to be rewritten. The facilities thing was a big confusing. I didn't know what the recommendation is on Lucie Stern. To make it more productive as a more specialized facility servicing smaller segment of the marketplace, playing to strengths of existing facilities; I don't get it. There's another one of those. We know this here. Again, it's not a finding. We know we have some great facilities that aren't anywhere else. We're not learning anything from that, nor will Council. There was some comments on Cubberley. We're very familiar with that issue. I could say more, but I'll stop there.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Knopper.

Commissioner Knopper: Hi. I would concur. I just keep putting question marks next to almost every paragraph. For instance, since you were just talking about Lucie Stern, about the historic character and that the programming should reflect that. I don't even know what that means. I literally do not have enough information to actually comment, other than I'm a little confused. I like analytics. I like, "Okay, so we have 43,000 ballet classes. This is where they're located geographically. Based on population and all of the data we've collected, you really only need 37,000." Great, that makes sense to me. I just keep feeling like I'm reading these paragraphs with a lot of words that just aren't gelling. That's it. I'm done.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: I'll just bring up a couple of points that struck me. Commissioner Lauing and Knopper have made really good points. Ed was pretty specific, so that's probably going to help you. The key findings are really important, because sometimes that's all people read. We're going to need more input on this. We have to go through this document again, because we want to get it right. We want to feel good about this. Something that struck me was under programming areas and populations, the fourth bullet point. I feel like I have my finger on the pulse of the Junior Museum as a user, because my kids took virtually every camp that was offered there. When you say something like it's not present in other areas, I agree with that. Our Junior Museum is completely unique. As a parent shopping around for camps, I'd much rather send my kids there than Camp Galileo for instance, because of the quality of the staff. As a user, that just stood out incredibly to me. The city made a big investment to have a really high quality educational program there. The bottom line in my experience is most of those camps filled up really quickly. As a resident of Palo Alto, I wouldn't want you to make some regional advertisements, to strain our staff to provide even more classes. I don't understand the thinking there. Can you explain that to me?

Ms. Fiore: Again, I'm not the author of this document. My guess would be that other communities might make a policy decision that they want to attract regional visitors either for revenue reasons or for public relations reasons or to help serve gaps that exist regionally. That may very well not be the case based on what you just described. Again, it's one of those may considerations that we're floating out there without drawing a conclusion about it.

Commissioner Crommie: That's an area where you need to understand our community more. There's a lot of anxiety around being a regional supplier. It's hugely controversial in this city. You can't be superficial about it at all. That's a hot button topic as far as I see. It has to do with playing fields, our theater program. Do we want to be a supplier of high quality science camps for the rest of the region? That has to do with use. It's connected to how popular are they. It's all these economic considerations that are really

deeper than just a superficial statement maybe we should go after it regionally. Let me make one other comment. This also has to do with regional activities. For me, how much the city subsidizes the activity really makes a difference in how you want to go after it regionally. From this Commission, we've learned that we subsidize our theater programs quite a bit, to the point some of us think maybe too much as a city. If it's a highly subsidized program, I wouldn't want to subsidize it for the region. You see how the economics plays under decisions?

Ms. Fiore: Yeah, absolutely.

Commissioner Crommie: I don't know within this report how regional considerations are going to be handled. They have to be handled ...

Commissioner Markevitch: (inaudible)

Commissioner Crommie: Children's Theatre groups. We subsidize that as a city, probably more highly than any other services. I'm interested in that. As a Commission, we've been interested in how it all works. We've received tables on it, so we could see for ourselves the economics of it all. Again, it comes back to playing fields. A hot topic in this city is what to do about playing fields and whether we should provide those regionally or not. We don't really know how that all works. There are a lot of forces at play.

Ms. Fiore: Right, understood. Ultimately whether you want to be a regional provider, again is a policy directive from this group and from Council. That's a decision that needs to be made, and then your programming will fall out from that. We're not making any recommendations on that front right now. Again, I understand your point that you need more information to even start to get there.

Commissioner Crommie: I'm just reacting to an off-hand comment on this bullet point. It's just sort of dangling a bit. It's not well developed.

Ms. Fiore: Yes, I understand your point. Thank you.

Commissioner Crommie: Not that it's a bad topic.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Markevitch.

Vice Chair Markevitch: Going back to the Lucie Stern Center.

Commissioner Lauing: Which page?

Vice Chair Markevitch: Under facilities. It says it's a major asset to the city. When you're talking about the Lucie Stern Center, are you referring to the community room, the ballroom, the fireside room? Are you also including the theater in there? The Children's Theatre is spelled out in the next bullet point, but Main Stage is not. There are three companies that pretty much take up the bulk of the usage, about 90 percent. I want to make sure they're protected, because they're special. Without that protection, they would not be able to thrive. I just want to make sure that somewhere in here the Main Stage theater is listed.

Ms. Fiore: Okay.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Hetterly.

Commissioner Hetterly: I agree with many of the comments that came before me. Under strategic directions, I'm not sure what you're trying to get at with strategic directions. You should have reference to the Comp Plan and the strategic plan working hand in hand. There should be some connection in here to the Cost of Service Study, and maybe that will come out in the revenue analysis. Those seem to me strategic initiatives that are relevant to this plan. I also am confused about those second two bullets under that section. Under programming areas and populations, the first bullet talked about missing opportunities to work together because of a decentralization of function. Rather than talking about missed opportunities, I think you're saying we should identify high value opportunities to bridge the gaps. I think I got lost in wordsmithing there. I'm sorry. On facilities, the first bullet, the Cubberley Community Center, that last sentence says, "Finding a replacement venue for the most important of Cubberley's program offerings should be a priority." Having been on the Cubberley Community Center Advisory Committee, that shouldn't be the priority. You could say "or," but there should be some mention of redesigning facility for more appropriate and efficient use to meet our needs onsite rather than trying to move services elsewhere. Finally, under gaps and overlaps, there is no mention of gaps even though that's in the heading. It only talks about overlaps. I would like to know what are the gaps. Also I'd like to have some more qualitative overlay of where are overlaps unnecessary versus beneficial. That's all I have for that section.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: I just have one quick point. On the gaps and overlaps, you have a sub-bullet saying, "The JCC primarily serves the surrounding community's Jewish population." That's not my perception of it. I don't know that there's this huge surrounding Jewish community. There is an established onsite community of retired people. As far as it being a Jewish section of town, I'm not aware of that. I'm aware of people traveling there from many parts of town. Did I misread this?

Ms. Fiore: Yeah. I don't think that surrounding community in this context was meant as neighborhood. I think it's more of a citywide/regional community.

Commissioner Knopper: It serves the Jewish community.

Commissioner Crommie: I think of the pool there. This is about aquatics, isn't it? There's so much going on there; what are you referring to on that sub-bullet?

Ms. Fiore: The point here is about aquatics. While there are multiple providers, they each target different parts of the market. The JCC may draw a different crowd than the YMCA (crosstalk).

Commissioner Crommie: I don't know that, unless you show me. I really don't know that. I don't know if more Jewish people go there than the Y. Is that what you're trying to say in this sub-bullet point?

Ms. Fiore: We're not trying to make any point about quantity, rather that there are multiple providers serving the market.

Commissioner Crommie: You have the word "primarily" which is a red flag to me. You're using the word "primarily," and I'm not sure that's accurate.

Chair Reckdahl: I just have one comment. On that same page, that last bullet really summarizes what is wrong with the document. It says, "In many cases programming overlaps are not an indication (inaudible), rather they confirm that these are popular, in-demand programs." Without numerically estimating both need and supply, you can't make that statement. This whole section talks about this and that, but it's all very qualitative. In real estate, it's location, location, location. In a study like this, it's metrics, metrics, metrics. We need to know numerically what is the demand, numerically what is the supply. The difference in those two will tell us whether we are serving that need or not. The fact that there's 17 hamburger places in Palo Alto, that doesn't necessarily mean there's a shortage of hamburgers or an excess. It depends on the relative supply. That's what I want to see more of. Rob, do you want to add anything?

Mr. de Geus: That's really good feedback. It's such an important report. We've got to get it right. I totally understand that, but I'm concerned because we have to recalibrate expectations of what MIG's doing and how they're doing it and the data, but also the expectations of what this report is going to do and be. I don't think it can be all of what you're hoping it will be. For instance, if we look at the JCC, we're not going to have all the data about the JCC and demand and use there or the YMCA or some of these other providers.

Chair Reckdahl: In the city classes, if we know they fill up in five minutes—just the vacancy rates on all the facilities tells a lot.

Mr. de Geus: That data we have. I agree with you it ought to be in here.

Chair Reckdahl: That doesn't tell us if there's some niche that's not met at all. (crosstalk) cricket class, we don't know whether it fills up or not.

Commissioner Lauing: The next page, which is needs, opportunities and challenges, outlines in five bullet points what we're trying to get. I would totally agree with you. If we're not going to get that, we better make some serious changes. It says stuff in the second point, results of analyses including gaps in parks and programs and unmet community demand. That's a big part of what we're trying to get. The other stuff is that as well. If in the midst of this process we don't think we're going to get that, then we better start setting Council's expectation that that's not what's going to come out of it. I'm not saying that, but I'm agreeing with you that if we need to adjust, let's adjust.

Mr. de Geus: That's what I want to take a second look at. Maybe I take a look at it with a couple of Commissioners, just to go back and re-look at the scope that we defined, the outreach plan that we defined. Just to be sure that we have clear expectations of what we're going to receive in this report. We can adapt if we need to take a little longer to make sure we get it right. I do feel like we do ...

Commissioner Crommie: I would say don't overstate. I'm reacting to statements that I think might not be true. You have to be very careful about what you say.

Mr. de Geus: I completely agree.

Chair Reckdahl: Frankly, I don't really care whether the JCC serves Jews or non-Jews. It's irrelevant. Just say what's the capacity; that's more important.

Mr. de Geus: We talked about data and what is the metrics. I agree that really should be driving the report and the findings. I wonder whether it would be helpful to have a couple of Commissioners that are particularly interested in data, as we take a bit of a pause here, to think about where we're at, where we're headed, what's missing in terms of the data that we need. I certainly agree. Particularly with the recreation programming report, there's big gaps.

Commissioner Knopper: Do you think that the data has been collected and maybe it's just, no offense, not articulated? Sometimes when you're living it day in and day out, you just make assumptions and you don't write everything down, so they're not including

things because it's more of a shorthand to abbreviate the report. Do you think the actual data exists at this point?

Mr. de Geus: I think there's good data. I don't know that there's enough, probably not enough. I agree generally with where the Commission is. I struggle to understand some of this as well, because they're all coming in individual reports. I don't know how they relate to each other specifically. Some are a little further along, it seems like, than some of the other reports. I'm finding that a little challenging. I also recognize that we're still in the somewhat early phase of this. All the data hasn't come in yet. The next phase, when we're ready for it, when it starts to come all together, when start to see real trends and a picture for the future, hasn't happened yet. What I'm hearing is a fear that we're going to get to this point of prioritization before we're ready to have that conversation.

Commissioner Crommie: We have to take a look tonight at what the data sources are that are still coming in. Don't you think before we go home tonight we should understand that? Like what's on the docket for collection. You can probably tell us, correct?

Mr. de Geus: It's no surprise; you've seen it all before. It was in the outreach plan that you looked at several times. It included the Mapita research. It included the stakeholder workshops. We've had one; there's two more but that's with all of our stakeholders, representative of a lot of the stakeholders. Then we have the survey; we haven't got that data yet. That's a big piece that's missing.

Commissioner Crommie: We skipped a section in here. Can we just briefly look at it? We have a section on some reporting on data here. It's tabulations.

Commissioner Knopper: That's one of the things that is also frustrating to me. We don't have to drill down too much, but it's the format that it was presented. This was very difficult to read. It's clear that each section was probably written by a different person, because everybody has a different focus. The tables aren't consistent and there's different graphs and different kinds of bullet points. I'm not going to be overly OCD about it, but there's so much data. If it's not presented in a very formulaic way, it's just hard.

Mr. de Geus: The presentation of the information is an easier problem to resolve.

Commissioner Knopper: I agree. Maybe you can extrapolate, so people aren't as frustrated. I got very confused; I admit it. Even the way the headings are laid out. That's semantics at this point, and we have bigger fish to fry. The next time it's presented, just having a cleaner presentation might be more helpful.

Commissioner Lauing: In that very first report we looked at, I suggested we should have a data session around this stuff next month. If we indeed got some of this stuff that's on

page 2 of the final document: needs analysis and essential park elements, responses to demographic changes and trends, and recreation trends product. If that's really there or is going to be there, once that's there and it's digested, there's hope. The qualitative stuff isn't going to get us there.

Commissioner Crommie: Just responding to this report, when I look at page 14 under community workshop summary, I see things missing that I know came up at the intercepts. I'm not seeing a lot about gyms here. Maybe I'm missing it.

Ms. Fiore: This particular document was a summary of the three workshops that we held in October (crosstalk).

Commissioner Crommie: I went to two of the three. I was there, and I'm not seeing badminton. Ping pong came up strongly in one of them.

Commissioner Lauing: Let's focus here.

Commissioner Crommie: I don't know what to make of it when I don't see things. Why isn't it here under recreation?

Ms. Fiore: Ping pong tables is on page 15.

Chair Reckdahl: Right now we don't want to be ...

Commissioner Crommie: We don't want to get into the details.

Chair Reckdahl: I agree that a lot of these points are important, but also we could be here until midnight. Ed is right in that we need to look at what data is going to be delivered. For next month, it would be very good if we say these are the pieces of hard data that's going to be delivered and where are they coming from. Are they coming from surveys? Are they coming from the city? What is the purpose? With that data, do we believe that it's going to give us actionable results for the Council? We need to be able to look at the data next month and be able to say that will be sufficient or that won't be sufficient. Ed, do you want to say anything?

Commissioner Lauing: That's exactly what we need to do. We'll do a gaps analysis of the data to see if we need any other data sources.

Chair Reckdahl: That will go for next month.

Mr. de Geus: Okay.

2590 Chair Reckdahl: Apart from data, do you have any more comments or questions?
2591

2592 Mr. de Geus: No. Between now and next month, does it make any sense for a
2593 Commissioner or two to work with staff on this question of data? As we think about how
2594 to present that next month, we want to present something that makes sense to you all and
2595 we don't just hear more of "it's a problem." Perhaps that's something we can do after next
2596 month. If we really do recognize that there's more work that needs to be done, then we
2597 have an ad hoc committee that works on it.
2598

2599 Chair Reckdahl: We'd talked about doing an ad hoc before, but it came down that
2600 everyone was interested. We thought this was crucial, so we wanted to keep it out of ad
2601 hoc because we all wanted to be in the loop.
2602

2603 Mr. de Geus: That's right.
2604

2605 Ms. Fiore: If I may? What would be productive, as I had suggested, would be to
2606 resurface some of the products that came before. As Rob said, it has been rolling in very
2607 piecemeal and it's hard to see the big picture. Another layer of synthesis of all the pieces
2608 we've done and the stuff that's pending, and repackage that in the framework of these
2609 needs and opportunities and challenges and goals and objectives. I agree with you that
2610 this middle piece is very unclear at this point. Doing a little bit more work around that,
2611 maybe that's what we can look at as a group next month and then decide if we're ready to
2612 get to project list and recommendations after that. It will be important to articulate what
2613 these data pieces are that were scoped and what has been delivered and what's pending
2614 and whether or not that meets your and Council's objectives for data. If not, that's a big
2615 problem.
2616

2617 Commissioner Crommie: I wonder if it will help us ...
2618

2619 Chair Reckdahl: Also ...
2620

2621 Commissioner Crommie: Sorry. Go ahead.
2622

2623 Chair Reckdahl: Ed cited this last section, that two pages that summarized what will be
2624 delivered. Adding some meat onto that would be good. We really want a good
2625 description of what we're going to be delivering to Council.
2626

2627 Commissioner Lauing: This is an engineering project. We're delivering quality; we're
2628 not solving for the timeline. We can't go to an artificial timeline. If it's not ready to go,
2629 we can't release it.
2630

Commissioner Knopper: You said the survey piece was missing. That's important for us to know. I feel like if a section is inadequately supported with enough information, we shouldn't even talk about it. There's so much to dive through. To your point Ed, we shouldn't set a false date just to hit the date if we're not going to have the right result.

Commissioner Crommie: Do you think it's going to be helpful if we read a report you did for another city?

Ms. Fiore: Actually that occurred to me earlier tonight. If we could ...

Commissioner Crommie: Did you send us some? I'm sorry.

Ms. Fiore: Yeah, we could send you some ...

Mr. Jensen: At the last meeting, we gave three samples. They're in that plan outline.

Commissioner Crommie: I'll go back. I do remember reading them at the time, but I forgot.

Ms. Fiore: I think they went out with the memo we sent you in November/December, but we could recirculate that. I think that would be very helpful.

Commissioner Crommie: I'll go back and look at those. I think that does help.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think we've beat that to death. Next month it's coming back, so we're going to beat it some more.

Mr. Jensen: It'll come back every month until it's done. This is the main thing you're going to be working on.

Commissioner Lauing: That sounds like a threat, Peter.

Mr. Jensen: It is.

Mr. de Geus: We're going to wear you out.

Commissioner Hetterly: Maybe we can put it earlier in the agenda next month, so she doesn't have to catch us at our tired and grumpiest.

Chair Reckdahl: Yes, that is true.

6. Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison updates.

Chair Reckdahl: Deirdre and I went out to Byxbee on Sunday to look around. We expect we'll have some type of briefing next month, talking about the trail up top, and come to some conclusion whether we like the layout right now or we think there's room for improvement. Daren had some feedback that he's going to be giving to Deirdre. We'll be, I assume, sometime in the next month meeting with Daren.

Commissioner Crommie: Not you and me? We're both together.

Chair Reckdahl: You, me and Daren will get together sometime in the next month.

Commissioner Crommie: We hope so. Stacey Ashlund and I are on the Lucy B. Evans Interpretive Center ad hoc committee. We've had one meeting with Daren Anderson and one with John Aiken to discuss some CIPs that have been written up for the Lucy Evans Interpretive Center. We've already done our work, but we didn't get on the Agenda so we'll report next month. The work has already been done. I guess that's it.

Chair Reckdahl: Anything with dog parks?

Commissioner Hetterly: We had a short one, but we'll save it for next month.

Commissioner Lauing: Where are we on CIPs? Should we reconvene that one? Do you know, Rob?

Rob de Geus: We can give an update next month.

7. Discussion of Possible Dates for the PARC 2015 Retreat.

Commissioner Knopper: You mean next December?

Rob de Geus: (inaudible)

Commissioner Lauing: This is the Retreat.

Commissioner Crommie: I wanted to mention something about the Retreat.

Commissioner Knopper: What Retreat?

Chair Reckdahl: The one we go up to Foothills Park.

Commissioner Knopper: (inaudible)

Vice Chair Markevitch: (inaudible) this year.

Chair Reckdahl: That's usually in February.

Commissioner Crommie: I want to throw out whether we can do it at the Lucy Evans Interpretive Center. I've been talking to Daren about doing some canoeing with our Commission. He said he would get the canoes. I was wondering if we could combine our Retreat with a little tour. Plan it around the tides. Would anyone be interested in doing that? Maybe we could just—is that too much? A separate event?

Vice Chair Markevitch: How about an optional?

Commissioner Crommie: After the event maybe?

Commissioner Lauing: Scuba maybe?

Commissioner Crommie: The city owns canoes. I don't think we own scuba gear. I was just ...

Commissioner Lauing: What about dates? Dates?

Vice Chair Markevitch: We're just trying to nail down the date, not ...

Mr. de Geus: Is Friday best for folks? It seemed like that was best last time. We can poll Commissioners for a Friday in February. Friday morning.

Commissioner Hetterly: Early March is better for me.

Mr. de Geus: Early March.

Commissioner Hetterly: I defer to the Chair entirely.

Commissioner Crommie: Maybe we need a poll with a couple of dates at the end of February or beginning of March.

Commissioner Markevitch: That sounds (inaudible).

Chair Reckdahl: Friday morning, is 10:00 a good time for people or do you guys want it early so you have more of the day left?

Vice Chair Markevitch: Just send out the poll.

Chair Reckdahl: Cat, give them options for dates, but also give them options for times too. We have that set.

V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Reckdahl: I see none.

Commissioner Markevitch: You're learning.

Commissioner Lauing: You're getting the hang of this, Keith.

Commissioner Knopper: She has one.

Commissioner Hetterly: Just a tiny thing to add to the calendar. The State of the City is February 18th, Wednesday, at 7:00 p.m., if people are interested in hearing the story of the state of the city and what the next year's going to look like.

Chair Reckdahl: What was the date of that?

Commissioner Hetterly: February 18th and it'll be at Mitchell Park.

VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 24, 2015 MEETING

Chair Reckdahl: Coming next week, we'll talk about the 7.7 acres.

Commissioner Knopper: Month.

Chair Reckdahl: Next month. The 7.7 acres, particularly we want to talk about Acterra, public access.

Commissioner Markevitch: Hydrologic study.

Commissioner Knopper: It should be an action item.

Commissioner Markevitch: Just state it's an action item.

Chair Reckdahl: Yes, action item. Hydrological study. I want to polish this a little more. We are giving a recommendation to Council or are we deciding whether we want to give a recommendation to Council? What is our purpose for the 7.7 acres discussion next month?

Rob de Geus: It will be a recommendation. Given today's comments, staff will write another staff report with a staff recommendation. We'll list it as an action item, and then you can discuss it next month.

Chair Reckdahl: If the recommendation is wait until the study's done, that would be the recommendation?

Mr. de Geus: Right.

Chair Reckdahl: Waiting is an option. I'm happy with that. That's one item. Then the Master Plan.

Mr. de Geus: We also have the Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo. They were hoping to come this evening, but there wasn't time. There's been one community meeting on this already. Commissioner Lauing attended, which was great. There's big plans to renovate, rebuild the Junior Museum and Zoo with the help of the Friends that supports that program. They have conceptual plans of that.

Chair Reckdahl: What is the timeframe for that?

Mr. de Geus: We are in negotiations with the Friends this year to work through a construction agreement and potential governance agreement after it gets rebuilt with them.

Chair Reckdahl: I thought there was some part of Rinconada that we were waiting and going to do in tandem when they remodeled the Junior Museum.

Mr. de Geus: There is an environmental study that's happening with Rinconada Park that includes the Junior Museum and Zoo.

Chair Reckdahl: Some of the construction near there we wanted to do simultaneously with the Museum remodel.

Mr. de Geus: That's possible.

Vice Chair Markevitch: Could that possibly move to March, since February is already pretty packed?

Commissioner Crommie: What else is on there?

Commissioner Lauing: They're a long way from even raising all the money yet, so we don't have to do this next month.

Peter Jensen: It's mostly now based on the environmental report that's in conjunction with the Rinconada Long Range Plan. To keep on track and not push that out any further, already the environmental report is going to take until December of this. Every month that goes by just pushes that out further. The presentation will be solely on their proposed plan. Some of that you've started to look at already with the Long Range Plan and the expanded footprint into the park, which is probably the key thing to look at. As far as the length of time the presentation can go, it's not a very long presentation and discussion for this set, because it'll be coming back several times as the plan evolves. It would help to keep it on its environmental track to go next month. We were trying to get it on tonight, but I didn't think you guys wanted to be here until 1:00 in the morning.

Commissioner Hetterly: We have to review it before it can go to the environmental review process.

Mr. Jensen: Yeah. Some of that process is the feedback from the boards and commissions. That goes along with the studies.

Commissioner Crommie: What's making next month's agenda so busy? I haven't heard.

Chair Reckdahl: The Master Plan. We spent an hour and a half on the Master Plan tonight.

Commissioner Crommie: We have the bridge which is (inaudible). What are our other items?

Vice Chair Markevitch: 7.7 acres.

Mr. de Geus: 7.7 acres.

Commissioner Crommie: That's two.

Vice Chair Markevitch: If people could be briefer in their comments, it would go smoother.

Chair Reckdahl: It hurt us tonight.

Vice Chair Markevitch: You can't always count on that.

Chair Reckdahl: Tonight we had a half hour worth of consumer content too.

Commissioner Crommie: This is later than usual, but we haven't had a late meeting in a long time.

Chair Reckdahl: My inclination would be to try to do that. If something pops up in the next month when we make the agenda, we will push it off a month. Let's strive for it right now, and we can examine the final agenda and see if ...

Commissioner Lauing: Having seen the presentation that we're going to get, I do agree that it's pretty short. We won't have as much public comment as they did.

Commissioner Crommie: I was also interested in getting someone to report to us on the Measure E parcel, where it stands. It could be pushed out, but it'd be nice to hear back. There were a lot of decisions that were made on that in the last couple of months.

Mr. de Geus: We have someone ready to come. We'll put it on the list for February or March.

Commissioner Crommie: It is affecting parkland.

Chair Reckdahl: Is that it or do you have any more?

Mr. de Geus: No. Just back to announcements. I did want to mention that we'll be going to Council February 9th to ask them for additional funds to continue to operate the golf course. We still don't have permits. We're inching along, making progress. Mostly it's in the hands of Senior Engineer Joe Teresi working with the regulatory agencies. We don't have them in hand yet, and we had budgeted to fund the golf course until the end of February. We need funds through the end of the fiscal year in the event that the permits don't come through. There'll be an updated staff report on the golf course and the status going to Council. I'll make sure you all receive that as well. I'm sure you're interested.

Mr. Jensen: Magical Bridge is getting closer to completion. If you would like to see the site, I do go out there almost every day. If you email me, you can probably meet me out there. It's looking like a playground now. You can really see what it looks like. We're looking at the first of March to open the playground.

Chair Reckdahl: It looks very nice. I can't wait to play on some of that stuff.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Hetterly and second by Commissioner Knopper at 11:20 p.m.



Approved

**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
February 24, 2015
CITY HALL
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California**

Commissioners Present: Stacey Ashlund, Deirdre Crommie, Jennifer Hetterly, Abbie Knopper, Ed Lauing, Pat Markevitch, Keith Reckdahl

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Council Liaison Eric Filseth

Staff Present: John Aikin, Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus, Peter Jensen, Matthew Krupp

I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY: Catherine Bourquin

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:

None.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Chair Reckdahl: I have one card for David Carnahan. David, you have two minutes.

David Carnahan: Thank you, Chair Reckdahl and Commissioners. David Carnahan, Deputy City Clerk, here to talk to you about commission recruitment. Currently the city is looking to fill terms on the Human Relations Commission, three terms on the HRC, three terms on the Public Art Commission, and two terms on the Utilities Advisory Commission. Terms on all three commissions run for three years, from May 1st of this year through April 30, 2018. The deadline to apply is March 3rd. I'm coming to all the boards and commissions in hopes that commission members know people that they could refer for application, as well as members of the public that attend meetings and watch from home may be interested. These are great opportunities for members of the community to give back to their community and help shape the future of Palo Alto.



Approved

There are a few specific requirements for each board and commission. For HRC, the Human Relations Commission, you need to be a Palo Alto resident. For the Utilities Advisory Commission, each member needs to be a Utilities customer or a representative of a Utilities customer. Did you guys hear any of that? Okay, good. For Public Art, it's a bit of a mouthful. There's really no concise way to say this, so I'm just going to read it to you. The requirements to be on the Public Art Commission: members shall either be members of the Architectural Review Board or shall be professional visual artists, visual arts educators, professional visual arts scholars, or visual arts collectors whose authorities and skills are known and respected in the community and whenever feasible who have demonstrated an interest in and have participated in the arts program of the city. You also do not need to be a Palo Alto resident to serve on the Public Art Commission. Again, applications for all three commissions are due on March 3rd. We have applications at the back of the chambers. They're also available online. If there are any questions, please contact the Clerk's office. Does the Commission have any questions? All right. Thank you very much.

IV. BUSINESS:

Chair Reckdahl: Before we move on to new business, this probably should be an announcement at the end, but I'm going to move it up. Congratulations to our liaison, Rob de Geus, on his new position. He is now head of Community Services. We appreciate that.

Rob de Geus: Thank you very much. Much appreciated. It's an honor and a privilege. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.

1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the Regular Meeting of January 27, 2015.

Approval of the draft January 27, 2015 Minutes was moved by Vice Chair Markevitch and seconded by Commissioner Hetterly. Passed 6-0 Ashlund abstaining

2. Information Report on the Conceptual Plans for the Re-Building of the Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo.

Rob de Geus: We'll invite John Aikin up here, and team. Let me just introduce John. John's the Director of the Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo. I have to say one of the great things about becoming Director of the Department is I get to be involved in some areas where I haven't been involved as much recently. The Junior Museum and Zoo is an example of that. It's such a great program. When is the last time the Commissioners have been to the Junior Museum and Zoo? Pretty recently? You've got to go back. John

and team are doing a great job there. It's fantastic. It's a treasure of a place for the community, and it's bursting at the seams, and it has been for some time. I'm excited to have John here to talk about what could be in the future for this wonderful program. With that, let me pass it on to John.

John Aikin: Thank you, Rob, for that wonderful introduction. Commissioners, I'm pleased to be here to bring you up to speed with something that we've been planning for a couple of years. The Friends of the Junior Museum and Zoo have been fundraising and helping the city come up with concepts for what this could be, but it didn't become an official city project until a letter of intent was authorized by the Council, I guess, at the end of the last fiscal year. This is our first opportunity to really come to you formally and bring this project forward. I'm very excited to do it. I'd like to introduce the members of the team here. Sarah Vaccaro from Cody Anderson Wasney Architects here in Palo Alto. Peter Jensen, I think you know our landscape architect. I'm going to let Peter set the context for this in terms of the Master Plan.

Peter Jensen: In association with the Junior Museum and Zoo Project, this was an aspect of the Rinconada Long Range Plan, which you haven't heard about in a little while as far as the expanding footprint of the Junior Museum and Zoo building and Zoo itself that was shown in the Long Range Plan. The Rinconada Long Range Plan is a joint, I guess, venture with the Junior Museum and Zoo as far as getting its environmental work done. The recommendations that were part of the Long Range Plan are basically now being reviewed as far as environmental review. That's how these two projects are joined together. The Long Range Plan did show the expanded footprint of the Junior Museum and Zoo. It was shown at several community meetings and discussed about the future expansion of the Junior Museum and Zoo. No public opposition came to light from those meetings, and I don't image that they will. As Rob said, it is a cherished item in Palo Alto. The Junior Museum and Zoo is really beloved, the building and the Zoo. That's how it connects to the Long Range Plan. Those two things in their environmental work are going along together. Without further ado, I'll turn it back to John and the consultant to talk more about the Junior Museum and Zoo.

Mr. Aikin: If you'll turn to your screens, our mission is to engage a child's curiosity in science, to encourage exploration, and to build a foundation for understanding and a lifelong respect for nature. We chose those wisely, because it's really about their curiosity that they bring. Science is a process, and nature is the phenomenon that we want to engage them in. We've been here a long time. We're celebrating our 80th year for the Museum, and the 40th year for the Zoo. We are a hybrid institution that is part school, part zoo, part museum, but very much part of the community. I think part of that is that we are in a residential neighborhood. We've been free for a long time for people to stop by. It is has really meshed us well in the community. We have about 150,000 visits a year. That's not really visitors; that's number of visits. We don't collect admission, and

so this is an estimate based on nose counts throughout the year. All of them are local. Many of them are repeat visitors, and they're all children 0-9 years of age and their caretakers. We have a second demographic that we serve. We have probably one of the greatest outreach programs that I'm aware of. In this outreach program, we provide science education in our local elementary schools, and we're touching 100 percent of the local elementary schools. We have robust contracts with at least 70 percent where we're doing every grade, every child, every science curriculum. These are amazing programs. Lots of hours with the students. Many students served. The Friends support at-risk neighborhood schools pro bono, so they raise the funds and deploy city staff to teach those classes in East Palo Alto and now in Mountain View. When people stop by, this is all about play for a young child, but we've staged that play thoughtfully with exhibits that engage them in scientific phenomena and use their whole bodies and get them to observe, question, and open their minds to exploration. From there, it's the school work or it's coming back and taking classes to learn more. That stage is all set in the institution. We've been there for a long time. This building was built in 1941, and it no longer really reflects the scale of our audience nor our storage needs or staff needs. I'll go through a few of the issues. Parking conditions are pretty challenging. Let me get back to that. This is actually our relationship with the park which, I think, could be much better. I think there could be an entrance to that part that's more inviting. The Zoo has turned its back on the park with a USDA-required fence. I think we can do a much better job of having a presence in the park. The parking lot is laid out in a confusing manner that is dangerous. I cringe as I see moms walk kids across that every day. We're crowded on busy days, to the point that on rainy days we take cell phone numbers to call moms waiting in their cars, because we don't have enough room in the institution. We're chock full of storage places and we have great people that take wonderful care of our animals, but we can do much more if we build new facilities that reflect modern husbandry practices and modern zoo conditions. We have about 4,000 objects in our collections, and we've been Palo Alto's attic for a long time. We've got a lot of interesting things. Some of them meet our mission very well and are important to our teaching. Some of them don't, and we're in the process of cataloging those, but they need to be housed in accordance with standards established by the American Alliance for Museums. This rebuild should allow us to do that. Those outreach programs that are so phenomenal are ultimately limited by storage space and our ability to deploy teachers. This is the mother ship that allows all that to occur. I'm going to turn it over to Sarah Vaccaro now, who'll walk you through the current plans.

Sarah Vaccaro: Hello, Commissioners. Thank you for having us here tonight. Peter, thank you for setting the stage in terms of the Long Range Plan. John, thank you for setting the stage of what this treasured amenity is in the City of Palo Alto as well as the facility needs in order to grow and make this program able to reach more in the community. I want to set the stage with the existing facilities to begin with. This is the existing site plan. The existing Museum building is shown in the dark gray. The existing

Zoo footprint is shown in the light gray. This overlays the Rinconada Park boundaries. Rinconada Park along with Lucie Stern and the Junior Museum and Zoo sit in one large public facility parcel. A part of this parcel is zoned as parkland, the Rinconada Park. The current Zoo sits mostly within parkland, so the zoological program is an approved existing use within Rinconada Park. We'll circle back on that in a few minutes. This diagram shows the existing Heritage Trees and special trees around the Junior Museum and Zoo. The red trees are Heritage redwoods. The dark blue are Heritage oak trees. There are two special trees that are highlighted with a green graphic. One is the dawn redwood tree which is a special deciduous redwood tree, and then a large pecan that outdates most of the buildings on this site. All of the Heritage trees will be protected with this proposed expansion as well as the two specimen trees will be highlighted as features in the proposed plan. As John mentioned earlier, the existing vehicular circulation in the parking lot is confusing as these arrows indicate, and there are a lot of collision opportunities between pedestrians and vehicles in this current organization. Part of the Long Range Plan as well as working with our team, we're trying to reorganize the parking lot to be much safer and clearer as well as provide additional parking spots. This diagram in the dark blue or purple color shows the proposed expanded building footprint for the new Museum. It is about 5,000 square feet larger than the existing footprint. That is for the reasons that John outlined before of providing expanded storage capacity as well as education spaces and visitor amenity spaces. The blue outline here shows the proposed expanded Zoo footprint. As I mentioned, it is entirely in parkland in line with providing only zoological program in the parkland which is in line with the existing zoo program currently in park. The proposed expanded footprint is about 11,000 square feet further into the park than the existing Zoo footprint. As Peter mentioned before, the expanded Museum and Zoo footprint have both been identified in the Long Range Master Plan and coordinated with the overall design of this end of the park, coordinated with the other amenities that are located here. This diagram shows some of the immediate trees that will be affected with this proposed expansion in the orange color. There are about 10-12 trees in the area immediately surrounding the existing building and Zoo that will be affected and need to be removed. This is in the context of the entire larger Long Range Plan. There's over 300 trees on the site. These few trees around the JMZ as well as other trees on the site have been identified—there's about 50—to be removed, and then close to 78 trees are proposed to be planted in the Long Range Master Plan. This is the proposed site plan. The darker blue color shows the proposed building location. We have the Museum building on the lower side of the screen. It circles around that dawn redwood tree creating an educational courtyard and a nice entrance plaza off of the drop-off zone in the parking lot. This site plan shows the proposed reconfigured parking lot, which has been developed in coordination with Peter and his team. The light blue shows the proposed outdoor Zoo enclosure. This will be a netted enclosed area, so it will be a loose-in-the-zoo concept where birds and animals will be able to roam freely as well as other animals that will be in enclosed exhibits. There is a small proposed zoo support building that is located in the park. This will provide support such as animal care and

207 feeding rooms and other quarantine-type spaces to allow for proper husbandry care for
208 the animals. The lightest blue is the back-of-house support area for the Zoo as well. One
209 thing to note in this plan is that we are proposing a public restroom on the park side of the
210 proposed Zoo building, and this will be accessed from the park and serve as a public
211 amenity on this end of Rinconada Park as there's currently no public restrooms. That's it
212 for this time.

213
214 Mr. Aikin: We have a few other drawings here we could ask questions, but we wanted to
215 target this informational session to you with issues that we thought were pertinent to park
216 planning and not get into zoo and museum design and things like that. If you have
217 questions, we have a few more slides we can get to. Thank you.

218
219 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioners, comments or questions? Commissioner Knopper.

220
221 Commissioner Knopper: Thank you for your presentation. Could you just explain, you
222 have the proposed Zoo footprint and then the proposed Zoo building and then there's a
223 gray area that sits underneath that. I can't point.

224
225 Ms. Vaccaro: This area?

226
227 Commissioner Knopper: Yes. What is that?

228
229 Ms. Vaccaro: It's an exterior zoo support area. There will be some cages for animals that
230 need to be moved in and out of the main exhibit spaces as well as a lay-down area for
231 materials and support. It's an exterior support area for the Zoo.

232
233 Commissioner Knopper: Thank you.

234
235 Chair Reckdahl: You mentioned that the new Zoo's going to take up 11,000 more square
236 feet of parkland. Can you compare both the outside Zoo area now and then and also the
237 building areas now and then.

238
239 Ms. Vaccaro: The existing Museum building footprint is approximately 8,500 square
240 feet. The proposed Museum building footprint is approximately 13,600 square feet.
241 That's an expansion of about 5,100 square feet. The exterior Zoo enclosure, the area
242 where all the exhibits and people are able to access the existing Zoo, is 10,600 square
243 feet. We're proposing to grow it to 13,000 square feet. That's a difference of about
244 2,400. The Zoo support building, currently there is no Zoo support building, so that's
245 zero for the existing. We're proposing a 2,900 square foot building. The exterior Zoo
246 support yard that we were just speaking of currently is about 2,400 square feet, and we're
247 proposing an expanded area of 3,900 square feet. A difference of 1,500.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.

Vice Chair Markevitch: I agree that the Museum and the Zoo are fantastic. They're great. I'm looking at this, and I'm very concerned that Rinconada Park is getting chipped away. Walter Hays took a big part of it, and now the Zoo is proposing to take a large part. Earlier in your presentation, you said we want to be able to have a more welcoming aspect into the Zoo from the park. Then in this later screen shot, you have a building there, which is not a welcoming thing to me. All it is is a public bathroom facing into the park, and then this is a working building where the animals are going to be taken care of. That doesn't match up with what you had said earlier. Also, was a two-story building considered, so you would take up less of a footprint and you would roll out less of the Zoo into the park? That's really a sticking point with me. I just feel very strongly that this park needs to stay the size it is, because it is such a wonderful park. Is this also coordinating with the Rinconada Master Plan that we worked so hard on? It looks like the play area and the tot lot have rolled closer to Hopkins. Does that mean that the bar-be-que area is now gone from there? It seems everything's getting pushed, and then some stuff is just going away. I didn't see the bar-be-que area on here. That's all my questions and statements for now.

Mr. Aikin: Peter, do you want to answer the question about the Master Plan? Then I'll address the questions about the building.

Mr. Jensen: The playground does get pushed closer to Hopkins to make more room for the Zoo building and the Zoo itself. In that corner of the park, there is nothing that really takes place there. It's not like it's a high-use zone of the park. It looks like the back of someone's yard, because of the fence area there. I think that the land that's being given up by the park is being better utilized in this sense. If you just walk around through that space, this area again is not programmed at all. It's not used at all. It's mostly full of asphalt and is the back of the school. The walkway and the entry into the park with the connection to the parking lot is much improved with the design, even with the larger Zoo and Zoo building there. The proposed bathroom in the Zoo building is something that was a high priority for the Long Range Plan of getting a bathroom down closer to the playgrounds. Either way, the back of the Zoo building or the back of a restroom facility aesthetically can be made to look a lot better than what is there now, as far as the wood fence. Nothing as far as the amenities in the park is being lost. The playgrounds are shifted closer to Hopkins, but the actual playground expands because the tot lot by the tennis court is moved into this area so you have a joint playground use. The existing picnic area there is reconfigured, but it actually gets larger and more amenities, such as a fire pit that was requested by the Girl Scouts. In the final design of the Long Range Plan, a lot more elements are being incorporated into that area than are there now, which I think works very well in conjunction with the Junior Museum and Zoo and in close proximity to the school that you have this node of activity where people are gathering. In

the overall sense, no park amenities are being lost in any way in that location. The location being taken up by the Zoo, like I said, is kind of a dead zone or dead space in the park. It's not really being utilized for anything, mostly composed of asphalt right now. The footprint shown was in the Long Range Plan discussed with the community.

Mr. Aikin: I'd love to address the issue of the building and the back-of-house building in the Zoo. We do have buildings in the Zoo today, but they're scattered, small CMU buildings, and really don't reflect modern husbandry practices. What we are designing—we'll show you here—is a two-story building so that we can have public access on the roof deck which is a butterfly garden. It's essentially a greenhouse on the second floor. Down on the first floor is back-of-house animal care as well as underground exhibits for kids to go underground and underwater to see animals. It's really a stacked zoo with a back-of-house connected to it. This is the view from the park. The building is sunk—I think it's 4 feet—underground so that the first roof layer—I think it's about 7-9 feet—pitches down. It's got a green roof on it. Then you can see the netting on top there above the greenhouse structure. I think that it should be pleasing but, yes, it is a structure.

Vice Chair Markevitch: I had two more questions regarding the parking lot. One of them was, you've closed off an entrance. Are you adding parking spaces? When you have a performance that comes out of the Main Stage, everybody leaves at the same time, and it can be chaotic. The other one is, I noticed alongside the garden area of Lucie Stern where there's two 15-minute green striped parking spaces. It looks like you're redoing the brick there. I want to be sure that what you're doing is historic to the building, because it's important. I know right now it's just red brick and it's cobbled and people trip on it and fall. I want some thought put into that design.

Mr. Jensen: The red brick is historic. It's actually going to be restored along that walkway. Up to this point here, the existing walkway will remain not exactly like it is today. It's going to be repaired within the next few months. That's using a lot of the existing brick, but that will be maintained the same in the language of Lucie Stern. That walkway that connects through the walk does exist through here. This portion is new along with a new entry court there. That does connect you fully through the park over to Lucie Stern, making a better connection to the amenities that are all there. We are aware there is an elimination of a driveway into that parking lot, which currently exists in this location. In the overall design, it was felt the safety and having a clear destination and drop-off for the Junior Museum and Zoo was a key aspect of that design because of the user group, mostly small children. Making that clear designation of having a drop-off and not having the main entry pathway coming directly in front of that was a big bonus to that design. The parking lot—I'm not aware of the number—20 more parking spaces in the parking lot than is there now. That is accomplished by the restriping of the parking lot and the expansion of the parking lot into this area here. We are in the environmental review, looking at the intersection there and what can be done to ease traffic congestion

in that area as well as the ease of crossing the street at that location as part of the upgrade for the parking lot.

Commissioner Lauing: Thanks for your presentation. I went to the public meeting about this that you presented, so I had a lot more detail which was helpful. The overall question is obviously going to be the intrusion on the park as existing. Just to pick up on what Commissioner Markevitch has said, it's almost doubling the intrusion there. That night when I saw it in the public meeting and I see it here in the document, I guess the question is, if you had to scale back, how would you prioritize what you would take out to fit it in? If we do remodels, we don't get to buy the land next door. We just have to fit it on the site. When I go through here and I see things like storage or maintenance or exterior animal cages, interior stroller parking, not just exterior but interior stroller parking, offices, I can't prioritize those. If we're giving up square footage of parkland for people to have better offices and storage, maybe offsite storage could be helpful, and 2,000 of the 4,000 specimens could be offsite. Obviously it has to be in the right kind of conditions. The general question is, how would you prioritize to make it smaller? Maybe you can't answer that tonight, but at some point I think that the various commissions should see an alternative that's smaller so that they can judge what you'd have to give up. That's kind of the driver. Another question in that regard is, since you're basically taking down the building and starting over because it's so magnificent, was there any consideration given to just finding a different location? It's already so jammed with the school and the parking lot and the community center and the park itself, maybe we should just look at a different location for it entirely. You touched on it, but at some point you'll have the opportunity to go into more detail. You're now going to draw more visitors in, and you're already doing some outreach to Mountain View and East Palo Alto, and this is going to be spectacular. Plus or minus 20 car spaces may not be enough. At some point, the city has to come up with the tough decision that parking spaces are going to have to go underground as expensive as they are, because we're planning for the next 50 years. Maybe something as radial and as expensive as that has to be tossed into the mix. I think that's the fundamental issue, the relative size, what you give up and the increased folks that are coming through here that would have to come in to see this new magnificent spot, where we are going to put them as well.

Mr. Aikin: If I could just quickly mention what that footprint in the park does versus what the footprint in the non-park area where the Museum sits now. It's primarily animal enclosures and animal back-of-house. I say primarily because there's one office for the Zoo Director who sits in the Zoo today. The back-of-house is really needed to operate a zoo according to the accreditation standards of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. The animal collection is pretty much the animal collection that we have today with a couple of additions, the butterfly house and a meerkat exhibit. They're scaled to meet those accreditation standards, and so the reality is the Zoo today has exhibits that are too small. If we get criticisms, it's usually about "Gosh, couldn't these animals have a little

375 bit more room?" I think we are pushed up against Walter Hays on one side, a parking lot
376 on another, a park on the other side, and there's only so much room . We did look at
377 other sites before we ventured in on this. The conclusion that we came to is that the
378 relationship with the community for this location and this institution was a great deal
379 of—a big part of the equity of this institution and the relationship with the community
380 was the ease of transport to get here. The other site that we looked at was off a freeway,
381 but it required everybody to get into a car and not ride a bike or take a Palo Alto shuttle
382 or walk. As we solve the transportation issues, I hope that we're going to be able to do it
383 in a multimodal way so that not everybody has to get here by car. We will take all this
384 into consideration and come back with some priorities.

385
386 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Hetterly.

387
388 Commissioner Hetterly: I agree with all the comments that have come before. I also
389 wanted to ask about the entry plaza. As I looked at that overview with the layout of the
390 proposed building and Zoo area, it looked like the entrance plaza is as big as the
391 encroachment into the park. I wonder if there's not some way to create a better balance
392 there to reduce the impact on the park.

393
394 Mr. Aikin: I'll probably turn this to Peter to talk a little bit about that entry plaza. What
395 I'll mention is from the Museum's standpoint and our ability to throw public events and
396 have a space to really engage the public in meaningful ways outside and have gathering
397 areas, that's one of the things that we are limited now. We would love some outdoor
398 plaza space. Peter, do you have any comments about that entry plaza?

399
400 Mr. Jensen: The entry plaza, as far as the Long Range Plan goes, is proposed as a way to
401 properly link the parking lot to the park. If you've visited the park, which I'm sure you
402 have, you walk past the dumpsters and that's the way to get into the park. It doesn't really
403 have a formalized entry or connection to the parking lot. In look or what they could be
404 has not been decided yet. It's more of a placeholder in the Long Range Plan that we
405 would have some type of connection point that would lead from the parking lot. That
406 could be studied more, and we could look at the Zoo encroaching more into that space.
407 That is made more difficult by the trees that are located there, the large oak tree and the
408 large pecan tree. The encroachment into the root zone of those areas would have some
409 impact on those trees. The space that you're gaining is nominal, if any, as far as the entry
410 plaza goes in trying to add some of the space to the Zoo. I think it goes to note again that
411 the restroom facility on the backside of the Zoo was a popular amenity to the community
412 as far as its proximity to the playgrounds. That space would become, if the Zoo wasn't
413 there, a restroom facility as well and would take up the majority of that space. I think it's
414 a fair tradeoff. As you can see down at the bottom image, the Zoo then expands out into
415 this area right here. Like I said, it's the asphalt, meandering walkway that's next to the
416 school and a small portion of the larger turf area, not overly used in that respect as a main

feature of the main turf area. I think the usability, the benefit that the community gets from having the expanded Zoo, the beneficial impact that it has on the animals to have the proper care area for them, I think those are all good reasons to look at that space as being dedicated to the Zoo than to the park.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Ashlund.

Commissioner Ashlund: I have a couple of questions. Can you go to the last diagram in your presentation. The first question, in the redesign of the parking lot, are these two parking lots that are shown in this diagram, are they connected? Once you're in the main one, can you drive to that second portion? So they would become connected. Okay. Where does the main driveway go? You said the main driveway that's currently coming into the JMZ is removed. Is it now the main driveway into Lucie Stern and then you would take the right into the Zoo? Yes, okay. The public restroom access, I wasn't clear. Is that only once you're in the Museum and Zoo that you can access the public restroom or is there an external access from the park side as well?

Ms. Vaccaro: There's an external access from the park side. Anyone using the playground areas or the picnic areas would be able to come over and access the restroom right off the park pathways.

Commissioner Ashlund: I applaud the addition of the Girl Scout fire pit. We've been sharing the Boy Scout fire pit for many years, so I appreciate the addition of that. The main question about the redesign, is the existing foundation being reused or is this a total teardown and do over?

Ms. Vaccaro: We're proposing to remove the existing building. It's an older building type, and it would not be easily renovated or expanded to this newer building type. It would be costly.

Commissioner Ashlund: So the foundation would be redone as well?

Ms. Vaccaro: Correct.

Commissioner Ashlund: Have you given any thought to rotating the placement? I agree with Commissioners' comments about the welcoming aspect of the Museum and Zoo into the park. Right now it feels like the welcoming direction is still the direction that it currently is. If we're redoing the whole foundation anyway, did you do any proposals that looked at rotating it so that the entry plaza was more adjacent to the parkland rather than the Zoo building for equipment?

Ms. Vaccaro: We have studied numerous layouts for the entire footprint. The goal is really to try and keep the Museum portion out of parkland as it's not currently a use in the park, and only put Zoo programs in the park. That limited us to this area of the site here. We are currently developing the design right now to really strengthen the views and the connection from the park entrance plaza and from these areas of the park to the main entrance so that there really is a strong view corridor. One item that I failed to mention earlier is that this wall that encloses the Zoo is going to be themed as an educational component, so that it actually lends itself as kind of a guiding or wayfinding mechanism that leads people from the park around the Zoo enclosure and then to the entry point of the Museum and Zoo.

Commissioner Ashlund: The final question I had is regarding the cost of this proposal and the fundraising efforts for that as far as considering the underground parking as an option because it would buy back space, it would preserve parkland. Has that option been looked at?

Mr. Aikin: The option really has not been studied. I think there was a proposal early on the table, conceptually, that "Gosh, would the city consider underground parking?" I think that question was bigger than we could answer. I think I would leave that to the Commission and the city to grapple with. Are you ready for underground parking in Rinconada Park? It probably could be designed. It would be very expensive and disruptive to build. Is this the time and is that where we want to go? It's a tough choice.

Commissioner Ashlund: Thank you.

Commissioner Crommie: Hi, there. Thank you for the presentation. This reminds of building the megaplex, potentially, of soccer fields in the Baylands and creating a regional draw. I think our Zoo is an amazing resource for our community, but I'm just wondering is the goal here to make it more of a regional draw? Because you're using the word locally without really defining what you mean by local. You're not speaking in terms of Palo Alto residents. You're calling local from here down to San Jose and up to San Francisco? I'm just a little bit confused. What are the forces that want this regional draw? No matter what you're saying, this clearly has a huge impact on Rinconada Park. It's really a question of priorities. Do you want to give up parkland to have a bigger Zoo? My family has used this Zoo a lot every since my kids were little. We continue to go there now. My kid now helps in the CIT program there now as a teenager, so she's been a user of this Zoo from age 1 to now age 14, and she's not done yet. I'm a huge supporter of it, and I've always seen it as a program that's incredibly valuable. The staff is incredible. That's what makes it; the quality of the people who run this is just out of this world, which makes it a huge resource for residents in terms of camps and training and leadership opportunities for teenagers. It looks like it's worked really well. I know over time we do have to update things, but I'm really always dubious about regional draws

500 especially because it's just plopped down in the middle of a neighborhood. It's not like
501 the Exploratorium in San Jose that is in the middle of the city. I have a couple more
502 questions, but can you go over the forces that are leading to this regional program and
503 why you want meerkats for instance?
504

505 Mr. Aikin: Thank you for asking that question, because I don't think I was very clear
506 about the audience that we're building this for. We are trying to right size the project for
507 our existing audience. To prepare for that, we did years of surveys of our visitors to find
508 out where they come from, who they are, and who is using this space and what the
509 limitations are that keep them from coming. Our goal is not to make this a regional
510 facility. Our goal is to make this a great example of a local facility that does amazing
511 work with its elementary schools and its community. What we know about our audience
512 today is about 25 percent of our visitors are from Palo Alto, and the rest of our visitors
513 are primarily from about 15 miles in radius around us. What limits them is the age of our
514 audience, which is a young enough age that they can only spend so much time in the car.
515 There's a fair amount of stuff that comes with them, and then they need nap time and they
516 need food and they go home. I'm also glad that you gave the example of your children
517 following other opportunities within the Junior Museum. That is our core audience,
518 preschool and early elementary school-age children and that is going to stay our core
519 audience. What we plan to do is follow kids into middle school and high school as
520 opportunities to help us mentor young kids. At a programmatic level, this facility allows
521 us to stage their involvement in the institution. It's really not about trying to get people to
522 drive from south San Jose or central San Jose here. It really is about right sizing it. One
523 of the things that will allow us to control that to a certain degree is that we are looking at
524 an admission charge in the new facility, and that admission charge with a membership
525 program could help us make this much more available to local people versus one-time
526 visitors. People that go to destinations tend to do it two or three times a year, so there's a
527 price point and a strategy around dealing with that. We're investigating all of that now. I
528 can't answer fully how that's going to work, but we are looking at it. I just want to let you
529 know that we're as concerned about that as you are. Our goal from the very beginning is
530 to right size this for the existing audience.
531

532 Commissioner Crommie: Can you answer the rationale behind the meerkat exhibit?
533

534 Mr. Aikin: Yes, absolutely. We have an audience of very young children, and we have
535 sleeping bobcats right now which they spend maybe a minute in front of when they're
536 active. Children need more active animals, diurnal animals that are busy in the daytime.
537 We're trying to find some new exhibits that really engage them and that are appropriate
538 for that age. Butterflies and meerkats are two of the species that do it. We didn't want to
539 throw out our existing animals, because they're all rescues and we're caring for them. We
540 wanted to provide places for them. I think that's part of that prioritization that we talked

about earlier, that we could come back if we had to make choices about what would have to go.

Commissioner Crommie: Thank you. As far as square feet go, can you tell me how much green, open turf space is lost during this expansion? You're saying it's not really using area that's useful, which I sort of take exception with. When you reorganize the young play area with the big play area, you're densifying the space that the children are in for their play as far as I can tell. When I look at this picture, it looks to me like there's less green, open turf. Can you tell me what it's diminished by? Now compared to if this plan were enacted.

Mr. Jensen: I don't have the numbers of what the turf is to what it would be with the Museum. We would have to come back to you with that number.

Commissioner Crommie: I'd like that. Thank you. I've tried to add up all the numbers but it seems hopeless. Can you give me a clean number on the footprint square footage now versus the total footprint square footage with your plan? Just so we can tell the full magnitude difference. Just the entire footprint of everything now versus everything according to this plan.

Ms. Vaccaro: Sure. The existing footprint of the Museum building and the Zoo areas is 21,500 square feet. The proposed is 33,450 square feet. The delta is 11,950 square feet.

Commissioner Crommie: What's the delta? Can you give a percent increase on the delta? Percent expansion.

Ms. Vaccaro: I can't do that math off the top of my head.

Commissioner Crommie: Okay. 50 percent bigger?

Ms. Vaccaro: Yeah, about 50 percent larger.

Commissioner Crommie: It's not twofold bigger; it's a half-fold bigger?

Ms. Vaccaro: Correct.

Commissioner Crommie: Since it's clearly a big resource for Walter Hays school, have you thought about cutting a deal with them where they give up some of their land and produce a two-story building? They have all these one-story buildings on their school. If they consolidated into a two-story building, would they be willing to give up any land for the storage space? Just because they tend to use that facility probably more than any

582 other school in the city. First of all, do they use that facility more than any other school
583 in the city?
584

585 Mr. Aikin: Walter Hays has the most robust contract with us, yes. We serve their
586 students probably with more capacity than any other individual school because they are
587 next door. We met with them very early on to make sure that what we were planning
588 would meet their needs. They said, "We'd love to help you stay off our land." They also
589 have a capital project that they're planning now to expand the school and get rid of the
590 temporary structures out there. They're also feeling squeezed for space. I think we have
591 a very cordial relationship with them, but we can't really do a land grab.
592

593 Commissioner Crommie: You call it a land grab, but I don't know how that works. Is
594 there anyone in the city, like the City Manager, who controls those types of discussions?
595 I think it should be on the table.
596

597 Mr. de Geus: It's something that the city and school district can certainly talk about. I
598 would think maybe the City/School Liaison Committee might want to discuss that. That
599 would be the place to do it.
600

601 Commissioner Crommie: Almost done. How many years would this project go on and
602 where would the animals be and where would the exhibits be for this whole group of
603 children that are born during this period?
604

605 Mr. Aikin: I think several of you probably mentioned the value of the staff there. It's the
606 staff that make this work. Our intention is to keep the staff intact during construction,
607 which is about a two-year period. We're looking at temporary facilities for both the
608 animals, because there aren't places to place them. They're all rescues; they didn't have
609 homes in the first place. In an ideal location, we will have a pop-up museum so we can
610 prototype exhibits for the new Museum, but we'll also need to keep the education
611 programs intact. I've been meeting with the site counselors to assure them that our
612 contracts with the schools will continue, that the teachers they know and love will
613 continue to come and bring animals and objects and scientific equipment to the schools
614 and keep that all going. We intend to move offsite during the construction and then come
615 back in.
616

617 Commissioner Crommie: Would that include offsite for summer camps? You have a
618 really large summer camp program there.
619

620 Mr. Aikin: It would. The biggest impact would be Zoo Camp. We offer nine summer
621 camps every summer. The others could take place in other locations easily. It's the Zoo
622 Camp piece that would be the most difficult.
623

Commissioner Crommie: You wouldn't try to do a truncated Zoo Camp? You might have to take it offline?

Mr. Aikin: Depends on the site.

Commissioner Crommie: I'd put a big plug in to keep it going in some way. Seems like you just did the bobcat habitat renewal. When did that take place? I lose track of time. How many years ago was it?

Mr. Aikin: It's about four years ago, and it's protected on the site and reused for bobcats and raccoons right next to it. We are going to salvage that and not have to spend that money twice.

Commissioner Crommie: Okay, great. What is the feedback from the public meeting? In general, we usually get that attached to a report, and we didn't get that tonight. I'm wondering when we're going to get the public feedback summary from your community outreach meeting.

Mr. Aikin: I can get that to you. I'm sorry for not including it. We had about 12 members of the public come to our open house community meeting. Their questions were many of the same questions that you had, but were all in general in support of the project. It was really more curiosity about how we're going to do this and what we're going to do, and really no concerns that they brought up.

Commissioner Crommie: Okay, great. If you can just send us that, that'd be great. Thank you very much.

Chair Reckdahl: We're about 20 minutes behind schedule, so I'll keep this short. In addition to that feedback at the public meeting, it'd also be nice if this presentation, we were not delivered an electronic version of that, so if you can also send us that. The PowerPoint that you're showing upon the screen, we did not receive that. We received a four-page text, staff report.

Commissioner Hetterly: (inaudible)

Chair Reckdahl: Is it on the site now?

Commissioner Markevitch: (inaudible)

Mr. Aikin: It's been on the site.

Chair Reckdahl: It was not in our packet. Okay, thank you. One question. On the top of this four-page text, the top of page 2, it says "[d]ue to inadequate storage and support space, accreditation options for both the Museum and Zoo are unobtainable." What does that mean?

Mr. Aikin: There are two accrediting bodies for the Museum and the Zoo. One, the American Alliance for Museums. The other, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. We don't meet zoo standards for both the size of some of our exhibits and the fact that we have kitchen and animal prep facilities alongside animal enclosures, which those need to be separated. Also, the animals that go out to schools have to be separated from the collection that stays there permanently. Part of the back-of-house building is to house those animals that go to schools separately from the rest of the zoo animals, because it's a requirement of accreditation. The American Alliance of Museums, the primary standard that we don't meet is how we house our artifacts and collections. We've been in this community so long, we have some very rare objects that are priceless. They need to be under lock and key and in climate-controlled facilities. This old building just doesn't provide us either with the room to organize that or the HVAC systems to do it properly.

Chair Reckdahl: I also would like to echo what other people have said here. The Zoo is wonderful, but I really would like to see a smaller encroachment into the park, whether that's digging a basement or going to a second story. If you could shrink the building, I think you could pull the whole Zoo back and you would have less encroachment. I do like the idea, like Peter said, about the bathroom really is servicing the park. I like that, but I would like to have that back another 20 feet. I think that'd be a much better design. Everyone is short of space. Parks are short of space. Their square feet, right now, per capita is not in our target, and it's only going to get worse as the population grows. I hate to give up any park space that we haven't tried really hard to keep. I don't think we've tried hard. This is a single-story building. I'd like to go down or go up and squish it together so we don't go into the park nearly as much. That is it. Any other questions? Rob.

Mr. de Geus: I'll make a couple of comments here, listening to the feedback. The feedback's very interesting and helpful for the staff and the team that's working on this. As I looked at this, I wondered about the parkland and how the Zoo is larger and using more parkland. I suspect that's going to be the big conversation with the community, is that really worth it. For me, as I thought about the value that the Junior Museum and Zoo brings, that's also an important part of the equation. One, the Zoo is already on parkland. If the Zoo expands, it's not necessarily thought about as giving up parkland. It's using parkland differently. Does that make sense given what is being designed and built here for the community? As I think about it that way, it has helped me to become more excited about the possibility of the expanded Zoo. I bring that up because I've thought about it quite a bit. The other thing I would mention is about Rinconada Park generally.

It's probably the best park that we have in Palo Alto, partly because there's so much to do there. It's an excellent destination with the Art Center and the Children's Library, the Children's Theatre. We've got the park and, of course, the pool and tennis courts, and then the Junior Museum as well right there. It's an amazing destination. That's partly why it works as opposed to maybe another location. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.

3. Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.

Chair Reckdahl: We do have one public comment for the Master Plan. Shani Kleinhaus, you have two minutes. Oh, is she here?

Shani Kleinhaus: Good evening. I'm Shani Kleinhaus with Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and a resident of Palo Alto. Somebody asked me to tell you all that I'm an employee of Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, and I represent the members of our organization in this city and others. In Palo Alto, we have several hundred members. I think it's more than 400, and they care about nature and birds and having those species of birds and animals and habitats stay in the city. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan, I have attended several of the meetings, and I've seen many of you there. I've several times asked for the word nature to be part of the title. There's some kind of process where the word nature is not there. I guess it assumes that open space takes care of that, but I've seen the word open space being used for a lot of other uses that are not necessarily natural and thought it would be good to specify it. If we specify trails, why not nature? It's interesting to me when I look now, in Palo Alto I think nature has an intrinsic value for people. They don't just want to have nature because they want access to nature. They actually want to have nature for nature itself. That is not being measured, and it's hard to measure it. All the criteria that we have here don't measure it. The value of the nature that we have in the city, that is not measured by how many people are actually using it in some way and just having it around. It's mentioned; many, many people mentioned it in different meetings, but there's got to be a more specific address of the word nature and all the species and all the ecosystems and all the habitats that come with it. I have another specific comment to the ...

Chair Reckdahl: Ten seconds, please wrap it up.

Ms. Kleinhaus: I'm sorry. The recommended criteria, including sea level rise and making that a criteria excludes from high priority a lot of areas in south Palo Alto, like Ramos Park, excludes a lot of the Baylands and parts of Byxbee. It's a problem when you come to areas such as ...

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.

Ms. Kleinhaus: ... Lucy Evans which is one of the most valued places for education and for recreation. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: We'll move onto the presentation. Rob de Geus and Peter Jensen and consultants.

Rob de Geus: Good evening again, Commissioners. We have Lauren Schmitt here and Ellie Fiore from MIG and of course Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect, who's been working really hard on the Parks Master Plan. Just wanted to mention that last month's meeting was a challenging one on this topic. I had real trouble sleeping after that meeting, I have to say, but it was good though, actually. It was needed, I think, for us and for you, of course. We've done quite a bit of work this past month to sort of reset a little bit. In some ways, just hit the pause button and take stock of where we are. The feedback that we're receiving and how we're collecting that data and how we're sharing that data and really sort of think through a structure and a framework for how that will be used to define needs and then ultimately priorities and recommendations for the Master Plan. I appreciate the feedback. It was important. I think we've come a long way this month and am looking forward to the conversation tonight and hearing your feedback about where we are today. With that, I'll pass it onto Lauren or Ellie. Lauren.

Lauren Schmitt: Thanks for having us here tonight. You received in your packet a memo of a concept that we want to go over with you tonight as a way to help start sorting through what is a phonebook of data, which I know is kind of overwhelming. One of the things that Peter has done is started to put together in one place so you have a resource for the remainder of this planning process but also in the future for all of this analysis, all of the public input, pulling that together as a resource. We want to share with you a concept for an evaluation matrix and some of the criteria, so that we can start talking with you about how we move towards recommendations and a plan. Before we get into the matrix though, I just wanted to share some thoughts with you about how that's going to work. I think your park system is so complex. The programming that you do, the facilities that you offer, I think the presentation we just heard is a real illustration of that and the balancing that you need to do. It's not like there's a bunch of this analysis and then all of a sudden we're going to presto, come out with a plan. There's a lot of steps, and we need you and we need the staff involved in making decisions, evaluating things along the way. We just wanted to emphasize that we've had this data collection and analysis. Now we need to summarize that and say, "What does it all mean?" and start thinking about what might we do in the future. To do that, first we need to understand supply, understand demand. We need to define Palo Alto's role in meeting demand across the whole system, not just what are we doing for sports fields, what are we doing for museums. That will then allow us to define the needs. We can then think about what are the options for meeting those needs, because you may not opt to meet all needs. You

may not be able to do everything within the constrained land base that you have, so you have to balance. Then and only then can we start laying out the directions. We've got a ways to go, and I think it's important to pause and really think about those steps that are ahead of us. Just thinking about where we're going, there's a lot of different tools. The directions that we eventually get to setting out as the right directions for this community, there's a lot of tools that will be in the plan. They're not just necessarily site specific recommendations, but also policies, potentially standards, things like that. We'll evaluate all those things as we go forward. I wanted to talk a little bit about the task at hand right now, which is around defining need, supply, demand. I know one of the questions that has come up is, "Well, can't we just simply say what's the percent capacity? Are we low? Are we high? Will it be good into the future? Put the demand over the supply and see where we're at." My answer to that is, "Yes, we can do that, but there's a number of assumptions." I just want to lay those out on the table, some of the questions that we need to all be considering. We're not going to answer those tonight, but we do want to be thinking about those as we think about the complexity that is this park system. To start out with supply, there's been lots of work in this process and previously looking at supply. We know what the counts of things are, where they're located. We know what programs you offer. There are still other issues. How much of the day should we be counting? There's peak use times. There's times that are very popular. If you go out to a certain site at 5:00 in the morning, it may not be used. Do we count that time in supply or should we be looking at those times that are customary use times? Defining capacity. Some sites and some programs, we know that you can put 20 people in this class or the building has this capacity. Something like a playground, what is the capacity? We need to be clear what that is. To some people, 25 kids on that playground would be way too crowded. To others, you could just keep packing them in. The other thing that Palo Alto does well is temporal use. You do a lot of sharing, not just your own facilities but other facilities. How do we account for the supply of a room like this one at Lucie Stern that sometimes is an exercise room and at other times is an event space? Where does that count in the supply? Even though we have a good idea of what's out there, there's some things we need to think about how we count that. On the demand side, we've had tons and tons of data, not just from the systems here and the registration system, but much of the public involvement data is really talking about demand. One of the key questions is, who are you trying to serve? That issue came up earlier. Are we serving a regional audience? Are we serving a local audience? Something that you wrestled with in the Field Use Policy. That's a policy I've been impressed with when I studied it. I've told Peter it's something we've recommended other agencies look at, because you were very deliberate about who you were serving, how you were going to evaluate those things. One thing I also want to point about who you're trying to serve, there's today's users, there's the people who you're reaching today. Because this is a Long Range Plan, we also want to think about who tomorrow's users might be and what are the new activities that are going to be generated and provide some space and thinking about needs to accommodate those new, cool things that are going to happen in recreation in the coming

years. The other thing on the demand side is setting parameters. That's something you did really well in the Field Use Policy, where you had a standard about what's a reasonable amount of practice games, tournaments that a local group could be allowed. If you don't do that, somebody could just come in and say, "I want to do this every day." As a public entity, is that as valid as something that's a bit more metered? You do that with your pool right now, how you allocate lap swim time and other things. A really important question is the whole peak demand versus non-peak or average demand. If you build your park system or you build a set of gyms for 7:00 p.m. on a weeknight, you're going to have a whole lot of gyms and not much of anything else. It's kind of like building your parking lot at the mall for December 24th. We just need to think about what level of demand we want to do or do we want to be looking at that season when a whole bunch of things overlap or the prime Saturday, the nicest day of the year? The other thing that's an issue in demand is certain types of facilities, certain types of spaces attract more demand and sometimes generate more. If you have a really nice dance room, all of a sudden you're going to start getting classes that work really in a really nice dance room. People are going to start gravitating to that. Sometimes you can even create demand. We found through the outreach, for example, that certain configurations of tennis courts were attracting more use and more demand than others. We need to be deliberate about how we factor those things in. We need to have our team, the staff team, and all of you be on the same page around the assumptions so that you feel confident and the community feels confident that as we're stepping through and making decisions and what we're saying about the need, we're all on the same page so that we can do that math that you're looking for to determine the capacity and where you're at. With that overview, I'm going to turn it over to Ellie to talk a little bit about this matrix concept. We want to get your feedback on that to see if you think it's a tool that will work to help connect the dots and parse all of that data.

Peter Jensen: Ellie, I'm just going to say that passing around right now is a binder. The binder is a sample of what you're going to be getting soon. It relates back to this information that Ellie's going to be talking about. It's the matrix that we have. It references back to the binder. Information, data, those types of things can be referenced back to where they come from and easily found within the binder. You will be getting the binder in the next couple of days. We'll figure out how to get that to you, but I did want to send around the sample. The package of papers that we have now in there you can see is very dense. That's what we're hoping the matrix that Ellie's going to start to describe here pretty soon starts to summarize a little bit and get you to a more direct path of where to find that information, that data that's in there.

Ellie Fiore: Thank you, Peter. We wanted to come back this month and start to try to answer some of the questions that you all raised last month, which is not just what do you know. I know that there was some concern and some fear that we were going to jump to recommendations and that that logical and analytical path wasn't clear on what those are

based on. We are taking this moment to pause and kind of reframe and start to lay out more explicitly what we know and how we know it. The tool we're proposing to use for that is what we're calling the Data and Needs Summary Matrix which was in your packet. I want to take this opportunity to orient you to that tool, and then we want to get a sense tonight from you of whether this is a concept that makes sense, whether it does start to answer some of those questions. If so, we'll move forward with populating that. The idea here again, as Peter implied, is that this is kind of a rollup of all of the data that's going to be in your binders. Those are all things you've seen before for the most part, but we know they've been arriving bit by bit and piecemeal. This is our attempt to reframe and pull everything together and frame it for you. What you got in your packet were two things. One is the matrix, the big Excel sheet with the green header. The other was the Data and Needs Summary concept, which is the narrative description of the matrix. I'll just walk through what the matrix consists of. Down Column B, what we have in categories are the elements of your park system. We've got three overarching categories: parks, trails, and open spaces; recreation facilities; and programs. You'll see this is not an exhaustive list, for example, of every type of program, but they're rolled up into categories that we think make good sense and that we've worked over with staff as an organizing structure, again to kind of present that higher layer of data. Working across the elements in the columns. These are evaluation measures that we consider, that we're going to base our summary of needs of recommendations on. I'll walk you through each of those. In the narrative packet is a description of the data sources. This again keys back to the list of data sources that'll be in your binder. For each we've developed, where appropriate, a rating scale and then criteria for rating that. We'll walk through those now. The first set is Columns C and D, which are the current service/inventory and then level of control. This is basically a summary of what's on the ground, what is being programmed currently, and then how much control does the city have over that looking into the future. That includes ownership, lease and, also as mentioned, sea level rise. Moving in Column E, this is our measure of capacity. As Lauren just mentioned, there's a lot of different dynamics that can be considered here. What our attempt at the criteria here is to do is to give an indication of whether it's below, at, or over capacity, again putting some parameters around those criteria. Column F is geographic analysis. What we're presenting here is summary statements, because there are several data points leading into this. Some are qualitative; some are quantitative. We wanted to pull out some key findings and summary statements here. Columns G and H are two sides of the same coin. This perception of quality as we've heard it expressed by the community and based on our own site observations, and then also expressed need. Quality is, are there improvements needed or are there deficiencies that were noted? Express need is, was there demand for more or expanded services? Column I is a quick summary of the demographic trends. The analysis of which I know we wanted to resurface for you. You mentioned it briefly last time. What we've done is tried to roll it up and say, "Based on the demographic analysis that we did with the census and the school district data and our knowledge of recreation trends, do we expect that the demand is going to grow, be stable,

or decline?" Columns J and K are what we're calling barriers to access and projected demand. This is physical or institutional or other barriers that have been expressed, why people can't physically or have trouble getting to places or why they can't access programs. Is it oversubscribed? Is it a time of day that's inconvenient? What are those things that we've heard articulated or observed in our analysis of the programs? The project demand is a summary of, are there opportunities for new activities for growth in a certain area? This is a summation of not just the demographic trends but the recreational trans and our professional judgment based on experience and planning in other communities. What that all rolls into hopefully in a logical manner is what we're calling the Summary of Need. What we've done in this matrix that you received is flesh out as examples four rows, a couple within each category area. The Summary of Need is our high level observations at this point based on everything that came before it. This is what we would discuss with you, discuss with staff. Did we get it right? Do you agree? If so, then that becomes the foundation for talking possible projects and possible recommendations. We want to go through this exercise first to make sure we have all the information we need to get to there, and that it's clearly articulated. I think the question is, whether this helps clarify the process, the work done to date, the structure we're using to fill in some of the holes, to gather a little bit more data, and then does this fill in that middle piece of the scope of work and the middle piece of the process that I think we felt was missing last time we met?

Chair Reckdahl: Can you comment about the data sources in the top?

Ms. Fiore: Yes. Our intent was to get you these binders tonight, but there was a little production hiccup. The list of data sources is keyed in Row 2. For example, Number 2 is the data in each summary. Number 4 was the sustainability review. All of the inputs into each of those columns reflects back, so it's essentially a table of contents for your binder as well as a data source list.

Chair Reckdahl: Is that going to be multiple rows or how are you going to get that information in Row 2? It'd be nice to have an example of what's going to be the content in Row Number 2.

Commissioner Lauing: It's just numerical, isn't it?

Ms. Fiore: Yeah, that is the content. It references back to the sources that we used to generate what's in each column.

Commissioner Lauing: You might have six numbers in there, one, three, seven, nine, ten.

Ms. Fiore: Yeah, exactly. For demographic trends, you see one number, seven, because that references back to the demographic trends piece. For the column previous to that,

expressed need, there's five items, many of which were the several different community input elements. What's going to be in the matrix is those numbers, and they reference back to the summary of products and the work products.

Chair Reckdahl: Okay. The concern we would have is if on Row 2 you list seven sources, then when I'm looking down on Row 17, I have to go through those seven sources in order to figure out where that number came from. It would be nice if for each number that you list, each content, you would say, "That comes from Page 13 of Reference 3," and reference that for each row as opposed to up top. Otherwise, we're stuck just looking for the needle in the haystack.

Ms. Schmitt: I think it's going to be very difficult what you're asking. The reason is there's not a smoking gun around each of these things in each source. The question in the summary from Mapita, for example. There might be a whole bunch of comments in there that are in an appendix. It's pages and pages and pages of comments. This is a huge amount of content. Along the way, we've been taking it in, we've been assessing, and we've been overlaying and looking for patterns, and then checking as we come back. For each and every one of these things, there's not "here's the quotation or the figure that says" For some of them, there probably is, but I don't think we'll be able to map page 17, this figure, or page 19, that figure. I don't want to over-promise that. I understand what you're saying. It's like, "Well, if I have to look through the whole summary"

Chair Reckdahl: There has to be some rationale of how we score these things. What I'd like to see is a separate document that lists the rationale for each one of these. Otherwise, we have no way of verifying what that demand is.

Ms. Schmitt: That's one of the reasons why we try to establish some criteria. In some cases, those are more numerically based. The perception of quality is one with certain Mapita score ranges, because we can pull that data and say, "Okay, we can evaluate these things." There's also noted issues around certain parks. We are trying to use the criteria to provide what you're asking for, so that it works across all of these sources of data and what all of those inputs are. If you're feeling like these criteria aren't doing that, my question to you would be, do you feel like we could dial those in further? I really don't think we can reference each and everything, because I can't tell you how many cells that would be. I'm just thinking about how many times somebody has commented on tennis or community gardens or whatever. There's a lot.

Chair Reckdahl: Yeah, but when you were filling out this spreadsheet, you have to evaluate each of these cells. You're not putting random numbers in it. You actually are looking at, "Okay, I'm looking at community gardens. How did I determine the demand?" You must count something. There must be some way that you're quantifying

the demand for community gardens, and there's some way that you're quantifying the supply of community gardens.

Ms. Schmitt: Yeah, yep.

Chair Reckdahl: Since you're the one who's doing that, we're just asking you to show your work.

Ms. Schmitt: Yeah, so that's what we're trying to do with this matrix. Let me explain the thought process around community gardens, since you chose that particular one. We look at the supply; you have three sites. You have a high level of control over those sites, because you own the sites where they're located. It's not like a Cubberley situation. You can be confident they're going to be there. We know from your capacity and bookings that you get more requests than you have plots. That's why that is rated over. It relates to the criteria in there. You're getting more requests than you have supply so it's over capacity. The geographic analysis showed—you can see the commentary in there—your community gardens are clustered in the northern end of Palo Alto. You have a number of plots that are arrayed across those three sites. All of those sites are in the north end of town, and there aren't other options for community garden sites. In some communities, there's churches or other providers that have them. The southern part of the community doesn't have them. When we step into the perception of quality, what we heard through all of the public workshops is people love the community gardens that you have. They think they work very well. We also heard that there is a need for more sites, more plots. That jives with what we know, that you don't have any in the south end of town and that the plots are oversubscribed. The public is also saying that. In terms of the demographic trends, we know that older adults favor gardening, and your results show that. You've got a high population of older adults, and that's projected to increase. Therefore, the participation trend for that one, we project the demand is going to increase. You're already oversubscribed; you're probably going to have more interest in that activity in the future. That takes us to the next column. There are barriers for participation, and the barriers are that there's not enough plots and they're all in one end of town. Looking at all of that, we see there being high projected demand. Community gardening is one of those activities that's been increasing across the nation and regionally. That's why that's rated high. We have all of this local data, and so the summary we would say around that preliminarily is there's a need for overall more plots whether they're at the existing sites or elsewhere.

Chair Reckdahl: One of the problems I have is that right now we're doing the high, medium, low. That's too coarse. It doesn't make it actionable for us. For example, if you say it's oversubscribed, so it gets an H. We have no idea if it's oversubscribed by 10 percent or 300 percent. Does that mean that we have to find three more plots in the city or 300 more plots? We have no idea. When you keep it very qualitative, we can't action

on that. We need to say the demand right now is 120 percent of the supply and, using projections, we think it's going to be 150 percent of the supply in ten years.

Ms. Schmitt: I think we can get to that number, but I want to come back to what I talked about in the beginning. There's a lot of assumptions. I could do that math, and I could give you a number. You might feel comfortable that it's a number, but if we're not on the same page about the assumptions, then it's a garbage number. If I make the assumption that we're in a community where all plots have to be 20x20. We had a shortage of plots, but that size plot was too large for a lot of people to handle. Yeah, it was oversubscribed. Yet, when you looked at did people actually follow through and garden, there was a number of underutilized sites. That's the trick of that number that you're looking for, which is why we try to stick with criteria. Is it generally over? Is it generally under? We can get to that number, but we have to have a broader discussion about what goes into that number. Also, keep in mind that I think community gardening is one that's easier to predict. Just because something is undersubscribed now doesn't mean that there's not a demand for that activity or that there wouldn't be in the future. It could be an emerging activity. It could be that you haven't reached the population. There's populations we've heard that you would like to be serving or that you think would be important to serve in this community. Right now, you're not serving some of those populations. If we are only looking at the things that you're doing now, we're going to not account for the needs of these folks that many of you and many of the community members think is really important to reach out to. We also want to make sure we leave space as we're looking at these needs to account for that. I don't want to seem like I'm ducking this, but this is really complicated. You as a city particularly have a very complicated system, and you have a very sophisticated layering of services that you're providing. It's not like you're a green field community and you're expanding out and you're stamping out the same neighborhood park in every subdivision. It's very nuanced.

Commissioner Lauing: Just to add one point to what you're saying. You're talking about percentages, but I'm actually even more interested in sample size. If 4,000 dog owners said that we need more dog space—I'm making all these up—versus 4 community gardeners said we need more space, those are both very interesting points to know. One we need to take some pretty severe action on. The other one maybe we don't have to take any action on in the next five years, and we look at it in 15 years. We're going to keep asking for this, quantitative data. Quantitative data. Not that you heard at a community outreach that two people wanted X, Y or Z, but that in surveys and in face-to-face votes, people said X, Y or Z.

Ms. Schmitt: I get that. I think Ellie gets that too. One of the reasons why we like to do the type of outreach and that you guys have embraced is doing a lot of different types of outreach and different layers of outreach for that reason that you're getting at. You don't want just some organized group to come and cook the result. Again we tried to get at

your concern with criteria. Express need, we ranked it high if across multiple channels—three, four, five different activities—or through results that you'll see in the next month, through survey results from Mapita, through some of the things that got really big numbers, if it came up again and again and again, then we're ranking that as high. If it's mixed, like tennis was one of those that's mixed where a certain percentage of your population plays tennis. When you look at the overall community results, people are like, "Eh, I think we're good on tennis." If you ask the tennis players, they're the ones that have real specific needs around the facilities. Is it lighted? Is it grouped together? When we hear from them, what they're saying is, "You know, there are some needs here." In that case, it's mixed from these different sources, so we ranked it as medium because there's some evidence that there is a need there, but it's mixed. Low, there are just certain things that just really didn't come up or, when you look across multiple channels, it was just, "Eh." A couple of the things that it was very clear there was a high expressed need for. It's not reflected in this table at this point, but restrooms came up again and again across multiple channels as something that was really a critical part of enjoying the park system. Community gardens was one of those. Having seating and great resting places in parks supporting people spending time, lingering, talking to their friends, that came up again and again. It came up at the workshops. It came up in intercepts. Things like that. We're trying to use those criteria, so that as you start to layer that you start to see those patterns emerge. The land here and the facilities that you have are just way too precious not to take all of that in and make the best decision because you're going to have to make hard choices. Again, I think the presentation earlier tonight made that very clear to me about the kind of choices that you guys are going to be wrestling with in the next 20 years. We want to make sure you have a tool in this plan that helps you make the best decision for the community, because it will be difficult every single time.

Chair Reckdahl: We've used up 35 minutes, and we've allocated 45 so we still have a little time left. We can run over if we need to. The first priority is to do it right, but also I don't want to waste time. Rob, what do you think? What's your priority? Do you want to hear comments from here or do you have things that you want to ask the consultants? How do you want to work this?

Mr. de Geus: I appreciate the work that the consultants have done and taken the time to work with us. We've met numerous times over this last month to think about this data question. I'm particularly interested in hearing from the rest of the Commissioners. I don't want to move forward with our process until we get to a general comfort level. This is a framework that has a lot of value and could really help us with the Master Plan, particularly defining the need. The next and more important step is then looking at those needs through a filter that is most important to the community to start making priorities and recommendations. I actually think it's a pretty good framework but again, before we start populating this matrix and having the consultant spend a lot of time on that, I want

1125 to be sure the Commission feels comfortable with this approach, this methodology for
1126 how we will use the data for coming up with some findings.

1127
1128 Chair Reckdahl: Comments, questions? Commissioner Knopper.

1129
1130 Commissioner Knopper: Thank you. I'm echoing what Ed had said with regard to
1131 quantifying the high, medium, low. I totally understand why you need to consolidate all
1132 of the information. If there's nine passionate people about community gardens in Palo
1133 Alto and there's 500 dog owners, at some point in the process we just have to know that
1134 piece of information so we can then rank what should be priorities. Not to beat a dead
1135 horse, but I think it's really important to be clear on that particular point. I appreciate that
1136 we're regrouping and clarifying in a more strategic way all of this giant information dump
1137 and the way that we can cross-reference it. That binder is great. It's obviously
1138 overwhelming, and I'm really looking forward to having it in my house with all the other
1139 paper that we get. Any time that you think, "Gosh, maybe we need to break it down and
1140 really cross-reference and give them statistics and this is how many people answered this
1141 particular question and this is a really high priority;" any time you think, "You know
1142 what? They want even more quantitative data," I would love for you to assume that we
1143 would. Thank you.

1144
1145 Commissioner Hetterly: I just have a couple of comments. I do think that this matrix
1146 would be a useful tool for discussion once it's populated and being able to see what you
1147 see as the core documents for whichever column we're talking about. I do think it would
1148 be much more useful if, to the extent possible, you could make notations within the cells
1149 when there is a smoking gun or a key report that was most telling in certain areas.
1150 Otherwise, you have seven of us duplicating all the work that you've just done and
1151 coming to our own separate conclusions. I don't think that's very productive. As I look
1152 through the binder, it's basically the reports that you have presented to us, it appears. I
1153 know we had a lot of comments on most of them. I wonder if these have been updated
1154 since they first came to us in draft form or if we're going to reread what we saw before.

1155
1156 Ms. Fiore: Most of them are as you've seen them before. We have captured those
1157 comments on all of the documents. Some of those comments on the documents were
1158 addressed in the form of memos to you, which will also be in the binder. For example,
1159 the ones that we heard last month, I have documented but we have not gone back and re-
1160 edited those documents because we wanted to keep moving forward. Those comments
1161 have all been memorialized somewhere, but we are not necessarily taking the time to
1162 update those documents. They are recorded, and they will be fed forward. For example,
1163 the program analysis which we dug into pretty deeply last time, that document is still
1164 very much in draft, so that one will be updated. Most of the rest of them are in a semi-
1165 final state, as I like to call it, so we're just keeping the record of your comments and then
1166 moving on.

Ms. Schmitt: Just as a process point, the intent on these is they're a platform for moving forward. Your plan is not going to be a compendium of the demographic trends analysis and this and that. When we craft that document and the language that goes into that, any comments that you've made that are around, if we're taking a section of text out of something, all of that will appear in the final document. To Ellie's point, none of that is lost. By the time you've received some of the documents and some of the comments that you're making, they roll into the next piece of analysis that we're doing. In some ways by the time things get to you—this is one of the challenges—we've been continuing to move forward on certain other aspects of the project, so we can then give you the next round of analysis.

Commissioner Hetterly: Thank you. We shouldn't look at the sustainability report and say, "Why doesn't this reflect that we had this discussion?" I just want to get that on the table, that these are not final versions. They don't incorporate necessarily our comments.

Ms. Fiore: Correct.

Commissioner Hetterly: A piece of data that seems to be missing from the binder—and I'm not sure how it can be represented—is your discussions with staff about field use. What's going on with field use? Who is using it when and how? Or the capacity bookings information. You come to conclusions about capacity booking, but it doesn't look like there's anything in the contents here that would provide the backup data for how you reached that conclusion.

Ms. Schmitt: Yeah. Capacity bookings is actually one that we don't have the data yet. We're working on that now. We've been crunching the program and booking data. That's one that does not exist yet. It's still in processing form. Eventually that will become the program analysis Part 2 that's really about capacity and needs.

Mr. de Geus: Just to add to that, Commissioner Hetterly, is that the binder will continue to grow as we get more data. The survey data is not in there yet. You make a good point about staff analysis and staff interviews that have been happening, capturing that data. It's actually pretty rich data. These are staff that are working in the field with these users every day. Capturing that and including that and referencing it in the matrix is important. In addition to that—we've discussed this internally—as we discover certain trends, as the data is starting to suggest that we need more of something, then do additional research or outreach to that particular group of users to understand more of what they need. That would then also add to this matrix and to the folder of data. Does that help?

Commissioner Hetterly: Yes.

Ms. Schmitt: A forthcoming thing, I think, that will also document some of the staff discussions around the physical facilities which I believe you'll be getting next month, is Item 9 on the data list which are the existing conditions maps. Those are detailed of every single site. It's giving some of the history. It's giving some of the noted issues and deficiencies. Daren has been heavily involved with that, and other staff, in documenting the things that are there. This is again one of these other pieces that the documentation is happening. It's on its way to you, but you don't have it yet. That's one of the other challenging things for you as a body; things are not yet in your hands but we're starting to formulate ideas about them.

Mr. de Geus: I know that we have other Commissioners that need to speak, but this may help as well. If we think about the next step on this, if we agree this is a good methodology and we move forward and start populating this and start defining the high, low, medium or whatever rating that we decide is the one that really works. An important next step that we would like to do is have a special retreat on the Master Plan and spend several hours on the matrix with MIG and staff and actually walk through these line items and talk about them. "Here are the Summary of Needs. How did you come up with that?" It'll be in a narrative form in the Summary of Needs. We'll have the binders and all of the data, and we'll have a really rich discussion about each of these. There will be different interpretations, and we'll discuss that. Then we'll tweak the Summary of Needs during that meeting. Hopefully at the end of that, we'll have a pretty good picture of the Summary of Needs.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: Thank you. I think this is really helpful, to see this. It's moving in the right direction. I would like to ditto what other Commissioners have said. When you list your sources, if you can just letter them and then reference back to those sources for the key points, it's really going to be helpful. Something like when you say demographics show that we're increasing the number of school children, can you cite that report? That's a very global issue. Something as big as that, I think it's worth citing the document. A couple of points here. When you were listing the elements on page 3 of the report, they go onto page 4, I like seeing this kind of granularity. I appreciate this. I like that you have experience nature, but I also think we need something about the preservation of nature. The reason that's important is because of the wildlife, because of the ecosystems. When we go to experience nature, it's predicated on having nature there to begin with. If you can add that in, I'd really appreciate it. On this list, again, where you have all these bullet points that I'm referring to—one of them is experience of nature—should dogs be fitting into one of these bullet points? I couldn't find it there.

Ms. Schmitt: It's under recreational facilities, off-leash dog areas. We were thinking about it more on the facilities side. For some of these, it's how you slice it. We put

restrooms with parks, open space and trails because it came up cutting across all use of the system.

Commissioner Crommie: Yeah. I just find that one can go into a couple of different places, but I know you're thinking about it. It seemed like population density wasn't encapsulated. That's really important for planning, knowing where the population density is. That's going to impact the kinds of gaps that we have. Again I was thinking that could be a bullet point, just in the big picture. I'd add that land preservation has to do with ecosystems, and then also population density. Another part of the big picture to me when we're looking at supply and demand is where our schools are located in the city. So many cities are just very integrated with their schools, and the schools provide these major resources. Look at the community of Los Altos, one of our neighboring communities. It's completely integrated, because they really don't have nearly enough parks, and they really rely on their schools. I'd like to see some meta analysis of where our schools are relative to where the population is. The schools provide a green space for populations. I know in the south of Palo Alto, especially in my neighborhood, we're not near a school at all. We have a lower amount of parks, and we're not near a school. Somehow the locations of schools can compound gaps. Is there a way you've done that in the past, where you bring that in?

Ms. Schmitt: Yes. One of the things that we're trying to retrofit with this approach is most of these planning efforts will have a needs assessment. They'll address things like that. Both of those points that you brought up around population density and looking at that as an overlay as well as where the schools are located, I think we need to give a little bit more thought exactly how that works. They either fit within that geographic analysis or they become their own column around it. Yeah, I think those are good ones. They are really important in actually the demand side. More people equals more demand. On the supply side, because they provide an alternative, the schools do.

Commissioner Crommie: I'm about halfway done. Those are some big ideas. Getting into a little bit more lower level stuff. I'm not seeing the gyms really differentiated like I would like to see them. What I know goes in gyms is volleyball and badminton. If you look at our demographics of having an increasing Asian component, that's a really popular sport among the Asian cultures, south Asian and Asian. I'd like to see that differentiated. I don't know how it came back in the polling. I just want to have a column for it if you need to talk about it.

Ms. Schmitt: Okay. If you look down in Column B in recreation facilities, we did actually call out gymnasiums. The facilities we called out are off-leash dog areas, community gardens, basketball courts, tennis courts, rectangle sports fields ...

Commissioner Crommie: Can you reference pages please?

Ms. Schmitt: Sure. It's on the matrix, and it's Line 22. Row 22 is gymnasiums. It actually has its own row. For the reasons that you said, it's come up a lot. We're looking at the need for gymnasiums.

Commissioner Crommie: When you talk about resources and unmet needs, so many things are parsed out here. You represent a lot of things, but I don't see volleyball. I don't see badminton as far as it being called out when everything else is. I don't see a lot of omissions, so my list is not long. It's just a few things. You've listed so many things, you might as well list them all.

Ms. Schmitt: Here's the thing. The gymnasium is the recreation facility that contains those activities that you're talking about. If you were to build an indoor gym, you would program it in different ways. Sometimes you might have basketball where there's ten people, five on a side, playing each other. Sometimes you might put a couple of volleyball ...

Commissioner Crommie: Excuse me. I understand that. If we're talking about gaps, aren't you within a gym going to specify any of these activities? I don't see where they're going to be cited.

Ms. Schmitt: So then we're looking at the programming in the programming section. The grouping that we use within the programming—if this isn't right, we want to talk about it in a different way. We use the groupings that the city already uses for how it thinks about programs. These categories of adult aquatics, adult special interest classes are the way you look at data now in these groupings of types of classes. Within those would be the specific activities that you're talking about. We'd certainly be open to looking at it in a different way. I'd like Rob's feedback for sure.

Commissioner Crommie: Let me specify a little more. I don't know right now if we have badminton as a program.

Mr. de Geus: We don't.

Commissioner Crommie: That's an example of we don't have it, yet people might want it. How does it show up on this matrix?

Mr. de Geus: How I think it would show up, and we don't have it yet here. With respect to badminton for adults, for instance, it would show up in the Needs Summary. I would expect it would be in the narrative there specific to programs. It's under adult sports, so within that particular need there may be multiple sports that emerges as being needs.

Under several outreach efforts, it came up that badminton was a need or an interest. so it would be defined there. Hopefully if this ...

Commissioner Crommie: Can you give me the line where it would be?

Mr. de Geus: That would be Line 32 on the matrix, adult sports, other programs.

Commissioner Crommie: Could it come up under youth as well?

Mr. de Geus: It could.

Commissioner Crommie: Okay, okay.

Mr. de Geus: There's a youth sports or a youth and teen programs.

Commissioner Crommie: These will get filled in over time, and then we'll assess ...

Mr. de Geus: Right, right.

Commissioner Crommie: ... what we want. As far as on Line 8 when you have essential activity access, it's sort of a bigger idea. You might want the word "hit." You have throw, catch, shoot, kick. I think hit is for lacrosse, anything with a stick. That also relates to badminton; although, you don't do that outside as much as lacrosse. That's just an idea. I really wanted to comment on now the Columns E, H and I on the spreadsheet. I actually think this relates to a question that Chair Reckdahl was bringing up with the community gardens. I think community gardens is a good example. You said maybe we are overbooked, so Column E would come up as over. You could also have a situation where something is not overbooked, but you have H as an expressed need. An example with community gardens is very illustrative, because you can have all these people who live midtown south who aren't anywhere near a community garden; therefore, they haven't even bothered to put their name on a list. I think those columns are very important. In fact, I'd even say you might want to push E over near H and I. Those are very independent kinds of things, and they're all equally important. I like that you're doing it that way. When you're doing projections of need, like community garden you brought that up with the elderly. It's a different kind of data-driven need. Our other Commissioners were all very interested in you tying this into your data. You're going to have to have some kind of data projected trends. It's going to help parse apart where the data is coming from. Right now you might rate something as a very high need based on projections of the aging population. I just hope there's a way you can cite that. It'll make the argument stronger if you can do that. It comes up to this idea of is it just nine people out there asking for community gardens. That's one component. You can give a number and say within your outreach how many people did you encounter. What would

strengthen something like that is in your projection. All those things have to fit together. When you can do it, it would be very helpful.

Chair Reckdahl: We hit the one hour, so if you can keep it crisp.

Commissioner Crommie: Okay. I just want to make sure I brought up everything. I think I hit the major points. Can we email you if we think of other things? Okay.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Ashlund.

Commissioner Ashlund: There were three more specific things. My high level question is, the binders contain a lot of the communication that we've received and commented on and discussed already as a Commission, how do you want us to use that binder? Other than when we're looking at the matrix, if we have questions or we think things are not reflected as they should be, we would refer back to it. But how, other than that, do you want us to use that?

Ms. Fiore: What you described is one of the major uses. It's also a historical record. I know you weren't here last month, but there were some questions about "Oh, yeah, we received that demographic analysis a couple of months ago, but it would be great if we could look at it now that we're talking about needs." We wanted you to just have everything at your fingertips.

Commissioner Ashlund: Great, thank you. I thought that this was going to be our major topic of the March 20th retreat, so I'm glad that you said you think this will be a whole separate retreat that we would have to discuss the Master Plan.

Mr. de Geus: Yeah, it could be the March 20th retreat. Depending on how far we get this evening and if we can populate this matrix by then, we might choose to do that on March 20th. I've been discussing this with Chair Reckdahl, which one should come first. He definitely would like to have a retreat where we talk about the year generally and all the other areas of work that we have. Given that the Master Plan is the most important project of the year, if we're ready to have a deeper discussion on that, I have an interest in moving forward on it and working on that on the 20th.

Commissioner Ashlund: You just mentioned that we as a Commission would discuss and populate the matrix together. I was under the impression ...

Mr. de Geus: No.

Commissioner Ashlund: ... that MIG would.

Mr. de Geus: MIG would, but we would discuss their findings and how they populated it and what conclusions they came to.

Commissioner Ashlund: All right. The three things on page 4 of the narrative that are the elements, the Parks, Trails and Open Space elements. You talked about that some points cut across categories, restrooms for example. I would encourage you to add accessibility as a separate bullet point in that list. Walkability is number 1 which is great for the mobile, but not necessarily great for the blind and visually impaired or mobility impaired. I would include that particularly because walkability is not necessarily the point of access that many people can use. Sometimes parking is essential for people that won't be walking there or public transportation as well. That is the page 4 comment. Page 5, under the elements for recreation programs, I see that the bullet says "intervention/special needs." I'm not clear on the use of the word intervention in that use. I'm very familiar with this area, so I'm wondering did you mean early intervention, therapeutic intervention? Did you mean inclusion or is there some other use of that?

Mr. de Geus: That really refers to some of our at-risk youth programs.

Commissioner Ashlund: I'm sorry?

Mr. de Geus: It refers to our at-risk youth programs.

Commissioner Ashlund: Oh, okay, great. Thank you. That definitely helps clarify that for me. When special needs is listed as part of that or even as a separate bullet, I just want to make sure we're capturing both special needs programs as well as support for inclusion programs.

Mr. de Geus: Within that particular cost center and the way the budget is structured within the city, there's three areas within intervention and special needs and that is senior programs, therapeutic recreation programs and at-risk youth programs.

Commissioner Ashlund: That's budget-wise as separate specialized programs for special needs. How does one get further budget support for inclusion in the broad programming sense?

Mr. de Geus: I think to get budget support we could potentially look at this Master Plan when it's populated, particularly if there is a need that's been identified across different platforms related to this line item around access or special needs, in one of those categories. We could use that as a tool, and I think the Council will be looking at it as well for where to invest more versus less.

Commissioner Ashlund: Okay, great. My last quick question on page 6 was actually related to the sea level rise question. When I was reading this, I also had the same thought. Are we automatically going to be excluding something like the Baylands? I want to be careful just because something is adjacent to the Bay that it doesn't automatically get excluded as a high priority for major investment if it's of value to the Palo Alto community and could have 20, 30 years of use.

Ms. Fiore: Yeah, absolutely. What we're trying to convey here, what the high, medium and low refers to is the city's level of control over that site, what level of control does the city have over the 50-year time span. Sea level rise being an impact we can expect to occur in that timeframe. It's not saying if sea level rise is going to impact that site, it becomes a low priority. It factors into the level of control the city has over the site. Does that make sense? The high, medium, low here is not the priority assignment. It's high level of control, medium level of control or low level of control. One of those factors that factors into that rating is sea level rise. The others are ownership and management.

Commissioner Ashlund: I understand the ownership. That's a lot more clear of course. What time span are we looking at when we say a 50-year sea level rise might be much more significant than what's happening in 20 years?

Ms. Schmitt: This is supposed to be a 20-year plan. Sea level rise is an issue that's come up. One of the things it's made clear, you guys want to be able to make rich decisions, so we decided to include sea level rise in addition with ownership because you should just be aware when later on you're going on and you're weighing, like you said, investments at one site versus another, you may make a strategic decision that investing in a site with sea level rise is the right thing to do because of the need or because of the timeframe of the improvement. You should know going into it that that's an impact. The same thing if you were to invest in a site that you didn't have long-term control of the property, if you didn't own it or have a long-term lease.

Commissioner Ashlund: Thank you. That's all my questions.

Chair Reckdahl: Council Member Filseth.

Council Member Filseth: If I can ask a gear head question here. On one of the early slides, there was a line that said the Master Plan called for 3 acres of park space per 1,000 residents.

Ms. Schmitt: No, that was just to be an example of a standard. The Master Plan is not calling for anything. We have to do the needs assessment and make that determination about the right level for Palo Alto. There are for setting Quimby Act fees. There's a

minimum and a maximum threshold that the State says, and 3 acres is the minimum. That's why I just pulled that number as an example of a numerical standard.

Council Member Filseth: There's a State guideline?

Ms. Schmitt: For setting Quimby fees.

Council Member Filseth: Quimby fees, okay. All right. Thanks very much.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Markevitch.

Vice Chair Markevitch: I had a question regarding the collection of data. You're using census and you're also using school district numbers with regards to children, but we also have a fair amount of private schools in Palo Alto that the kids might not necessarily live in Palo Alto but they're here during the day and they may be using park facilities. Has that been taken into account, and homeschooling kids as well?

Ms. Fiore: I don't believe it's explicitly been taken into account, but we have identified youth outreach as a focus area we want to do more of, in part because we didn't capture a lot of middle high school students in our survey. We're working with Rob and his staff to identify who the best contacts into that population are. We're going to do a focus group style event. That's a great point that we should consider those populations.

Chair Reckdahl: To answer Rob's question, I do think this spreadsheet is a good start. I'm worried about the high, medium and low. That's just too coarse to make any actionable decisions. We're on the road, but I want to see more quantitative analysis. Give me numbers. Thank you.

4. Discussion of Temporary Batting Cages at the Former PASCO Site Next to the Baylands Athletic Center.

Chair Reckdahl: We have two speakers. Shani Kleinhaus is first. Shani, are you going to speak?

Shani Kleinhaus: (inaudible)

Chair Reckdahl: Okay. Then we'll move on to Craig Yanagisawa, sorry.

Craig Yanagisawa: Yanagisawa. Thank you. I'm a board member of Palo Alto Little League. We're supporting the construction of the cages at the Baylands, as currently Palo Alto Little League is the sole supplier of batting cages in Palo Alto, and we service over 1,000 kids with our facility which includes only four cages. Our league consists of kids

up to 12 years old. Beyond 12 years old and up to high school, there is no current facility for batting cages. Palo Alto Little League is not connected to Palo Alto Babe Ruth. We serve different ages. The two high schools, which have batting cages, are only dedicated to their sports teams. We're just supporting Palo Alto Babe Ruth in construction of new cages. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Daren Anderson, Parks and Rec, is up now.

Daren Anderson: Good evening. I'm Daren Anderson. I'm with Open Space, Parks and Golf. With me tonight is Park Supervisor Miguel Chacon and Chris Lillios who's a board member with Palo Alto Babe Ruth little league. We're here tonight to get the Commission's feedback about this project and how we can improve it. Let me start by giving you the background on this site, and it being proposed as the location for this pilot batting cage project. The city entered into a lease with Palo Alto Sanitation Company in 1958 for garbage collection, and we leased them this land on this site. That entire area in the blue and the green was leased to PASCO, as they're called. One acre of that land became parkland, and that's the little triangle in blue. Miguel can highlight that for you with the mouse, so you can make that out. Eventually the city moved onto a new provider. Instead of PASCO, they went with GreenWaste, and GreenWaste didn't need that piece of land. It became unused; it was just a paved parking lot that PASCO had used for parking vehicles and some storage. Eventually Public Works removed the asphalt, and it's just a base rock. A little triangle about 1 acre in size. The city at that time, around 2009-2010, explored options to see if we could fit soccer fields or some sort of playing field on there. Because of the size and the configuration, we could not fit any fields on that. It's a challenging site because you've got an existing PG&E power pole right in the middle of the wide section. You've got about five or six utility gas infrastructure boxes that are at grade or above grade. Then you've got a PG&E gas and power line easement that I'll get into a little bit more detail about, that prohibits any structures on that facility. I want to show you what the site looks like right now. This is one of the angles looking towards that power pole in the center. Again, this is the base rock. A little closer view on that power pole. Again, all developed, there's a few pieces of weeds, weed patches here or there, but not much vegetation; no trees. Again you can see the fence line existing that separates GreenWaste's facility from the rest of this former PASCO site. There's an example of one of those little utilities that's covered with an A-frame barricade that's above ground. I mentioned the PG&E easements. This slide here is not in your packet, but I'd like you to look up just for a second to the screen. You can see about a 95-foot buffer between these two easements. There's three easements actually. There's two power pole easements and a gas line easement. The two yellow lines on this sheet show you where those power lines run through the property. The gas line runs right between them. The red lines show that boundary where you cannot build a structure. That definitely makes it a challenge, definitely limits what's possible. We took the plans that you see in the packet tonight to PG&E, and met with them a number of

times to see if we could adjust our plans, and we did. They indeed approved the plans that are in your packet. In May 2014 Babe Ruth baseball league approached staff with this concept of building batting cages and funding them completely at the Baylands Athletic Center. In light of the Master Plan which is underway and again scheduled to be completed in November 2015, Babe Ruth proposed doing a pilot program for this batting cage project. Under the pilot program, there'd be two batting cages placed on this former PASCO site. They'd be situated outside the PG&E easements and would be designed and constructed to be temporary. They could be moved or eliminated when and if the Master Plan or golf course reconfiguration planning determines a better use for that site. The other aspects to the project include converting one parking stall. To the upper left—you've got it in your packet too—you can see a blue area that indicates a normal parking stall would need to be converted to a handicapped stall and then a small pathway that will connect to the existing one. It's comprised of base rock; we just need to clean it up. It would connect to an existing gate to that parcel. No new infrastructure would need to be added. It's just cleaning up that site. At this point, I'd like to turn it over to Chris, and he can give us a little bit of detail on why there's a need for batting cages at this site.

Chris Lillios: Yes, I see three main driving forces toward this batting cage project. One is utilization of the Baylands baseball field. A quarter to maybe a third of any baseball practice is spent doing batting. I've seen countless number of teams spending time on this beautiful large diamond, one coach hitting a ball to 12-15 kids one at a time. It's a very inefficient process, and it's a very poor use of a beautiful field which is primarily used for games, base running, fielding practice. The batting portion of any practice is far better executed in a batting cage where you can get far more repetitions at hitting the ball. The retrieval time is minimized, and it would offload the use of the main baseball field for better use of it. In other words, having full on scrimmages and so forth, and not using up a whole field just for one person hitting a ball to a number of players on the field. In addition, having the cages would extend the use of that area, because the field is closed for four months out of the year, November, December, January, February when no baseball activities could happen, or softball at all. Having a batting cage facility would extend the utility of that area by allowing year-round training opportunities for not only Babe Ruth but, as Craig had mentioned, Little League and Palo Alto Girls Softball. The Oaks also play there. American Legion plays there, and countless numbers of moms and dads with their kids are out there just wanting to hit the ball. We'd love to have batting cages. Currently people go to facilities that they have to pay for to get this kind of batting in. There's a big business around batting cages, and I'd like to have an opportunity for these 12-year-old kids and above to do batting, not using Palo Alto Little League's facilities which are already oversubscribed with not only the kids in their program, but also older kids like high school-age and middle school-age kids which I think would be better served in a facility that we're proposing here at Baylands.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chris. I should also point out that in 2004, City Council approved a park improvement ordinance to add a batting cage at the Baylands Athletic Center. It's unclear exactly why that didn't end up happening. It was part of a CIP where they carried out some improvements. That was slated to be one, but for some reason it wasn't included. In that staff report associated with that park improvement ordinance, it was noted that most baseball and softball facilities of the same size and caliber as the Baylands Athletic Center do have batting cages. It demonstrates that this need has existed for a long time. It was once approved by Council and, for some reason, it didn't happen. I want to highlight some of the advantages that I see regarding this project. One is it's fully funded by Babe Ruth. The second is that it could provide some useful information to the Master Plan. Batting cages is one of the things that was originally thrown out by staff as something to look at when they started the Master Plan process. This could provide a lot of information of is it really useful, is it heavily used. If we were to put in a pilot program, is this the right site? Guidance on the preferred design in terms of durability and security, what it would need to make this successful. There's some upsides in terms of the fit for Palo Alto especially in this area. Another advantage is once it's established and up and running, as Chris had pointed out, it would become part of the Baylands Athletic Center facility. That would benefit other groups; little league, softball, private teams, and camps. Another part is this is an undesirable spot to invest money in before we've got a finished Master Plan or before we've made decisions on what's going to happen to the golf course reconfiguration. This is not a place we'd probably want to invest money just now. When we have an opportunity to have an outside group fund it with the understanding that it's temporary and will pend the results of a Master Plan that's coming, it's definitely something that could be advantageous to the city. Lastly, this is a flexible project. It's designed to be temporary, so it can be moved. There's no foundation set into there. You don't have to dig into the ground at all. We can eliminate the cages when that Master Plan or golf course reconfiguration planning determines that there is a better use for that site. This is a highlight on the accessibility page where you can see that parking lot path that would lead into the parcel. These are some cage types. I mentioned in the staff report they're still deliberating on two different types. We've got the open frame and then the enclosed. We just need some more time to analyze both the investment and the benefits of those two options. Again, synthetic turf would be underneath the facility. If this project is successful—I'm defining successful as well used, a safe facility, vandalism is kept to a minimum, and access is equally distributed. If we have those things, the pilot would continue until the Master Plan is complete and we have an identified use from the Master Plan for this site. If the Master Plan were to recommend this location for batting cages and there's the demonstrated need, staff would return to the Commission to discuss the option of a Phase 2 for this project. The Phase 2 could include two additional batting cages, a warm-up area, a walkway and a storage shed. I believe it's in your packet, but there's a visual demonstration of what that Phase 2 would look like. Again, that would pend completion of the Master Plan. This final slide again illustrates what we're talking about, which is just the two batting cages and the

accessible parking lot conversion. That concludes the staff presentation. We welcome your questions and comments.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Knopper:

Commissioner Knopper: I think it's great. In my opinion, there's absolutely no reason not to do it. I literally did a double take when I saw October 2004. I'm like, "Wow, that's 11 years. That's a long time to wait for a batting cage." I would put it up tomorrow if I could.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: Hi there. Thank you for your presentation. I know batting cages are really important. It seems like it does increase the efficiency of practice, especially during the youth practice sessions. Are they used during the games or just during the practices?

Mr. Lillios: If there's a game going on and there's another pair of teams coming before their game, they will use the batting cages to warm up and do some practice swings. Yes, it will be utilized to help prepare the teams that are coming on for a subsequent game.

Commissioner Crommie: As we stand now, all the other locations where baseball is done, are there batting cages and are they at the schools as well?

Mr. Lillios: The cages that I'm aware of, there are four cages at Little League. They're highly utilized. They are on Palo Alto Little League private land, so they have been kind enough to let the public meander in and out. Other than that, there's a couple of cages at Cubberley that Palo Alto Girls Softball has. They're small and not well known and, I think, under lock and key, so there's not much access there. Of course, all of the high schools will have two to four cages minimum, but again those are under lock and key by the high schools. Other than that in the City of Palo Alto, I have no knowledge of any other batting cages open to the public.

Commissioner Crommie: Babe Ruth is a private club kind of baseball. It's a try-out system to get into Babe Ruth, right? It's a high level activity. I'm little bit confused if this is only for Babe Ruth players or if other people who are playing recreationally can use it.

Mr. Lillios: This project is being spearheaded by Babe Ruth because we have a strong desire to have a baseball facility, not just for ourselves. Our charter is to serve the baseball playing youth, whether they're Babe Ruth or Little League or not in any league. They could be recreational softball players. They just want to go out there and take some

1709 hacks. The Malibu Fun Center used to be the place where you could go and take some
1710 hacks. There just aren't places like that, where people can just take some swings.
1711 Although, we're spearheading it and we have obviously a vested interest because we have
1712 pretty high utilization of that Baylands field. There are plenty of other organizations.
1713 Like I said, there's the Oaks, there's summer camps throughout the summer that could use
1714 something like this. There's private organizations. Most of these are very Palo Alto
1715 centric amazingly. There's more beyond Palo Alto, but I think this could serve a large
1716 fraction of Palo Alto need as I see it.

1717
1718 Commissioner Crommie: That's good. It seems like an acre is an awful lot of space for
1719 batting cages. I know they are used on much smaller footprints, probably in all the
1720 locations where they're used. I know this is only temporary, but I really believe in having
1721 batting cages there. I would support having batting cages, but the rub for me is there is
1722 an acre of land there. I just want to make sure that we envision the use of that acre
1723 openly and fully without presuming this Phase 2 process. I really am sympathetic to the
1724 need for the batting cages, and it has been put off for way too long. We're going to be
1725 done with our Master Plan in about a year's time, so the timing's a little bit odd right now.
1726 You've waited already 11 years, and now we're about to come to this huge final product
1727 of the Master Plan. I hate to say it, but do you think we should wait one more year? Can
1728 you just give me a little bit more of an argument for why now?

1729
1730 Mr. Anderson: My assessment is there are advantages to doing it now. You're right
1731 there's a lot of things up in the air as to what the best use of that's going to be. You're
1732 absolutely right that the Master Plan is the document to give us those answers, and it
1733 won't come until November. I also know that implementing that Master Plan will not be
1734 overnight. It's a very long-term process. They're going to identify priorities that are
1735 really unknown at this point. I'll give you a good example. Scott Park was one example
1736 where we had a CIP, and it took two years to implement a very simple CIP at Scott Park.
1737 My point there is only to say that when you have a plan that covers the entire city, to wait
1738 on something like this for fear that maybe there will be something come November 1st
1739 that should go right there is really unlikely. If you couple that with the benefit of this
1740 being so mobile, so flexible. It can be pulled out really in about a day and a half, I'm
1741 imagining since there's no foundation work. It's disassembling some pipes. I think the
1742 down side is very, very small for the city. I've had a really frank conversation with Babe
1743 Ruth to say there are going to be serious implications if we add 10 acres of recreation
1744 where the golf course is giving up that section, which would theoretically add who knows
1745 what. There's lots of different options. There may be need for that 1 acre. I don't know
1746 exactly how that will shake out. They understand that going into that, and they feel it's a
1747 worthwhile investment. Again, the things I highlighted, the benefits of what you can
1748 learn in that interim period will be valuable for us as we say, "Okay, if we don't have a
1749 batting cage accessible to anybody in Palo Alto except for these private groups where
1750 they're under lock and key and we do need one, which may come out in the Master Plan,

may not, then where are we going to put it and what should it be like?" This is our opportunity to get a free learning lesson on what those answers are.

Commissioner Crommie: That makes a lot of sense to me. To summarize, I support batting cages. I think it's needed for safety and efficiency for the sport. They're located in all other sites, and they need it here as well. I'm concerned about using the full acre for this whole complex program without vetting it a lot more thoroughly. I think the footprint of the batting cages is pretty small. Lastly, I always get a little bit concerned when I hear that things are under lock and key at the schools and why we don't have better relationships with figuring out how to have more of a shared use. I don't know that much about how the baseball works. Club soccer does sometimes get use of schools. In fact, schools seem to make money off of it sometimes. I just wish we could understand that better on our Commission. It's been a long-term concern of mine.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Hetterly.

Commissioner Hetterly: I think it's a great idea to have batting cages that can support the baseball field and softball field at Baylands Athletic Center. I'm a little uneasy about this particularly because it almost feels like that acres is like the 7 acres at Foothill Park that we've never talked about before. We've never talked about any other use for it before. As far as I can tell, there's been no public outreach on this pilot proposal. I understand that it's temporary. I generally like the idea of pilots. I think that's a great way to go; however, just as we've talked about with the dog park pilot, often once you start a pilot it's hard to end it. I'm glad that it's temporary. I do think it makes sense, before promoting a PIO, to have at least one public outreach meeting to talk about the location and whether this is an appropriate location. It seems to be a different location than the 2004 PIO. I don't know why there was a change and whose preference changed to make that location different. As Commissioner Crommie suggested, it's an acre of contiguous property and if you throw us a batting cage, though it's small, that precludes any other use of that space for other functions. I have no idea if there are other functions that would be beneficial there, never having thought about it before I saw this agenda item. If it were to move onto Phase 2, the other problem with building the batting cages in order to determine whether there is demonstrated need, that seemed a little strange to me. It sounds like you're saying you have a need, Babe Ruth has a need, Little League seems to have a need. I'm not sure what more we're going to learn from a pilot about that need, except that maybe if you build it, they will come and we'll have more and more people wanting to use it who maybe didn't before or maybe aren't from Palo Alto-based groups. That's something that can affect policy deliberations along the way. I have one more point. The Phase 2, adding a whole nother acre to the baseball/softball complex at Baylands Athletic Center seems to me an awful lot of space for a single dedicated use. We don't have any other use like that across the city where we have that much acreage dedicated to just one use. Even our synthetic turf fields are used for soccer, football,

lacrosse. That's not to say we shouldn't have it, but I think it's something that we should be thinking about. I think public discussion is a worthwhile pursuit.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Lauing.

Commissioner Lauing: Yes, thanks. As most of my colleagues know, I was on the Babe Ruth board for five years before I came here. The batting cages were on the docket then. It's probably in the minutes somewhere of the meetings, but it's my recollection that it became very cost prohibitive when Babe Ruth looked at it because we got a lot of feedback from the city on the flood plains that we're still getting feedback from a lot of people on. It might not have been only the city, because of the kind of commentary that's coming back on the golf course. Which is why it became too cost prohibitive to do—I don't know if you had to have them 6 feet high or whatever it was—but that was the reason for that. There's no question there's a demonstrated need. To your point, I don't think we even need a pilot because there just aren't any. A lot of times Babe Ruth teams would go over to the Little League fields or, if they could get space on the weekends at the high school particularly Paly, they would go over there before games to warm-up in the batting cages. It's completely inconvenient. It's too bad that this isn't getting in in time for this season, but maybe it'll make the tournaments. Just a couple of questions. As this thing was getting back up, was there any debate about should we go back to first-base line or is it just because this land was available here? As you look at Phase 2, if that were to happen notwithstanding comments of my colleague, the easements seem to be right smack in the middle of that so I don't know how you're going to be able to do that anyway.

Mr. Anderson: The first question you asked of why not the first place that was identified in 2004. It pertains to the JPA project where that levee adjacent to the batting cage in that diagram will be pushed up very, very close to that area, pinching it off so much so that the walkway is almost compromised. It's very tight there in the plans. It seemed to make sense to look at another option. That's why.

Commissioner Lauing: That's my guess.

Mr. Anderson: Your second question, could you repeat that one more time, the Phase 2?

Commissioner Lauing: If you were to look at Phase 2, how can you because it looks like it's right in the middle of the easements?

Mr. Anderson: We met with PG&E, showed them Phase 1 and Phase 2 to say, "Would you have a problem with this?" I guess it's predominantly because it's not anchored in the ground, it could be moved and would not interfere with their direct access to those things. They gave us the okay, and I have it in writing.

Commissioner Lauing: Okay. To your question, Commissioner Crommie, the answer why you can't use the high schools is because the high school coaches are czars. They're totally in charge, and there's one key and that person has it. You can call it cultural, but they do use it an awful lot. Thanks. Very good presentation and preparation.

Commissioner Hetterly: I have one more quick question.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Hetterly.

Commissioner Hetterly: Do you anticipate when you're using the batting cage that it will be the same folks who are using the field at the same time as part of your practice or would you expect that you would have an increase in usership because you may have teams practicing on the field and other folks using the batting cages simultaneously? Would you anticipate that being an issue for parking?

Mr. Lillios: Yes, when word gets out that there's a batting cage, there will be independent groups going just for batting practice. The teams that I've been involved with, we have two or three practices a week, and one of them is dedicated to just batting alone. We will either go to the cage facility up in Belmont, or there's other facilities you can rent out for a pretty penny. I can see this would be a perfect place for those kind of activities to happen. Generally people drop off their kids and take off. They don't sit around to watch batting practice, because it's not much of a spectator sport for the parents. There will be a little bit, but I don't expect it to be substantial.

Commissioner Hetterly: Thank you.

Commissioner Crommie: It just occurred to me as far as environmental impact, is it going to disturb birds in the area if there's just a constant popping of the bat against the ball? Have you talked to any groups about that, environmental groups, about impact?

Mr. Anderson: We have not. I think the use would be in keeping with the baseball that's happening there. It would be programmed by the same gentleman, Adam Howard from Recreation, who programs the field use. We have control over it, so it's not as if it would be 24/7. It's not open where you can check in at midnight and start swatting. It's unlit, so we don't have to worry about light impacts. Our belief is it's going to be in keeping with the use there and not a dramatic change. It's also in an area where there's no vegetation. We can certainly do more exploring to see if there are any concerns about that, but it's not one staff has right now.

Commissioner Crommie: Okay. Normally we vet with different stakeholders when we set up a new recreational facility. I was looking at it simplistically that it's the same kids

that are there that then just use the batting practice. When you start to talk about a regional draw, I actually do get quite concerned about the density of use. I don't know what to do about that. I don't know if we're making it known that we're concerned about that. Can you give us some kind of follow-up and let us know how that's going?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, in advance of that, at the next time we bring this back to you. Again it'll be in keeping with how we manage the existing fields. That baseball field at the Athletic Center is not just "come help yourself," "come play as many league games as you want," "come in from all the surrounding communities." It's all brokered and managed by our recreation team. We don't suffer that problem with the fields, and I don't anticipate suffering that same problem with the batting cages because it'll be managed the same way.

Commissioner Crommie: Okay. I'm very familiar with our field use for soccer, but I'm really not that familiar with looking at that policy for that facility. Maybe one day you can educate us on that.

Mr. Anderson: I'd be glad to bring a draft policy for the batting cages that's proposed. We've already got a draft going. It needs to be vetted a little more fully. We'll be glad to bring that back when we bring this issue to you again.

Chair Reckdahl: Like Ed, my son plays Babe Ruth, so we've spent many hours in a batting cage. Never down in the Baylands, but before games we'll go over to the Little League field and throw batting practice there and then drive over to the Baylands. It'll be nice to have that in one location, to be able to do batting practice before the games right at the place where the game is. On the far left of the picture, of the blue triangle, there right now is a fence. If we open that fence up, we would be connected over to the skin field that has Little League and also has Girls Softball. I would like to see that considered. Just say, "Can we put a gate in there?" Have the same lock on the gate as we have on the other gate, so that if 5070 plays their little league down there or the girls softball want to use that, they can access that directly instead of having to go all the way around. Certainly it's not that far to walk around, but it would be a much shorter shot to go through that little gate right at the far left. I would like to see that considered. After the golf course is reconfigured, knock on wood, there's a lot of decisions to be made. One question is the GreenWaste lease. Do you know the duration of that? Is that area going to be open for reconfiguration also or are we going to have to move around that?

Mr. Anderson: I don't have the answer to that, but I'd be glad to research it.

Chair Reckdahl: That I find irrelevant right now. This lot is going to be sitting empty for the next two or three years, because we're not going to put anything permanent on there while the golf course is being reconfigured. Either we can have a temporary batting cage

on there for the next two or three years or we have it sit empty for the next two or three years. I view this as a no-risk proposition. That is it. Any other questions? Do you know the path forward now or do you still have to do some work in figuring out what you want to do?

Mr. Anderson: An option for moving forward, I'd like to think about it and perhaps consult with my director. An option is hold a public meeting, come back with a PIO based on feedback we've gotten and with a design and see if the Commission approves and then go to Council afterward.

Chair Reckdahl: Typically if you were to schedule a public meeting, how much lead time do you want to have for that? Is that a couple of weeks?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, 2 1/2.

Chair Reckdahl: Okay. Thank you.

5. Information Report on the Organics Facilities Plan and Use of the Measure E Site.

Chair Reckdahl: We do have one public speaker. Emily Renzel is going to be talking about the Measure E site.

Emily Renzel: At the risk of keeping poor Matt Krupp here for another 3 minutes. The Measure E has been studied quite a lot. I think with the last request for proposal that went out, staff had pretty much decided that much of the 10-acre site would not be excavated and used for composting, just the 3.8 acres of the 10 acres. There are basically two portions of the 10-acre site with greater and lesser likelihood of being used in the next six years or so, seven years, before 2021. I just want to be sure that you're planning for the Byxbee Hills Park, not working around that 10 acres in illogical ways. In other words, not necessarily putting anything on it, but looking at your trail systems and everything else to make them logical in the event that we can rededicate this land. The Measure E prevents the Council from rededicating the land, but Council could at some point, once it's determined that the site would not be used, put it to the voters sooner. That's always a possibility. I'm not advocating that at this point. I'm just suggesting that in your planning, you should look at the whole site, at least the part that doesn't include the flatter 3.8 acres, and do your best to have a forward idea of what will happen there. I just can't resist commenting that I think use of the 1-acre triangle for batting cages is great. It's reclaiming this parkland that's been parkland since 1965. It was allowed to be used by the garbage company, and they were supposed to restore it to baseball field when it was done. PASCO sold to Waste Management and then we went to GreenWaste, so it never happened. The triangle has been parkland since 1965. The GreenWaste acre was

1961 exempted from the park dedication. Whoever asked the question about use of it, it
1962 wouldn't necessarily not be available for park should it be decided at some point. It is not
1963 currently park dedicated. Thank you.

1964
1965 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Matthew Krupp, you're talking about the Measure E area.
1966 Thank you.

1967
1968 Matthew Krupp: Hi, good evening, Commissioners. Matthew Krupp with Public Works
1969 Zero Waste. I'm Environmental Programs Manager for the Zero Waste Group. If you
1970 have any questions about recycling or composting later, I'll be happy to answer those as
1971 well. The reason I'm here today is to talk to you about the Measure E parcel and the
1972 RFPs, the process that came out of that. I was the project manager on both the Energy
1973 Compost Facility request for proposal and the subsequent Compost Facility request for
1974 proposal. I don't know if I can go off script, but I actually can answer a question that
1975 came from the last presentation from Commissioner Reckdahl about that parcel that
1976 GreenWaste uses right now. The GreenWaste and Palo Alto contract currently goes until
1977 2017. Staff is going to present to the Finance Committee just next week a proposal to
1978 extend the contract to 2021. Part of that contract extension is also looking at an
1979 opportunity for GreenWaste to locate its short-term corporation yard, which is what they
1980 use that facility as, in a location outside of Palo Alto. We currently require them to have
1981 a facility within Palo Alto, but a new contract amendment would allow them to have a
1982 facility outside of Palo Alto. Of course we have to look at the needs of servicing our
1983 refuse customers, the garbage and getting all the different carts out there. Again, that's
1984 something that we're looking at the opportunity to change should the use be desired to be
1985 changed by you guys and the Council. I wanted to address that question while I was
1986 here. Daren didn't have to come back and ask me later.

1987
1988 Chair Reckdahl: The purpose of having that site, is that for drop off?
1989

1990 Mr. Krupp: That site is the office for the local staff. We have the managers and the route
1991 supervisors who are located over there. Also our outreach staff is located there as well.
1992 We also have carts and bins for our residential and commercial customers that are located
1993 there, so we can provide very fast service. Let's say one of you called up and said, "Hey,
1994 my garbage cart is broken" or something like that. We can get it out to you a lot of times
1995 the same day if not the next day, which is a service that many other garbage companies
1996 can't provide. We are able to provide very speedy service. The larger GreenWaste
1997 corporation yard, where all the trucks are located, is actually in Santa Clara off of
1998 Lafayette Street. We can't get there quite as quickly ...
1999

2000 Chair Reckdahl: If we do not require them to have that local, would they want that 1 acre
2001 still?
2002

Mr. Krupp: That's something that we would have to work out with GreenWaste. About two years ago there was a question about whether that site was going to be needed for other park uses. GreenWaste investigated other sites around the community and found that there were basically none that could service them within the boundary of Palo Alto. That's why we looked at providing GreenWaste the opportunity to have a site that was located outside of the boundaries of Palo Alto.

Chair Reckdahl: Just from the last presentation, that little triangle is very hard to use with that 1 acre blocking it. When we look at the reconfiguration, it'd give us a lot more flexibility if we could convert that into parkland, even if that means moving that to somewhere else.

Mr. Krupp: Sure, sure. I think that's a good question. I haven't been involved in the Master Plan that was talked about earlier today. I would imagine that that parcel would be considered as part of a Master Plan parcel. I don't want to speak on something that I don't know enough about. As Emily Renzel said, it was parkland that's being used for another use right now.

Chair Reckdahl: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Krupp: Sorry to go off script there. Let's get back onto the story of the former Palo Alto landfill and garbage and wastewater. You'll all be experts by the end of this presentation I hope. We did have a lot of people helping with this whole project, and they're listed over there. Consultants ARI, CH2M Hill, and Jim Bender Consulting. This project was—at least the first part of it—the Energy Compost Facility was a joint project that was with the Zero Waste Group and Public Works and also the Regional Water Quality Control Plant, another division within Public Works. Before I go into the specifics of Measure E and that parcel, I want to talk to you about some of the goals that staff had in order to define the best possible project. We needed to do a number of things from the wastewater perspective and from the solid waste perspective. The most important thing actually is on the wastewater side, decommissioning our sewage sludge incinerator which is one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions within the city. There are only two sewage sludge incinerators that operate within the Bay area. We are one of them. It was a Council priority to decommission and turnoff that incinerator. That's one of the priorities that we are looking to do from the wastewater side. On the solid waste side, we are looking at two things. The first thing was to find a new home for a composting operation. You might remember not that long ago we composted yard trimmings, your yard trimmings, over on top of the landfill. Once the landfill was closed and needed to be closed, that operation needed to stop. We had to end that operation. It was not compatible with the use of Byxbee Park to have a composting operation on top of it. That operation closed back a few years ago. We wanted to look at a new place to put composting and compost the yard trimmings. We also wanted to identify if there was an

opportunity to take our commercial food scraps, food that's not eaten at restaurants, and also residential food scraps and harness the energy in that material. We're trying to find all of that stuff. By doing all that, we would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and be able to handle all three of these wastes. Now one of the ideas that came out in the proposal in the Measure E ballot initiative, is that perhaps there's a technology that can do all these things together, can handle the biosolids, the sewage sludge, the yard trimmings and the food scraps together in one combined technology. That was a premise that was based early on. We are looking at all of these things to try to see if we can do them. Were we successful? The short answer is no, we weren't. I'll get to the rest of it in a second. How did we get to the point where we're at right now? We did a feasibility study back in 2011 to see if it even made sense to pursue this further. We looked at a number of different technologies including dry anaerobic digestion. That was the original technology that was proposed by the Palo Altans for Green Energy, the people who put together the Measure E initiative. We looked at that, and it proved that it could be feasible. A feasibility study is only the first step. What happened from there is that Council elected to put the Measure E item on the ballot. It was on the ballot in November 2011, passed with a two-thirds majority. A couple of things that are interesting about the Measure E ballot initiative. One is that it called for staff to investigate the opportunity for putting an Energy Compost Facility on this 10-acre Measure E site, which I'll talk about in a second. It also undedicated the 10 acres of Byxbee Park Hills until 2021. What Emily Renzel was saying is that after 2021, Council could elect to return that back into parkland. Until such time, it was available for use. It didn't mandate that the use had to be there, but it called for the investigation and the opportunity to put that Energy Compose Facility there. I just want to make that distinction quickly for you. In 2013 we released an RFP for an Energy Compost Facility, that called for a technology to handle all of these feed stocks, the three that we talked about before, biosolids, food scraps and yard trimmings, either in one facility or perhaps in multiple facilities with the opportunity to use an acre within the wastewater treatment plant and the 10 acres of the Measure E site. We did that. What we found is that nothing really worked the way we had hoped. We didn't get a proposal that would satisfy the needs of both our solid waste needs and our wastewater needs. What it did clarify though was that there was a certain technology that was appropriate for the wastewater side of the shop. I'll get to that in a second. That RFP was canceled. The Council elected to reject all the proposals at that point. They said, at that point, "Well, we don't want to use the entire Measure E site. 10 acres is not appropriate to build on, so we're going to restrict you to 3.8 acres."—I'll show you that in a second—"3.8 acres of that site which is fairly flat, and we want you to look at it right away to see if it's possible to put a Composting Facility to compost yard trimmings and possibly residential food scraps together on this 3.8-acre site." Right away we quickly turned around in, I would say, record speed for government a new RFP which was looking at just composting on that Measure E site. What did we find? Well, the Measure E site is complicated. Building something there was very expensive, much more expensive than composting outside. At

that point in time when we get to December just last year, a few months ago, Council said, "You know what? Maybe this isn't quite ready for prime time. We're going to hold off on this project, and we're going to continue essentially with the status quo." That's the lead. I want to give you a little bit more background about the site here. Now you know the ending, that nothing is happening over there for at least a little while. I want to talk about the site itself so you have some perspective. I know all of you spend a lot of time out on Byxbee Park. Daren gives me full reports back when he sees you all out there. Here's the park over here. Of course, we're going to be opening up a large portion of the last phase over in Earth Day. That'll be very exciting. We're going to be presenting next month to you about the Byxbee Park Hills concepts and the trails and all the great stuff we're doing over there. Right now if we look at the Measure E site, you can see this site is in blue. That's about 10 acres. The dark blue, over here, this is what we call the relatively flat area, the 3.8-acre area that was part of the Compost Facility RFP. Then the treatment plant is over here in yellow. One of the reasons that we weren't able to do anything right away on the Measure E site, and especially that 3.8-acre site, is that it has a number of constraints on the site. There is a habitat corridor, a set of trees pretty well established, that was serving as a barrier between the landfill and the waste water treatment plant right over here. That connects the Bay, over here, with Renzel Marsh. There's a lot of really great habitat in there, foxes and some other bunch of critters that are too numerous to name. Building on that site would involve the potential dislocation of that particular habitat corridor. That's one challenge. The second challenge is building anywhere on the Baylands is no easy feat. Underneath all that land is Bay mud, not really the most conducive neighborhood to build stuff in. In addition to that, right over here is a landfill, so you're building next to a landfill which is also not the easiest thing to build on. Add on to that a number of pipes that go underneath the site, real challenge. All of that drove up the cost and just made building even a simple compost facility very expensive. The last piece of making it expensive, you're like, "Why is it so expensive to build a compost facility? They seem like they should be pretty cheap." Well, you guys all have noses, right? Okay. Compost is smelly; it can be anyway. Because the use of Byxbee Park Hills is a park and people would be right here taking nice strolls and going by. They would smell what was coming off this facility, so we required the highest level of odor protection possible for that facility so that it would not smell offsite at all. Some people like the smell of compost. Me personally not so much. To have full odor control on that site again drove costs up. In turn, that is why we don't have a facility located on that site. What are we actually going to do? I'll try to wrap this up quickly for you. As part of the recommendation back in May 2014, we broke up our plans for dealing with organics, those three different organic streams, yard trimmings, food scraps and biosolids into four components. The first component, Number 1, is addressing biosolids specifically. That allows us to decommission the incinerator, so we can take those biosolids and send them off to either the Central Valley or over to the East Bay Municipal Utility District in Oakland to be processed there. That's a new truck offloading facility as part of Component 1. That project is underway right now. The first two components, by

the way, are inside the treatment plant. Keep that in mind. Component 2 is anaerobic digestion. That's wet anaerobic digestion, building giant tanks that essentially eat the biosolids, the sewage sludge. That would also be located within the treatment plant. Part of that facility would be sending food scraps to those digesters, and that would all generate energy. All that energy would more than satisfy the energy needs of the wastewater treatment plant, which is one of the largest energy users in the entire city. It's a very green and sustainable effort. Essentially energy that you guys create through your trips to the bathroom—I apologize for being blunt—and the food that you eat or don't eat in this case. That's Components 1, 2 and 3. All of that would be located within the treatment plant's footprint. Component 4, that was what we were looking at with the Compost Facility RFP. That's the piece that we are currently, for lack of a better word, on hold and sending our organics outside of the community. I thought I had another slide at the end of there, but that's okay. My apologies. Here we are. Bear with me for one second here. We're experiencing technical difficulties. There we are. What happens? Again, we talked about in December 2014 the decision to go with the lower cost option, to use composting facilities for our yard trimmings and food scraps outside of Palo Alto. We are currently looking at a facility that's not very far, about 15 miles from our current location, in north San Jose, to do that. We're going to provide annual updates every December on the status of the composting technology to see if there are lower cost options to use on the Measure E site. Again, this site can be considered for energy/compost uses until 2021. At that time, in 2021 and beyond, the Council can elect to return it back to parkland. That is the close of my presentation. Thank you for listening. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Chair Reckdahl: Before we start the questions, can you give one clarification? Dedicated parkland versus undedicated, what's the ramifications of that? If something is undedicated, does that mean it can't be touched by the city or that the city can develop it just like you would any parkland?

Mr. Krupp: From my understanding, that parcel is not considered part of the park system. Those 10 acres are not parkland. Now the city can elect to do something else with it.

Chair Reckdahl: For example, making trails on it, finishing off the Byxbee Hills Park. Could they treat it just like they would any other parkland? By development I mean making trails or finishing off the park, make plantings, that type of thing.

Mr. Krupp: What I can do is I can address how we handled the 10 acres within the interim park concepts, which we're going to talk about next month. We didn't put any trails through there, because we didn't know what that use would be. We didn't want to put a trail in there and have to remove the trail that people were getting used to service. We have to cap that part of the landfill, so it has to be finished. It will be planted the

same way as the rest of the landfill, so it won't look necessarily different from the rest of Byxbee Park Hills. At this point at time, until we're directed otherwise, we're not planning to put any trails through there. On the other hand, we're also not planning to fence it off. Daren, I don't know if you want to add anything to that.

Daren Anderson: No, I think you covered it.

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: I want to thank you so much for this presentation. It's really important for our Commission to stay aware of what's going on with this acreage. So much has been happening, and you gave a really great timeline. I really appreciate your presentation. What's important to me is that we acknowledge that what was expected to happen with Measure E has not happened. The vote was shall 10 acres of existing parkland in Byxbee Park be undedicated for the exclusive purpose of building a processing facility for yard trimmings, food waste and other organic material. The idea behind this was to get green energy from anaerobic digestion. It's anaerobic digestion which is going to give us that green energy. You updated us quite well on the findings that so far that hasn't happened. The proponents of Measure E were very hopeful that it would. The opponents said, "We don't think the technology is there." We have six more years to figure it out. Because it's not looking like it is there, I'm just hoping that somehow our Commission can over time, through some kind of direction between staff helping us figure out how to do this, not lose sight of that parkland. This is to support what Emily Renzel said, that we have a lot of development going on in Byxbee Park. There's a lot of interest in our community to get those trails figured out, to make it a rich place for people to be. We've waited a long time. As we plan that, I think it's our responsibility on the Commission to not lose sight of that parkland. If you carve out the 3.8 out of the 10, that's still leaving 6.2 acres to think about. I try to keep track of all this and I read a lot of the reports. Can you just say once again what that 3.8 would be carved out for provisionally? I know nothing is set, but can you just give a one sentence on that?

Mr. Krupp: Yeah, sure. The reason the 3.8 acres was carved out from the whole was that there was no fill underneath. There's no actual garbage underneath those 3.8 acres, and we wouldn't have to excavate the garbage and build a retaining wall, which was originally the possibility with using all the 10 acres. The 3.8 acres was what we always called "the relatively flat" portion of that land.

Commissioner Crommie: Now I understand. Should anything go there, the idea is it should really only go on the 3.8 if anything goes there at all. That is more of a rationale for us to really keep our eye on the 6.2 acres. I think that land is a really important gateway to Byxbee Park. When you look at the map, it just sits right there as people are going to enter the park. I just think we don't want to lose sight of that. I also want to

make a point that when this vote went forth, the idea was that 10 acres was to be used independently for the production of green energy. If we can't do that, I personally think we have to be very careful about setting that site up as some kind of support land for the processing plant. Just because it happens to be next to it doesn't mean that we have no mandate whatsoever to have this undedicated parkland to somehow be some auxiliary space to support what's going on at the regional—what did we call that? The sewage treatment center. I really would like us to separate this as we study this on the Commission. I really hope that you'll continue to come back to us. I also want to say I think the city is doing very good work totally independent of Measure E. I know it was a goal of the city to get rid of the incinerator. That's huge. I want to congratulate the powers behind that. To push forward with all of these incredibly sensible things that needed to take place which have really no bearing on our parkland and are going to proceed independently of that. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Other questions. Nope. Thank you.

6. Council Recommendation on Next Steps for the 7.7 Acres at Foothills Park.

Chair Reckdahl: We do have one speaker, Jerry Hearn.

Jerry Hearn: Thank you very much. Members of the Commission, Jerry Hearn, resident of Portola Valley. In the interests of disclosure, I've been involved with the Acterra nursery and with Acterra both since their inception; however, tonight I'm speaking as a private citizen in regards to the recommendation in front of you tonight. There are three elements to it. I want to comment individually on each one of them. The first one regarding the hydrologic study, I think that's an excellent idea. It's in line with the natural environment element of the general plan. In my experience working with the Master Plan process for the parks, there's seems to be a great interest for water features, and this could turn out to be an interesting water feature. Thirdly, as mentioned in there, there is some potential for steelhead trout that do exist in the downstream end of Los Trancos Creek which this empties into. I think that's a good idea, and I fully support that. The second item is about the closure of the park temporarily until the hydrologic study is done. I think that makes perfect sense. If you've been out there, you know what the area looks like. The flat area, which is the only really accessible area, is pretty uninteresting at this point. There doesn't seem to be a whole lot of interest to go out there; however, you might think about making it available for tours every once in a while as was done before, although those were not very well attended. It's not a bad idea if people want to go out there and take a look at it. The third part, which as to do with the nursery lease. When I first read about the idea of having it be on an annual basis, that kind of set me back a little bit because I thought back to when we were trying to find a place for the nursery, how long it took us to find it, how long it took us to put all the pieces together. The idea that in a year's time or half a year's time, depending on whatever happened, we

Approved

could be looking for a new place. That would be a real challenge. However, with the option that it's a four-year renewable lease with both parties agreeing to it and given the excellent relationship that we have established with staff over the many years, I think that we would be able to work with that. I'm sure that it would not be a surprise sprung on us, so we would have plenty of time to make a change if we needed to. In general, I just want to say that I support the recommendation. I appreciate all the work that staff has put into thinking about this. I look forward to seeing that 7.7 acres put to better use than it has been in the past with the exception, of course, of the Acterra nursery which is a fabulous use. Thank you very much.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Daren, it's yours.

Daren Anderson: Good evening. I'm here tonight seeking your recommendation to Council on how to proceed with that 7.7-acre parcel of parkland at Foothills Park. A quick summary of where we left off. The Council had dedicated this land in August 2014 and directed staff to work with the Commission to figure out the best use for the land. After the ranger-led tours and the public meeting, staff brought the issue to the Commission to discuss it on January 27th, last month. At the meeting, there was general consensus on how to move forward. The first general agreement was to fund and implement the hydrology study for Buckeye Creek. There was note that this should be completed before making any recommendations whatsoever on how to use the land for any other purpose. The second was to renew that Acterra nursery lease for a short-term basis so the city has flexibility to act on those recommendations that would come about through some hydrology study. I've recommended a year-to-year lease, as you saw in the staff report, with the option to renew for four additional years pending that mutual agreement and the city's approval. The third consensus was to keep that parcel closed to the public, which is status quo, until the hydrology study is complete. I would like to thank the Commission and the ad hoc committee for excellent guidance, really clear directions, and assistance with this process. That concludes my presentation. I'm available for any questions or comments.

Chair Reckdahl: Okay. Questions?

Chair Lauing: Do the ad hoc committee members want to add anything different or additional from last month?

Chair Reckdahl: Go ahead, Commissioner Hetterly.

Commissioner Hetterly: I was going to go ahead and move that we approve the recommendation.

Chair Reckdahl: Do we have a second?

Commissioner Lauing: Second.

Commissioner Knopper: Second. Oh, sorry.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION MOVED BY COMMISSIONER HETTERLY AND
SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LAUING.**

Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: I just had a question. Am I allowed to ask that?

Commissioner Hetterly: (inaudible)

Commissioner Lauing: Motion's on the table.

Commissioner Crommie: Thank you, Daren, for all your hard work on this as well as thank you to our ad hoc committee. I think this was a really good proposal. I wanted a sense of what you're thinking in terms of timeframe. The reason I'm asking this question is I know part of the proposal is to keep this land out of reach to the public. Any time we do have parkland, I think as a Commission we have to be very mindful of that. I take that very seriously as far as cutting off access. I know that in the past a couple of Council Members have asked if, while we're figuring this all out, we can have access. We've bantered that about. I think there are some good arguments in this proposal for why we cannot do that considering cost and safety, just to mention two of them. Can you just speak to this issue a little bit? We've been waiting decades for this, and I would just hate for it to go on and on. Can you give me some sense of what you're thinking in terms of the timeline?

Mr. Anderson: My hope for the timeline is that the capital improvement project is approved, and we are able to have access to the funds come July 1st. Once the funds are available, jump on this immediately. Go out to bid, see if we can find a good consultant to take on the hydrology study. The part of the timeframe that I'm uncertain about is how long it'll take to get the hydrology study completed. It would really be part of that pre-bid proposal, where I'm hearing from consultants if they need to see it through a full rain cycle. In some preliminary outreach, we know that there are some contractors who have studied the hydrology in the general area. They might have a good enough understanding that could truncate that process a little bit, rather than having to see it over an extended period of time. That's an unknown at this point. I need more details to come through the outreach to these contractors and the people who study hydrology. That said, I could not foresee it going beyond a year.

Commissioner Crommie: Just as far as how this is phrased here. It says, "Keep the 7.7-acre parcel closed until after the hydrology study is completed." We know that once a study is completed, then we have to study the findings of the study, figure out where we want to go with that. I might try to make a friendly amendment to this or I wonder if we can have some kind of clarification about that. I wanted, I guess, more clarification on this statement.

Mr. Anderson: I understand what you mean. I think it bears elaboration. I think the right thing is after that study is complete, it comes back to the Commission and then we can look at all those options we vetted. Somewhere in there it could open early, because now you've got an understanding of the implications of the hydrology. It could remain closed. The reason I left it partially open is we know what the process will be after the hydrology study is complete. Somewhere in there it could open and maybe not. It would really be at the Commission's recommendation, which is what Council asked of you. We could add language or if you think that suffices, leave it as is.

Commissioner Crommie: As a Commission, I'd like a chance when it's on the table. It sounds like it's already on the table. I don't know the logistics of when I bring that up for discussion. I would like some guidance on having our Commission talk about the wording of Number 2. Is this the proper time to do that? I want to know if anyone else on the Commission ...

Commissioner Hetterly: Do you have a proposal for what (inaudible)?

Commissioner Crommie: What would I propose?

Commissioner Hetterly: Do you have a suggestion for what you would like? Do you have wording to propose?

Commissioner Crommie: Let me think a minute. Keep it closed until it's completed. Once it's completed, bring it back in a timely manner so we can reevaluate that. I don't know quite how to word that. I feel like it's just a little bit too open-ended. Does anyone else share my concern?

Commissioner Knopper: Actually no. It's not only with regard to the hydrologic study. Obviously you mentioned the safety issue with regard to the parcel. There's also a private residence, if you recall, that has three open sides. From a public-private perspective, we can't just open it to the public because then they'll end up trespassing. The other issue I want to bring up is after the hydrologic study and the conclusion of the Master Plan, having all of that data as well as the creek information, like structurally the creek issue, folding all that data together and then being able to systematically make decisions that are formed based on what this—because it's really 2.1 acres as we talked

about that's buildable potentially. I think that's very clear. Keep the parcel closed until after the study and then we can deal with it at that point. I think the study is only one piece of it, because it's also about the Master Plan.

Chair Reckdahl: My concern would be that you could infer that first sentence says that once the study is complete, we will open it. That'd be my only concern about misinterpretation. If we want to say, "Shall remain closed at least until after the hydrology study is complete," that would say that we don't have any obligation to open it once the hydrological study is complete.

Commissioner Crommie: Okay. That's possible. Commissioner Knopper just said two things that I am not sure I personally agree with. I don't think it's really been established that only 2.1 acres of that are usable. We don't know that for certain. There are ways to build trails on—it's all predicated on flatness. We know that you can build trails in areas that are not flat. I don't agree with that.

Commissioner Lauing: What's wrong with leaving it open as it is? It seemed to me that the language you added didn't change the facts here, which is it's going to stay closed until the hydrologic study is complete. I'm not sure what your language does. It doesn't say it's going to open. It's just an extra sentence, just as I heard it anyway. All we're saying with the way it's written is that it's going to stay closed, if we approve this recommendation, until we get the results of the hydrologic study. After that we could make new recommendations the next day, I guess, technically the way this is written.

Commissioner Crommie: If that's the interpretation, that's fine with me. I like the idea once it's complete that it can come back to us immediately and we can try to open it. I wouldn't vote for something that's going to be closed indefinitely. I think the safety measures are workable. I personally believe that you can overcome that and open this up. There are ways to mitigate the dangers to the public. I think eventually our Commission is going to have to deal with this question of what we're doing next. I interpret this the way that, I guess, Commissioner Lauing just stated it; that as soon as it's complete, at any point it can come back to us and we can say we can open it.

Mr. Anderson: Would it be at all helpful if I added text to the staff report that goes to Council to just make that abundantly clear that this is the process that the Commission and staff intend to follow? Everything we just enumerated. That after this is done, immediately after, staff will bring this back to the Commission. One of the things that may result is opening it sooner rather than later, but we'll have the full breadth of information from the Master Plan and the hydrology study. We'll combine it to take the most prudent process forward.

Approved

Commissioner Crommie: I like that personally, because I'm not believing that it's impossible to open this land up. I actually believe it is possible, but I think the hydrology study takes precedence in my mind. That's why I would vote in favor of this. I do think it's possible to open up this land while we're studying it further.

Chair Reckdahl: Without an amendment, we go back to the Motion. We have a Motion and a second. All in favor say aye. Opposed. It passes. Thank you, Daren.

MOTION PASSES: 7-0

7. Other Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates.

Chair Reckdahl: Are there any ad hocs that have updates?

Commissioner Ashlund: Yeah. Commissioner Crommie and I met regarding the Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center. We met with Daren Anderson regarding the site, and then with John Aikin to discuss the site and the CIPs that are available as well as future steps regarding programming. The three CIPs that are currently in process are a feasibility study to determine how to repair and replace the boardwalk. That RFP I assume went out; it was to go out last month. This study will complete in the fall and design can begin soon after pending Council approval. Cost of construction for the boardwalk will be determined during the study and further refined in the design stage. The second is the project for general improvements to the Interpretive Center. The scope of this project is decking, railing, structural framing as needed, exterior wood siding, flooring, cabinetry, and doors. That is interior as well as exterior, because the floor is continuous on the exterior of the building as well as inside. There's \$100,000 budgeted for design in the current fiscal year and \$405,000 scheduled for construction in fiscal year 2016. This RFP did go out in January and design will begin this spring. Public Works had slated to do public input in the fall. We added that we should have Parks and Rec feedback prior to the public input phase on that process. The third one is improvements to the Interpretive Center exhibits, but this also includes the outdoor signage. That project is funded at \$56,000 scheduled for fiscal year 2017. We discussed that that was insufficient budget for exhibits, but it's the starting point. We'll be going back after that. That is the current status. Commissioner Crommie, did you have anything to add?

Commissioner Crommie: Yes, thank you. The next step in this is to bring John Aikin to present to us on these CIPs with the main focus on the third one that Commissioner Ashlund just mentioned, which is the Interpretive Center exhibits. What we brought up in our meeting with John Aikin is that we're very interested in discussing programming and making sure that the facility is sustaining future programming. When we asked about that, he said that he thinks that the second CIP that Commissioner Ashlund mentioned will probably cover needs for reconfiguration, if any, in the interior space for

2464 programming. What was not covered is this concept of the exhibits. That's where John
2465 Aikin sees a deficit. He felt that we could actually be useful in examining that as a
2466 Commission. He said it broadly pertains to exhibits across the Baylands Open Space
2467 Preserve, if we want to look at this as an integrated endeavor. There's a lot of food for
2468 thought that he brought up in our meeting. I think our Commission would have some
2469 good input on that. Because we have members of our Commission that get involved in
2470 the CIP process, it'd be nice for us to get some of this information through a presentation
2471 and then decide if we want to try for any advocacy within the CIP process on this topic.
2472 The outcome of our meeting is I'm really hoping that we will bring this to the
2473 Commission as an agenda item.

2474
2475 Rob de Geus: That all makes sense to me. The sequencing of when to look at the exhibit
2476 CIP, I've talked to John Aikin about this as well. The boardwalk and knowing whether
2477 we're going to have a boardwalk or not or if it's going to change in some way and the
2478 facility and the walls and other things related to the second CIP that you spoke about,
2479 both of those will inform what we might do with the exhibit program. I want to be sure
2480 we get those going first and then integrate the exhibit CIP at the appropriate time. I agree
2481 that \$56,000 is not enough really for what we would want to do there. To the point about
2482 exhibits, if you've been out there recently, there are four exhibits on the exterior but
2483 they're sitting on railing that's pretty old and falling apart. All the rails are rusted. Those
2484 things need to be understood in terms of what needs to be fixed before we can really
2485 design exhibits and how they might be installed as an example.

2486
2487 Commissioner Crommie: In that big picture concept, we'd want him to cover everything.

2488
2489 Mr. de Geus: Right, right, correct.

2490
2491 Chair Reckdahl: Any Lucy Evans improvements, is that all going to be funded through
2492 CIPs or could it be external funds?

2493
2494 Mr. de Geus: It could be external funds. These three CIPs are all within the CIP budget
2495 and the Infrastructure Reserve. We don't have any external funding.

2496
2497 Chair Reckdahl: Is there a Friends of the Baylands or is it just Friends of Parks?

2498
2499 Mr. de Geus: We don't have a Friends of the Baylands.

2500
2501 Commissioner Ashlund: We talked about the need for something like that too. There's
2502 not a Friends group associated with that facility at this point.

2503
2504 Mr. de Geus: Not specifically. We have Friends of Palo Alto Parks and we have the
2505 environmental volunteers of course that are out there.

Chair Reckdahl: Let's talk offline and bring this up in a future meeting.

Commissioner Crommie: This has a lot of visibility right now, which is very important. Commissioner Ashlund and I, in talking to John Aikin, agreed that we need to act now with a vision because of the visibility and the momentum. This is the time to do it if we want to advocate for any kind of global envisioning, when it comes to something like exhibits.

Chair Reckdahl: Any other ad hocs? Okay.

V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Reckdahl: Rob, did you have any announcements?

Rob de Geus: It's late so I'll be quick. We do have our summer camp and aquatics registration coming up. We did have a fair over the weekend at Mitchell Park, which was a lot of fun. A lot of parents and children attended that and met some of the staff. By 5:00 p.m. this Friday, submissions need to be in so we can process the summer camp program. I wanted to give an update on the CIP program. Generally the Commission worked with staff in defining priorities. That's moving through the process. We still have Buckeye Creek, of course a high priority, Bol Park. The Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan is in there as well. Hopefully that will get approved, which actually could inform exhibits. Also Cubberley is also now coming into play, because we have an agreement with the school district that defines specific funding to support the Cubberley campus. There's a few things that I'd love to see fixed there; the tennis courts as an example. They're really in bad shape. There's a number of other things that we'd just like to get fixed up at Cubberley as well as starting the Master Planning process for the future of Cubberley.

Commissioner Lauing: What about that fire hazard at Foothills? Was that put in the CIPs from a different group?

Mr. de Geus: No. That's an interesting question. It was requested that it wouldn't be put in the capital budget, but rather be put forward as an operating budget request between Public Works, Community Services and Fire. We're submitting it that way. It's in the mix, so we'll see if it gets approved. That's it.

Chair Reckdahl: What's the status on El Camino Park?

Mr. de Geus: The status on El Camino Park is it's moving forward. I believe something had begun on site. I don't know that they had a specific groundbreaking, that I'm aware

of at least. We've been moving forward and hope to have it completed by the end of the calendar year with an open facility. A long time coming.

Chair Reckdahl: How about the Mayfield turf? I think we'd said that we were looking at a February timeframe to start the turf. I think that's been pushed back.

Mr. de Geus: I think it's on schedule. We're a bit behind, I should say first of all. The most recent schedule, we're sticking with that. Both fields need to be replaced in terms of the turf.

Chair Reckdahl: They're doing it sequentially, so we only lose one field at a time?

Mr. de Geus: That's correct.

Commissioner Ashlund: Can I request an update on Magical Bridge next time if possible? I know there's been a lot of progress there, so any word you have on the opening.

Mr. de Geus: Yeah, that'll be good timing. By the end of March I think it's intended to be open if all goes according to plan.

Chair Reckdahl: How about Scott Park?

Mr. de Geus: I'll have to get back to you on Scott Park. I'm not sure what the status is on that.

VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR MARCH 24, 2015 MEETING

Chair Reckdahl: Maybe you should talk about the retreat first.

Rob de Geus: The retreat we have scheduled for March 20th from noon to 3:00 at Mitchell Park Community Center.

Chair Reckdahl: We're not doing Foothills.

Mr. de Geus: Not this time. Was it not available or we just went with Mitchell?

Catherine Bourquin: Sorry, it was more convenient for me to reserve Mitchell this time.

Mr. de Geus: It was more convenience for Catherine, so we're at Mitchell.

Commissioner Knopper: Are we in the library or are we actually in the Community Center?

Vice Chair Markevitch: Probably the community center.

Mr. de Geus: If there's a desire for the Commission to be somewhere else, we can do that. Mitchell's a nice change.

Chair Reckdahl: It's a new facility. In some ways it's nice to use the new facility.

Mr. de Geus: Yeah, I agree.

Chair Reckdahl: If anything's wrong with it, we can complain.

Mr. de Geus: It keeps Catherine happy too, so that's always good. The question will be, what do we do at that retreat? I think there's two possibilities. One is a typical retreat that we do, where we take some time to really reflect on the year past and the year ahead and try to plan out the year in priorities and see if we can set the agenda to some degree for the next several months. The alternative is to focus on the Parks Master Plan. That really depends on how far MIG can get with staff in preparing the matrix and the data and the binders, so that we can have a productive meeting. We'll have to see. We have a little bit of time; I guess about a month to prepare for that. I suspect we're not going to be ready by March 20th to do that deep dive in the matrix and the Summary of Needs, because there's just so much information. I don't want to go forward with it unless it's really ready and well thought through.

Chair Reckdahl: I am concerned that if we wait too long and they fill it out the wrong way too much, then they'll say, "Well, we put so much into this, you can't change it now."

Mr. de Geus: That's a fair point too. That's something that perhaps we can talk about over the next month to see where things are at. We can also talk with MIG and make the call as we get a little closer. Everybody's got it on their calendar? Either way it'll be ...

Chair Reckdahl: We will have a retreat on the 20th. We will set the content, and then Rob will send something out by email depending on what the content is. We'll prepare for the regular retreat. I think the highest priority is Master Plan. If we're anywhere close to having something, we should do the Master Plan.

Commissioner Lauing: If that happens, then we're going to put the retreat content into one of our subsequent meetings, correct? As opposed to setting another retreat to do the real retreat.

2631 Chair Reckdahl: I guess we can talk about that at the retreat.

2632
2633 Commissioner Lauing: Unless the retreat is the 20th, right?

2634
2635 Chair Reckdahl: Yes. On the 20th, if we're discussing the Master Plan, then as part of
2636 that we can talk about when we want the regular retreat content.

2637
2638 Commissioner Lauing: Right, but it's not going to be on the 20th if that happens. We
2639 can't squeeze in both the retreat agenda and essentially a study session on the Master
2640 Plan.

2641
2642 Mr. de Geus: We can add that to the agenda. Assuming the Master Plan is ready, we can
2643 add to the agenda on the 24th of March what we want to do with a future retreat, I
2644 suppose.

2645
2646 Chair Reckdahl: Or even on the 20th too we could talk about it. Either way.

2647
2648 Commissioner Lauing: You're going to have two agendas ready for the 20th? Like two
2649 game plans and then whatever one ...

2650
2651 Chair Reckdahl: Yeah. Pat and I will get input from people on the path forward for the
2652 Commission. We'll put that on the shelf if the Master Plan comes in. Does that seem
2653 reasonable?

2654
2655 Commissioner Lauing: Yeah.

2656
2657 Commissioner Hetterly: In terms of putting things on the table for the retreat if it were to
2658 be the planning the year retreat on the 20th, I'm not sure how the Brown Act weighs in on
2659 that. If more than two Commissioners have thoughts about it, then they need to send it to
2660 you not to ...

2661
2662 Mr. de Geus: Send it to staff, yeah.

2663
2664 Commissioner Hetterly: Everybody should do that, send your comments or suggestions
2665 for the retreat to Rob and not to Keith.

2666
2667 Commissioner Crommie: Can you frame that a little bit more when you say suggestions?
2668 What do you mean exactly? Are we going to base it on past retreats? I'm a little
2669 confused.

2670
2671 Chair Reckdahl: Yeah. In past retreats, we've talked about what ad hocs we would have
2672 and what priorities we would have. If there's other paths forward or any guidance that

2673 you want to give, that you want to talk about, give it to Rob or come prepared to talk
2674 about it. If it's just your two cents, you can give that at the retreat.

2675
2676 Commissioner Crommie: Right. I've thought that when we're actually at the retreat, we
2677 discuss quite a few things as a group as far as we traditionally form subcommittees.
2678 We'll decide which ones to carry forward and whether we need any more.

2679
2680 Chair Reckdahl: I think the only exception is if it's anything where Rob has to gather
2681 data or one of us has to gather data. We want to know about that before the meeting, so
2682 we can get any supporting material.

2683
2684 Commissioner Crommie: Can you just give an example of what you mean?

2685
2686 Chair Reckdahl: If we're talking about, say, summer camps, and you want some
2687 information about the summer camps so that we can talk about making different types of
2688 summer camps or marketing them better, then you would want some information from
2689 Rob about how well the summer camps went this year, how the sign-ups went, what was
2690 popular, what was not popular. If we get over to Mitchell Park and we're inside and you
2691 want to talk about the summer camps, then we don't have the data. The only reason that
2692 you would want to send stuff to Rob is if some preparation has to go into that before the
2693 retreat.

2694
2695 Mr. de Geus: I think that's fair; although, I would add that we don't really want to work
2696 any issue at the retreat necessarily. We're trying to put things on the table that
2697 Commissioners or staff think have a policy implication of some type that we might weigh
2698 in on as a Commission and to advise Council on. If you have those kinds of ...

2699
2700 Commissioner Lauing: Or if someone has format changes compared to the default of
2701 previous years, that would be fair game to also forward to you.

2702
2703 Mr. de Geus: Absolutely, sure.

2704
2705 Commissioner Lauing: I think, Commissioner Crommie, what we're saying is that we
2706 would just go with the normal default as we've usually done unless someone has a great
2707 idea that the Chair and the Vice decide we should make this shift.

2708
2709 Commissioner Crommie: Right. I was just hoping people could bring those great ideas
2710 up right now at our meeting. That's traditionally what we've done. I guess I'm a little bit
2711 confused in this outsourcing proposal. I feel like this is the time for people to bring up
2712 ideas.

Commissioner Hetterly: Sorry. I think I complicated the issue by raising it. We don't have it on the agenda today to discuss the retreat. We don't even know when we're going hold the retreat. Since we're in this Plan A/Plan B scenario for the 20th, I just wanted to remind everyone that if we do end up having the retreat on the 20th, be cautious of the Brown Act.

Commissioner Crommie: Now I understand where you're coming from. Just to clarify, I thought we had a date and a time. Is that not true?

Mr. de Geus: Yeah, we do. March 20th, noon to 3:00. We'll provide lunch.

Chair Reckdahl: March 20th, we will have a retreat. The only issue is the content of the retreat. Is it the traditional content or is it just the Master Plan? We might do 3 hours on the Master Plan.

Commissioner Crommie: We're going to have to notice this?

Mr. de Geus: Oh, yeah.

Chair Reckdahl: Oh, yeah.

Commissioner Crommie: Maybe we've just neglected to put it on the agenda. In the past we've often discussed it at our meeting prior to the retreat.

Mr. de Geus: I think we have. I think that's right.

Commissioner Crommie: I was just a little bit ...

Mr. de Geus: Retreat planning I think, yeah.

Commissioner Crommie: Right. That's okay.

Chair Reckdahl: Agenda items for next month, for the 24th.

Mr. de Geus: We have a Byxbee Park plan.

Commissioner Crommie: I just wanted to comment that Daren is working very hard on that. We have an ad hoc subcommittee that needs to meet before we present that. We were almost ready to meet. Now we're probably going to meet really soon. That's Commissioner Reckdahl and myself.

Chair Reckdahl: He has the feedback from the consultant now, so we can talk about it.

Commissioner Crommie: Right. I think we're ready to set our meeting. He's ready.

Chair Reckdahl: I assume Master Plan is going to come up.

Mr. de Geus: Yeah, Parks Master Plan will be back.

Commissioner Crommie: Can we invite John Aikin to come and speak about the Baylands CIP? If we have room in the meeting.

Mr. de Geus: I don't think he'll have a whole lot of information by next month, is my sense. This is related to the exhibits specifically?

Commissioner Crommie: Yeah. When Commissioner Ashlund and I spoke with him, he made it sound like he was ready to come as soon we were able to have him.

Mr. de Geus: Okay, I'll check with him.

Commissioner Crommie: If you could just talk to him about that.

Mr. de Geus: Okay.

Chair Reckdahl: What is the schedule for determining CIPs?

Mr. de Geus: We're in the process of getting the new five-year plan approved. We run on a fiscal year from July 1 to June 30th. Now we're doing the 2016-2020 five-year plan and trying to get the first year, 2016, the actual budget approved. The other four years are just a plan.

Chair Reckdahl: We submitted a bunch for this coming fiscal year.

Mr. de Geus: Right. We're still in the process of getting those approved.

Chair Reckdahl: That goes up one level, and then they throw some out and keep some. Then they submit that to a higher level, to the Council.

Mr. de Geus: Right. It goes up several levels. So far all of our priorities remain in there, which is good news.

Chair Reckdahl: It's made it through the first cut, and now it's going to Council.

Mr. de Geus: Correct. After July 1, after the budget has been approved, we can start over in evaluating the next round.

Chair Reckdahl: What is the date for the Council to approve it?

Mr. de Geus: I saw the schedule this week. I'll have to send it out. I know the Community Services budget is scheduled to go to the Finance Committee—are you on the Finance Committee, Council Member? Yeah. I think it's May 5th for the CSD operating budget. The capital budget goes on a different schedule. I'll have to send that calendar out to you all.

Chair Reckdahl: So we will not have any news about CIPs next month?

Mr. de Geus: No.

Vice Chair Markevitch: We only have two agenda items so far for next month.

Mr. de Geus: I'll have to check with Daren and with Peter to see if there are any park projects that need to come forward.

Chair Reckdahl: The other option is if the agenda's looking thin next month, we could do the Master Plan that evening on the 24th at our regular meeting or have a two-hour chunk out of it, some big chunk of the evening meeting. Then just have a retreat on the 20th, our normal retreat.

Mr. de Geus: We could do that. It feels to me like that's a really big discussion, and something that might lend itself to not being in this format and not going late into the evening.

Commissioner Crommie: When do we get the revenue report? Is that part of the Master Plan? That's an important piece that we haven't seen yet.

Mr. de Geus: The cost and prices. I haven't seen that either. I think they're working on that. We received today the survey results, a summary of the survey results. I haven't read it yet. That's the latest I've gotten from MIG.

Commissioner Crommie: As far as the next time we talk about the Master Plan, do we have a topic that we're expecting to talk about? Would we be talking about those survey results? That's a pretty meaty topic.

Mr. de Geus: On the 24th?

Commissioner Crommie: Yeah.

Mr. de Geus: The survey results would be in there. That alone could be enough of a topic for the Master Plan.

Chair Reckdahl: Do you have any more comments? Okay.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Hetterly and second by Commissioner Ashlund at 10:52 p.m.



TO: PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

FROM: DAREN ANDERSON

DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY SERVICES

DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 2015

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION REGARDING POSSIBLE USES FOR THE 7.7 ACRES OF NEWLY DEDICATED PARK LAND AT FOOTHILLS PARK.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend that Council approve of the following course of action regarding use of the newly acquired 7.7 acres of park land at Foothills Park:

1. Fund and implement a Capital Improvement Project to conduct a hydrology study of Buckeye Creek.
2. Keep the 7.7 acre parcel closed until after the hydrology study is completed.
3. Renew the Acterra Nursery lease for one year so that the lease expiration will coincide with the approximate timeframe to complete the hydrology study. The lease should include the option for renewal on a yearly basis for four additional years pending mutual agreement and City approval.

BACKGROUND

The 7.7 acre parcel was a gift to the City of Palo Alto in 1981 by the Lee family. The Lee family retained an estate on the property until 1996 when it reverted to the City. From 1996 to 2005 the City leased the land to a private resident who owns the land adjacent to the 7.7 acre parcel.

On August 18, 2014, Council passed an ordinance dedicating the 7.7 acre parcel as park land. Council directed the Parks and Recreation Commission to facilitate the development of ideas for specific land use options of the newly dedicated 7.7 acres in Foothills Park. A Commission Ad Hoc committee was formed to help direct the process of collecting public input on the issue.

In October 2014, four Ranger lead tours of the 7.7 acres were made available to the public. A total of 9 members of the public attended those tours. On October 18, 2014, a public meeting was held at Foothills Park to collect suggestions and comments from the public on ideas for how to best use the newly acquired park land. There was another Ranger lead tour occurring prior to the meeting. Approximately 10 people attended this tour and 27 people attended the meeting. At the meeting, and at each of the tours, the history and the challenges/restrictions associated with the 7.7 acres were discussed. On November 10, 2014, the Parks and Recreation Commission Ad Hoc Committee provided an update to Council regarding the 7.7 acres parcel.

DISCUSSION

On January 27, 2015, the Parks and Recreation Commission discussed the possible uses for the newly acquired 7.7 acres of park land adjacent to Foothills Park. Several Commissioners noted that because of the timing of the hydrology study and the Parks Master Plan, we should not expect the Parks Master Plan to identify specific direction on how to develop the 7.7 acre parcel. The Commissioners also noted the Parks Master will provide information about what gaps and needs throughout the City's park system that will be helpful in forming a decision about the future uses of the 7.7 acre parcel.

There was general consensus among the Commissioners on three issues regarding the 7.7 acre parcel:

1. Buckeye Creek hydrology study should be completed before making any recommendations on how to use the land. The recommendations on how to best address the hydrology challenges may alter the City's decision on how best to use the land.
2. The Acterra Nursery lease should be renewed on a short term basis so that the City has the flexibility to act on whatever options and recommendations develop from the hydrology study.
3. The site should remain closed until after the hydrology study is complete. Investing in fencing and supervision to open the site to the public before the hydrology study is not prudent.

The Commission noted that there is no need for additional Ad Hoc Committee meetings on this topic, and that staff should return promptly to the Commission with a recommendation. The recommendation of this staff report is the preferred option. The subsequent staff report that will be sent to Council will recommend the Commission's preferred option. The Council staff report will also discuss the alternative options and the associated disadvantages that were considered, which include opening the parcel to the public and adding park amenities to the property in advance of the hydrology study.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: January 27, 2015 Parks and Recreation Commission 7.7 Acre Staff Report

PREPARED BY: _____

DAREN ANDERSON

Open Space, Parks, and Golf Division Manager, Community
Services Department

TO: PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

FROM: DAREN ANDERSON

DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY SERVICES

DATE: JANUARY 27, 2015

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION ON POSSIBLE USES FOR THE NEWLY ACQUIRE 7.7 ACRES OF PARK LAND ADJACENT TO FOOTHILLS PARK.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission discuss possible uses for the newly acquired 7.7 acres of park land adjacent to Foothills Park, and provide guidance to staff on which concepts should be further developed to include cost estimates.

BACKGROUND

The 7.7 acre parcel was a gift to the City of Palo Alto in 1981 by the Lee family. The Lee family retained an estate on the property until 1996 when it reverted to the City. From 1996 to 2005 the City leased the land to a private resident who owns the land adjacent to the 7.7 acre parcel.

On August 18, 2014, Council passed an ordinance dedicating the 7.7 acre parcel as park land. Council directed the Parks and Recreation Commission to facilitate the development of ideas for specific land use options of the newly dedicated 7.7 acres in Foothills Park. A Commission Ad Hoc committee was formed to help direct the process of collecting public input on the issue.

DISCUSSION

In October 2014, four Ranger lead tours of the 7.7 acres were made available to the public. A total of 9 members of the public attended those tours. On October 18, 2014, a public meeting was held at Foothills Park to collect suggestions and comments from the public on ideas for how to best use the newly acquired park land. There was another Ranger lead tour occurring prior to the meeting. Approximately 10 people attended this tour and 27 people attended the meeting. At the meeting, and at each of the tours, the history and the challenges/restrictions associated with the 7.7 acres were discussed. Attachment A includes the public's comments and suggestions.

Three major themes were expressed from the public on the tours and the public meeting:

Theme 1: Recreational Activities

Concepts ranged from adding a campground, picnic area, structure for special events, and an off-leash dog area.

Theme 2: Restoration

The public suggestions regarding possible restoration strategies vary greatly. Concepts ranged from simple restoration involving planting native grasses and some trees, to significant restoration involving more involving de-channeling Buckeye Creek and restoring the original meandering creek flow; removing the overburden soil and restoring the area to one contiguous valley.

Theme 3: Sustain the Acterra Nursery

There were numerous comments supporting the Acterra Nursery on the site. There were also some suggestions about providing space for an additional environmental partner.

Challenges for Developing the 7.7 Acre Parcel

Current Soil Conditions

When the 7.7 acre parcel was owned by the Lee family, the land was used as a place to store the overburden (spoils and rock) from the adjacent quarry. The north hillside (on the right side as you enter the property from Foothills Park) is comprised of highly compacted overburden from the quarry. The approximately 2.1 acre valley floor (flat area without trees) of the 7.7 acre parcel has approximately 5 feet of overburden. The compacted and poor soils do not drain well and make it challenging to grow trees and other vegetation.

The former lessee of the 7.7 acres parcel struggled to sustain and grow trees on the site. The lessee used extensive amounts of compost to establish redwood trees along the hillside and edges of the parcel. The trees are stunted in growth, but they have survived.

Buckeye Creek

Buckeye Creek originates in Foothills Park at the upper end of Wildhorse Valley and passes through the 7.7 acre parcel. The channelized creek has experienced significant down-cutting resulting in creek erosion. These eroded sediments wash down the creek and deposit in the 7.7 acre parcel during the rainy season. The collected sediments must be removed two to three times every year to prevent flooding. The adjacent Open Space Maintenance Shop in Foothills Park was flooded in 1983. The City created a raised berm along Buckeye Creek, adjacent to the shop, to protect it from the creek overflowing. The shop area floods now as a result of poor drainage away from the shop and road.

The amount of sediment that accumulates in the 7.7 acre parcel and needs to be removed varies greatly year to year. Some years, when it is fairly dry, no sediment is removed from the culverts. On years with average rainfall it can vary between 30 to 100 yards of sediment. On extremely rainy years there can be as much as 500 to 600 yards of sediment removed. Some of the sediment has been used to fill in the slopes of the 7.7 acre parcel, some on the valley floor, and some was taken off site.

The removal is especially important before the creek flows through culverts at the end of the 7.7 acres (back right hand side of property). This is the last opportunity to clear the sedimentation before heading into the large culverts downstream. The sediments vary from fine to large sands and gravels, most all the fine, nutrient rich silts wash downstream and do not drop out in this area.

The private resident whose property borders the 7.7 acres has managed the creek sediment removal process up until now at his cost. The City will now be responsible for that work unless an agreement between the City and the private resident is obtained.

Buckeye Creek Culverts

Buckeye Creek has been channelized in many sections in Foothills Park, including at the (west) end of the 7.7 acre parcel. Buckeye Creek flows into a series of culverts and then flows under private property for several hundred feet. The culverts start as a single seven foot diameter opening and then reduce down into multiple three foot culverts. The first large culvert is approximately seven feet below the valley floor of the parcel. Access to the culvert is currently not secured, and would be dangerous if someone ventured down into it or was washed into it during a rain event. The culvert would need to be secured with fencing and a gate (to allow access for heavy equipment to clear the culvert of sediment) before the site is opened to the public.

Some stakeholders have suggested that Buckeye Creek could support steelhead habitat. Buckeye Creek flows into Los Trancos Creek, which has been documented to have steelhead. Since a significant portion of the creek is channelized and deeply incised, it has an increased slope resulting in a high stream velocity. This accelerates erosion and prevents the formation of pools and riffles needed for good fish habitat. It is uncertain if there is enough water flow in the creek to support steelhead.

No Utilities on Site

There are no electrical, water, or sewer lines on the 7.7 acre parcel. Any infrastructure that requires these amenities would need to factor in the added expense to provide the necessary utilities.

Hydrologic Study

A hydrologic study of Buckeye Creek is needed to help analyze and find solutions to the historic channelization and resulting down-cutting and erosion problems. Staff recommends that this study be funded and completed as soon as possible. Staff also recommends that the hydrologic study be completed before developing permanent plans and investing significant funds to construct any facilities on the site that might limit some of the possible recommendations and solutions that will be proposed by the hydrologic plan. A \$75,000 Capital Improvement Project (CIP) for a hydrologic study of Buckeye Creek was proposed by staff in fiscal year 2013, but it was not funded. Staff will re-submit a CIP request to fund a hydrological study.

Easements and Other Restrictions

There is an emergency ingress and egress easement that runs through the parcel to Los Trancos Road. This easement must be maintained for emergency response and evacuation of Foothills Park.

Development is limited next to Buckeye Creek. Environmental regulations preclude any permanent structures or parking lots within 50 feet of Buckeye Creek. (The 50 feet is measured from the bank of the creek.)

The 7.7 acres is bordered on three sides by a private residence. There is only one public entry and exit point to the 7.7 acres. It is through Foothills Park, and passes through the Foothills Park Maintenance Facility and staff parking area.

The flat area of the parcel (approximately 2.1 acres) is the only viable usable space within the total 7.7 acres for constructing any type of structure. This includes the current .53 acre nursery parcel. The remaining portion of the parcel is hillsides, exclusive easements and setback from Buckeye Creek. The approximate size of this flat area was ascertained through measurements taken from the City's GIS system.

The Parks Master Plan

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is underway and will have information that will provide valuable insight to any functions that may be currently underserved in our park and recreation system.

Joint Council and Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

On November 10, 2014, the Parks and Recreation Commission Ad Hoc Committee provided an update to Council regarding the 7.7 acres parcel.

There were several Council comments and questions from Council regarding the parcel:

1. Suggestion to make the property accessible to the public during the interim period while the City decides how best to use the property.
2. Suggestion to have a joint Council/ Commission study session on just the topic of the future of the 7.7-acre parcel, potentially at Foothills Park.
3. Discussion about the need to secure the site with fencing due to security and safety concerns.
4. Question about whether the gravel, rock, and sand be commercially mined from the flat portion of the parcel to remove the spoils and perhaps make money for the City. (CSD staff explored this option with Public Works staff who manages the City's soil importation project to cap the former landfill. Public Works explained that developers pay to dispose of clean soils. It is extremely unlikely that anyone would pay to haul away quarry spoils that could not be sold when they were originally mined.
5. Question about the cost to fence off the nursery and culvert in order to make the 7.7-acre parcel accessible to the public (Staff will get an estimate for these costs and an estimated time frame on how long it would take to install).
6. Suggestion about a trail connection between the parcel and the Nature Center along the upland margin of the property close to Mr. Arrillaga's (adjacent neighbor) fence line.
7. Suggestion that staff and the Commission should recommend short-term and long-term phases for the parcel and include costs and estimated timing.

Feasibility and Needs Analysis for the Major Themes

The feasibility and needs assessment in this report is based on analysis of reservations of existing park facilities, and observations from staff in the field. Information from the Parks Master Plan will provide additional information once it is complete in November 2015.

Recreation Theme Concepts

Camping Needs assessment:

There is demand for additional camping at Foothills Park during Friday and Saturday nights throughout the summer.

The existing Foothills Park Towle Camp has eight campsites. It is typically booked to capacity every Friday and Saturday nights all summer long, with holidays, May, June, and September (popular for school groups) being reserved 6 to 12 months in advance.

Camping Feasibility:

1. Noise from a campground in close proximity to the adjacent land owner's homes may be an issue for both campers and for the adjacent land owner. There may also be issues with smoke generated from campfire circle or barbecues. No matter where a campground is placed on the 7.7 acre parcel, it would only be about 300 feet from the adjacent land owner's back yard.
2. Unless the campground was very small (less than 15 visitors) and designed to be a primitive, hike-in-only campground, a parking lot in the 7.7 acre area would be necessary.
3. Restrooms will be needed for primitive or car camping.
4. Unless the hydrologic issues can be addressed, the campground would be at some risk of flooding during extreme rain events. The 7.7 acre parcel is the lowest valley location in the park and has the coldest temperatures in the park during the winter.
5. There are alternative locations in Foothills Park that may be better suited for an additional camping area or group picnic area. There is a flat area just below the hill from Fire Station 8, where there are nearby utilities, parking, and no neighbors in close proximity (See Attachment C).

Group Picnic Area Needs Assessment:

There is demand for large group picnic areas during the summer months. Any group of more than 25 people must have a permit and there is only one existing group picnic area in Foothills Park. The Oak Grove group picnic area may be reserved and can accommodate groups up to 150 people. The picnic area is typically booked to capacity on weekends from June through September. There are five other picnic areas in Foothills Park available for groups of less than 25 visitors on first-come first-serve availability.

Group Picnic Area Feasibility:

1. Noise from a group picnic area in close proximity to the adjacent land owner's homes may be an issue.
2. It would require adding a parking lot in the 7.7 acre area. We couldn't use the existing

parking lot adjacent to the Oak Grove Picnic Area because that lot is full when Oak Grove is being used.

3. It would require adding restrooms.
4. One attraction for the existing popular picnic areas (Oak Grove and Orchard Glen) is the large lawns adjacent to these areas for activities and games. Adding irrigated lawns to the 7.7 acres would be an expensive, water intense addition.
5. Unless the hydrologic issues can be addressed the picnic area would be at some risk of flooding during extreme rain events. There are alternative locations in Foothills Park that may be better suited for an additional camping area or group picnic area. There is a flat area just below the hill from Fire Station 8, where there are nearby utilities, parking, and no neighbors in close proximity (See Attachment C).

Trail Needs Assessment:

The existing Foothills Park trail system is 15 miles long. The trails offer a wide variety of hiking experiences, challenges, and views. There were no requests for trails in this area from the public that participated in the Ranger led tours or the public meeting to discuss the possible uses for the site.

Trail Feasibility:

1. A simple trail on the flat area of the 7.7 acres could be constructed.
2. More information is needed on the feasibility of constructing a hillside trail.

Group Meeting Area Needs Assessment:

The Foothills Park Interpretive Center and Orchard Glen Picnic Area often serve as a group meeting areas, as they are located in central areas within the park and have accessible parking, restrooms, and drinking fountains available. Staff have neither noticed nor received feedback from park visitors that a group meeting area is desired. Though, some participants at the public meeting on the 7.7 acre parcel suggested adding a group meeting area to this site.

Group meeting Area Needs Feasibility:

1. Noise from a group meeting area in close proximity to the adjacent land owner's homes may be an issue.
2. It may require adding a parking lot in the 7.7 acre area. The existing parking lot adjacent to the Oak Grove Picnic Area is full when Oak Grove is being used.
3. It may require adding restrooms.
4. Unless the hydrologic issues can be addressed the group meeting area would be at some risk of flooding during extreme rain events.

5. There are alternative locations in Foothills Park that may be better suited for a group meeting area. There is a flat area just below the hill from Fire Station 8, where there are nearby utilities, parking, and no neighbors in close proximity (See Attachment C).

Restoration Theme Concepts:

Habitat Restoration Needs Assessment:

1. The site would benefit from habitat restoration, especially for riparian habitat restoration adjacent to Buckeye Creek. The habitat of the flat section of the 7.7 acre parcel is largely bare soil (comprised of five feet of compacted overburden quarry spoils) and some weeds. The sloped sides of the parcel consist of a mix of redwood and eucalyptus trees and some coyote brush shrubs. The habitat value could be improved by planting native vegetation and controlling invasive weeds.

Habitat Restoration Feasibility:

1. There are no utilities on the parcel. Any plantings would require a temporary irrigation system be installed. The closest water line is at the maintenance shop.
2. The poor soil conditions should be mitigated in order to have successful vegetation growth. For the flat section of the parcel, one option is rip the hard compacted ground and add compost and other soil amendments. Composting has been demonstrated to gradually improve the soil on the adjacent quarry site parcel. Another option could include removing the overburden and use compost and other soil amendments. By removing the overburden the flat parcel elevation would be lowered creating the opportunity for riparian habitat and flood zones along Buckeye Creek. This concept could be explored through the hydrologic study.
3. If the Acterra Nursery remains on site some of the habitat restoration projects could be incorporated to the Acterra Nursery agreement or the Acterra Stewardship work plan.

De-channeling Buckeye Creek and Restoring the Original Meandering Creek Needs Assessment:

1. One concept to mitigate the historic channelization of Buckeye Creek would be to remove much of the overburden in the flat portion of the 7.7 acres and allow for a natural meandering and flooding of the creek. The hydrologic study should address this issue in terms of need and feasibility.

Parks and Recreation Commission Ad Hoc Committee

A recommendation from the Ad Hoc Committee is premature at this point since the Commission has not had an opportunity to discuss the 7.7 acre parcel. However, the Ad Hoc Committee did create the following options to consider, which may be helpful as ideas for fostering discussion on the topic.

Options to consider:

1. Extend lease with Acterra for another five years, with the caveat that they may be required to move elsewhere within Foothills Park pending the result of hydrology study. The existing lease will expire in July 2015.
2. Assuming the CIP for the hydrologic study of Buckeye Creek is approved, start the study as soon as possible- July 2015.
3. If the Commission and Council determine the site should be opened to the public, City staff should install fencing and gates to ensure that the culvert is safe and that the open areas are separated from the Acterra Nursery.
4. Inform the neighbors well in advance of the date that the parcel will be opened to the public so that they can make arrangements to put up fencing to secure their areas.
5. Avoid investing in any improvements or amenities for the site, other than fencing and gates, because the hydrologic study may provide recommendations that would necessitate changing where we locate certain amenities.
6. Open the property to the public after the necessary fences have been installed.
7. Continue Commission discussions on development plans for the 7.7 acre parcel.
8. Continue to collect feedback from park visitors regularly using the parcel for what they would like to see long term on the property.
9. The scope of the Parks Master Plan could be expanded to include recommendations for development of the 7.7 acre parcel. The recommendations would be based on the findings of the Master Plan, and feedback from the public, Commission, and Council. The Parks Master Plan will be completed by November 2015. The hydrological study, if approved, would most likely not be completed by that date, so any Master Plan concepts for future use of the parcel would not incorporate recommendations from the hydrological study. Because of the timing of the Hydrologic study and the Master Plan, the recommendations for the 7.7 acre parcel from the Parks Master Plan would be limited to a list of possible uses of the land, rather than drawings depicting specific locations for development.
10. Refine the development plans for the parcel once the hydrology study is complete.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Public Comments from Public Meeting
Attachment B: Acterra Nursery Facts
Attachment C: Aerial Photos Illustrating Configuration of Amenities on 7.7 Acre Parcel and on Alternative Site.

PREPARED BY: _____

DAREN ANDERSON

Open Space, Parks, and Golf Division Manager, Community
Services Department

ATTACHMENT A

Public Meeting

Subject: Gather community input on how to use the 7.7 acre area

Date: October 18, 2014

Location: Foothills Park

Eighteen people signed the sign-in sheet. There were some late arrivals. Total number of meeting participants was about 27.

Public Suggestions:

1. Open sided building for various special events. Ideally allowing horses. It would bring more people into the park. Possible uses could include hay rides, weddings, etc. The fact that there is a large flat area is a positive.
2. Note that the 5' of overburden soil (this is the material that was excavated from the adjacent quarry) that was placed on the 7.7 acres limits the restoration options. The overburden material is not good for growing plants. Alternatives to restoration should be considered. It would take a lot of effort to restore. Bounded with only one entry is also a challenge. We need to think outside the box.
3. The flat area is good thing. It would be a good location for a primitive campground with limited amenities. We could use the existing amenities, such as the restrooms at Oak Grove and the parking near Oak Grove picnic area.
4. Move the existing park maintenance building into the 7.7 acre area, and restore the site where the maintenance building is currently sitting. The maintenance yard is the entry to this space, and the entry should be attractive.
5. All options considered for this space should retain the Acterra nursery, and build on access to the nursery. The nursery should be instructional, not just commercial. (someone notes that classes of children do visit the nursery).
6. There are numerous benefits of the nursery, and it should be maintained on site.
7. There should be a place holder for option of including a Canopy tree nursery at the site.
8. It would be great if there was public access into this area through Los Trancos Road. Don't do anything that would preclude or prevent future connectivity through this site to the rest of Foothills Park.
9. Restore original creek. Consider removing the overburden soil and restoring the area to one contiguous valley. It would take a long time, but with time and grants it is possible.
10. Leave the site alone. Just add a simple trail.
11. Concern about emergency exit from the park. How is an individual inside the park supposed to escape the area if there is a gate that can only be opened by emergency response staff?
12. Acterra nursery should be allowed to stay on the site because it is a benefit to the City.
13. Make sure this issue is covered by the press (Weekly). It will ensure that more people are aware of the discussion.

14. The Parks Master Plan may identify needs that cannot be met with our existing space in the park system. Keep this area open for needs that are identified in the Master Plan.
15. Keep Acterra Nursery on the site.
16. Support the Acterra Nursery and expand the stewardship and educational opportunities.
17. Use the area for athletic fields.
18. Question about how often the campground and group picnic area are booked? (Staff explained that during summer weekends the campground and group picnic area are fully booked.)
19. Camping could be a great use for this site.
20. Cabin camping with platforms would be a good use for the site. It would increase winter camping.
21. Consider removing the eucalyptus trees from the site.
22. Adding something like the Oak Grove Picnic Area and including some new trees.
23. Include placeholders for connectivity.
24. Restoration could bring lots of grant money.
25. Canopy tree nursery
26. Creek restoration concept. There are lots of grants for this kind of work.
27. Improve the soil and let nature take its course. Remember, this is a nature preserve.
28. Respect the neighbors to this site. Need to take into account noise issues for whatever is considered for this area. You wouldn't put a campground right next to other neighbors' homes anywhere else in the park system, so why would you do it in this situation?

ATTACHMENT B

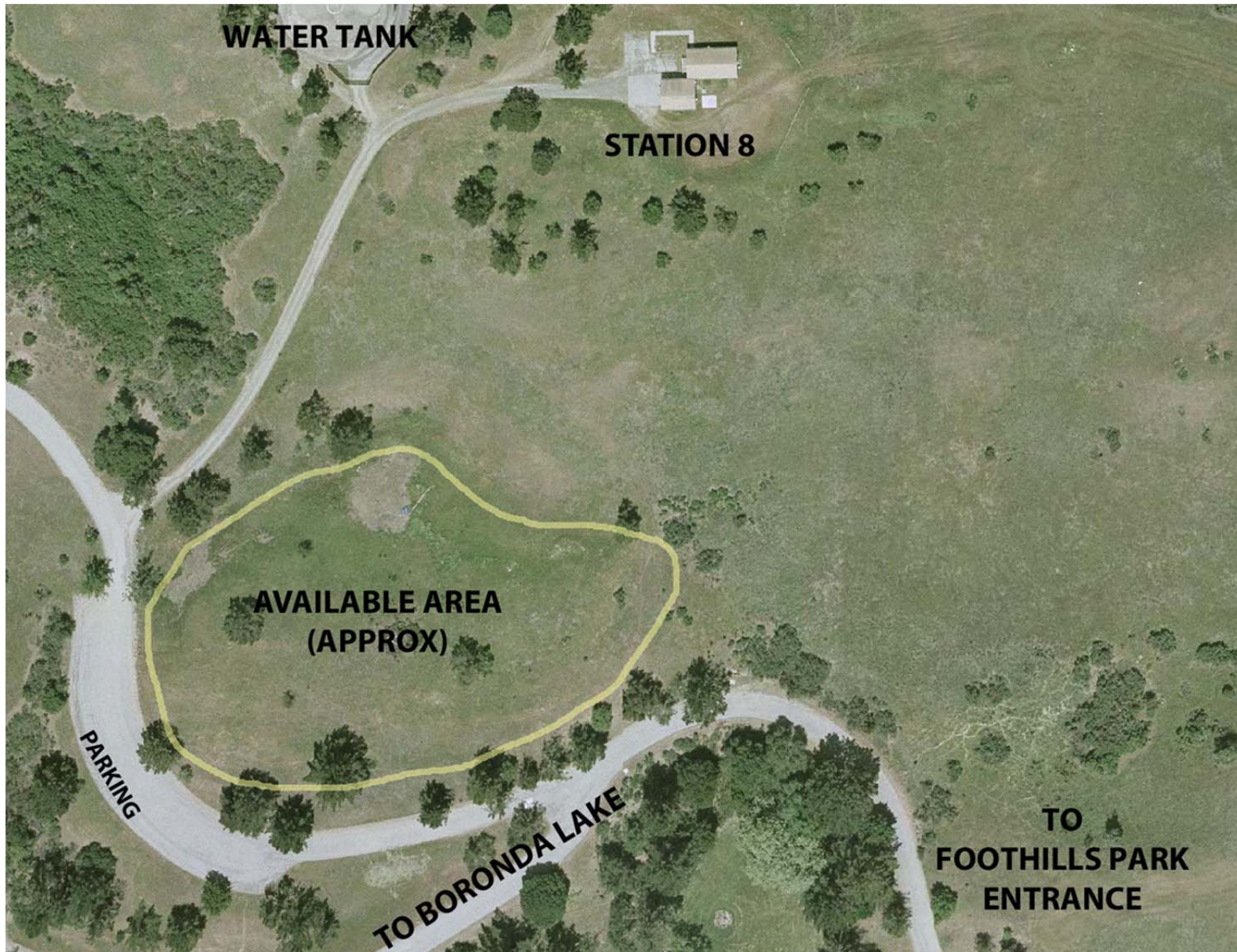
Acterra Native Plant Nursery Facts

The Acterra Native Plant Nursery has been in operation since 1996 and located on the current site since 2003. Acterra is a Palo Alto non-profit organization engaged in various activities intended to protect and enhance our local environment.

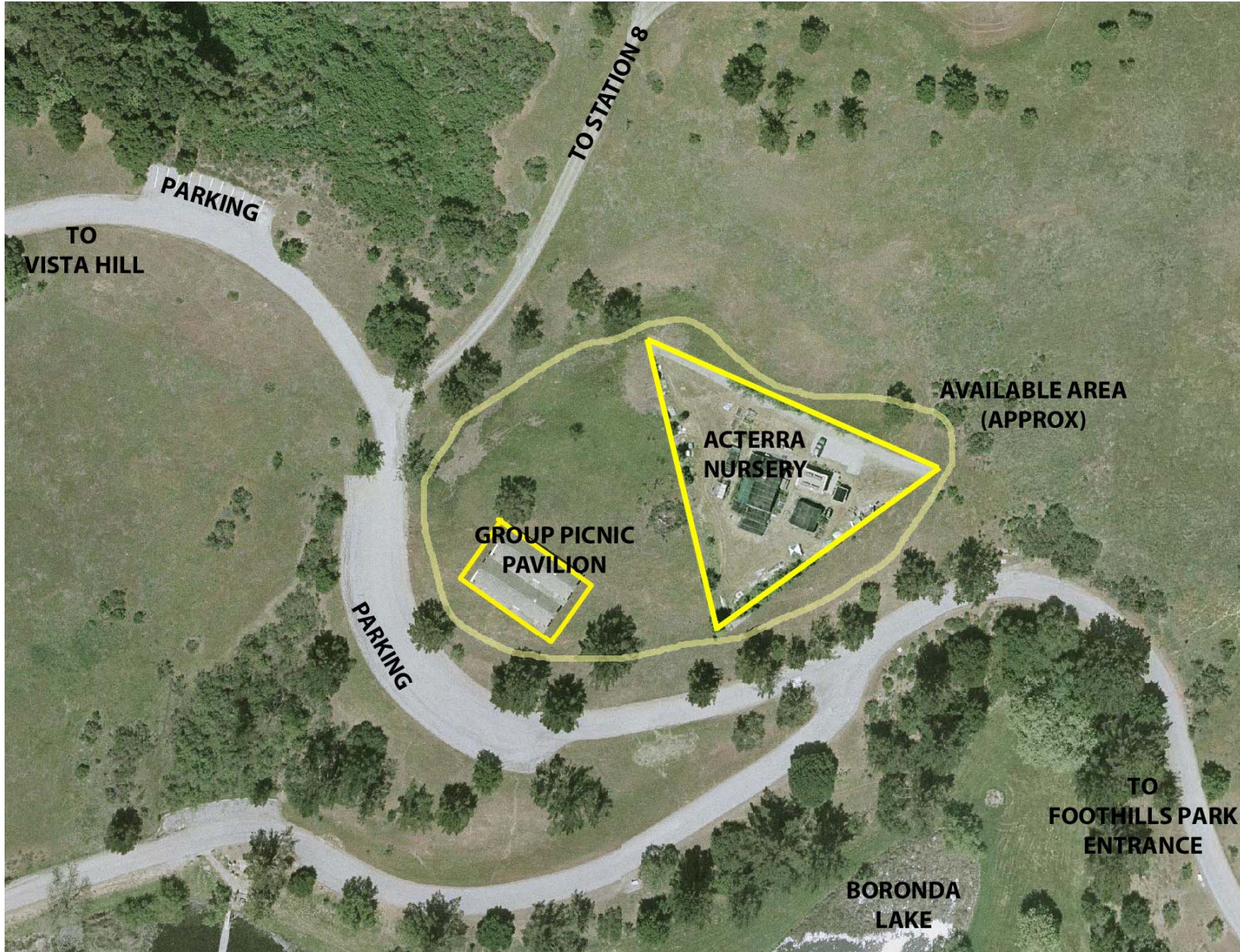
- The current lease for the nursery site expires in 2015 and can be renewed for another five years by mutual agreement between Acterra and the City of Palo Alto. In lieu of a cash rental payment for the nursery, Acterra provides the City with \$10,000 in value per year consisting of plants, materials and volunteer restoration services. Acterra meters and pays for all the nursery water usage. Electricity is generated on site via solar panels.
- The entire nursery, including all structures, the solar electric system and water line was built from the ground up by volunteers frequently using their own tools and employing donated and salvaged materials whenever possible.
- The nursery is staffed by one full-time and one part-time Acterra employee assisted by several regular volunteers. Staff duties extend beyond nursery operation to include related activities such as seed collecting and restoration consulting.
- Specializing in plants grown from local wild-collected propagules, the nursery grows about 150 species and more than 30,000 plants annually, some of which are endangered and difficult to propagate.
- The nursery provides all plants used in Acterra Stewardship program restoration projects, as well as being a key supplier of plants for other local public agencies such as the Santa Clara Valley Water District and the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District. For example, the nursery is the primary plant supplier for Mt. Umunhum Restoration.
- In Palo Alto alone, Acterra Stewardship provided 10,000 volunteer hours of habitat restoration and installed more than 14,500 nursery plants at seven different sites last year.
- The primary focus of the nursery is growing plants for wild land restoration. It also serves commercial and residential landscapers who wish to install water wise eco-friendly plants. The nursery pioneered the lawn replacement concept. Local schools, parks, demonstration gardens and rural farmers also use plants from the nursery.
- The nursery attracts an abundance of birds, butterflies, native bees, and other wildlife. We are especially proud of our large tree frog population. We facilitate the hatching of hundreds of tree frogs each year.

ATTACHMENT C

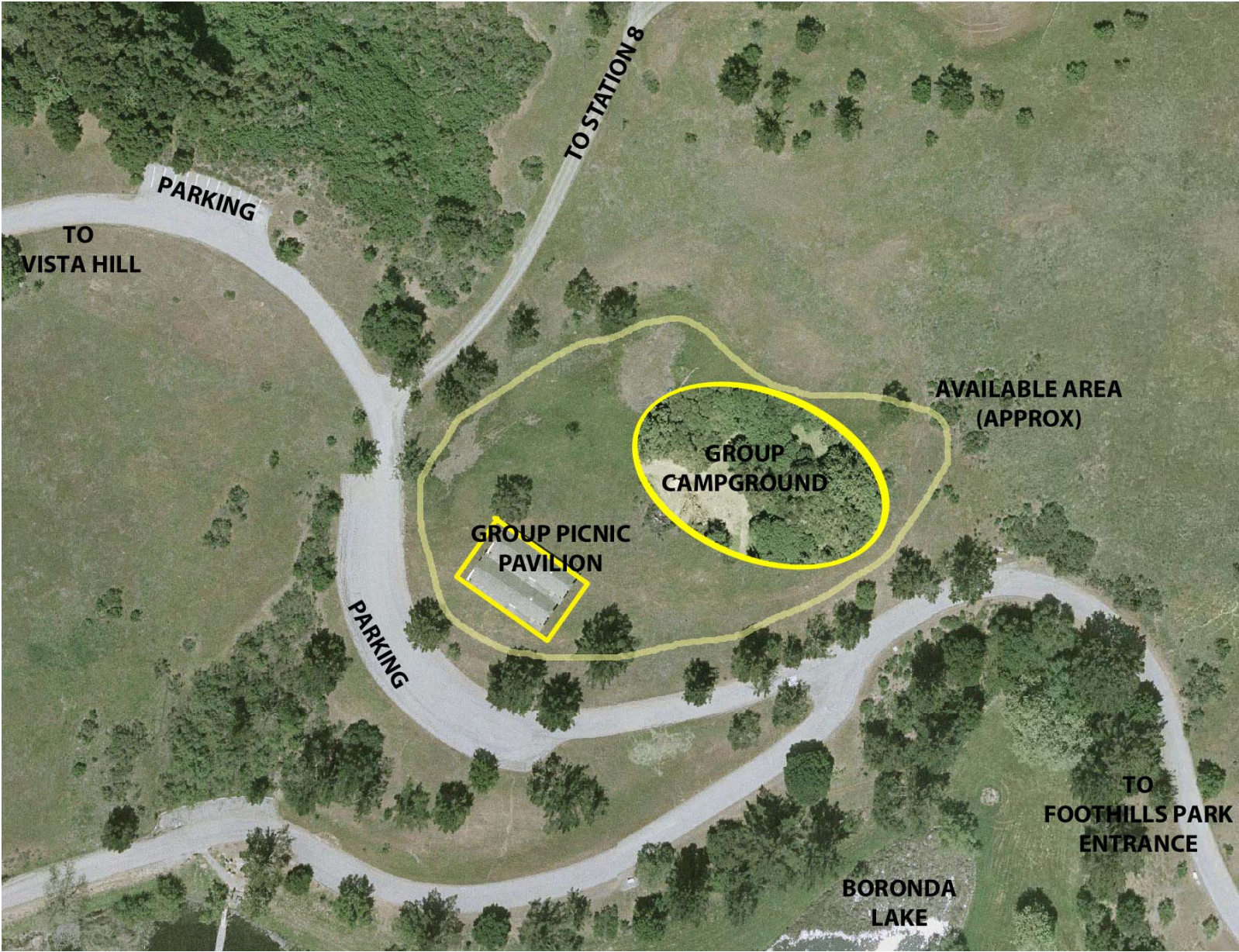
Alternative location for a possible nursery, group picnic area, or campsite. Between Boronda Lake to the south and Fire Station 8 to the north lies a flat undeveloped cut slope from the original construction of Foothills Park. The area has two existing paved parking lots (for development that never occurred), and both water and sewer utilities nearby.



Composite image pastes the existing Acterra Nursery and a proposed covered 5000 sq. foot group picnic pavilion (for groups up to 100). The area can accommodate a new restroom connected to existing sewer system.



Composite image with the picnic pavilion and a group campsite for 50 visitors.



Composite image showing the 7.7 acres with the Acterra Nursery remaining and an added 18,000 sq. foot parking lot and group picnic pavilion. The area could accommodate a new restroom on septic system.

