

CITY OF PALO ALTO
MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 19, 2008

To: Palo Alto City Council Colleagues

FROM: Mayor Yoriko Kishimoto, Council Members Drekmeier and Mossar

SUBJECT: Request for Analysis of Impacts on Staff Work Program to Produce a Work Product to Support an Integrated Policy Discussion of Landfill Closure and Byxbee Park-Phase II

With the expected closure of the Palo Alto Landfill in 2011, planning must begin for the completion of Byxbee Park (Phase II).

BACKGROUND

The City Council has made several important policy decisions affecting the future of the Baylands, including affirming the need to protect these dedicated open space holdings.

There are several Baylands-related planning efforts that will affect future decisions about Byxbee Park, including:

1. Community Services is developing a **Baylands Resource Management Plan**
2. Planning and Community Development is updating the **Baylands Master Plan**
3. Public Works is planning for the **landfill closure** expected in 2011; and has also been given direction by the Council to explore opportunities to provide both **recycling and composting services** within the City.
4. The City Auditor has made eight recommendations in the **Audit of the Environmental Services Center Proposal (11/15/04)**. The Auditor recently reported the current status of all eight recommendations as "In process." The Auditor's recommendations touch on several crucial aspects of Bayland's policy, such as:
 - determine the potential impacts of landfill closure on final grading plans,

- review and shape grading plans to be in conformance with the previously-approved Byxbee Park Plan (also recommended by the 2007 Hargreaves Report), and
- clarify existing boundaries, names and acreages of dedicated parklands in the Baylands.

5. Byxbee Park - Phase II Planning. The original design by Hargreaves for Byxbee Park, Phase 1, won national and international recognition for providing expansive views and a place of peace and refuge enjoyed by thousands on a daily basis.

In January, 2007, **Hargreaves Associates** reviewed the landfill work done since Phase I completion and makes recommendations for next steps now appropriate in the design of Phase II. The report notes, "While the Master Plan (for Byxbee Park) does include some basic ideas as a framework for the phase two park's completion, it was always intended that at the time of final closure the phase two park's design should move into full services of schematic design, design development and construction drawings. That process is still appropriate, but in addition there are now new opportunities for the park as a result of landfill operations and other changes to facilities adjacent to the park."

6. Regionally, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) and United States Geological Survey (USGS) are working to complete **sea level rise maps that are topographically accurate and useable for planning purposes**. These maps are scheduled for completion in September, 2008.

CONCLUSION

Given the importance of the Baylands to our community; the pending landfill closure and resulting completion of Byxbee Park; the approaching Request for Proposals (RFP) and negotiations for a waste hauling contract; and the complexity and interlocking nature of these issues, we believe that it is important for the Council to have an opportunity for meaningful policy input.

Now is an appropriate time for the community to consider its vision for completing Byxbee Park. Issues of design, access, slope and the impacts of sea level rise need to be addressed before a final landfill closure plan is submitted to the State for approval. This is the time to begin the process of designing new bike, pedestrian and car access. We need to plan for an improved trail system. It is also imperative

that we reconsider the current grading plan since it proposes very steep slopes that would likely hinder public access to new park areas.

We therefore ask our colleague's support in directing staff to return at our December 3 meeting with a proposed work plan, including a timeline and information on how current projects would be re-prioritized in order to accommodate this new assignment.

