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

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

15 **Commissioners Absent:**

16 **Others Present:** Council Liaison Eric Filseth

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

19 **I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY:** Catherine Bourquin

20
21 **II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

22
23 None.

24
25 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

26
27 Chair Reckdahl: I have one card for David Carnahan. David, you have two minutes.

28
29 David Carnahan: Thank you, Chair Reckdahl and Commissioners. David Carnahan,
30 Deputy City Clerk, here to talk to you about commission recruitment. Currently the city
31 is looking to fill terms on the Human Relations Commission, three terms on the HRC,
32 three terms on the Public Art Commission, and two terms on the Utilities Advisory
33 Commission. Terms on all three commissions run for three years, from May 1st of this
34 year through April 30, 2018. The deadline to apply is March 3rd. I'm coming to all the
35 boards and commissions in hopes that commission members know people that they could
36 refer for application, as well as members of the public that attend meetings and watch
37 from home may be interested. These are great opportunities for members of the
38 community to give back to their community and help shape the future of Palo Alto.



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

54
55 **IV. BUSINESS:**

56
57 Chair Reckdahl: Before we move on to new business, this probably should be an
58 announcement at the end, but I'm going to move it up. Congratulations to our liaison,
59 Rob de Geus, on his new position. He is now head of Community Services. We
60 appreciate that.

61
62 Rob de Geus: Thank you very much. Much appreciated. It's an honor and a privilege.
63 Thank you.

64
65 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.

66
67 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the Regular Meeting of January 27, 2015.**

68
69 Approval of the draft January 27, 2015 Minutes was moved by Vice Chair Markevitch
70 and seconded by Commissioner Hetterly. Passed 6-0 Ashlund abstaining

71
72 **2. Information Report on the Conceptual Plans for the Re-Building of the Palo
73 Alto Junior Museum and Zoo.**

74
75 Rob de Geus: We'll invite John Aikin up here, and team. Let me just introduce John.
76 John's the Director of the Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo. I have to say one of the
77 great things about becoming Director of the Department is I get to be involved in some
78 areas where I haven't been involved as much recently. The Junior Museum and Zoo is an
79 example of that. It's such a great program. When is the last time the Commissioners
80 have been to the Junior Museum and Zoo? Pretty recently? You've got to go back. John



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

85
86 John Aikin: Thank you, Rob, for that wonderful introduction. Commissioners, I'm
87 pleased to be here to bring you up to speed with something that we've been planning for a
88 couple of years. The Friends of the Junior Museum and Zoo have been fundraising and
89 helping the city come up with concepts for what this could be, but it didn't become an
90 official city project until a letter of intent was authorized by the Council, I guess, at the
91 end of the last fiscal year. This is our first opportunity to really come to you formally and
92 bring this project forward. I'm very excited to do it. I'd like to introduce the members of
93 the team here. Sarah Vaccaro from Cody Anderson Wasney Architects here in Palo Alto.
94 Peter Jensen, I think you know our landscape architect. I'm going to let Peter set the
95 context for this in terms of the Master Plan.

96
97 Peter Jensen: In association with the Junior Museum and Zoo Project, this was an aspect
98 of the Rinconada Long Range Plan, which you haven't heard about in a little while as far
99 as the expanding footprint of the Junior Museum and Zoo building and Zoo itself that
100 was shown in the Long Range Plan. The Rinconada Long Range Plan is a joint, I guess,
101 venture with the Junior Museum and Zoo as far as getting its environmental work done.
102 The recommendations that were part of the Long Range Plan are basically now being
103 reviewed as far as environmental review. That's how these two projects are joined
104 together. The Long Range Plan did show the expanded footprint of the Junior Museum
105 and Zoo. It was shown at several community meetings and discussed about the future
106 expansion of the Junior Museum and Zoo. No public opposition came to light from those
107 meetings, and I don't image that they will. As Rob said, it is a cherished item in Palo
108 Alto. The Junior Museum and Zoo is really beloved, the building and the Zoo. That's
109 how it connects to the Long Range Plan. Those two things in their environmental work
110 are going along together. Without further ado, I'll turn it back to John and the consultant
111 to talk more about the Junior Museum and Zoo.

112
113 Mr. Aikin: If you'll turn to your screens, our mission is to engage a child's curiosity in
114 science, to encourage exploration, and to build a foundation for understanding and a
115 lifelong respect for nature. We chose those wisely, because it's really about their
116 curiosity that they bring. Science is a process, and nature is the phenomenon that we
117 want to engage them in. We've been here a long time. We're celebrating our 80th year
118 for the Museum, and the 40th year for the Zoo. We are a hybrid institution that is part
119 school, part zoo, part museum, but very much part of the community. I think part of that
120 is that we are in a residential neighborhood. We've been free for a long time for people to
121 stop by. It is has really meshed us well in the community. We have about 150,000 visits
122 a year. That's not really visitors; that's number of visits. We don't collect admission, and



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

158
159 Sarah Vaccaro: Hello, Commissioners. Thank you for having us here tonight. Peter,
160 thank you for setting the stage in terms of the Long Range Plan. John, thank you for
161 setting the stage of what this treasured amenity is in the City of Palo Alto as well as the
162 facility needs in order to grow and make this program able to reach more in the
163 community. I want to set the stage with the existing facilities to begin with. This is the
164 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.

249 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.
250

251 Vice Chair Markevitch: I agree that the Museum and the Zoo are fantastic. They're
252 great. I'm looking at this, and I'm very concerned that Rinconada Park is getting chipped
253 away. Walter Hays took a big part of it, and now the Zoo is proposing to take a large
254 part. Earlier in your presentation, you said we want to be able to have a more welcoming
255 aspect into the Zoo from the park. Then in this later screen shot, you have a building
256 there, which is not a welcoming thing to me. All it is is a public bathroom facing into the
257 park, and then this is a working building where the animals are going to be taken care of.
258 That doesn't match up with what you had said earlier. Also, was a two-story building
259 considered, so you would take up less of a footprint and you would roll out less of the
260 Zoo into the park? That's really a sticking point with me. I just feel very strongly that
261 this park needs to stay the size it is, because it is such a wonderful park. Is this also
262 coordinating with the Rinconada Master Plan that we worked so hard on? It looks like
263 the play area and the tot lot have rolled closer to Hopkins. Does that mean that the bar-
264 be-que area is now gone from there? It seems everything's getting pushed, and then some
265 stuff is just going away. I didn't see the bar-be-que area on here. That's all my questions
266 and statements for now.
267

268 Mr. Aikin: Peter, do you want to answer the question about the Master Plan? Then I'll
269 address the questions about the building.
270

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

291 the overall sense, no park amenities are being lost in any way in that location. The
292 location being taken up by the Zoo, like I said, is kind of a dead zone or dead space in the
293 park. It's not really being utilized for anything, mostly composed of asphalt right now.
294 The footprint shown was in the Long Range Plan discussed with the community.
295

296 Mr. Aikin: I'd love to address the issue of the building and the back-of-house building in
297 the Zoo. We do have buildings in the Zoo today, but they're scattered, small CMU
298 buildings, and really don't reflect modern husbandry practices. What we are designing—
299 we'll show you here—is a two-story building so that we can have public access on the
300 roof deck which is a butterfly garden. It's essentially a greenhouse on the second floor.
301 Down on the first floor is back-of-house animal care as well as underground exhibits for
302 kids to go underground and underwater to see animals. It's really a stacked zoo with a
303 back-of-house connected to it. This is the view from the park. The building is sunk—I
304 think it's 4 feet—underground so that the first roof layer—I think it's about 7-9 feet—
305 pitches down. It's got a green roof on it. Then you can see the netting on top there above
306 the greenhouse structure. I think that it should be pleasing but, yes, it is a structure.
307

308 Vice Chair Markevitch: I had two more questions regarding the parking lot. One of
309 them was, you've closed off an entrance. Are you adding parking spaces? When you
310 have a performance that comes out of the Main Stage, everybody leaves at the same time,
311 and it can be chaotic. The other one is, I noticed alongside the garden area of Lucie Stern
312 where there's two 15-minute green striped parking spaces. It looks like you're redoing the
313 brick there. I want to be sure that what you're doing is historic to the building, because
314 it's important. I know right now it's just red brick and it's cobbled and people trip on it
315 and fall. I want some thought put into that design.
316

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



333 in that area as well as the ease of crossing the street at that location as part of the upgrade
334 for the parking lot.
335

336 Commissioner Laing: Thanks for your presentation. I went to the public meeting about
337 this that you presented, so I had a lot more detail which was helpful. The overall
338 question is obviously going to be the intrusion on the park as existing. Just to pick up on
339 what Commissioner Markevitch has said, it's almost doubling the intrusion there. That
340 night when I saw it in the public meeting and I see it here in the document, I guess the
341 question is, if you had to scale back, how would you prioritize what you would take out
342 to fit it in? If we do remodels, we don't get to buy the land next door. We just have to fit
343 it on the site. When I go through here and I see things like storage or maintenance or
344 exterior animal cages, interior stroller parking, not just exterior but interior stroller
345 parking, offices, I can't prioritize those. If we're giving up square footage of parkland for
346 people to have better offices and storage, maybe offsite storage could be helpful, and
347 2,000 of the 4,000 specimens could be offsite. Obviously it has to be in the right kind of
348 conditions. The general question is, how would you prioritize to make it smaller?
349 Maybe you can't answer that tonight, but at some point I think that the various
350 commissions should see an alternative that's smaller so that they can judge what you'd
351 have to give up. That's kind of the driver. Another question in that regard is, since you're
352 basically taking down the building and starting over because it's so magnificent, was
353 there any consideration given to just finding a different location? It's already so jammed
354 with the school and the parking lot and the community center and the park itself, maybe
355 we should just look at a different location for it entirely. You touched on it, but at some
356 point you'll have the opportunity to go into more detail. You're now going to draw more
357 visitors in, and you're already doing some outreach to Mountain View and East Palo Alto,
358 and this is going to be spectacular. Plus or minus 20 car spaces may not be enough. At
359 some point, the city has to come up with the tough decision that parking spaces are going
360 to have to go underground as expensive as they are, because we're planning for the next
361 50 years. Maybe something as radial and as expensive as that has to be tossed into the
362 mix. I think that's the fundamental issue, the relative size, what you give up and the
363 increased folks that are coming through here that would have to come in to see this new
364 magnificent spot, where we are going to put them as well.
365

366 Mr. Aikin: If I could just quickly mention what that footprint in the park does versus
367 what the footprint in the non-park area where the Museum sits now. It's primarily animal
368 enclosures and animal back-of-house. I say primarily because there's one office for the
369 Zoo Director who sits in the Zoo today. The back-of-house is really needed to operate a
370 zoo according to the accreditation standards of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.
371 The animal collection is pretty much the animal collection that we have today with a
372 couple of additions, the butterfly house and a meerkat exhibit. They're scaled to meet
373 those accreditation standards, and so the reality is the Zoo today has exhibits that are too
374 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

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

421
422 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Ashlund.

423
424 Commissioner Ashlund: I have a couple of questions. Can you go to the last diagram in
425 your presentation. The first question, in the redesign of the parking lot, are these two
426 parking lots that are shown in this diagram, are they connected? Once you're in the main
427 one, can you drive to that second portion? So they would become connected. Okay.
428 Where does the main driveway go? You said the main driveway that's currently coming
429 into the JMZ is removed. Is it now the main driveway into Lucie Stern and then you
430 would take the right into the Zoo? Yes, okay. The public restroom access, I wasn't clear.
431 Is that only once you're in the Museum and Zoo that you can access the public restroom
432 or is there an external access from the park side as well?

433
434 Ms. Vaccaro: There's an external access from the park side. Anyone using the
435 playground areas or the picnic areas would be able to come over and access the restroom
436 right off the park pathways.

437
438 Commissioner Ashlund: I applaud the addition of the Girl Scout fire pit. We've been
439 sharing the Boy Scout fire pit for many years, so I appreciate the addition of that. The
440 main question about the redesign, is the existing foundation being reused or is this a total
441 teardown and do over?

442
443 Ms. Vaccaro: We're proposing to remove the existing building. It's an older building
444 type, and it would not be easily renovated or expanded to this newer building type. It
445 would be costly.

446
447 Commissioner Ashlund: So the foundation would be redone as well?

448
449 Ms. Vaccaro: Correct.

450
451 Commissioner Ashlund: Have you given any thought to rotating the placement? I agree
452 with Commissioners' comments about the welcoming aspect of the Museum and Zoo into
453 the park. Right now it feels like the welcoming direction is still the direction that it
454 currently is. If we're redoing the whole foundation anyway, did you do any proposals
455 that looked at rotating it so that the entry plaza was more adjacent to the parkland rather
456 than the Zoo building for equipment?
457

458 Ms. Vaccaro: We have studied numerous layouts for the entire footprint. The goal is
459 really to try and keep the Museum portion out of parkland as it's not currently a use in the
460 park, and only put Zoo programs in the park. That limited us to this area of the site here.
461 We are currently developing the design right now to really strengthen the views and the
462 connection from the park entrance plaza and from these areas of the park to the main
463 entrance so that there really is a strong view corridor. One item that I failed to mention
464 earlier is that this wall that encloses the Zoo is going to be themed as an educational
465 component, so that it actually lends itself as kind of a guiding or wayfinding mechanism
466 that leads people from the park around the Zoo enclosure and then to the entry point of
467 the Museum and Zoo.
468

469 Commissioner Ashlund: The final question I had is regarding the cost of this proposal
470 and the fundraising efforts for that as far as considering the underground parking as an
471 option because it would buy back space, it would preserve parkland. Has that option
472 been looked at?
473

474 Mr. Aikin: The option really has not been studied. I think there was a proposal early on
475 the table, conceptually, that "Gosh, would the city consider underground parking?" I
476 think that question was bigger than we could answer. I think I would leave that to the
477 Commission and the city to grapple with. Are you ready for underground parking in
478 Rinconada Park? It probably could be designed. It would be very expensive and
479 disruptive to build. Is this the time and is that where we want to go? It's a tough choice.
480

481 Commissioner Ashlund: Thank you.
482

483 Commissioner Crommie: Hi, there. Thank you for the presentation. This reminds of
484 building the megaplex, potentially, of soccer fields in the Baylands and creating a
485 regional draw. I think our Zoo is an amazing resource for our community, but I'm just
486 wondering is the goal here to make it more of a regional draw? Because you're using the
487 word locally without really defining what you mean by local. You're not speaking in
488 terms of Palo Alto residents. You're calling local from here down to San Jose and up to
489 San Francisco? I'm just a little bit confused. What are the forces that want this regional
490 draw? No matter what you're saying, this clearly has a huge impact on Rinconada Park.
491 It's really a question of priorities. Do you want to give up parkland to have a bigger Zoo?
492 My family has used this Zoo a lot every since my kids were little. We continue to go
493 there now. My kid now helps in the CIT program there now as a teenager, so she's been a
494 user of this Zoo from age 1 to now age 14, and she's not done yet. I'm a huge supporter
495 of it, and I've always seen it as a program that's incredibly valuable. The staff is
496 incredible. That's what makes it; the quality of the people who run this is just out of this
497 world, which makes it a huge resource for residents in terms of camps and training and
498 leadership opportunities for teenagers. It looks like it's worked really well. I know over
499 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

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

543
544 Commissioner Crommie: Thank you. As far as square feet go, can you tell me how
545 much green, open turf space is lost during this expansion? You're saying it's not really
546 using area that's useful, which I sort of take exception with. When you reorganize the
547 young play area with the big play area, you're densifying the space that the children are in
548 for their play as far as I can tell. When I look at this picture, it looks to me like there's
549 less green, open turf. Can you tell me what it's diminished by? Now compared to if this
550 plan were enacted.

551
552 Mr. Jensen: I don't have the numbers of what the turf is to what it would be with the
553 Museum. We would have to come back to you with that number.

554
555 Commissioner Crommie: I'd like that. Thank you. I've tried to add up all the numbers
556 but it seems hopeless. Can you give me a clean number on the footprint square footage
557 now versus the total footprint square footage with your plan? Just so we can tell the full
558 magnitude difference. Just the entire footprint of everything now versus everything
559 according to this plan.

560
561 Ms. Vaccaro: Sure. The existing footprint of the Museum building and the Zoo areas is
562 21,500 square feet. The proposed is 33,450 square feet. The delta is 11,950 square feet.

563
564 Commissioner Crommie: What's the delta? Can you give a percent increase on the
565 delta? Percent expansion.

566
567 Ms. Vaccaro: I can't do that math off the top of my head.

568
569 Commissioner Crommie: Okay. 50 percent bigger?

570
571 Ms. Vaccaro: Yeah, about 50 percent larger.

572
573 Commissioner Crommie: It's not twofold bigger; it's a half-fold bigger?

574
575 Ms. Vaccaro: Correct.

576
577 Commissioner Crommie: Since it's clearly a big resource for Walter Hays school, have
578 you thought about cutting a deal with them where they give up some of their land and
579 produce a two-story building? They have all these one-story buildings on their school. If
580 they consolidated into a two-story building, would they be willing to give up any land for
581 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.

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

626
627 Mr. Aikin: Depends on the site.

628
629 Commissioner Crommie: I'd put a big plug in to keep it going in some way. Seems like
630 you just did the bobcat habitat renewal. When did that take place? I lose track of time.
631 How many years ago was it?

632
633 Mr. Aikin: It's about four years ago, and it's protected on the site and reused for bobcats
634 and raccoons right next to it. We are going to salvage that and not have to spend that
635 money twice.

636
637 Commissioner Crommie: Okay, great. What is the feedback from the public meeting?
638 In general, we usually get that attached to a report, and we didn't get that tonight. I'm
639 wondering when we're going to get the public feedback summary from your community
640 outreach meeting.

641
642 Mr. Aikin: I can get that to you. I'm sorry for not including it. We had about 12
643 members of the public come to our open house community meeting. Their questions
644 were many of the same questions that you had, but were all in general in support of the
645 project. It was really more curiosity about how we're going to do this and what we're
646 going to do, and really no concerns that they brought up.

647
648 Commissioner Crommie: Okay, great. If you can just send us that, that'd be great.
649 Thank you very much.

650
651 Chair Reckdahl: We're about 20 minutes behind schedule, so I'll keep this short. In
652 addition to that feedback at the public meeting, it'd also be nice if this presentation, we
653 were not delivered an electronic version of that, so if you can also send us that. The
654 PowerPoint that you're showing upon the screen, we did not receive that. We received a
655 four-page text, staff report.

656
657 Commissioner Hetterly: (inaudible)

658
659 Chair Reckdahl: Is it on the site now?

660
661 Commissioner Markevitch: (inaudible)

662
663 Mr. Aikin: It's been on the site.

664

665 Chair Reckdahl: It was not in our packet. Okay, thank you. One question. On the top of
666 this four-page text, the top of page 2, it says "[d]ue to inadequate storage and support
667 space, accreditation options for both the Museum and Zoo are unobtainable." What does
668 that mean?
669

670 Mr. Aikin: There are two accrediting bodies for the Museum and the Zoo. One, the
671 American Alliance for Museums. The other, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.
672 We don't meet zoo standards for both the size of some of our exhibits and the fact that we
673 have kitchen and animal prep facilities alongside animal enclosures, which those need to
674 be separated. Also, the animals that go out to schools have to be separated from the
675 collection that stays there permanently. Part of the back-of-house building is to house
676 those animals that go to schools separately from the rest of the zoo animals, because it's a
677 requirement of accreditation. The American Alliance of Museums, the primary standard
678 that we don't meet is how we house our artifacts and collections. We've been in this
679 community so long, we have some very rare objects that are priceless. They need to be
680 under lock and key and in climate-controlled facilities. This old building just doesn't
681 provide us either with the room to organize that or the HVAC systems to do it properly.
682

683 Chair Reckdahl: I also would like to echo what other people have said here. The Zoo is
684 wonderful, but I really would like to see a smaller encroachment into the park, whether
685 that's digging a basement or going to a second story. If you could shrink the building, I
686 think you could pull the whole Zoo back and you would have less encroachment. I do
687 like the idea, like Peter said, about the bathroom really is servicing the park. I like that,
688 but I would like to have that back another 20 feet. I think that'd be a much better design.
689 Everyone is short of space. Parks are short of space. Their square feet, right now, per
690 capita is not in our target, and it's only going to get worse as the population grows. I hate
691 to give up any park space that we haven't tried really hard to keep. I don't think we've
692 tried hard. This is a single-story building. I'd like to go down or go up and squish it
693 together so we don't go into the park nearly as much. That is it. Any other questions?
694 Rob.
695

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

Approved

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

712
713 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.

714
715 **3. Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.**

716
717 Chair Reckdahl: We do have one public comment for the Master Plan. Shani Kleinhaus,
718 you have two minutes. Oh, is she here?

719
720 Shani Kleinhaus: Good evening. I'm Shani Kleinhaus with Santa Clara Valley Audubon
721 Society and a resident of Palo Alto. Somebody asked me to tell you all that I'm an
722 employee of Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, and I represent the members of our
723 organization in this city and others. In Palo Alto, we have several hundred members. I
724 think it's more than 400, and they care about nature and birds and having those species of
725 birds and animals and habitats stay in the city. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan, I
726 have attended several of the meetings, and I've seen many of you there. I've several times
727 asked for the word nature to be part of the title. There's some kind of process where the
728 word nature is not there. I guess it assumes that open space takes care of that, but I've
729 seen the word open space being used for a lot of other uses that are not necessarily
730 natural and thought it would be good to specify it. If we specify trails, why not nature?
731 It's interesting to me when I look now, in Palo Alto I think nature has an intrinsic value
732 for people. They don't just want to have nature because they want access to nature. They
733 actually want to have nature for nature itself. That is not being measured, and it's hard to
734 measure it. All the criteria that we have here don't measure it. The value of the nature
735 that we have in the city, that is not measured by how many people are actually using it in
736 some way and just having it around. It's mentioned; many, many people mentioned it in
737 different meetings, but there's got to be a more specific address of the word nature and all
738 the species and all the ecosystems and all the habitats that come with it. I have another
739 specific comment to the ...

740
741 Chair Reckdahl: Ten seconds, please wrap it up.

742
743 Ms. Kleinhaus: I'm sorry. The recommended criteria, including sea level rise and
744 making that a criteria excludes from high priority a lot of areas in south Palo Alto, like
745 Ramos Park, excludes a lot of the Baylands and parts of Byxbee. It's a problem when
746 you come to areas such as ...

747
748 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.

749
750 Ms. Kleinhaus: ... Lucy Evans which is one of the most valued places for education and
751 for recreation. Thank you.

752
753 Chair Reckdahl: We'll move onto the presentation. Rob de Geus and Peter Jensen and
754 consultants.

755
756 Rob de Geus: Good evening again, Commissioners. We have Lauren Schmitt here and
757 Ellie Fiore from MIG and of course Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect, who's been
758 working really hard on the Parks Master Plan. Just wanted to mention that last month's
759 meeting was a challenging one on this topic. I had real trouble sleeping after that
760 meeting, I have to say, but it was good though, actually. It was needed, I think, for us
761 and for you, of course. We've done quite a bit of work this past month to sort of reset a
762 little bit. In some ways, just hit the pause button and take stock of where we are. The
763 feedback that we're receiving and how we're collecting that data and how we're sharing
764 that data and really sort of think through a structure and a framework for how that will be
765 used to define needs and then ultimately priorities and recommendations for the Master
766 Plan. I appreciate the feedback. It was important. I think we've come a long way this
767 month and am looking forward to the conversation tonight and hearing your feedback
768 about where we are today. With that, I'll pass it onto Lauren or Ellie. Lauren.

769
770 Lauren Schmitt: Thanks for having us here tonight. You received in your packet a
771 memo of a concept that we want to go over with you tonight as a way to help start sorting
772 through what is a phonebook of data, which I know is kind of overwhelming. One of the
773 things that Peter has done is started to put together in one place so you have a resource
774 for the remainder of this planning process but also in the future for all of this analysis, all
775 of the public input, pulling that together as a resource. We want to share with you a
776 concept for an evaluation matrix and some of the criteria, so that we can start talking with
777 you about how we move towards recommendations and a plan. Before we get into the
778 matrix though, I just wanted to share some thoughts with you about how that's going to
779 work. I think your park system is so complex. The programming that you do, the
780 facilities that you offer, I think the presentation we just heard is a real illustration of that
781 and the balancing that you need to do. It's not like there's a bunch of this analysis and
782 then all of a sudden we're going to presto, come out with a plan. There's a lot of steps,
783 and we need you and we need the staff involved in making decisions, evaluating things
784 along the way. We just wanted to emphasize that we've had this data collection and
785 analysis. Now we need to summarize that and say, "What does it all mean?" and start
786 thinking about what might we do in the future. To do that, first we need to understand
787 supply, understand demand. We need to define Palo Alto's role in meeting demand
788 across the whole system, not just what are we doing for sports fields, what are we doing
789 for museums. That will then allow us to define the needs. We can then think about what
790 are the options for meeting those needs, because you may not opt to meet all needs. You



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



833 years. The other thing on the demand side is setting parameters. That's something you
834 did really well in the Field Use Policy, where you had a standard about what's a
835 reasonable amount of practice games, tournaments that a local group could be allowed. If
836 you don't do that, somebody could just come in and say, "I want to do this every day."
837 As a public entity, is that as valid as something that's a bit more metered? You do that
838 with your pool right now, how you allocate lap swim time and other things. A really
839 important question is the whole peak demand versus non-peak or average demand. If you
840 build your park system or you build a set of gyms for 7:00 p.m. on a weeknight, you're
841 going to have a whole lot of gyms and not much of anything else. It's kind of like
842 building your parking lot at the mall for December 24th. We just need to think about
843 what level of demand we want to do or do we want to be looking at that season when a
844 whole bunch of things overlap or the prime Saturday, the nicest day of the year? The
845 other thing that's an issue in demand is certain types of facilities, certain types of spaces
846 attract more demand and sometimes generate more. If you have a really nice dance
847 room, all of a sudden you're going to start getting classes that work really in a really nice
848 dance room. People are going to start gravitating to that. Sometimes you can even create
849 demand. We found through the outreach, for example, that certain configurations of
850 tennis courts were attracting more use and more demand than others. We need to be
851 deliberate about how we factor those things in. We need to have our team, the staff team,
852 and all of you be on the same page around the assumptions so that you feel confident and
853 the community feels confident that as we're stepping through and making decisions and
854 what we're saying about the need, we're all on the same page so that we can do that math
855 that you're looking for to determine the capacity and where you're at. With that
856 overview, I'm going to turn it over to Ellie to talk a little bit about this matrix concept.
857 We want to get your feedback on that to see if you think it's a tool that will work to help
858 connect the dots and parse all of that data.
859

860 Peter Jensen: Ellie, I'm just going to say that passing around right now is a binder. The
861 binder is a sample of what you're going to be getting soon. It relates back to this
862 information that Ellie's going to be talking about. It's the matrix that we have. It
863 references back to the binder. Information, data, those types of things can be referenced
864 back to where they come from and easily found within the binder. You will be getting
865 the binder in the next couple of days. We'll figure out how to get that to you, but I did
866 want to send around the sample. The package of papers that we have now in there you
867 can see is very dense. That's what we're hoping the matrix that Ellie's going to start to
868 describe here pretty soon starts to summarize a little bit and get you to a more direct path
869 of where to find that information, that data that's in there.
870

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

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



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

937
938 Chair Reckdahl: Can you comment about the data sources in the top?

939
940 Ms. Fiore: Yes. Our intent was to get you these binders tonight, but there was a little
941 production hiccup. The list of data sources is keyed in Row 2. For example, Number 2 is
942 the data in each summary. Number 4 was the sustainability review. All of the inputs into
943 each of those columns reflects back, so it's essentially a table of contents for your binder
944 as well as a data source list.

945
946 Chair Reckdahl: Is that going to be multiple rows or how are you going to get that
947 information in Row 2? It'd be nice to have an example of what's going to be the content
948 in Row Number 2.

949
950 Commissioner Lauing: It's just numerical, isn't it?

951
952 Ms. Fiore: Yeah, that is the content. It references back to the sources that we used to
953 generate what's in each column.

954
955 Commissioner Lauing: You might have six numbers in there, one, three, seven, nine, ten.

956
957 Ms. Fiore: Yeah, exactly. For demographic trends, you see one number, seven, because
958 that references back to the demographic trends piece. For the column previous to that,

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

962
963 Chair Reckdahl: Okay. The concern we would have is if on Row 2 you list seven
964 sources, then when I'm looking down on Row 17, I have to go through those seven
965 sources in order to figure out where that number came from. It would be nice if for each
966 number that you list, each content, you would say, "That comes from Page 13 of
967 Reference 3," and reference that for each row as opposed to up top. Otherwise, we're
968 stuck just looking for the needle in the haystack.

969
970 Ms. Schmitt: I think it's going to be very difficult what you're asking. The reason is
971 there's not a smoking gun around each of these things in each source. The question in the
972 summary from Mapita, for example. There might be a whole bunch of comments in there
973 that are in an appendix. It's pages and pages and pages of comments. This is a huge
974 amount of content. Along the way, we've been taking it in, we've been assessing, and
975 we've been overlaying and looking for patterns, and then checking as we come back. For
976 each and every one of these things, there's not "here's the quotation or the figure that says
977" For some of them, there probably is, but I don't think we'll be able to map page 17,
978 this figure, or page 19, that figure. I don't want to over-promise that. I understand what
979 you're saying. It's like, "Well, if I have to look through the whole summary"

980
981 Chair Reckdahl: There has to be some rationale of how we score these things. What I'd
982 like to see is a separate document that lists the rationale for each one of these. Otherwise,
983 we have no way of verifying what that demand is.

984
985 Ms. Schmitt: That's one of the reasons why we try to establish some criteria. In some
986 cases, those are more numerically based. The perception of quality is one with certain
987 Mapita score ranges, because we can pull that data and say, "Okay, we can evaluate these
988 things." There's also noted issues around certain parks. We are trying to use the criteria
989 to provide what you're asking for, so that it works across all of these sources of data and
990 what all of those inputs are. If you're feeling like these criteria aren't doing that, my
991 question to you would be, do you feel like we could dial those in further? I really don't
992 think we can reference each and everything, because I can't tell you how many cells that
993 would be. I'm just thinking about how many times somebody has commented on tennis
994 or community gardens or whatever. There's a lot.

995
996 Chair Reckdahl: Yeah, but when you were filling out this spreadsheet, you have to
997 evaluate each of these cells. You're not putting random numbers in it. You actually are
998 looking at, "Okay, I'm looking at community gardens. How did I determine the
999 demand?" You must count something. There must be some way that you're quantifying

1000 the demand for community gardens, and there's some way that you're quantifying the
1001 supply of community gardens.

1002
1003 Ms. Schmitt: Yeah, yep.

1004
1005 Chair Reckdahl: Since you're the one who's doing that, we're just asking you to show
1006 your work.

1007
1008 Ms. Schmitt: Yeah, so that's what we're trying to do with this matrix. Let me explain the
1009 thought process around community gardens, since you chose that particular one. We
1010 look at the supply; you have three sites. You have a high level of control over those sites,
1011 because you own the sites where they're located. It's not like a Cubberley situation. You
1012 can be confident they're going to be there. We know from your capacity and bookings
1013 that you get more requests than you have plots. That's why that is rated over. It relates to
1014 the criteria in there. You're getting more requests than you have supply so it's over
1015 capacity. The geographic analysis showed—you can see the commentary in there—your
1016 community gardens are clustered in the northern end of Palo Alto. You have a number of
1017 plots that are arrayed across those three sites. All of those sites are in the north end of
1018 town, and there aren't other options for community garden sites. In some communities,
1019 there's churches or other providers that have them. The southern part of the community
1020 doesn't have them. When we step into the perception of quality, what we heard through
1021 all of the public workshops is people love the community gardens that you have. They
1022 think they work very well. We also heard that there is a need for more sites, more plots.
1023 That jives with what we know, that you don't have any in the south end of town and that
1024 the plots are oversubscribed. The public is also saying that. In terms of the demographic
1025 trends, we know that older adults favor gardening, and your results show that. You've
1026 got a high population of older adults, and that's projected to increase. Therefore, the
1027 participation trend for that one, we project the demand is going to increase. You're
1028 already oversubscribed; you're probably going to have more interest in that activity in the
1029 future. That takes us to the next column. There are barriers for participation, and the
1030 barriers are that there's not enough plots and they're all in one end of town. Looking at all
1031 of that, we see there being high projected demand. Community gardening is one of those
1032 activities that's been increasing across the nation and regionally. That's why that's rated
1033 high. We have all of this local data, and so the summary we would say around that
1034 preliminarily is there's a need for overall more plots whether they're at the existing sites
1035 or elsewhere.

1036
1037 Chair Reckdahl: One of the problems I have is that right now we're doing the high,
1038 medium, low. That's too coarse. It doesn't make it actionable for us. For example, if you
1039 say it's oversubscribed, so it gets an H. We have no idea if it's oversubscribed by 10
1040 percent or 300 percent. Does that mean that we have to find three more plots in the city
1041 or 300 more plots? We have no idea. When you keep it very qualitative, we can't action



1042 on that. We need to say the demand right now is 120 percent of the supply and, using
1043 projections, we think it's going to be 150 percent of the supply in ten years.
1044

1045 Ms. Schmitt: I think we can get to that number, but I want to come back to what I talked
1046 about in the beginning. There's a lot of assumptions. I could do that math, and I could
1047 give you a number. You might feel comfortable that it's a number, but if we're not on the
1048 same page about the assumptions, then it's a garbage number. If I make the assumption
1049 that we're in a community where all plots have to be 20x20. We had a shortage of plots,
1050 but that size plot was too large for a lot of people to handle. Yeah, it was oversubscribed.
1051 Yet, when you looked at did people actually follow through and garden, there was a
1052 number of underutilized sites. That's the trick of that number that you're looking for,
1053 which is why we try to stick with criteria. Is it generally over? Is it generally under? We
1054 can get to that number, but we have to have a broader discussion about what goes into
1055 that number. Also, keep in mind that I think community gardening is one that's easier to
1056 predict. Just because something is undersubscribed now doesn't mean that there's not a
1057 demand for that activity or that there wouldn't be in the future. It could be an emerging
1058 activity. It could be that you haven't reached the population. There's populations we've
1059 heard that you would like to be serving or that you think would be important to serve in
1060 this community. Right now, you're not serving some of those populations. If we are only
1061 looking at the things that you're doing now, we're going to not account for the needs of
1062 these folks that many of you and many of the community members think is really
1063 important to reach out to. We also want to make sure we leave space as we're looking at
1064 these needs to account for that. I don't want to seem like I'm ducking this, but this is
1065 really complicated. You as a city particularly have a very complicated system, and you
1066 have a very sophisticated layering of services that you're providing. It's not like you're a
1067 green field community and you're expanding out and you're stamping out the same
1068 neighborhood park in every subdivision. It's very nuanced.
1069

1070 Commissioner Lauing: Just to add one point to what you're saying. You're talking about
1071 percentages, but I'm actually even more interested in sample size. If 4,000 dog owners
1072 said that we need more dog space—I'm making all these up—versus 4 community
1073 gardeners said we need more space, those are both very interesting points to know. One
1074 we need to take some pretty severe action on. The other one maybe we don't have to take
1075 any action on in the next five years, and we look at it in 15 years. We're going to keep
1076 asking for this, quantitative data. Quantitative data. Not that you heard at a community
1077 outreach that two people wanted X, Y or Z, but that in surveys and in face-to-face votes,
1078 people said X, Y or Z.
1079

1080 Ms. Schmitt: I get that. I think Ellie gets that too. One of the reasons why we like to do
1081 the type of outreach and that you guys have embraced is doing a lot of different types of
1082 outreach and different layers of outreach for that reason that you're getting at. You don't
1083 want just some organized group to come and cook the result. Again we tried to get at



1084 your concern with criteria. Express need, we ranked it high if across multiple channels—
1085 three, four, five different activities—or through results that you'll see in the next month,
1086 through survey results from Mapita, through some of the things that got really big
1087 numbers, if it came up again and again and again, then we're ranking that as high. If it's
1088 mixed, like tennis was one of those that's mixed where a certain percentage of your
1089 population plays tennis. When you look at the overall community results, people are like,
1090 "Eh, I think we're good on tennis." If you ask the tennis players, they're the ones that
1091 have real specific needs around the facilities. Is it lighted? Is it grouped together? When
1092 we hear from them, what they're saying is, "You know, there are some needs here." In
1093 that case, it's mixed from these different sources, so we ranked it as medium because
1094 there's some evidence that there is a need there, but it's mixed. Low, there are just certain
1095 things that just really didn't come up or, when you look across multiple channels, it was
1096 just, "Eh." A couple of the things that it was very clear there was a high expressed need
1097 for. It's not reflected in this table at this point, but restrooms came up again and again
1098 across multiple channels as something that was really a critical part of enjoying the park
1099 system. Community gardens was one of those. Having seating and great resting places
1100 in parks supporting people spending time, lingering, talking to their friends, that came up
1101 again and again. It came up at the workshops. It came up in intercepts. Things like that.
1102 We're trying to use those criteria, so that as you start to layer that you start to see those
1103 patterns emerge. The land here and the facilities that you have are just way too precious
1104 not to take all of that in and make the best decision because you're going to have to make
1105 hard choices. Again, I think the presentation earlier tonight made that very clear to me
1106 about the kind of choices that you guys are going to be wrestling with in the next 20
1107 years. We want to make sure you have a tool in this plan that helps you make the best
1108 decision for the community, because it will be difficult every single time.

1109
1110 Chair Reckdahl: We've used up 35 minutes, and we've allocated 45 so we still have a
1111 little time left. We can run over if we need to. The first priority is to do it right, but also
1112 I don't want to waste time. Rob, what do you think? What's your priority? Do you want
1113 to hear comments from here or do you have things that you want to ask the consultants?
1114 How do you want to work this?

1115
1116 Mr. de Geus: I appreciate the work that the consultants have done and taken the time to
1117 work with us. We've met numerous times over this last month to think about this data
1118 question. I'm particularly interested in hearing from the rest of the Commissioners. I
1119 don't want to move forward with our process until we get to a general comfort level. This
1120 is a framework that has a lot of value and could really help us with the Master Plan,
1121 particularly defining the need. The next and more important step is then looking at those
1122 needs through a filter that is most important to the community to start making priorities
1123 and recommendations. I actually think it's a pretty good framework but again, before we
1124 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.

1167
1168 Ms. Schmitt: Just as a process point, the intent on these is they're a platform for moving
1169 forward. Your plan is not going to be a compendium of the demographic trends analysis
1170 and this and that. When we craft that document and the language that goes into that, any
1171 comments that you've made that are around, if we're taking a section of text out of
1172 something, all of that will appear in the final document. To Ellie's point, none of that is
1173 lost. By the time you've received some of the documents and some of the comments that
1174 you're making, they roll into the next piece of analysis that we're doing. In some ways
1175 by the time things get to you—this is one of the challenges—we've been continuing to
1176 move forward on certain other aspects of the project, so we can then give you the next
1177 round of analysis.

1178
1179 Commissioner Hetterly: Thank you. We shouldn't look at the sustainability report and
1180 say, "Why doesn't this reflect that we had this discussion?" I just want to get that on the
1181 table, that these are not final versions. They don't incorporate necessarily our comments.

1182
1183 Ms. Fiore: Correct.

1184
1185 Commissioner Hetterly: A piece of data that seems to be missing from the binder—and
1186 I'm not sure how it can be represented—is your discussions with staff about field use.
1187 What's going on with field use? Who is using it when and how? Or the capacity
1188 bookings information. You come to conclusions about capacity booking, but it doesn't
1189 look like there's anything in the contents here that would provide the backup data for how
1190 you reached that conclusion.

1191
1192 Ms. Schmitt: Yeah. Capacity bookings is actually one that we don't have the data yet.
1193 We're working on that now. We've been crunching the program and booking data. That's
1194 one that does not exist yet. It's still in processing form. Eventually that will become the
1195 program analysis Part 2 that's really about capacity and needs.

1196
1197 Mr. de Geus: Just to add to that, Commissioner Hetterly, is that the binder will continue
1198 to grow as we get more data. The survey data is not in there yet. You make a good point
1199 about staff analysis and staff interviews that have been happening, capturing that data.
1200 It's actually pretty rich data. These are staff that are working in the field with these users
1201 every day. Capturing that and including that and referencing it in the matrix is important.
1202 In addition to that—we've discussed this internally—as we discover certain trends, as the
1203 data is starting to suggest that we need more of something, then do additional research or
1204 outreach to that particular group of users to understand more of what they need. That
1205 would then also add to this matrix and to the folder of data. Does that help?

1206
1207 Commissioner Hetterly: Yes.

1208

1209 Ms. Schmitt: A forthcoming thing, I think, that will also document some of the staff
1210 discussions around the physical facilities which I believe you'll be getting next month, is
1211 Item 9 on the data list which are the existing conditions maps. Those are detailed of
1212 every single site. It's giving some of the history. It's giving some of the noted issues and
1213 deficiencies. Daren has been heavily involved with that, and other staff, in documenting
1214 the things that are there. This is again one of these other pieces that the documentation is
1215 happening. It's on its way to you, but you don't have it yet. That's one of the other
1216 challenging things for you as a body; things are not yet in your hands but we're starting to
1217 formulate ideas about them.
1218

1219 Mr. de Geus: I know that we have other Commissioners that need to speak, but this may
1220 help as well. If we think about the next step on this, if we agree this is a good
1221 methodology and we move forward and start populating this and start defining the high,
1222 low, medium or whatever rating that we decide is the one that really works. An
1223 important next step that we would like to do is have a special retreat on the Master Plan
1224 and spend several hours on the matrix with MIG and staff and actually walk through
1225 these line items and talk about them. "Here are the Summary of Needs. How did you
1226 come up with that?" It'll be in a narrative form in the Summary of Needs. We'll have the
1227 binders and all of the data, and we'll have a really rich discussion about each of these.
1228 There will be different interpretations, and we'll discuss that. Then we'll tweak the
1229 Summary of Needs during that meeting. Hopefully at the end of that, we'll have a pretty
1230 good picture of the Summary of Needs.
1231

1232 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.
1233

1234 Commissioner Crommie: Thank you. I think this is really helpful, to see this. It's
1235 moving in the right direction. I would like to ditto what other Commissioners have said.
1236 When you list your sources, if you can just letter them and then reference back to those
1237 sources for the key points, it's really going to be helpful. Something like when you say
1238 demographics show that we're increasing the number of school children, can you cite that
1239 report? That's a very global issue. Something as big as that, I think it's worth citing the
1240 document. A couple of points here. When you were listing the elements on page 3 of the
1241 report, they go onto page 4, I like seeing this kind of granularity. I appreciate this. I like
1242 that you have experience nature, but I also think we need something about the
1243 preservation of nature. The reason that's important is because of the wildlife, because of
1244 the ecosystems. When we go to experience nature, it's predicated on having nature there
1245 to begin with. If you can add that in, I'd really appreciate it. On this list, again, where
1246 you have all these bullet points that I'm referring to—one of them is experience of
1247 nature—should dogs be fitting into one of these bullet points? I couldn't find it there.
1248

1249 Ms. Schmitt: It's under recreational facilities, off-leash dog areas. We were thinking
1250 about it more on the facilities side. For some of these, it's how you slice it. We put

1251 restrooms with parks, open space and trails because it came up cutting across all use of
1252 the system.

1253
1254 Commissioner Crommie: Yeah. I just find that one can go into a couple of different
1255 places, but I know you're thinking about it. It seemed like population density wasn't
1256 encapsulated. That's really important for planning, knowing where the population density
1257 is. That's going to impact the kinds of gaps that we have. Again I was thinking that
1258 could be a bullet point, just in the big picture. I'd add that land preservation has to do
1259 with ecosystems, and then also population density. Another part of the big picture to me
1260 when we're looking at supply and demand is where our schools are located in the city. So
1261 many cities are just very integrated with their schools, and the schools provide these
1262 major resources. Look at the community of Los Altos, one of our neighboring
1263 communities. It's completely integrated, because they really don't have nearly enough
1264 parks, and they really rely on their schools. I'd like to see some meta analysis of where
1265 our schools are relative to where the population is. The schools provide a green space for
1266 populations. I know in the south of Palo Alto, especially in my neighborhood, we're not
1267 near a school at all. We have a lower amount of parks, and we're not near a school.
1268 Somehow the locations of schools can compound gaps. Is there a way you've done that
1269 in the past, where you bring that in?

1270
1271 Ms. Schmitt: Yes. One of the things that we're trying to retrofit with this approach is
1272 most of these planning efforts will have a needs assessment. They'll address things like
1273 that. Both of those points that you brought up around population density and looking at
1274 that as an overlay as well as where the schools are located, I think we need to give a little
1275 bit more thought exactly how that works. They either fit within that geographic analysis
1276 or they become their own column around it. Yeah, I think those are good ones. They are
1277 really important in actually the demand side. More people equals more demand. On the
1278 supply side, because they provide an alternative, the schools do.

1279
1280 Commissioner Crommie: I'm about halfway done. Those are some big ideas. Getting
1281 into a little bit more lower level stuff. I'm not seeing the gyms really differentiated like I
1282 would like to see them. What I know goes in gyms is volleyball and badminton. If you
1283 look at our demographics of having an increasing Asian component, that's a really
1284 popular sport among the Asian cultures, south Asian and Asian. I'd like to see that
1285 differentiated. I don't know how it came back in the polling. I just want to have a
1286 column for it if you need to talk about it.

1287
1288 Ms. Schmitt: Okay. If you look down in Column B in recreation facilities, we did
1289 actually call out gymnasiums. The facilities we called out are off-leash dog areas,
1290 community gardens, basketball courts, tennis courts, rectangle sports fields ...

1291
1292 Commissioner Crommie: Can you reference pages please?

1293
1294 Ms. Schmitt: Sure. It's on the matrix, and it's Line 22. Row 22 is gymnasiums. It
1295 actually has its own row. For the reasons that you said, it's come up a lot. We're looking
1296 at the need for gymnasiums.

1297
1298 Commissioner Crommie: When you talk about resources and unmet needs, so many
1299 things are parsed out here. You represent a lot of things, but I don't see volleyball. I
1300 don't see badminton as far as it being called out when everything else is. I don't see a lot
1301 of omissions, so my list is not long. It's just a few things. You've listed so many things,
1302 you might as well list them all.

1303
1304 Ms. Schmitt: Here's the thing. The gymnasium is the recreation facility that contains
1305 those activities that you're talking about. If you were to build an indoor gym, you would
1306 program it in different ways. Sometimes you might have basketball where there's ten
1307 people, five on a side, playing each other. Sometimes you might put a couple of
1308 volleyball ...

1309
1310 Commissioner Crommie: Excuse me. I understand that. If we're talking about gaps,
1311 aren't you within a gym going to specify any of these activities? I don't see where they're
1312 going to be cited.

1313
1314 Ms. Schmitt: So then we're looking at the programming in the programming section.
1315 The grouping that we use within the programming—if this isn't right, we want to talk
1316 about it in a different way. We use the groupings that the city already uses for how it
1317 thinks about programs. These categories of adult aquatics, adult special interest classes
1318 are the way you look at data now in these groupings of types of classes. Within those
1319 would be the specific activities that you're talking about. We'd certainly be open to
1320 looking at it in a different way. I'd like Rob's feedback for sure.

1321
1322 Commissioner Crommie: Let me specify a little more. I don't know right now if we have
1323 badminton as a program.

1324
1325 Mr. de Geus: We don't.

1326
1327 Commissioner Crommie: That's an example of we don't have it, yet people might want it.
1328 How does it show up on this matrix?

1329
1330 Mr. de Geus: How I think it would show up, and we don't have it yet here. With respect
1331 to badminton for adults, for instance, it would show up in the Needs Summary. I would
1332 expect it would be in the narrative there specific to programs. It's under adult sports, so
1333 within that particular need there may be multiple sports that emerges as being needs.

1334 Under several outreach efforts, it came up that badminton was a need or an interest. so it
1335 would be defined there. Hopefully if this ...

1336
1337 Commissioner Crommie: Can you give me the line where it would be?
1338

1339 Mr. de Geus: That would be Line 32 on the matrix, adult sports, other programs.
1340

1341 Commissioner Crommie: Could it come up under youth as well?
1342

1343 Mr. de Geus: It could.
1344

1345 Commissioner Crommie: Okay, okay.
1346

1347 Mr. de Geus: There's a youth sports or a youth and teen programs.
1348

1349 Commissioner Crommie: These will get filled in over time, and then we'll assess ...
1350

1351 Mr. de Geus: Right, right.
1352

1353 Commissioner Crommie: ... what we want. As far as on Line 8 when you have essential
1354 activity access, it's sort of a bigger idea. You might want the word "hit." You have
1355 throw, catch, shoot, kick. I think hit is for lacrosse, anything with a stick. That also
1356 relates to badminton; although, you don't do that outside as much as lacrosse. That's just
1357 an idea. I really wanted to comment on now the Columns E, H and I on the spreadsheet.
1358 I actually think this relates to a question that Chair Reckdahl was bringing up with the
1359 community gardens. I think community gardens is a good example. You said maybe we
1360 are overbooked, so Column E would come up as over. You could also have a situation
1361 where something is not overbooked, but you have H as an expressed need. An example
1362 with community gardens is very illustrative, because you can have all these people who
1363 live midtown south who aren't anywhere near a community garden; therefore, they
1364 haven't even bothered to put their name on a list. I think those columns are very
1365 important. In fact, I'd even say you might want to push E over near H and I. Those are
1366 very independent kinds of things, and they're all equally important. I like that you're
1367 doing it that way. When you're doing projections of need, like community garden you
1368 brought that up with the elderly. It's a different kind of data-driven need. Our other
1369 Commissioners were all very interested in you tying this into your data. You're going to
1370 have to have some kind of data projected trends. It's going to help parse apart where the
1371 data is coming from. Right now you might rate something as a very high need based on
1372 projections of the aging population. I just hope there's a way you can cite that. It'll make
1373 the argument stronger if you can do that. It comes up to this idea of is it just nine people
1374 out there asking for community gardens. That's one component. You can give a number
1375 and say within your outreach how many people did you encounter. What would

1376 strengthen something like that is in your projection. All those things have to fit together.
1377 When you can do it, it would be very helpful.

1378
1379 Chair Reckdahl: We hit the one hour, so if you can keep it crisp.

1380
1381 Commissioner Crommie: Okay. I just want to make sure I brought up everything. I
1382 think I hit the major points. Can we email you if we think of other things? Okay.

1383
1384 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Ashlund.

1385
1386 Commissioner Ashlund: There were three more specific things. My high level question
1387 is, the binders contain a lot of the communication that we've received and commented on
1388 and discussed already as a Commission, how do you want us to use that binder? Other
1389 than when we're looking at the matrix, if we have questions or we think things are not
1390 reflected as they should be, we would refer back to it. But how, other than that, do you
1391 want us to use that?

1392
1393 Ms. Fiore: What you described is one of the major uses. It's also a historical record. I
1394 know you weren't here last month, but there were some questions about "Oh, yeah, we
1395 received that demographic analysis a couple of months ago, but it would be great if we
1396 could look at it now that we're talking about needs." We wanted you to just have
1397 everything at your fingertips.

1398
1399 Commissioner Ashlund: Great, thank you. I thought that this was going to be our major
1400 topic of the March 20th retreat, so I'm glad that you said you think this will be a whole
1401 separate retreat that we would have to discuss the Master Plan.

1402
1403 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, it could be the March 20th retreat. Depending on how far we get
1404 this evening and if we can populate this matrix by then, we might choose to do that on
1405 March 20th. I've been discussing this with Chair Reckdahl, which one should come first.
1406 He definitely would like to have a retreat where we talk about the year generally and all
1407 the other areas of work that we have. Given that the Master Plan is the most important
1408 project of the year, if we're ready to have a deeper discussion on that, I have an interest in
1409 moving forward on it and working on that on the 20th.

1410
1411 Commissioner Ashlund: You just mentioned that we as a Commission would discuss and
1412 populate the matrix together. I was under the impression ...

1413
1414 Mr. de Geus: No.

1415
1416 Commissioner Ashlund: ... that MIG would.

1417

1418 Mr. de Geus: MIG would, but we would discuss their findings and how they populated it
1419 and what conclusions they came to.

1420
1421 Commissioner Ashlund: All right. The three things on page 4 of the narrative that are
1422 the elements, the Parks, Trails and Open Space elements. You talked about that some
1423 points cut across categories, restrooms for example. I would encourage you to add
1424 accessibility as a separate bullet point in that list. Walkability is number 1 which is great
1425 for the mobile, but not necessarily great for the blind and visually impaired or mobility
1426 impaired. I would include that particularly because walkability is not necessarily the
1427 point of access that many people can use. Sometimes parking is essential for people that
1428 won't be walking there or public transportation as well. That is the page 4 comment.
1429 Page 5, under the elements for recreation programs, I see that the bullet says
1430 "intervention/special needs." I'm not clear on the use of the word intervention in that use.
1431 I'm very familiar with this area, so I'm wondering did you mean early intervention,
1432 therapeutic intervention? Did you mean inclusion or is there some other use of that?

1433
1434 Mr. de Geus: That really refers to some of our at-risk youth programs.

1435
1436 Commissioner Ashlund: I'm sorry?

1437
1438 Mr. de Geus: It refers to our at-risk youth programs.

1439
1440 Commissioner Ashlund: Oh, okay, great. Thank you. That definitely helps clarify that
1441 for me. When special needs is listed as part of that or even as a separate bullet, I just
1442 want to make sure we're capturing both special needs programs as well as support for
1443 inclusion programs.

1444
1445 Mr. de Geus: Within that particular cost center and the way the budget is structured
1446 within the city, there's three areas within intervention and special needs and that is senior
1447 programs, therapeutic recreation programs and at-risk youth programs.

1448
1449 Commissioner Ashlund: That's budget-wise as separate specialized programs for special
1450 needs. How does one get further budget support for inclusion in the broad programming
1451 sense?

1452
1453 Mr. de Geus: I think to get budget support we could potentially look at this Master Plan
1454 when it's populated, particularly if there is a need that's been identified across different
1455 platforms related to this line item around access or special needs, in one of those
1456 categories. We could use that as a tool, and I think the Council will be looking at it as
1457 well for where to invest more versus less.

1459 Commissioner Ashlund: Okay, great. My last quick question on page 6 was actually
1460 related to the sea level rise question. When I was reading this, I also had the same
1461 thought. Are we automatically going to be excluding something like the Baylands? I
1462 want to be careful just because something is adjacent to the Bay that it doesn't
1463 automatically get excluded as a high priority for major investment if it's of value to the
1464 Palo Alto community and could have 20, 30 years of use.
1465

1466 Ms. Fiore: Yeah, absolutely. What we're trying to convey here, what the high, medium
1467 and low refers to is the city's level of control over that site, what level of control does the
1468 city have over the 50-year time span. Sea level rise being an impact we can expect to
1469 occur in that timeframe. It's not saying if sea level rise is going to impact that site, it
1470 becomes a low priority. It factors into the level of control the city has over the site. Does
1471 that make sense? The high, medium, low here is not the priority assignment. It's high
1472 level of control, medium level of control or low level of control. One of those factors
1473 that factors into that rating is sea level rise. The others are ownership and management.
1474

1475 Commissioner Ashlund: I understand the ownership. That's a lot more clear of course.
1476 What time span are we looking at when we say a 50-year sea level rise might be much
1477 more significant than what's happening in 20 years?
1478

1479 Ms. Schmitt: This is supposed to be a 20-year plan. Sea level rise is an issue that's come
1480 up. One of the things it's made clear, you guys want to be able to make rich decisions, so
1481 we decided to include sea level rise in addition with ownership because you should just
1482 be aware when later on you're going on and you're weighing, like you said, investments at
1483 one site versus another, you may make a strategic decision that investing in a site with
1484 sea level rise is the right thing to do because of the need or because of the timeframe of
1485 the improvement. You should know going into it that that's an impact. The same thing if
1486 you were to invest in a site that you didn't have long-term control of the property, if you
1487 didn't own it or have a long-term lease.
1488

1489 Commissioner Ashlund: Thank you. That's all my questions.
1490

1491 Chair Reckdahl: Council Member Filseth.
1492

1493 Council Member Filseth: If I can ask a gear head question here. On one of the early
1494 slides, there was a line that said the Master Plan called for 3 acres of park space per 1,000
1495 residents.
1496

1497 Ms. Schmitt: No, that was just to be an example of a standard. The Master Plan is not
1498 calling for anything. We have to do the needs assessment and make that determination
1499 about the right level for Palo Alto. There are for setting Quimby Act fees. There's a

1500 minimum and a maximum threshold that the State says, and 3 acres is the minimum.
1501 That's why I just pulled that number as an example of a numerical standard.

1502
1503 Council Member Filseth: There's a State guideline?

1504
1505 Ms. Schmitt: For setting Quimby fees.

1506
1507 Council Member Filseth: Quimby fees, okay. All right. Thanks very much.

1508
1509 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Markevitch.

1510
1511 Vice Chair Markevitch: I had a question regarding the collection of data. You're using
1512 census and you're also using school district numbers with regards to children, but we also
1513 have a fair amount of private schools in Palo Alto that the kids might not necessarily live
1514 in Palo Alto but they're here during the day and they may be using park facilities. Has
1515 that been taken into account, and homeschooling kids as well?

1516
1517 Ms. Fiore: I don't believe it's explicitly been taken into account, but we have identified
1518 youth outreach as a focus area we want to do more of, in part because we didn't capture a
1519 lot of middle high school students in our survey. We're working with Rob and his staff to
1520 identify who the best contacts into that population are. We're going to do a focus group
1521 style event. That's a great point that we should consider those populations.

1522
1523 Chair Reckdahl: To answer Rob's question, I do think this spreadsheet is a good start.
1524 I'm worried about the high, medium and low. That's just too coarse to make any
1525 actionable decisions. We're on the road, but I want to see more quantitative analysis.
1526 Give me numbers. Thank you.

1527
1528 **4. Discussion of Temporary Batting Cages at the Former PASCO Site Next to**
1529 **the Baylands Athletic Center.**

1530
1531 Chair Reckdahl: We have two speakers. Shani Kleinhaus is first. Shani, are you going
1532 to speak?

1533
1534 Shani Kleinhaus: (inaudible)

1535
1536 Chair Reckdahl: Okay. Then we'll move on to Craig Yanagisawa, sorry.

1537
1538 Craig Yanagisawa: Yanagisawa. Thank you. I'm a board member of Palo Alto Little
1539 League. We're supporting the construction of the cages at the Baylands, as currently Palo
1540 Alto Little League is the sole supplier of batting cages in Palo Alto, and we service over
1541 1,000 kids with our facility which includes only four cages. Our league consists of kids

1542 up to 12 years old. Beyond 12 years old and up to high school, there is no current facility
1543 for batting cages. Palo Alto Little League is not connected to Palo Alto Babe Ruth. We
1544 serve different ages. The two high schools, which have batting cages, are only dedicated
1545 to their sports teams. We're just supporting Palo Alto Babe Ruth in construction of new
1546 cages. Thank you.
1547

1548 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Daren Anderson, Parks and Rec, is up now.
1549

1550 Daren Anderson: Good evening. I'm Daren Anderson. I'm with Open Space, Parks and
1551 Golf. With me tonight is Park Supervisor Miguel Chacon and Chris Lillios who's a board
1552 member with Palo Alto Babe Ruth little league. We're here tonight to get the
1553 Commission's feedback about this project and how we can improve it. Let me start by
1554 giving you the background on this site, and it being proposed as the location for this pilot
1555 batting cage project. The city entered into a lease with Palo Alto Sanitation Company in
1556 1958 for garbage collection, and we leased them this land on this site. That entire area in
1557 the blue and the green was leased to PASCO, as they're called. One acre of that land
1558 became parkland, and that's the little triangle in blue. Miguel can highlight that for you
1559 with the mouse, so you can make that out. Eventually the city moved onto a new
1560 provider. Instead of PASCO, they went with GreenWaste, and GreenWaste didn't need
1561 that piece of land. It became unused; it was just a paved parking lot that PASCO had
1562 used for parking vehicles and some storage. Eventually Public Works removed the
1563 asphalt, and it's just a base rock. A little triangle about 1 acre in size. The city at that
1564 time, around 2009-2010, explored options to see if we could fit soccer fields or some sort
1565 of playing field on there. Because of the size and the configuration, we could not fit any
1566 fields on that. It's a challenging site because you've got an existing PG&E power pole
1567 right in the middle of the wide section. You've got about five or six utility gas
1568 infrastructure boxes that are at grade or above grade. Then you've got a PG&E gas and
1569 power line easement that I'll get into a little bit more detail about, that prohibits any
1570 structures on that facility. I want to show you what the site looks like right now. This is
1571 one of the angles looking towards that power pole in the center. Again, this is the base
1572 rock. A little closer view on that power pole. Again, all developed, there's a few pieces
1573 of weeds, weed patches here or there, but not much vegetation; no trees. Again you can
1574 see the fence line existing that separates GreenWaste's facility from the rest of this former
1575 PASCO site. There's an example of one of those little utilities that's covered with an A-
1576 frame barricade that's above ground. I mentioned the PG&E easements. This slide here
1577 is not in your packet, but I'd like you to look up just for a second to the screen. You can
1578 see about a 95-foot buffer between these two easements. There's three easements
1579 actually. There's two power pole easements and a gas line easement. The two yellow
1580 lines on this sheet show you where those power lines run through the property. The gas
1581 line runs right between them. The red lines show that boundary where you cannot build a
1582 structure. That definitely makes it a challenge, definitely limits what's possible. We took
1583 the plans that you see in the packet tonight to PG&E, and met with them a number of



Approved

1584 times to see if we could adjust our plans, and we did. They indeed approved the plans
1585 that are in your packet. In May 2014 Babe Ruth baseball league approached staff with
1586 this concept of building batting cages and funding them completely at the Baylands
1587 Athletic Center. In light of the Master Plan which is underway and again scheduled to be
1588 completed in November 2015, Babe Ruth proposed doing a pilot program for this batting
1589 cage project. Under the pilot program, there'd be two batting cages placed on this former
1590 PASCO site. They'd be situated outside the PG&E easements and would be designed and
1591 constructed to be temporary. They could be moved or eliminated when and if the Master
1592 Plan or golf course reconfiguration planning determines a better use for that site. The
1593 other aspects to the project include converting one parking stall. To the upper left—
1594 you've got it in your packet too—you can see a blue area that indicates a normal parking
1595 stall would need to be converted to a handicapped stall and then a small pathway that will
1596 connect to the existing one. It's comprised of base rock; we just need to clean it up. It
1597 would connect to an existing gate to that parcel. No new infrastructure would need to be
1598 added. It's just cleaning up that site. At this point, I'd like to turn it over to Chris, and he
1599 can give us a little bit of detail on why there's a need for batting cages at this site.
1600

1601 Chris Lillios: Yes, I see three main driving forces toward this batting cage project. One
1602 is utilization of the Baylands baseball field. A quarter to maybe a third of any baseball
1603 practice is spent doing batting. I've seen countless number of teams spending time on
1604 this beautiful large diamond, one coach hitting a ball to 12-15 kids one at a time. It's a
1605 very inefficient process, and it's a very poor use of a beautiful field which is primarily
1606 used for games, base running, fielding practice. The batting portion of any practice is far
1607 better executed in a batting cage where you can get far more repetitions at hitting the ball.
1608 The retrieval time is minimized, and it would offload the use of the main baseball field
1609 for better use of it. In other words, having full on scrimmages and so forth, and not using
1610 up a whole field just for one person hitting a ball to a number of players on the field. In
1611 addition, having the cages would extend the use of that area, because the field is closed
1612 for four months out of the year, November, December, January, February when no
1613 baseball activities could happen, or softball at all. Having a batting cage facility would
1614 extend the utility of that area by allowing year-round training opportunities for not only
1615 Babe Ruth but, as Craig had mentioned, Little League and Palo Alto Girls Softball. The
1616 Oaks also play there. American Legion plays there, and countless numbers of moms and
1617 dads with their kids are out there just wanting to hit the ball. We'd love to have batting
1618 cages. Currently people go to facilities that they have to pay for to get this kind of
1619 batting in. There's a big business around batting cages, and I'd like to have an
1620 opportunity for these 12-year-old kids and above to do batting, not using Palo Alto Little
1621 League's facilities which are already oversubscribed with not only the kids in their
1622 program, but also older kids like high school-age and middle school-age kids which I
1623 think would be better served in a facility that we're proposing here at Baylands.
1624



1625 Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chris. I should also point out that in 2004, City Council
1626 approved a park improvement ordinance to add a batting cage at the Baylands Athletic
1627 Center. It's unclear exactly why that didn't end up happening. It was part of a CIP where
1628 they carried out some improvements. That was slated to be one, but for some reason it
1629 wasn't included. In that staff report associated with that park improvement ordinance, it
1630 was noted that most baseball and softball facilities of the same size and caliber as the
1631 Baylands Athletic Center do have batting cages. It demonstrates that this need has
1632 existed for a long time. It was once approved by Council and, for some reason, it didn't
1633 happen. I want to highlight some of the advantages that I see regarding this project. One
1634 is it's fully funded by Babe Ruth. The second is that it could provide some useful
1635 information to the Master Plan. Batting cages is one of the things that was originally
1636 thrown out by staff as something to look at when they started the Master Plan process.
1637 This could provide a lot of information of is it really useful, is it heavily used. If we were
1638 to put in a pilot program, is this the right site? Guidance on the preferred design in terms
1639 of durability and security, what it would need to make this successful. There's some up-
1640 sides in terms of the fit for Palo Alto especially in this area. Another advantage is once
1641 it's established and up and running, as Chris had pointed out, it would become part of the
1642 Baylands Athletic Center facility. That would benefit other groups; little league, softball,
1643 private teams, and camps. Another part is this is an undesirable spot to invest money in
1644 before we've got a finished Master Plan or before we've made decisions on what's going
1645 to happen to the golf course reconfiguration. This is not a place we'd probably want to
1646 invest money just now. When we have an opportunity to have an outside group fund it
1647 with the understanding that it's temporary and will pend the results of a Master Plan that's
1648 coming, it's definitely something that could be advantageous to the city. Lastly, this is a
1649 flexible project. It's designed to be temporary, so it can be moved. There's no foundation
1650 set into there. You don't have to dig into the ground at all. We can eliminate the cages
1651 when that Master Plan or golf course reconfiguration planning determines that there is a
1652 better use for that site. This is a highlight on the accessibility page where you can see
1653 that parking lot path that would lead into the parcel. These are some cage types. I
1654 mentioned in the staff report they're still deliberating on two different types. We've got
1655 the open frame and then the enclosed. We just need some more time to analyze both the
1656 investment and the benefits of those two options. Again, synthetic turf would be
1657 underneath the facility. If this project is successful—I'm defining successful as well
1658 used, a safe facility, vandalism is kept to a minimum, and access is equally distributed. If
1659 we have those things, the pilot would continue until the Master Plan is complete and we
1660 have an identified use from the Master Plan for this site. If the Master Plan were to
1661 recommend this location for batting cages and there's the demonstrated need, staff would
1662 return to the Commission to discuss the option of a Phase 2 for this project. The Phase 2
1663 could include two additional batting cages, a warm-up area, a walkway and a storage
1664 shed. I believe it's in your packet, but there's a visual demonstration of what that Phase 2
1665 would look like. Again, that would pend completion of the Master Plan. This final slide
1666 again illustrates what we're talking about, which is just the two batting cages and the

1667 accessible parking lot conversion. That concludes the staff presentation. We welcome
1668 your questions and comments.

1669
1670 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Knopper:

1671
1672 Commissioner Knopper: I think it's great. In my opinion, there's absolutely no reason
1673 not to do it. I literally did a double take when I saw October 2004. I'm like, "Wow, that's
1674 11 years. That's a long time to wait for a batting cage." I would put it up tomorrow if I
1675 could.

1676
1677 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

1678
1679 Commissioner Crommie: Hi there. Thank you for your presentation. I know batting
1680 cages are really important. It seems like it does increase the efficiency of practice,
1681 especially during the youth practice sessions. Are they used during the games or just
1682 during the practices?

1683
1684 Mr. Lillios: If there's a game going on and there's another pair of teams coming before
1685 their game, they will use the batting cages to warm up and do some practice swings. Yes,
1686 it will be utilized to help prepare the teams that are coming on for a subsequent game.

1687
1688 Commissioner Crommie: As we stand now, all the other locations where baseball is
1689 done, are there batting cages and are they at the schools as well?

1690
1691 Mr. Lillios: The cages that I'm aware of, there are four cages at Little League. They're
1692 highly utilized. They are on Palo Alto Little League private land, so they have been kind
1693 enough to let the public meander in and out. Other than that, there's a couple of cages at
1694 Cubberley that Palo Alto Girls Softball has. They're small and not well known and, I
1695 think, under lock and key, so there's not much access there. Of course, all of the high
1696 schools will have two to four cages minimum, but again those are under lock and key by
1697 the high schools. Other than that in the City of Palo Alto, I have no knowledge of any
1698 other batting cages open to the public.

1699
1700 Commissioner Crommie: Babe Ruth is a private club kind of baseball. It's a try-out
1701 system to get into Babe Ruth, right? It's a high level activity. I'm little bit confused if
1702 this is only for Babe Ruth players or if other people who are playing recreationally can
1703 use it.

1704
1705 Mr. Lillios: This project is being spearheaded by Babe Ruth because we have a strong
1706 desire to have a baseball facility, not just for ourselves. Our charter is to serve the
1707 baseball playing youth, whether they're Babe Ruth or Little League or not in any league.
1708 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,



1751 may not, then where are we going to put it and what should it be like?" This is our
1752 opportunity to get a free learning lesson on what those answers are.
1753

1754 Commissioner Crommie: That makes a lot of sense to me. To summarize, I support
1755 batting cages. I think it's needed for safety and efficiency for the sport. They're located
1756 in all other sites, and they need it here as well. I'm concerned about using the full acre for
1757 this whole complex program without vetting it a lot more thoroughly. I think the
1758 footprint of the batting cages is pretty small. Lastly, I always get a little bit concerned
1759 when I hear that things are under lock and key at the schools and why we don't have
1760 better relationships with figuring out how to have more of a shared use. I don't know that
1761 much about how the baseball works. Club soccer does sometimes get use of schools. In
1762 fact, schools seem to make money off of it sometimes. I just wish we could understand
1763 that better on our Commission. It's been a long-term concern of mine.
1764

1765 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Hetterly.
1766

1767 Commissioner Hetterly: I think it's a great idea to have batting cages that can support the
1768 baseball field and softball field at Baylands Athletic Center. I'm a little uneasy about this
1769 particularly because it almost feels like that acres is like the 7 acres at Foothill Park that
1770 we've never talked about before. We've never talked about any other use for it before.
1771 As far as I can tell, there's been no public outreach on this pilot proposal. I understand
1772 that it's temporary. I generally like the idea of pilots. I think that's a great way to go;
1773 however, just as we've talked about with the dog park pilot, often once you start a pilot
1774 it's hard to end it. I'm glad that it's temporary. I do think it makes sense, before
1775 promoting a PIO, to have at least one public outreach meeting to talk about the location
1776 and whether this is an appropriate location. It seems to be a different location than the
1777 2004 PIO. I don't know why there was a change and whose preference changed to make
1778 that location different. As Commissioner Crommie suggested, it's an acre of contiguous
1779 property and if you throw us a batting cage, though it's small, that precludes any other use
1780 of that space for other functions. I have no idea if there are other functions that would be
1781 beneficial there, never having thought about it before I saw this agenda item. If it were to
1782 move onto Phase 2, the other problem with building the batting cages in order to
1783 determine whether there is demonstrated need, that seemed a little strange to me. It
1784 sounds like you're saying you have a need, Babe Ruth has a need, Little League seems to
1785 have a need. I'm not sure what more we're going to learn from a pilot about that need,
1786 except that maybe if you build it, they will come and we'll have more and more people
1787 wanting to use it who maybe didn't before or maybe aren't from Palo Alto-based groups.
1788 That's something that can affect policy deliberations along the way. I have one more
1789 point. The Phase 2, adding a whole nother acre to the baseball/softball complex at
1790 Baylands Athletic Center seems to me an awful lot of space for a single dedicated use.
1791 We don't have any other use like that across the city where we have that much acreage
1792 dedicated to just one use. Even our synthetic turf fields are used for soccer, football,



1793 lacrosse. That's not to say we shouldn't have it, but I think it's something that we should
1794 be thinking about. I think public discussion is a worthwhile pursuit.

1795
1796 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Lauing.

1797
1798 Commissioner Lauing: Yes, thanks. As most of my colleagues know, I was on the Babe
1799 Ruth board for five years before I came here. The batting cages were on the docket then.
1800 It's probably in the minutes somewhere of the meetings, but it's my recollection that it
1801 became very cost prohibitive when Babe Ruth looked at it because we got a lot of
1802 feedback from the city on the flood plains that we're still getting feedback from a lot of
1803 people on. It might not have been only the city, because of the kind of commentary that's
1804 coming back on the golf course. Which is why it became too cost prohibitive to do—I
1805 don't know if you had to have them 6 feet high or whatever it was—but that was the
1806 reason for that. There's no question there's a demonstrated need. To your point, I don't
1807 think we even need a pilot because there just aren't any. A lot of times Babe Ruth teams
1808 would go over to the Little League fields or, if they could get space on the weekends at
1809 the high school particularly Paly, they would go over there before games to warm-up in
1810 the batting cages. It's completely inconvenient. It's too bad that this isn't getting in in
1811 time for this season, but maybe it'll make the tournaments. Just a couple of questions.
1812 As this thing was getting back up, was there any debate about should we go back to first-
1813 base line or is it just because this land was available here? As you look at Phase 2, if that
1814 were to happen notwithstanding comments of my colleague, the easements seem to be
1815 right smack in the middle of that so I don't know how you're going to be able to do that
1816 anyway.

1817
1818 Mr. Anderson: The first question you asked of why not the first place that was identified
1819 in 2004. It pertains to the JPA project where that levee adjacent to the batting cage in
1820 that diagram will be pushed up very, very close to that area, pinching it off so much so
1821 that the walkway is almost compromised. It's very tight there in the plans. It seemed to
1822 make sense to look at another option. That's why.

1823
1824 Commissioner Lauing: That's my guess.

1825
1826 Mr. Anderson: Your second question, could you repeat that one more time, the Phase 2?

1827
1828 Commissioner Lauing: If you were to look at Phase 2, how can you because it looks like
1829 it's right in the middle of the easements?

1830
1831 Mr. Anderson: We met with PG&E, showed them Phase 1 and Phase 2 to say, "Would
1832 you have a problem with this?" I guess it's predominantly because it's not anchored in the
1833 ground, it could be moved and would not interfere with their direct access to those things.
1834 They gave us the okay, and I have it in writing.

1835
1836 Commissioner Lauing: Okay. To your question, Commissioner Crommie, the answer
1837 why you can't use the high schools is because the high school coaches are czars. They're
1838 totally in charge, and there's one key and that person has it. You can call it cultural, but
1839 they do use it an awful lot. Thanks. Very good presentation and preparation.
1840

1841 Commissioner Hetterly: I have one more quick question.
1842

1843 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Hetterly.
1844

1845 Commissioner Hetterly: Do you anticipate when you're using the batting cage that it will
1846 be the same folks who are using the field at the same time as part of your practice or
1847 would you expect that you would have an increase in usership because you may have
1848 teams practicing on the field and other folks using the batting cages simultaneously?
1849 Would you anticipate that being an issue for parking?
1850

1851 Mr. Lillios: Yes, when word gets out that there's a batting cage, there will be
1852 independent groups going just for batting practice. The teams that I've been involved
1853 with, we have two or three practices a week, and one of them is dedicated to just batting
1854 alone. We will either go to the cage facility up in Belmont, or there's other facilities you
1855 can rent out for a pretty penny. I can see this would be a perfect place for those kind of
1856 activities to happen. Generally people drop off their kids and take off. They don't sit
1857 around to watch batting practice, because it's not much of a spectator sport for the
1858 parents. There will be a little bit, but I don't expect it to be substantial.
1859

1860 Commissioner Hetterly: Thank you.
1861

1862 Commissioner Crommie: It just occurred to me as far as environmental impact, is it
1863 going to disturb birds in the area if there's just a constant popping of the bat against the
1864 ball? Have you talked to any groups about that, environmental groups, about impact?
1865

1866 Mr. Anderson: We have not. I think the use would be in keeping with the baseball that's
1867 happening there. It would be programmed by the same gentleman, Adam Howard from
1868 Recreation, who programs the field use. We have control over it, so it's not as if it would
1869 be 24/7. It's not open where you can check in at midnight and start swatting. It's unlit, so
1870 we don't have to worry about light impacts. Our belief is it's going to be in keeping with
1871 the use there and not a dramatic change. It's also in an area where there's no vegetation.
1872 We can certainly do more exploring to see if there are any concerns about that, but it's not
1873 one staff has right now.
1874

1875 Commissioner Crommie: Okay. Normally we vet with different stakeholders when we
1876 set up a new recreational facility. I was looking at it simplistically that it's the same kids

1877 that are there that then just use the batting practice. When you start to talk about a
1878 regional draw, I actually do get quite concerned about the density of use. I don't know
1879 what to do about that. I don't know if we're making it known that we're concerned about
1880 that. Can you give us some kind of follow-up and let us know how that's going?
1881

1882 Mr. Anderson: Yes, in advance of that, at the next time we bring this back to you. Again
1883 it'll be in keeping with how we manage the existing fields. That baseball field at the
1884 Athletic Center is not just "come help yourself," "come play as many league games as
1885 you want," "come in from all the surrounding communities." It's all brokered and
1886 managed by our recreation team. We don't suffer that problem with the fields, and I don't
1887 anticipate suffering that same problem with the batting cages because it'll be managed the
1888 same way.
1889

1890 Commissioner Crommie: Okay. I'm very familiar with our field use for soccer, but I'm
1891 really not that familiar with looking at that policy for that facility. Maybe one day you
1892 can educate us on that.
1893

1894 Mr. Anderson: I'd be glad to bring a draft policy for the batting cages that's proposed.
1895 We've already got a draft going. It needs to be vetted a little more fully. We'll be glad to
1896 bring that back when we bring this issue to you again.
1897

1898 Chair Reckdahl: Like Ed, my son plays Babe Ruth, so we've spent many hours in a
1899 batting cage. Never down in the Baylands, but before games we'll go over to the Little
1900 League field and throw batting practice there and then drive over to the Baylands. It'll be
1901 nice to have that in one location, to be able to do batting practice before the games right
1902 at the place where the game is. On the far left of the picture, of the blue triangle, there
1903 right now is a fence. If we open that fence up, we would be connected over to the skin
1904 field that has Little League and also has Girls Softball. I would like to see that
1905 considered. Just say, "Can we put a gate in there?" Have the same lock on the gate as we
1906 have on the other gate, so that if 5070 plays their little league down there or the girls
1907 softball want to use that, they can access that directly instead of having to go all the way
1908 around. Certainly it's not that far to walk around, but it would be a much shorter shot to
1909 go through that little gate right at the far left. I would like to see that considered. After
1910 the golf course is reconfigured, knock on wood, there's a lot of decisions to be made.
1911 One question is the GreenWaste lease. Do you know the duration of that? Is that area
1912 going to be open for reconfiguration also or are we going to have to move around that?
1913

1914 Mr. Anderson: I don't have the answer to that, but I'd be glad to research it.
1915

1916 Chair Reckdahl: That I find irrelevant right now. This lot is going to be sitting empty for
1917 the next two or three years, because we're not going to put anything permanent on there
1918 while the golf course is being reconfigured. Either we can have a temporary batting cage

1919 on there for the next two or three years or we have it sit empty for the next two or three
1920 years. I view this as a no-risk proposition. That is it. Any other questions? Do you
1921 know the path forward now or do you still have to do some work in figuring out what you
1922 want to do?
1923

1924 Mr. Anderson: An option for moving forward, I'd like to think about it and perhaps
1925 consult with my director. An option is hold a public meeting, come back with a PIO
1926 based on feedback we've gotten and with a design and see if the Commission approves
1927 and then go to Council afterward.
1928

1929 Chair Reckdahl: Typically if you were to schedule a public meeting, how much lead time
1930 do you want to have for that? Is that a couple of weeks?
1931

1932 Mr. Anderson: Yeah, 2 1/2.
1933

1934 Chair Reckdahl: Okay. Thank you.
1935

1936 **5. Information Report on the Organics Facilities Plan and Use of the Measure E**
1937 **Site.**
1938

1939 Chair Reckdahl: We do have one public speaker. Emily Renzel is going to be talking
1940 about the Measure E site.
1941

1942 Emily Renzel: At the risk of keeping poor Matt Krupp here for another 3 minutes. The
1943 Measure E has been studied quite a lot. I think with the last request for proposal that
1944 went out, staff had pretty much decided that much of the 10-acre site would not be
1945 excavated and used for composting, just the 3.8 acres of the 10 acres. There are basically
1946 two portions of the 10-acre site with greater and lesser likelihood of being used in the
1947 next six years or so, seven years, before 2021. I just want to be sure that you're planning
1948 for the Byxbee Hills Park, not working around that 10 acres in illogical ways. In other
1949 words, not necessarily putting anything on it, but looking at your trail systems and
1950 everything else to make them logical in the event that we can rededicate this land. The
1951 Measure E prevents the Council from rededicating the land, but Council could at some
1952 point, once it's determined that the site would not be used, put it to the voters sooner.
1953 That's always a possibility. I'm not advocating that at this point. I'm just suggesting that
1954 in your planning, you should look at the whole site, at least the part that doesn't include
1955 the flatter 3.8 acres, and do your best to have a forward idea of what will happen there. I
1956 just can't resist commenting that I think use of the 1-acre triangle for batting cages is
1957 great. It's reclaiming this parkland that's been parkland since 1965. It was allowed to be
1958 used by the garbage company, and they were supposed to restore it to baseball field when
1959 it was done. PASCO sold to Waste Management and then we went to GreenWaste, so it
1960 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

2003 Mr. Krupp: That's something that we would have to work out with GreenWaste. About
2004 two years ago there was a question about whether that site was going to be needed for
2005 other park uses. GreenWaste investigated other sites around the community and found
2006 that there were basically none that could service them within the boundary of Palo Alto.
2007 That's why we looked at providing GreenWaste the opportunity to have a site that was
2008 located outside of the boundaries of Palo Alto.

2009
2010 Chair Reckdahl: Just from the last presentation, that little triangle is very hard to use
2011 with that 1 acre blocking it. When we look at the reconfiguration, it'd give us a lot more
2012 flexibility if we could convert that into parkland, even if that means moving that to
2013 somewhere else.

2014
2015 Mr. Krupp: Sure, sure. I think that's a good question. I haven't been involved in the
2016 Master Plan that was talked about earlier today. I would imagine that that parcel would
2017 be considered as part of a Master Plan parcel. I don't want to speak on something that I
2018 don't know enough about. As Emily Renzel said, it was parkland that's being used for
2019 another use right now.

2020
2021 Chair Reckdahl: Okay, thank you.

2022
2023 Mr. Krupp: Sorry to go off script there. Let's get back onto the story of the former Palo
2024 Alto landfill and garbage and wastewater. You'll all be experts by the end of this
2025 presentation I hope. We did have a lot of people helping with this whole project, and
2026 they're listed over there. Consultants ARI, CH2M Hill, and Jim Bender Consulting. This
2027 project was—at least the first part of it—the Energy Compost Facility was a joint project
2028 that was with the Zero Waste Group and Public Works and also the Regional Water
2029 Quality Control Plant, another division within Public Works. Before I go into the
2030 specifics of Measure E and that parcel, I want to talk to you about some of the goals that
2031 staff had in order to define the best possible project. We needed to do a number of things
2032 from the wastewater perspective and from the solid waste perspective. The most
2033 important thing actually is on the wastewater side, decommissioning our sewage sludge
2034 incinerator which is one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions within the
2035 city. There are only two sewage sludge incinerators that operate within the Bay area. We
2036 are one of them. It was a Council priority to decommission and turnoff that incinerator.
2037 That's one of the priorities that we are looking to do from the wastewater side. On the
2038 solid waste side, we are looking at two things. The first thing was to find a new home for
2039 a composting operation. You might remember not that long ago we composted yard
2040 trimmings, your yard trimmings, over on top of the landfill. Once the landfill was closed
2041 and needed to be closed, that operation needed to stop. We had to end that operation. It
2042 was not compatible with the use of Byxbee Park to have a composting operation on top of
2043 it. That operation closed back a few years ago. We wanted to look at a new place to put
2044 composting and compost the yard trimmings. We also wanted to identify if there was an



2045 opportunity to take our commercial food scraps, food that's not eaten at restaurants, and
2046 also residential food scraps and harness the energy in that material. We're trying to find
2047 all of that stuff. By doing all that, we would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and be
2048 able to handle all three of these wastes. Now one of the ideas that came out in the
2049 proposal in the Measure E ballot initiative, is that perhaps there's a technology that can do
2050 all these things together, can handle the biosolids, the sewage sludge, the yard trimmings
2051 and the food scraps together in one combined technology. That was a premise that was
2052 based early on. We are looking at all of these things to try to see if we can do them.
2053 Were we successful? The short answer is no, we weren't. I'll get to the rest of it in a
2054 second. How did we get to the point where we're at right now? We did a feasibility
2055 study back in 2011 to see if it even made sense to pursue this further. We looked at a
2056 number of different technologies including dry anaerobic digestion. That was the
2057 original technology that was proposed by the Palo Altans for Green Energy, the people
2058 who put together the Measure E initiative. We looked at that, and it proved that it could
2059 be feasible. A feasibility study is only the first step. What happened from there is that
2060 Council elected to put the Measure E item on the ballot. It was on the ballot in
2061 November 2011, passed with a two-thirds majority. A couple of things that are
2062 interesting about the Measure E ballot initiative. One is that it called for staff to
2063 investigate the opportunity for putting an Energy Compost Facility on this 10-acre
2064 Measure E site, which I'll talk about in a second. It also undedicated the 10 acres of
2065 Byxbee Park Hills until 2021. What Emily Renzel was saying is that after 2021, Council
2066 could elect to return that back into parkland. Until such time, it was available for use. It
2067 didn't mandate that the use had to be there, but it called for the investigation and the
2068 opportunity to put that Energy Compose Facility there. I just want to make that
2069 distinction quickly for you. In 2013 we released an RFP for an Energy Compost Facility,
2070 that called for a technology to handle all of these feed stocks, the three that we talked
2071 about before, biosolids, food scraps and yard trimmings, either in one facility or perhaps
2072 in multiple facilities with the opportunity to use an acre within the wastewater treatment
2073 plant and the 10 acres of the Measure E site. We did that. What we found is that nothing
2074 really worked the way we had hoped. We didn't get a proposal that would satisfy the
2075 needs of both our solid waste needs and our wastewater needs. What it did clarify though
2076 was that there was a certain technology that was appropriate for the wastewater side of
2077 the shop. I'll get to that in a second. That RFP was canceled. The Council elected to
2078 reject all the proposals at that point. They said, at that point, "Well, we don't want to use
2079 the entire Measure E site. 10 acres is not appropriate to build on, so we're going to
2080 restrict you to 3.8 acres."—I'll show you that in a second—"3.8 acres of that site which is
2081 fairly flat, and we want you to look at it right away to see if it's possible to put a
2082 Composting Facility to compost yard trimmings and possibly residential food scraps
2083 together on this 3.8-acre site." Right away we quickly turned around in, I would say,
2084 record speed for government a new RFP which was looking at just composting on that
2085 Measure E site. What did we find? Well, the Measure E site is complicated. Building
2086 something there was very expensive, much more expensive than composting outside. At

2087 that point in time when we get to December just last year, a few months ago, Council
2088 said, "You know what? Maybe this isn't quite ready for prime time. We're going to hold
2089 off on this project, and we're going to continue essentially with the status quo." That's the
2090 lead. I want to give you a little bit more background about the site here. Now you know
2091 the ending, that nothing is happening over there for at least a little while. I want to talk
2092 about the site itself so you have some perspective. I know all of you spend a lot of time
2093 out on Byxbee Park. Daren gives me full reports back when he sees you all out there.
2094 Here's the park over here. Of course, we're going to be opening up a large portion of the
2095 last phase over in Earth Day. That'll be very exciting. We're going to be presenting next
2096 month to you about the Byxbee Park Hills concepts and the trails and all the great stuff
2097 we're doing over there. Right now if we look at the Measure E site, you can see this site
2098 is in blue. That's about 10 acres. The dark blue, over here, this is what we call the
2099 relatively flat area, the 3.8-acre area that was part of the Compost Facility RFP. Then the
2100 treatment plant is over here in yellow. One of the reasons that we weren't able to do
2101 anything right away on the Measure E site, and especially that 3.8-acre site, is that it has a
2102 number of constraints on the site. There is a habitat corridor, a set of trees pretty well
2103 established, that was serving as a barrier between the landfill and the waste water
2104 treatment plant right over here. That connects the Bay, over here, with Renzel Marsh.
2105 There's a lot of really great habitat in there, foxes and some other bunch of critters that
2106 are too numerous to name. Building on that site would involve the potential dislocation
2107 of that particular habitat corridor. That's one challenge. The second challenge is building
2108 anywhere on the Baylands is no easy feat. Underneath all that land is Bay mud, not
2109 really the most conducive neighborhood to build stuff in. In addition to that, right over
2110 here is a landfill, so you're building next to a landfill which is also not the easiest thing to
2111 build on. Add on to that a number of pipes that go underneath the site, real challenge.
2112 All of that drove up the cost and just made building even a simple compost facility very
2113 expensive. The last piece of making it expensive, you're like, "Why is it so expensive to
2114 build a compost facility? They seem like they should be pretty cheap." Well, you guys
2115 all have noses, right? Okay. Compost is smelly; it can be anyway. Because the use of
2116 Byxbee Park Hills is a park and people would be right here taking nice strolls and going
2117 by. They would smell what was coming off this facility, so we required the highest level
2118 of odor protection possible for that facility so that it would not smell offsite at all. Some
2119 people like the smell of compost. Me personally not so much. To have full odor control
2120 on that site again drove costs up. In turn, that is why we don't have a facility located on
2121 that site. What are we actually going to do? I'll try to wrap this up quickly for you. As
2122 part of the recommendation back in May 2014, we broke up our plans for dealing with
2123 organics, those three different organic streams, yard trimmings, food scraps and biosolids
2124 into four components. The first component, Number 1, is addressing biosolids
2125 specifically. That allows us to decommission the incinerator, so we can take those
2126 biosolids and send them off to either the Central Valley or over to the East Bay Municipal
2127 Utility District in Oakland to be processed there. That's a new truck offloading facility as
2128 part of Component 1. That project is underway right now. The first two components, by



2129 the way, are inside the treatment plant. Keep that in mind. Component 2 is anaerobic
2130 digestion. That's wet anaerobic digestion, building giant tanks that essentially eat the
2131 biosolids, the sewage sludge. That would also be located within the treatment plant. Part
2132 of that facility would be sending food scraps to those digesters, and that would all
2133 generate energy. All that energy would more than satisfy the energy needs of the
2134 wastewater treatment plant, which is one of the largest energy users in the entire city. It's
2135 a very green and sustainable effort. Essentially energy that you guys create through your
2136 trips to the bathroom—I apologize for being blunt—and the food that you eat or don't eat
2137 in this case. That's Components 1, 2 and 3. All of that would be located within the
2138 treatment plant's footprint. Component 4, that was what we were looking at with the
2139 Compost Facility RFP. That's the piece that we are currently, for lack of a better word,
2140 on hold and sending our organics outside of the community. I thought I had another slide
2141 at the end of there, but that's okay. My apologies. Here we are. Bear with me for one
2142 second here. We're experiencing technical difficulties. There we are. What happens?
2143 Again, we talked about in December 2014 the decision to go with the lower cost option,
2144 to use composting facilities for our yard trimmings and food scraps outside of Palo Alto.
2145 We are currently looking at a facility that's not very far, about 15 miles from our current
2146 location, in north San Jose, to do that. We're going to provide annual updates every
2147 December on the status of the composting technology to see if there are lower cost
2148 options to use on the Measure E site. Again, this site can be considered for
2149 energy/compost uses until 2021. At that time, in 2021 and beyond, the Council can elect
2150 to return it back to parkland. That is the close of my presentation. Thank you for
2151 listening. I'm happy to answer any questions.

2152
2153 Chair Reckdahl: Before we start the questions, can you give one clarification?
2154 Dedicated parkland versus undedicated, what's the ramifications of that? If something is
2155 undedicated, does that mean it can't be touched by the city or that the city can develop it
2156 just like you would any parkland?

2157
2158 Mr. Krupp: From my understanding, that parcel is not considered part of the park
2159 system. Those 10 acres are not parkland. Now the city can elect to do something else
2160 with it.

2161
2162 Chair Reckdahl: For example, making trails on it, finishing off the Byxbee Hills Park.
2163 Could they treat it just like they would any other parkland? By development I mean
2164 making trails or finishing off the park, make plantings, that type of thing.

2165
2166 Mr. Krupp: What I can do is I can address how we handled the 10 acres within the
2167 interim park concepts, which we're going to talk about next month. We didn't put any
2168 trails through there, because we didn't know what that use would be. We didn't want to
2169 put a trail in there and have to remove the trail that people were getting used to service.
2170 We have to cap that part of the landfill, so it has to be finished. It will be planted the



2171 same way as the rest of the landfill, so it won't look necessarily different from the rest of
2172 Byxbee Park Hills. At this point at time, until we're directed otherwise, we're not
2173 planning to put any trails through there. On the other hand, we're also not planning to
2174 fence it off. Daren, I don't know if you want to add anything to that.

2175
2176 Daren Anderson: No, I think you covered it.

2177
2178 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

2179
2180 Commissioner Crommie: I want to thank you so much for this presentation. It's really
2181 important for our Commission to stay aware of what's going on with this acreage. So
2182 much has been happening, and you gave a really great timeline. I really appreciate your
2183 presentation. What's important to me is that we acknowledge that what was expected to
2184 happen with Measure E has not happened. The vote was shall 10 acres of existing
2185 parkland in Byxbee Park be undedicated for the exclusive purpose of building a
2186 processing facility for yard trimmings, food waste and other organic material. The idea
2187 behind this was to get green energy from anaerobic digestion. It's anaerobic digestion
2188 which is going to give us that green energy. You updated us quite well on the findings
2189 that so far that hasn't happened. The proponents of Measure E were very hopeful that it
2190 would. The opponents said, "We don't think the technology is there." We have six more
2191 years to figure it out. Because it's not looking like it is there, I'm just hoping that
2192 somehow our Commission can over time, through some kind of direction between staff
2193 helping us figure out how to do this, not lose sight of that parkland. This is to support
2194 what Emily Renzel said, that we have a lot of development going on in Byxbee Park.
2195 There's a lot of interest in our community to get those trails figured out, to make it a rich
2196 place for people to be. We've waited a long time. As we plan that, I think it's our
2197 responsibility on the Commission to not lose sight of that parkland. If you carve out the
2198 3.8 out of the 10, that's still leaving 6.2 acres to think about. I try to keep track of all this
2199 and I read a lot of the reports. Can you just say once again what that 3.8 would be carved
2200 out for provisionally? I know nothing is set, but can you just give a one sentence on that?

2201
2202 Mr. Krupp: Yeah, sure. The reason the 3.8 acres was carved out from the whole was that
2203 there was no fill underneath. There's no actual garbage underneath those 3.8 acres, and
2204 we wouldn't have to excavate the garbage and build a retaining wall, which was
2205 originally the possibility with using all the 10 acres. The 3.8 acres was what we always
2206 called "the relatively flat" portion of that land.

2207
2208 Commissioner Crommie: Now I understand. Should anything go there, the idea is it
2209 should really only go on the 3.8 if anything goes there at all. That is more of a rationale
2210 for us to really keep our eye on the 6.2 acres. I think that land is a really important
2211 gateway to Byxbee Park. When you look at the map, it just sits right there as people are
2212 going to enter the park. I just think we don't want to lose sight of that. I also want to

2213 make a point that when this vote went forth, the idea was that 10 acres was to be used
2214 independently for the production of green energy. If we can't do that, I personally think
2215 we have to be very careful about setting that site up as some kind of support land for the
2216 processing plant. Just because it happens to be next to it doesn't mean that we have no
2217 mandate whatsoever to have this undedicated parkland to somehow be some auxiliary
2218 space to support what's going on at the regional—what did we call that? The sewage
2219 treatment center. I really would like us to separate this as we study this on the
2220 Commission. I really hope that you'll continue to come back to us. I also want to say I
2221 think the city is doing very good work totally independent of Measure E. I know it was a
2222 goal of the city to get rid of the incinerator. That's huge. I want to congratulate the
2223 powers behind that. To push forward with all of these incredibly sensible things that
2224 needed to take place which have really no bearing on our parkland and are going to
2225 proceed independently of that. Thank you.
2226

2227 Chair Reckdahl: Other questions. Nope. Thank you.
2228

2229 **6. Council Recommendation on Next Steps for the 7.7 Acres at Foothills Park.**
2230

2231 Chair Reckdahl: We do have one speaker, Jerry Hearn.
2232

2233 Jerry Hearn: Thank you very much. Members of the Commission, Jerry Hearn, resident
2234 of Portola Valley. In the interests of disclosure, I've been involved with the Acterra
2235 nursery and with Acterra both since their inception; however, tonight I'm speaking as a
2236 private citizen in regards to the recommendation in front of you tonight. There are three
2237 elements to it. I want to comment individually on each one of them. The first one
2238 regarding the hydrologic study, I think that's an excellent idea. It's in line with the natural
2239 environment element of the general plan. In my experience working with the Master
2240 Plan process for the parks, there's seems to be a great interest for water features, and this
2241 could turn out to be an interesting water feature. Thirdly, as mentioned in there, there is
2242 some potential for steelhead trout that do exist in the downstream end of Los Trancos
2243 Creek which this empties into. I think that's a good idea, and I fully support that. The
2244 second item is about the closure of the park temporarily until the hydrologic study is
2245 done. I think that makes perfect sense. If you've been out there, you know what the area
2246 looks like. The flat area, which is the only really accessible area, is pretty uninteresting
2247 at this point. There doesn't seem to be a whole lot of interest to go out there; however,
2248 you might think about making it available for tours every once in a while as was done
2249 before, although those were not very well attended. It's not a bad idea if people want to
2250 go out there and take a look at it. The third part, which as to do with the nursery lease.
2251 When I first read about the idea of having it be on an annual basis, that kind of set me
2252 back a little bit because I thought back to when we were trying to find a place for the
2253 nursery, how long it took us to find it, how long it took us to put all the pieces together.
2254 The idea that in a year's time or half a year's time, depending on whatever happened, we



Approved

2255 could be looking for a new place. That would be a real challenge. However, with the
2256 option that it's a four-year renewable lease with both parties agreeing to it and given the
2257 excellent relationship that we have established with staff over the many years, I think that
2258 we would be able to work with that. I'm sure that it would not be a surprise sprung on us,
2259 so we would have plenty of time to make a change if we needed to. In general, I just
2260 want to say that I support the recommendation. I appreciate all the work that staff has put
2261 into thinking about this. I look forward to seeing that 7.7 acres put to better use than it
2262 has been in the past with the exception, of course, of the Acterra nursery which is a
2263 fabulous use. Thank you very much.

2264
2265 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Daren, it's yours.

2266
2267 Daren Anderson: Good evening. I'm here tonight seeking your recommendation to
2268 Council on how to proceed with that 7.7-acre parcel of parkland at Foothills Park. A
2269 quick summary of where we left off. The Council had dedicated this land in August 2014
2270 and directed staff to work with the Commission to figure out the best use for the land.
2271 After the ranger-led tours and the public meeting, staff brought the issue to the
2272 Commission to discuss it on January 27th, last month. At the meeting, there was general
2273 consensus on how to move forward. The first general agreement was to fund and
2274 implement the hydrology study for Buckeye Creek. There was note that this should be
2275 completed before making any recommendations whatsoever on how to use the land for
2276 any other purpose. The second was to renew that Acterra nursery lease for a short-term
2277 basis so the city has flexibility to act on those recommendations that would come about
2278 through some hydrology study. I've recommended a year-to-year lease, as you saw in the
2279 staff report, with the option to renew for four additional years pending that mutual
2280 agreement and the city's approval. The third consensus was to keep that parcel closed to
2281 the public, which is status quo, until the hydrology study is complete. I would like to
2282 thank the Commission and the ad hoc committee for excellent guidance, really clear
2283 directions, and assistance with this process. That concludes my presentation. I'm
2284 available for any questions or comments.

2285
2286 Chair Reckdahl: Okay. Questions?

2287
2288 Chair Lauing: Do the ad hoc committee members want to add anything different or
2289 additional from last month?

2290
2291 Chair Reckdahl: Go ahead, Commissioner Hetterly.

2292
2293 Commissioner Hetterly: I was going to go ahead and move that we approve the
2294 recommendation.

2295
2296 Chair Reckdahl: Do we have a second?

2297
2298 Commissioner Lauing: Second.

2299
2300 Commissioner Knopper: Second. Oh, sorry.

2301
2302 **STAFF RECOMMENDATION MOVED BY COMMISSIONER HETTERLY AND**
2303 **SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LAUING.**

2304
2305 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

2306
2307 Commissioner Crommie: I just had a question. Am I allowed to ask that?

2308
2309 Commissioner Hetterly: (inaudible)

2310
2311 Commissioner Lauing: Motion's on the table.

2312
2313 Commissioner Crommie: Thank you, Daren, for all your hard work on this as well as
2314 thank you to our ad hoc committee. I think this was a really good proposal. I wanted a
2315 sense of what you're thinking in terms of timeframe. The reason I'm asking this question
2316 is I know part of the proposal is to keep this land out of reach to the public. Any time we
2317 do have parkland, I think as a Commission we have to be very mindful of that. I take that
2318 very seriously as far as cutting off access. I know that in the past a couple of Council
2319 Members have asked if, while we're figuring this all out, we can have access. We've
2320 bantered that about. I think there are some good arguments in this proposal for why we
2321 cannot do that considering cost and safety, just to mention two of them. Can you just
2322 speak to this issue a little bit? We've been waiting decades for this, and I would just hate
2323 for it to go on and on. Can you give me some sense of what you're thinking in terms of
2324 the timeline?

2325
2326 Mr. Anderson: My hope for the timeline is that the capital improvement project is
2327 approved, and we are able to have access to the funds come July 1st. Once the funds are
2328 available, jump on this immediately. Go out to bid, see if we can find a good consultant
2329 to take on the hydrology study. The part of the timeframe that I'm uncertain about is how
2330 long it'll take to get the hydrology study completed. It would really be part of that pre-
2331 bid proposal, where I'm hearing from consultants if they need to see it through a full rain
2332 cycle. In some preliminary outreach, we know that there are some contractors who have
2333 studied the hydrology in the general area. They might have a good enough understanding
2334 that could truncate that process a little bit, rather than having to see it over an extended
2335 period of time. That's an unknown at this point. I need more details to come through the
2336 outreach to these contractors and the people who study hydrology. That said, I could not
2337 foresee it going beyond a year.

2339 Commissioner Crommie: Just as far as how this is phrased here. It says, "Keep the 7.7-
2340 acre parcel closed until after the hydrology study is completed." We know that once a
2341 study is completed, then we have to study the findings of the study, figure out where we
2342 want to go with that. I might try to make a friendly amendment to this or I wonder if we
2343 can have some kind of clarification about that. I wanted, I guess, more clarification on
2344 this statement.

2345
2346 Mr. Anderson: I understand what you mean. I think it bears elaboration. I think the
2347 right thing is after that study is complete, it comes back to the Commission and then we
2348 can look at all those options we vetted. Somewhere in there it could open early, because
2349 now you've got an understanding of the implications of the hydrology. It could remain
2350 closed. The reason I left it partially open is we know what the process will be after the
2351 hydrology study is complete. Somewhere in there it could open and maybe not. It would
2352 really be at the Commission's recommendation, which is what Council asked of you. We
2353 could add language or if you think that suffices, leave it as is.

2354
2355 Commissioner Crommie: As a Commission, I'd like a chance when it's on the table. It
2356 sounds like it's already on the table. I don't know the logistics of when I bring that up for
2357 discussion. I would like some guidance on having our Commission talk about the
2358 wording of Number 2. Is this the proper time to do that? I want to know if anyone else
2359 on the Commission ...

2360
2361 Commissioner Hetterly: Do you have a proposal for what (inaudible)?

2362
2363 Commissioner Crommie: What would I propose?

2364
2365 Commissioner Hetterly: Do you have a suggestion for what you would like? Do you
2366 have wording to propose?

2367
2368 Commissioner Crommie: Let me think a minute. Keep it closed until it's completed.
2369 Once it's completed, bring it back in a timely manner so we can reevaluate that. I don't
2370 know quite how to word that. I feel like it's just a little bit too open-ended. Does anyone
2371 else share my concern?

2372
2373 Commissioner Knopper: Actually no. It's not only with regard to the hydrologic study.
2374 Obviously you mentioned the safety issue with regard to the parcel. There's also a
2375 private residence, if you recall, that has three open sides. From a public-private
2376 perspective, we can't just open it to the public because then they'll end up trespassing.
2377 The other issue I want to bring up is after the hydrologic study and the conclusion of the
2378 Master Plan, having all of that data as well as the creek information, like structurally the
2379 creek issue, folding all that data together and then being able to systematically make
2380 decisions that are formed based on what this—because it's really 2.1 acres as we talked

2381 about that's buildable potentially. I think that's very clear. Keep the parcel closed until
2382 after the study and then we can deal with it at that point. I think the study is only one
2383 piece of it, because it's also about the Master Plan.
2384

2385 Chair Reckdahl: My concern would be that you could infer that first sentence says that
2386 once the study is complete, we will open it. That'd be my only concern about
2387 misinterpretation. If we want to say, "Shall remain closed at least until after the
2388 hydrology study is complete," that would say that we don't have any obligation to open it
2389 once the hydrological study is complete.
2390

2391 Commissioner Crommie: Okay. That's possible. Commissioner Knopper just said two
2392 things that I am not sure I personally agree with. I don't think it's really been established
2393 that only 2.1 acres of that are usable. We don't know that for certain. There are ways to
2394 build trails on—it's all predicated on flatness. We know that you can build trails in areas
2395 that are not flat. I don't agree with that.
2396

2397 Commissioner Lauing: What's wrong with leaving it open as it is? It seemed to me that
2398 the language you added didn't change the facts here, which is it's going to stay closed
2399 until the hydrologic study is complete. I'm not sure what your language does. It doesn't
2400 say it's going to open. It's just an extra sentence, just as I heard it anyway. All we're
2401 saying with the way it's written is that it's going to stay closed, if we approve this
2402 recommendation, until we get the results of the hydrologic study. After that we could
2403 make new recommendations the next day, I guess, technically the way this is written.
2404

2405 Commissioner Crommie: If that's the interpretation, that's fine with me. I like the idea
2406 once it's complete that it can come back to us immediately and we can try to open it. I
2407 wouldn't vote for something that's going to be closed indefinitely. I think the safety
2408 measures are workable. I personally believe that you can overcome that and open this up.
2409 There are ways to mitigate the dangers to the public. I think eventually our Commission
2410 is going to have to deal with this question of what we're doing next. I interpret this the
2411 way that, I guess, Commissioner Lauing just stated it; that as soon as it's complete, at any
2412 point it can come back to us and we can say we can open it.
2413

2414 Mr. Anderson: Would it be at all helpful if I added text to the staff report that goes to
2415 Council to just make that abundantly clear that this is the process that the Commission
2416 and staff intend to follow? Everything we just enumerated. That after this is done,
2417 immediately after, staff will bring this back to the Commission. One of the things that
2418 may result is opening it sooner rather than later, but we'll have the full breadth of
2419 information from the Master Plan and the hydrology study. We'll combine it to take the
2420 most prudent process forward.
2421

Approved

2422 Commissioner Crommie: I like that personally, because I'm not believing that it's
2423 impossible to open this land up. I actually believe it is possible, but I think the hydrology
2424 study takes precedence in my mind. That's why I would vote in favor of this. I do think
2425 it's possible to open up this land while we're studying it further.
2426

2427 Chair Reckdahl: Without an amendment, we go back to the Motion. We have a Motion
2428 and a second. All in favor say aye. Opposed. It passes. Thank you, Daren.
2429

2430 **MOTION PASSES: 7-0**
2431

2432 **7. Other Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates.**
2433

2434 Chair Reckdahl: Are there any ad hocs that have updates?
2435

2436 Commissioner Ashlund: Yeah. Commissioner Crommie and I met regarding the Lucy
2437 Evans Baylands Interpretive Center. We met with Daren Anderson regarding the site,
2438 and then with John Aikin to discuss the site and the CIPs that are available as well as
2439 future steps regarding programming. The three CIPs that are currently in process are a
2440 feasibility study to determine how to repair and replace the boardwalk. That RFP I
2441 assume went out; it was to go out last month. This study will complete in the fall and
2442 design can begin soon after pending Council approval. Cost of construction for the
2443 boardwalk will be determined during the study and further refined in the design stage.
2444 The second is the project for general improvements to the Interpretive Center. The scope
2445 of this project is decking, railing, structural framing as needed, exterior wood siding,
2446 flooring, cabinetry, and doors. That is interior as well as exterior, because the floor is
2447 continuous on the exterior of the building as well as inside. There's \$100,000 budgeted
2448 for design in the current fiscal year and \$405,000 scheduled for construction in fiscal year
2449 2016. This RFP did go out in January and design will begin this spring. Public Works
2450 had slated to do public input in the fall. We added that we should have Parks and Rec
2451 feedback prior to the public input phase on that process. The third one is improvements
2452 to the Interpretive Center exhibits, but this also includes the outdoor signage. That
2453 project is funded at \$56,000 scheduled for fiscal year 2017. We discussed that that was
2454 insufficient budget for exhibits, but it's the starting point. We'll be going back after that.
2455 That is the current status. Commissioner Crommie, did you have anything to add?
2456

2457 Commissioner Crommie: Yes, thank you. The next step in this is to bring John Aikin to
2458 present to us on these CIPs with the main focus on the third one that Commissioner
2459 Ashlund just mentioned, which is the Interpretive Center exhibits. What we brought up
2460 in our meeting with John Aikin is that we're very interested in discussing programming
2461 and making sure that the facility is sustaining future programming. When we asked
2462 about that, he said that he thinks that the second CIP that Commissioner Ashlund
2463 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.

2506
2507 Chair Reckdahl: Let's talk offline and bring this up in a future meeting.
2508

2509 Commissioner Crommie: This has a lot of visibility right now, which is very important.
2510 Commissioner Ashlund and I, in talking to John Aikin, agreed that we need to act now
2511 with a vision because of the visibility and the momentum. This is the time to do it if we
2512 want to advocate for any kind of global envisioning, when it comes to something like
2513 exhibits.
2514

2515 Chair Reckdahl: Any other ad hocs? Okay.
2516

2517 **V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**
2518

2519 Chair Reckdahl: Rob, did you have any announcements?
2520

2521 Rob de Geus: It's late so I'll be quick. We do have our summer camp and aquatics
2522 registration coming up. We did have a fair over the weekend at Mitchell Park, which was
2523 a lot of fun. A lot of parents and children attended that and met some of the staff. By
2524 5:00 p.m. this Friday, submissions need to be in so we can process the summer camp
2525 program. I wanted to give an update on the CIP program. Generally the Commission
2526 worked with staff in defining priorities. That's moving through the process. We still
2527 have Buckeye Creek, of course a high priority, Bol Park. The Baylands Comprehensive
2528 Conservation Plan is in there as well. Hopefully that will get approved, which actually
2529 could inform exhibits. Also Cubberley is also now coming into play, because we have an
2530 agreement with the school district that defines specific funding to support the Cubberley
2531 campus. There's a few things that I'd love to see fixed there; the tennis courts as an
2532 example. They're really in bad shape. There's a number of other things that we'd just like
2533 to get fixed up at Cubberley as well as starting the Master Planning process for the future
2534 of Cubberley.
2535

2536 Commissioner Lauing: What about that fire hazard at Foothills? Was that put in the
2537 CIPs from a different group?
2538

2539 Mr. de Geus: No. That's an interesting question. It was requested that it wouldn't be put
2540 in the capital budget, but rather be put forward as an operating budget request between
2541 Public Works, Community Services and Fire. We're submitting it that way. It's in the
2542 mix, so we'll see if it gets approved. That's it.
2543

2544 Chair Reckdahl: What's the status on El Camino Park?
2545

2546 Mr. de Geus: The status on El Camino Park is it's moving forward. I believe something
2547 had begun on site. I don't know that they had a specific groundbreaking, that I'm aware

2548 of at least. We've been moving forward and hope to have it completed by the end of the
2549 calendar year with an open facility. A long time coming.

2550
2551 Chair Reckdahl: How about the Mayfield turf? I think we'd said that we were looking at
2552 a February timeframe to start the turf. I think that's been pushed back.

2553
2554 Mr. de Geus: I think it's on schedule. We're a bit behind, I should say first of all. The
2555 most recent schedule, we're sticking with that. Both fields need to be replaced in terms of
2556 the turf.

2557
2558 Chair Reckdahl: They're doing it sequentially, so we only lose one field at a time?

2559
2560 Mr. de Geus: That's correct.

2561
2562 Commissioner Ashlund: Can I request an update on Magical Bridge next time if
2563 possible? I know there's been a lot of progress there, so any word you have on the
2564 opening.

2565
2566 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, that'll be good timing. By the end of March I think it's intended to
2567 be open if all goes according to plan.

2568
2569 Chair Reckdahl: How about Scott Park?

2570
2571 Mr. de Geus: I'll have to get back to you on Scott Park. I'm not sure what the status is on
2572 that.

2573
2574 **VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR MARCH 24, 2015 MEETING**

2575
2576 Chair Reckdahl: Maybe you should talk about the retreat first.

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2578 Rob de Geus: The retreat we have scheduled for March 20th from noon to 3:00 at
2579 Mitchell Park Community Center.

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2581 Chair Reckdahl: We're not doing Foothills.

2582
2583 Mr. de Geus: Not this time. Was it not available or we just went with Mitchell?

2584
2585 Catherine Bourquin: Sorry, it was more convenient for me to reserve Mitchell this time.

2586
2587 Mr. de Geus: It was more convenience for Catherine, so we're at Mitchell.

2589 Commissioner Knopper: Are we in the library or are we actually in the Community
2590 Center?

2591
2592 Vice Chair Markevitch: Probably the community center.

2593
2594 Mr. de Geus: If there's a desire for the Commission to be somewhere else, we can do
2595 that. Mitchell's a nice change.

2596
2597 Chair Reckdahl: It's a new facility. In some ways it's nice to use the new facility.

2598
2599 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, I agree.

2600
2601 Chair Reckdahl: If anything's wrong with it, we can complain.

2602
2603 Mr. de Geus: It keeps Catherine happy too, so that's always good. The question will be,
2604 what do we do at that retreat? I think there's two possibilities. One is a typical retreat
2605 that we do, where we take some time to really reflect on the year past and the year ahead
2606 and try to plan out the year in priorities and see if we can set the agenda to some degree
2607 for the next several months. The alternative is to focus on the Parks Master Plan. That
2608 really depends on how far MIG can get with staff in preparing the matrix and the data and
2609 the binders, so that we can have a productive meeting. We'll have to see. We have a
2610 little bit of time; I guess about a month to prepare for that. I suspect we're not going to be
2611 ready by March 20th to do that deep dive in the matrix and the Summary of Needs,
2612 because there's just so much information. I don't want to go forward with it unless it's
2613 really ready and well thought through.

2614
2615 Chair Reckdahl: I am concerned that if we wait too long and they fill it out the wrong
2616 way too much, then they'll say, "Well, we put so much into this, you can't change it now."

2617
2618 Mr. de Geus: That's a fair point too. That's something that perhaps we can talk about
2619 over the next month to see where things are at. We can also talk with MIG and make the
2620 call as we get a little closer. Everybody's got it on their calendar? Either way it'll be ...

2621
2622 Chair Reckdahl: We will have a retreat on the 20th. We will set the content, and then
2623 Rob will send something out by email depending on what the content is. We'll prepare
2624 for the regular retreat. I think the highest priority is Master Plan. If we're anywhere close
2625 to having something, we should do the Master Plan.

2626
2627 Commissioner Lauing: If that happens, then we're going to put the retreat content into
2628 one of our subsequent meetings, correct? As opposed to setting another retreat to do the
2629 real retreat.

2630

2631 Chair Reckdahl: I guess we can talk about that at the retreat.
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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.

2714 Commissioner Hetterly: Sorry. I think I complicated the issue by raising it. We don't
2715 have it on the agenda today to discuss the retreat. We don't even know when we're going
2716 hold the retreat. Since we're in this Plan A/Plan B scenario for the 20th, I just wanted to
2717 remind everyone that if we do end up having the retreat on the 20th, be cautious of the
2718 Brown Act.

2719
2720 Commissioner Crommie: Now I understand where you're coming from. Just to clarify, I
2721 thought we had a date and a time. Is that not true?

2722
2723 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, we do. March 20th, noon to 3:00. We'll provide lunch.

2724
2725 Chair Reckdahl: March 20th, we will have a retreat. The only issue is the content of the
2726 retreat. Is it the traditional content or is it just the Master Plan? We might do 3 hours on
2727 the Master Plan.

2728
2729 Commissioner Crommie: We're going to have to notice this?

2730
2731 Mr. de Geus: Oh, yeah.

2732
2733 Chair Reckdahl: Oh, yeah.

2734
2735 Commissioner Crommie: Maybe we've just neglected to put it on the agenda. In the past
2736 we've often discussed it at our meeting prior to the retreat.

2737
2738 Mr. de Geus: I think we have. I think that's right.

2739
2740 Commissioner Crommie: I was just a little bit ...

2741
2742 Mr. de Geus: Retreat planning I think, yeah.

2743
2744 Commissioner Crommie: Right. That's okay.

2745
2746 Chair Reckdahl: Agenda items for next month, for the 24th.

2747
2748 Mr. de Geus: We have a Byxbee Park plan.

2749
2750 Commissioner Crommie: I just wanted to comment that Daren is working very hard on
2751 that. We have an ad hoc subcommittee that needs to meet before we present that. We
2752 were almost ready to meet. Now we're probably going to meet really soon. That's
2753 Commissioner Reckdahl and myself.

2754
2755 Chair Reckdahl: He has the feedback from the consultant now, so we can talk about it.

2756
2757 Commissioner Crommie: Right. I think we're ready to set our meeting. He's ready.

2758
2759 Chair Reckdahl: I assume Master Plan is going to come up.

2760
2761 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, Parks Master Plan will be back.

2762
2763 Commissioner Crommie: Can we invite John Aikin to come and speak about the
2764 Baylands CIP? If we have room in the meeting.

2765
2766 Mr. de Geus: I don't think he'll have a whole lot of information by next month, is my
2767 sense. This is related to the exhibits specifically?

2768
2769 Commissioner Crommie: Yeah. When Commissioner Ashlund and I spoke with him, he
2770 made it sound like he was ready to come as soon we were able to have him.

2771
2772 Mr. de Geus: Okay, I'll check with him.

2773
2774 Commissioner Crommie: If you could just talk to him about that.

2775
2776 Mr. de Geus: Okay.

2777
2778 Chair Reckdahl: What is the schedule for determining CIPs?

2779
2780 Mr. de Geus: We're in the process of getting the new five-year plan approved. We run
2781 on a fiscal year from July 1 to June 30th. Now we're doing the 2016-2020 five-year plan
2782 and trying to get the first year, 2016, the actual budget approved. The other four years
2783 are just a plan.

2784
2785 Chair Reckdahl: We submitted a bunch for this coming fiscal year.

2786
2787 Mr. de Geus: Right. We're still in the process of getting those approved.

2788
2789 Chair Reckdahl: That goes up one level, and then they throw some out and keep some.
2790 Then they submit that to a higher level, to the Council.

2791
2792 Mr. de Geus: Right. It goes up several levels. So far all of our priorities remain in there,
2793 which is good news.

2794
2795 Chair Reckdahl: It's made it through the first cut, and now it's going to Council.
2796

2797 Mr. de Geus: Correct. After July 1, after the budget has been approved, we can start
2798 over in evaluating the next round.

2799
2800 Chair Reckdahl: What is the date for the Council to approve it?

2801
2802 Mr. de Geus: I saw the schedule this week. I'll have to send it out. I know the
2803 Community Services budget is scheduled to go to the Finance Committee—are you on
2804 the Finance Committee, Council Member? Yeah. I think it's May 5th for the CSD
2805 operating budget. The capital budget goes on a different schedule. I'll have to send that
2806 calendar out to you all.

2807
2808 Chair Reckdahl: So we will not have any news about CIPs next month?

2809
2810 Mr. de Geus: No.

2811
2812 Vice Chair Markevitch: We only have two agenda items so far for next month.

2813
2814 Mr. de Geus: I'll have to check with Daren and with Peter to see if there are any park
2815 projects that need to come forward.

2816
2817 Chair Reckdahl: The other option is if the agenda's looking thin next month, we could do
2818 the Master Plan that evening on the 24th at our regular meeting or have a two-hour chunk
2819 out of it, some big chunk of the evening meeting. Then just have a retreat on the 20th,
2820 our normal retreat.

2821
2822 Mr. de Geus: We could do that. It feels to me like that's a really big discussion, and
2823 something that might lend itself to not being in this format and not going late into the
2824 evening.

2825
2826 Commissioner Crommie: When do we get the revenue report? Is that part of the Master
2827 Plan? That's an important piece that we haven't seen yet.

2828
2829 Mr. de Geus: The cost and prices. I haven't seen that either. I think they're working on
2830 that. We received today the survey results, a summary of the survey results. I haven't
2831 read it yet. That's the latest I've gotten from MIG.

2832
2833 Commissioner Crommie: As far as the next time we talk about the Master Plan, do we
2834 have a topic that we're expecting to talk about? Would we be talking about those survey
2835 results? That's a pretty meaty topic.

2836
2837 Mr. de Geus: On the 24th?
2838

Approved

2839 Commissioner Crommie: Yeah.

2840
2841 Mr. de Geus: The survey results would be in there. That alone could be enough of a
2842 topic for the Master Plan.

2843
2844 Chair Reckdahl: Do you have any more comments? Okay.

2845
2846 **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

2847
2848 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Hetterly and second by Commissioner
2849 Ashlund at 10:52 p.m.

