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**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
March 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:** Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus, Peter Jensen

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

19
20 **II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

21
22 None.

23
24 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

25
26 None.

27
28 **IV. BUSINESS:**

29
30 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the Regular Meeting of February 24, 2015.**

31
32 Approval of the draft February 24, 2015 Minutes was moved by Vice Chair Markevitch
33 and seconded by Commissioner Hetterly. Passed 7-0
34



35 **2. Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Facilities Master Plan to Include a**
36 **Review of the Community Survey Summary and Park Existing Conditions**
37 **Maps.**
38

39 Chair Reckdahl: We have the MIG consultants. Thank you for coming down. This is a
40 two-hour chunk of time, so hopefully it will be very productive. You can start with your
41 presentation.
42

43 Rob de Geus: Just a quick comment. We don't have to take two hours if we get through
44 more quickly. It is actually pretty rich information in this survey. Most of all, the
45 Commission did a great deal of work in helping prepare the survey and get it ready for
46 public consumption. I don't know if you remember, but we spent a whole afternoon
47 reworking the survey, making sure that it had the questions that we really needed and
48 wanted. That was well worth it, because we had over 1,000 respondents. Pretty
49 interesting information that we're going to discuss tonight. We do have a presentation.
50 We welcome back Ryan and Ellie from MIG. We'll have them start off. Thank you.
51

52 Ryan Mottau: Thank you again for having me here, Chair Reckdahl and all of you
53 members of the Parks and Rec Commission. We wanted to reserve a chunk of time here,
54 because I know that this is an important topic for you all and there's a lot of information
55 provided. I want to start off with a quick explanation of what you're seeing in front of
56 you. It's been a little while, and we've taken this step back to pull a bunch of data
57 together. You've got your binders in hand now that include a lot of background
58 information organized more specifically by reference numbers and sections as explained
59 in the first sheet there. This is already inserted into your binders from the retreat, so you
60 have that information. The summary is in front of you for the survey at this point. We're
61 calling it Initial Summary because it is the first of two steps of digging into this
62 information. We wanted to make sure to get a chance to talk with you all about what
63 information might need some further clarification. We've talked about from the start of
64 this process, this survey effort was going to involve getting as many responses as we
65 could, but then also doing a breakdown of those responses to rebalance for
66 representativeness across the population. We're going to talk about that a little bit at the
67 end of this presentation. What I really want to do is go over a few points that stood out to
68 us as we went through this process of breaking down all of these results; and also ask you
69 all if there are things, either from the points that I'm going to bring up this evening or the
70 charts that I'm going to bring up or from any of the other questions, that you would like to
71 discuss with us while we're here and set you off on a path to review this a little more. We
72 will dig into that last little bit about the quota-based analysis. As Rob said, this survey
73 was a joint effort. We administered it per the scope request with the web service that the
74 City has subscribed to as part of our original plan from the start. We got a chance to
75 really dig in both with your ad hoc committee and with the full PRC to make sure the
76 questions addressed the topics that were close to your priorities and making sure that we



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77 got to the response we wanted and also to give you guys some time to provide feedback
78 about how to get the word about that. I want to say, echoing again what Rob said, that
79 we really feel like that was a big success; 1,164 responses once we had culled the limited
80 number of duplicates that inevitably happen, people hitting submit twice, that kind of
81 thing. We did not see any evidence in our review of quality control of any people who
82 had taken this survey lots of times or tried to load down a particular answer. I have no
83 concerns about the quality of this information as we move forward. Just to give a quick
84 profile of who responded. This is the entire set of responses. What you'll see here are
85 percentages all based on that 1,164 number with a couple of very limited exceptions that
86 are really representing out of the number of people who responded to this survey overall
87 is how we can look at these percentages. Overall the general respondent profile was
88 primarily people identifying as living in Palo Alto. We have the racial and ethnic
89 breakdown compared against the American Community Survey. If you aren't familiar
90 with that, between decennial census they do the estimates and updates for updated
91 information. This is the most current census information aligned here with that
92 breakdown for the entire survey count. Also looking at a couple of key questions, which
93 were very important to you all, making sure that we were including those parents with
94 children in the household or youth in the household. We had asked that question on our
95 survey in detail, what age groups do you have children in. We also aggregated that so
96 that we could do a quick comparison to what the ACS shows the overall community
97 breakdown is. Where we came out on that point is that we actually got a little bit
98 stronger response from the households with children. It actually flip flopped that overall
99 demographic in terms of what the ACS shows. We had 35 percent of households in Palo
100 Alto with children, 66 percent of our overall survey respondents have children of any age
101 in their household. Just to point out here, the math on the upper table here, which I'm
102 assuming you guys are seeing on your screens as well. On the upper table here, just to
103 note that these people were allowed to answer for multiple categories, and so the math on
104 the county column will not add up to 100, but the math on the percentage column will
105 also not because of the basis on the 1,164 responses. There is a double counting in that,
106 but not in the lower set there. Moving on to the meat of this. The summary presents
107 upfront, after the profile of what this survey is, a breakdown of some, as we called them,
108 themes and key findings. The two categories of what we really drew out of these results
109 overall. Themes being things that we saw across a wide set of questions. We tried to pin
110 those down so that you could see where those themes were being drawn out of,
111 referencing specifically to the different graphs that addressed those questions. In a
112 second section within that, what we labeled as strong findings on some key issues. So
113 drawing out from the topics that you have pointed out, that Staff has pointed out, the
114 community has pointed out are very important, starting to find those particularly strong
115 results. By strong I mean really looking at the things that look overwhelmingly
116 supportive. We are not trying to split hairs here, it's not 50 percent versus 51 percent.
117 We are looking at things that are more like overall 75 percent of people were supportive.
118 We are looking at things that overall 75 percent of people were supportive. Thinking



119 about those, one of the topics that hit, and this chart covers a couple of different points.
120 You also have a handout. I will note that it goes through all of these graphs with a little
121 bit more detail. They have the raw numbers of responses in each category. Looking at
122 this graph, there were a couple of these strong findings that we identified. The topic of
123 water conservation as part of the overall sustainability questions that we asked really did
124 garner a lot of support. There were many strongly supporting responses to things like
125 expanding the use of recycled water and reducing the turf grass where it is not needed for
126 sports use. On a related note, on that same graph there are a couple of questions related
127 to the choice of using or not using artificial turf on athletic fields. It has some
128 sustainability implications on both sides. Artificial turf fields as noted in the question can
129 reduce the watering needs compared to a natural turf fields, but the support overall in the
130 community was stronger for avoiding artificial turf fields in favor of natural grass which
131 also allowed for drainage and reduces the need for the plastics and rubbers and things in
132 that environment. Overall we were seeing in this context of sustainability and water
133 conservation not as much support for artificial turf. Onto Graph 6. This question was
134 really tying into improvements to parks generally across the system to make those visits
135 more comfortable and convenient. This captured a variety of topics including one that
136 has been a perennial favorite here, which is the restroom topic, adding restrooms into
137 some of your park facilities. What we heard overall really was a pretty overwhelming
138 response. Over 80 percent of the people responding to this survey said that it was either a
139 4 or a 5, with 5 being very important, 1 being not important on our rating scale. This
140 came in with a group of amenities that we were actually hearing a lot about in other
141 venues as well. Restrooms come up in a lot of our meetings and our public forums as did
142 seating and shade, which both polled well here and really got the kind of support. I'll
143 note in addition to the blues on the charts, we're also looking at the red and the orange
144 which are very small in a lot of those areas. There's a fairly good chunk of people who
145 are a little bit more undecided, but there's a very strong voice in support and a very small
146 voice that says it wouldn't be appropriate. These are feeling like the kinds of findings
147 that we could take action based on and really put some support behind. The next graph is
148 Graph 8, if you're following along elsewhere on the summary. Thinking about the ways
149 to address dogs within parks; another topic that we know has been very important. With
150 all of the responses considered, the strong responses really came on the positive side from
151 improving where you have existing dog parks and the strong negative, or the strong not
152 appropriate, response came on the off-leash answer in non-fenced areas. We specifically
153 asked it and made the clarifying point, which gets cut off on this caption, that it would
154 require a change to our current City policy around this if that was to be a solution.
155 There's a lot more people saying that that would not be an appropriate solution from the
156 overall set. We have done a little bit of preliminary breaking down of this for dog owner
157 versus non-dog owner, which seems the logical next step of looking at this question.
158 Predictably what we see on the how parts of this question, the second, third and fourth
159 answers, you really see almost a complete flip-flop, that dog owners are more in support
160 of all of the above options with no one clear frontrunner. Non-dog owners basically



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161 saying none of those seem as appropriate as improving existing dog parks. The one thing
162 I will say is that both agreed in general and across the board, looking in the specific
163 categories, that doing nothing, the no additional dog parks answer, was inappropriate for
164 both dog owners and non-dog owners. That was a useful finding. While it doesn't
165 necessarily clarify from the population as a whole what should be our immediate
166 solution, it does provide some guidance about what did not test well. These were
167 questions about some recreation programming options that are based on the categories of
168 programming options that are offered and match up to general categories that we've used
169 in other situations to capture the range of common recreation programs. Thinking about
170 the enhancement or addition of the following programs, this is not a question about the
171 quality of the existing program or whether it should exist, but should we be adding to it,
172 should we be improving it. The top testing items here with the most importance
173 attributed to them were gym-based sports and then in no particular order fitness classes,
174 social events and spaces, and clubs and classes organized around interests. The general
175 interest classes with lesser support, less importance placed on martial arts and fitness
176 equipment or weight room spaces. In parallel, thinking about the services and activities
177 that are provided by the various providers and spaces at Cubberley Community Center,
178 we see a parallel in that the importance placed on outdoor sports and indoor sports and
179 health programs at that facility with closely following some reflection of the unique role
180 that building or that facility plays in the system. The senior wellness, stroke and
181 cardiovascular programs as well as the rooms for rent for other activities, all of those
182 tenants that have provided the variety of services across the board. Across all these
183 categories there really is quite a bit of importance placed on each of the things. The
184 categories being based on the groupings of things that are currently being offered there as
185 well, thinking about the long-term future of that facility. Jumping back a little bit to
186 some of the broader patterns and some of the broader themes, I had a couple more points
187 that I wanted to draw out. One is the overall importance placed on the ways and methods
188 to connect people with nature, to bring nature and sustainable practices into our park
189 system. The natural paths and nature play both tested very positively when asked about
190 the ways to bring some of these features closer to people. That's a finding that we can
191 use. Thinking about overall additions and improvements to achieve health and well being
192 in community members across Palo Alto, a lot of options here. This topic overall
193 resonated very strongly with people, but some of the specific ones reflect national,
194 California, local trends around the self-directed activities. Bicycling, walking and
195 jogging in a park, going and enjoying a park in a quiet or more contemplative or
196 connected to nature kind of way, and those nature activities. All of those things really do
197 match up to national and regional trends around what people are using their park systems
198 for. One of our big questions that we wanted to get a little bit of preliminary
199 prioritization and ranking around. In Graph 16, this question asked folks to rank this list
200 of options in order. The color coding here is a little bit different than the other questions.
201 Starting from the left, the blues represent the highest rankings. That scale is backwards, I
202 apologize. Oh, the color reversed. I'm sorry. In my PowerPoint, the color reversed from



203 what it is on the actual chart. I'm looking at one and reading off the other. The bars are
204 actually correct. From left to right, we are seeing ranked 1, ranked 2, ranked 3, ranked 4,
205 ranked 5. The legend that is showing on the PowerPoint is incorrect. I apologize about
206 that. The overall highest ranking item, to cut to the chase, was to invest in enhancing and
207 improving neighborhood parks across the City, really distributing that benefit across. I'm
208 losing my space here.

209
210 Commissioner Crommie: Ryan, we can follow it on our sheets. That's fine.

211
212 Mr. Mottau: I'm sorry. I'm trying to track on my laptop which is not matching what I'm
213 seeing. Looking at some other options popping up in this. This brings us to a point that
214 I'm sure will come up in some of your minds about other questions, other responses to
215 some of these other questions. One of the things I want to note is that in almost all cases,
216 except for where we just asked an open-ended question, where people could write in their
217 thoughts and comments which is the final chart in your summary, these other responses,
218 while they often rank highly, are based on a relatively smaller number of responses. I
219 don't want you to necessarily line those up in your mind because you've got a percentage
220 of people saying that this other choice is 30 percent of the people ranking it number 1.
221 That represents a pretty broad range of responses and that 30 percent is a smaller number
222 than 30 percent of the people who ranked the overall question. When thinking about
223 percentages on those open-ended other questions, let's not give them quite the same
224 influence as your other results.

225
226 Chair Reckdahl: Would it be possible to see these results? I'm talking about Graph 16.

227
228 Mr. Mottau: The other answers?

229
230 Chair Reckdahl: Not so much that. The problem is that if you ranked other number 1,
231 then your number 2 has less influence on the top five.

232
233 Mr. Mottau: I see what you mean. Removing other as an option to get a sense of the
234 other questions.

235
236 Chair Reckdahl: The people who put other for number 1 ranked their number 2 as a
237 number 1. Now we can see not so much their views over all issues, but just an apples to
238 apples comparison.

239
240 Mr. Mottau: Zero it down into the defined choices.

241
242 Chair Reckdahl: Exactly.

243
244 Mr. Mottau: Okay. That's a good clarification. I appreciate that.

245
246 Chair Reckdahl: That's possible to do?
247

248 Mr. Mottau: Yes, yes. That shouldn't be a problem at all. We will take note of that.
249

250 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.
251

252 Commissioner Crommie: On this graph number 16, there are 85 people that ranked
253 something other number 1. Did they coalesce?
254

255 Mr. Mottau: A pattern in those? No.
256

257 Commissioner Crommie: A pattern.
258

259 Mr. Mottau: No. There was a pretty wide range of responses here. It echoed a lot of the
260 things which we will talk about on the final point. My observation of surveying in
261 general and of the results in this survey was that when people had the opportunity to write
262 things in, the patterns that we saw were basically the same question to question to
263 question. If they were passionate about dog parks, they were writing in dog parks all the
264 way across the board. If they were passionate about getting more sports fields on the
265 ground, that was what we were seeing written in across the board. The patterns are best
266 represented when you're looking at your overall set of charts, the last chart in the packet.
267 It's not the last chart in this packet. I have the last chart in this set that is the overall
268 open-ended responses. It's the last chart in your summary. It's on the last page of your
269 overall summary. What this shows across all of the open-ended responses is what the
270 patterns really were for people responding. The way that we dug into that was we looked
271 through all 500-plus open-ended responses and started tagging them with individual
272 markers for topics. As we started doing that for all of them, we aggregated those into
273 some groups. These are the groups that resulted from that. In answer to your question,
274 Commissioner Crommie, this pattern followed in the other open-ended questions, but we
275 can provide the open-ended ideas much like we did for that final question on the
276 summary.
277

278 Commissioner Hetterly: Did you do the same thing with the open-ended response from
279 the Mapita?
280

281 Mr. Mottau: We did. I'm trying to remember.
282

283 Commissioner Hetterly: We have a huge list that's broken down (crosstalk).
284

285 Mr. Mottau: There were a lot of different open-ended questions in that effort. I'd have to
286 go back and look. Specifically, we did have a general, overall comment. I believe that

287 we did do a summary of what we heard in that. Otherwise, a lot of the open-ended
288 comments were designated specifically to a park. The way that we illustrated those was
289 around the park. I can go back and check that.

290
291 Commissioner Hetterly: If you have it, I think it would be helpful to see. I thought this
292 was useful.

293
294 Mr. Mottau: Yeah, sure.

295
296 Commissioner Crommie: If you calculate the percentage of people that didn't rank one of
297 the things that we gave them as number 1, it gives you a sense of the confidence people
298 have in the survey, that we're hitting upon something they care about. Just a rough
299 calculation, 10 percent or so might not have thought that we hit it right for something
300 they really care about. It'd be good to notice that kind of breakdown.

301
302 Mr. Mottau: Okay. We'll take a look at that with those couple of comments in mind.
303 Like I said, this is the initial version. We want to bring you back a little bit further
304 analysis on this set. That's helpful information for us. Let me just run through one or
305 two more graphs here. The question around the Baylands property, this is Graph 17 if
306 you're looking at your set. Asking again the appropriateness of different options as we go
307 through this. A strong response to mainly two different responses which were the
308 additional sports fields or expanding essentially the function of that site now. The other
309 one, which was an idea that surfaced in other ways, was a natural area for hiking or bird
310 watching which really expands on the theme of the golf course redevelopment. I do
311 believe that between those two not only is there a good indication of some ideas, but also
312 things that are very compatible with that site based on our information so far. I think that
313 that's a useful finding. I have the opportunity here for more comments about things that
314 you found interesting. I would like to ask you all if you would like to talk about the
315 quota sampling process first or point out other things that you found interesting through
316 your review of this survey so far that we could use as we're refining and revising. Let me
317 give a quick run. This is not a long section. I tried to keep this presentation short,
318 because I really do want to field any questions you have and then go from there. The
319 basic premise, as you probably noticed, is when we look at the overall results, out of our
320 1,164 people who responded to this survey, the demographic characteristics don't match
321 very closely. They match fairly closely but not exactly to the census information that we
322 provided. One of the questions that we've been asked a couple of times, and we've asked
323 but now have the process in hand for you with our data, is how do we use these responses
324 with some confidence that we are seeing a representative group of our population. The
325 overall methodology is around taking that large sample and breaking it down, using a
326 research method known as quota sampling, to take a sample out of that population
327 randomly that matches certain characteristics that are known about the overall population.
328 The characteristics that are best known about the overall population based on census data

329 that seem most relevant to this overall survey are that race and ethnicity breakdown and
330 the children in the household. Those were the ones that I chose to present about this. I
331 think that the questions that we have heard, the concerns that we've all expressed about
332 let's make sure that we get as representative an answer as we can, center on are we talking
333 about people who have kids, people who don't have kids, are we capturing a
334 representative view of the population as a whole. What we propose to do here and what
335 we wanted to get your buy-in on before we went down this path was that we take from
336 this larger sample a sample of about 400 responses that are randomly balanced for these
337 demographic criteria. Essentially working to, as I said, rebalance or negate any over-
338 representation of different demographic groups that were over-represented in the larger
339 sample. This will bring us to a very close match to the overall demographics. The
340 difference between these would give us a sense of do these overall results really vary
341 from what we would see if we had managed to sample the entire population and we were
342 matched up to that census population. That inevitably raises some questions as we start
343 getting into this. What we would like to know overall is if you have specific questions
344 about that method or if there are other criteria or if there are criteria that you're curious
345 but seem more relevant or these may be just work as we go forward. This is a proposal to
346 you. It's one of the things that we promised as part of the original scope, to come back
347 through and do some post-sampling analysis on this to rebalance. Our process and
348 method would be to randomly select based on these criteria. I wanted to put that question
349 out there. Of course, I'm happy to field any other questions about survey findings,
350 especially if there are ones that you would like to call out as particularly interesting or
351 relevant to your discussions.

352
353 Chair Reckdahl: I have one question about this. If you added one more criteria, what
354 would be the next when you look at correlations.

355
356 Mr. Mottau: If we were to add one more?

357
358 Chair Reckdahl: Yeah.

359
360 Mr. Mottau: In terms of the demographics that we asked, I would probably ...

361
362 Chair Reckdahl: We don't have income? That was not asked?

363
364 Mr. Mottau: We don't have income. We intentionally did not ask income. It's a question
365 that tends to bump people out of the survey. They don't like to answer it. Especially
366 when we were asking so many questions, we didn't want to ask anything that was going
367 to make people uncomfortable about finishing the questionnaire. We don't have income.
368 We do have one other option that I would consider, some basic breakdown of the overall
369 population around the City. We did ask where people live by neighborhood. In the
370 summary you'll see that we broke that down preliminarily based on the breakdown that

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371 we most commonly heard in the community and have seen overall, which is that
372 north/south along the Oregon Expressway. We took all of the neighborhoods in the north
373 and all the neighborhoods in the south and provided a summary overall of that. I would
374 say that an either/or separation like that would be possible. The only challenge to that is I
375 don't have currently, because the census won't break this down for me, a solid population
376 known number for the population north of Oregon Expressway versus south. I wouldn't
377 want to run this process with all pretty well established and known data and not the other.
378

379 Chair Reckdahl: Before we go to Commission questions, we have one public speaker.
380 Shani Kleinhaus. After she completes, then we'll have questions from the
381 Commissioners.
382

383 Commissioner Lauing: We may want to decide if we want to deal with this question first
384 or the survey comments first and then this question.
385

386 Chair Reckdahl: Okay. Shani, you have two minutes.
387

388 Shani Kleinhaus: Good evening, Commission, staff and consultants. Wonderful. So
389 many people responded. It's unbelievable. These things don't happen. What it does tell
390 me is that anyone in Palo Alto who wanted to respond knew about it. You don't need to
391 go that way. You have all the responses. You have enough people who participated, and
392 it doesn't look like anybody who wanted to voice their opinion did not have a chance. If
393 you had 200 responses, that would make sense. When you have over 1,000, it doesn't.
394 You don't need to go to that scope, my opinion. I did take a lot of statistics when I was
395 doing my Ph.D. The other thing I wanted to say is a few comments on some of the
396 results. One thing is that I'm very happy to see all the support for nature in natural areas
397 as well as in the City. This is something that we are always saying to people, but there is
398 no data to support that. I've seen that recently in Cupertino when the city completely,
399 overwhelmingly rejected a proposal to create something that they didn't like in a park.
400 We see that generally, and thank you to the community. I'm extremely impressed with
401 that. There are two things that won a lot of points here. I wanted to just say one little
402 thing about loop trails and nature play. Those things are really important, if you don't
403 stick them where they don't belong. Nature play really belongs in urban parks, not in
404 nature. In nature, they can play in nature; you don't need to build something for it. This
405 came really strongly in Cupertino when their proposal to create nature play in natural
406 areas, and the community just said, "No way. Why do that? We can have nature there.
407 We don't need to create and build something for that." The other one is the loop trails.
408 They're really good and they're really important, but you have to be careful that the
409 people walking around don't see each other. They see nature. If the loop trail is such that
410 it's too close, instead of seeing the animals and birds or whatever else is there the people
411 just see each other. That's what you do downtown where you look at people and not at
412 nature. Just pay attention to the location as it moves forward. I'll help you with that as

413 well. Thank you. This is a wonderful document, and I'm very, very happy to see it.
414 Thanks.

415
416 Chair Reckdahl: Thanks. Since this is on the board, let's tackle this right now and then
417 we'll move onto general questions. Do we have any comments or questions about the
418 quota sampling?

419
420 Commissioner Lauing: I could put a question back to them. With this breakdown, it's
421 not clear to me what you get. Make sure it's literally up there. With the possible
422 exception of the children, the first four bullet points, do we care if we need fields or if we
423 want somebody that's out enjoying nature or kicking a ball or those other things? I'm not
424 sure what we get, what the outcome is.

425
426 Mr. Mottau: The outcome basically is an exactly identical set of charts unless there is a
427 substantial difference that is hidden by the fact that our overall survey responses are more
428 like 75 percent Caucasian instead of more closely representing the result. I think the
429 opportunity here is to provide that check against overrepresentation.

430
431 Chair Reckdahl: That first chart that you put up that talked about the big findings, have
432 you broken that down by race and see if that changes from race?

433
434 Mr. Mottau: We did some preliminary looks just at cross-tabulating them, just putting
435 them in one column versus the other, the overall results versus non-Caucasian results, for
436 example. Because those were the smaller group, we wanted to make sure that we weren't
437 seeing big result differences. We didn't identify any big result differences in that initial
438 review, which doesn't indicate to me that once we go through this process, we're going to
439 see some big shift in any given response essentially. I'm happy to go through the process
440 to make sure and to be able to present that and say that we did that. That was part of our
441 original promise. Based on what I've seen in terms of our initial breakdowns, I don't see
442 anything swinging widely based on taking this subsample.

443
444 Chair Reckdahl: From your experience, what's your opinion on self-selection? If people
445 don't answer, does that mean they really don't care or does that mean that they care but
446 they didn't get out there and answer the question?

447
448 Mr. Mottau: In terms of self-selecting to answer the survey overall, we just don't have
449 them in our sample. I think that has less to do with not caring than about the time and
450 interference that interferes with any given activity. I'm sure that we are seeing a slightly
451 higher population of park and recreation users in this group. They are self-selecting in
452 terms of choosing, but those folks that are already connected also got the direct emails,
453 the extra reminders and that kind of thing. There's no argument that there's going to be
454 more people who are already connected to parks and recreation in this sample. I don't

455 think that that has changed the response to surveys that we have run in parallel. Self-
456 selecting web versions, totally random digit dial phone surveys, when we've done that in
457 parallel we've seen basically the same patterns across both surveys. I can't speak for this
458 one because I don't have a parallel survey to hold up and say, "This is the definitive
459 proof." Overall I don't see big differences in how people respond to these kind of
460 questions.

461
462 Chair Reckdahl: Deirdre.

463
464 Commissioner Crommie: I'm leaning against doing this. I want to understand it a bit
465 better. Are you getting at trying to weight this data to compensate for a population that's
466 missing? Is that what it's all about?

467
468 Mr. Mottau: It's similar; it's not weighting though. The difference between weighting
469 and sub-sampling is that instead of giving, for example, Hispanic responses more credit
470 for the answers that they gave, we are reducing the overall answers down. It's a reductive
471 rather than an additive process. Both processes would be for the same purpose, to
472 balance that representation. Rather than giving one answer more credit than 15 or 10
473 answers, it's really reducing the overall sample in a random way.

474
475 Commissioner Crommie: I'm against that, because I don't think these criteria are
476 significant enough to do that. Maybe, if you presented us with other criteria. I don't
477 think we need to weight this. I'm calling it weighting even though you're saying it's a
478 little bit different. I don't think we need to weight this by race particularly. I don't think
479 that gives us more information. I think there are other, probably more important criteria
480 going on. If our Commission was interested, if you can cross-correlate and say, "This
481 group of Asians felt this was really important." That would be more significant. Again,
482 I'm not sure I want to do that quite frankly.

483
484 Mr. Mottau: One alternative, that is a possibility and we've done a little bit of as I
485 mentioned, is taking some of these results and comparing them against the overall result
486 to see if there are big differences. I would be reluctant to do that with small subgroups
487 for all the appropriate reasons. If we don't have 180 or 200 responses, I don't want to talk
488 about responses from a group that small.

489
490 Commissioner Crommie: I agree with that.

491
492 Mr. Mottau: I'm open to suggestions about things you would like to see broken out as
493 opposed to going through this process. Like I said, we've done a little bit of that already
494 in terms of dog owners and non-dog owners and thinking about the cross-tabulation of
495 that. If there are other criteria that you would like to look at, that's certainly an
496 alternative.

497
498 Commissioner Lauing: I can answer that, but Commissioner Hetterly hasn't spoken yet.
499

500 Commissioner Hetterly: I agree. I don't think it's useful to do a sampling based on
501 ethnicity. I'm not sure that's going to tell us anything new or different. I am interested
502 though in understanding more about the breakdown between households with children,
503 households without children, seniors, and the north/south distribution. What I'm really
504 interested in is how did the answer choices by them break down rather than a sampling.
505 I'm not a statistics person, so I'm not sure what extra we gain from doing a sampling
506 process. I would, by those categories, be very interested in knowing out of these 451
507 people who rated this, how did that break down. Do we know how supportive our seniors
508 are of playing fields as opposed to natural spaces? That's something that might be
509 interesting to me.
510

511 Mr. Mottau: One of the things that would help us to zero in on that and to get you both
512 quickly and cost-effectively those answers is if there are specific questions that it feels
513 like I really want to know what families with children versus families without children
514 had to say about this particular answer choice. Each of these answer choices ends up
515 amounting to an entire question unto itself, because of the way we asked it; is it
516 appropriate. It's really helpful for us to be able to zero in on those specific ones. We've
517 done the general scan and didn't see a lot of big swings in one direction or another. If
518 there were specific ones, it would certainly keep it from becoming a phone book of cross-
519 tabulations and things. If you have suggestions as you go through, we'd love to hear
520 those.
521

522 Commissioner Hetterly: In the packet you suggested that rather than doing an age
523 breakdown, you were going to do some follow-up focus groups with youth. I think that's
524 still important to do regardless of what you (crosstalk).
525

526 Mr. Mottau: We have started that process. We had a meeting last night with the Youth
527 Commission which went really well. We got some good ideas to supplement some of the
528 ideas that were here. We had a chance to bounce a few ideas off of them that we'd heard,
529 getting a sense of if that resonates with them as representatives of that population,
530 understanding that they don't speak for and about all of them. Getting some opportunity
531 there where we had it with the experts representing youth here in Palo Alto.
532

533 Commissioner Lauing: My comments were close to Commissioner Hetterly's, but just a
534 little bit additional. There's still a lot of things that have to be decided here. For
535 example, the dogs, the fields, etc. To her other point, we still have some other questions
536 that aren't even covered here, what are senior needs. We didn't ask a question about it.
537 What might specific Hispanic needs be? That still has to be done somewhere somehow.
538 Speaking to the first one, this one on dog parks, there's so much stuff that's important

539 there. For one thing, you have a complete numerical breakdown, and you see exactly
540 who's in which camp. I don't mean that they're necessarily feuding camps. When you
541 look at the data, the verbiage says only 30 percent of non-dog owners indicated off-leash
542 areas are appropriate or very appropriate. If you look at that, that's really significant in
543 another way. It's all in how you read statistics. There's no benefit to a non-dog owner to
544 have off-leash dogs. None whatsoever. In fact, some would say it's a detriment. 30
545 percent say, "This is a great idea. Let's do this." That's the kind of data that we can take
546 some action on, when you have the dog owner thing. We don't have that, for example, in
547 any of the responses on fields. If we had that and we knew that it was in the age group of
548 6-12, which is most of the younger kids that are the dominant players on the fields, that
549 would be interesting. I don't want to be quoted out of context in the newspaper. There's
550 still an ignorance factor there, because parents don't necessarily know what field
551 availability is. It would be good to see if the perception is that those parents think we're
552 fighting for fields all the time. There's some sub-segments that you could do that would
553 be much more helpful than the one you proposed here. It's around some of these
554 substantive questions that we're going to spend tens of millions of dollars on, if we say go
555 or not, if we say it doesn't need doing for ten years but we'll look at it in the second ten
556 years. That's well worth investing in.

557
558 Mr. Mottau: I'm hearing from you that if I could interpret the breakdowns of questions
559 relating to the implementation of different options for field use or field investments by
560 households with children, households without children to understand that same kind of
561 dynamic that we were seeing with the breakdown that we did run on the dog owners and
562 the answers to the dog parks.

563
564 Commissioner Lauing: Right.

565
566 Mr. Mottau: That's exactly the kind of detail that I was saying would be useful. Places
567 where you see that connection between a demographic switch that we can pull one way
568 or the other and a specific set of answer choices that you'd like to know those details
569 about. That's a great one.

570
571 Commissioner Lauing: Similarly there was quite a bit of interest in a second pool. It's
572 obvious to do that geographically and see if 90 percent of the folks are in the area where
573 the pool is not. Nothing good or bad about that; it's just the fact that it would be helpful
574 to know.

575
576 Commissioner Ashlund: When I first read this, I interpreted it as MIG recommends
577 addressing youth focus as well. On second reading, it actually doesn't say youth; it says
578 under age 35 for your recommendation here. Do you see where I'm referring to in the
579 MIG recommendation? It has no page number. It's the back of the very first page. The
580 back of the memo, yes, the cover memo.

581
582 Mr. Mottau: The cover memo. Yeah.
583

584 Commissioner Ashlund: It says due to the low number of respondents in age groups
585 under 35, MIG recommends addressing the age representation separately with a
586 combination of additional focus group-based outreach to younger residents. By merely
587 saying below 35 is the under-represented portion, are we talking the 14-18 year olds who
588 are enrolled in school and living at home with their parents? Are we talking the 18 to
589 mid-20s who are maybe taking part-time classes or are we talking young professionals
590 who are working in Silicon Valley who may not have time or interest in going to the
591 parks? It's unclear if they're under-represented because they don't use the parks and they
592 have no interest or time or if they're under-represented and there's validity there.
593

594 Mr. Mottau: It's an interesting point. What we were speaking to primarily was the
595 number of people who responded in those particular age categories and seeing that our
596 response profile fell off in the age groups under 35. A number of the follow-up
597 conversations that we have been having are starting to touch on both younger adults and
598 youth. That's one of the targets that we would like to hit as we're doing this follow-up
599 conversation effort. In response to some of the other points, we've also talked pretty
600 extensively with Avenidas and some of their staff about the trends and issues they're
601 seeing around seniors. The groups that I met with today that represented some of the
602 field users and the middle school athletics groups were trying to find ways, it's not
603 directly asking those populations but we're trying to find ways to get information out of
604 interests that are connected to those age groups. It's less than perfect. It would be great
605 to say, "Well, I can now go out and get another couple hundred responses from people
606 who are under 35." I don't think that is practical. A chunk of that population is just very
607 difficult to reach in this method. We're open to ideas. We've been continuing to generate
608 with staff some ideas about how to supplement this information, which is one piece of the
609 larger picture we're trying to assemble about the overall input. I'm open to other
610 suggestions, but we are trying to fill in everything under that.
611

612 Commissioner Crommie: On this point, at the intercept on California Street, we saw a lot
613 of people in that demographic group, between 20 and 35. Did we take any demographics
614 when we doing that?
615

616 Ellie Fiore: We did take some, but not consistently. We put it in people's hands as an
617 option. If it got busy, there might not have been time for that. We got some
618 demographic data, but not with the rigor we have here.
619

620 Mr. Mottau: It is one of the reasons why we specifically do those kinds of events, to
621 expand beyond the people who are going to fill out a survey or come to a workshop. We
622 can catch those people. The fact that we don't have a count of them is unfortunate. The

623 reality, as you're noting, is that your experience was we did actually talk to a number of
624 those folks. They've been incorporated as part of this process. That's important to us.

625
626 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Ashlund.

627
628 Commissioner Ashlund: I just wanted to follow up. Is your MIG recommendation that
629 we pursue, when it says under 35, it's in that 14-18 range? That's a captive population.
630 They attend school; they live with their parents. They're certainly easier to target in some
631 ways than if they're over 18 and independent and not in secondary education. Are you
632 recommending either or both?

633
634 Mr. Mottau: I would like to supplement everything under 35. We are faced with those
635 practical limitations as well. Our hope would be to capture more of that perspective all
636 the way up to 35 if possible.

637
638 Commissioner Ashlund: Great. I didn't see this in the demographics. I thought we had
639 this on the survey, but maybe we didn't ask it at all. We asked age, so we know whether
640 they're checking the senior box versus not. Did we ask disability as a demographic?

641
642 Mr. Mottau: No, we did not.

643
644 Commissioner Ashlund: Okay. My caution is if we're approaching the Youth Council
645 for that youth voice, the under-represented populations are under-represented
646 consistently. If you have your high achieving non-disabled youth on a youth panel,
647 you're not hearing from the kids who aren't able to be on youth panel. I would just
648 caution against using that narrow selection of voices.

649
650 Mr. Mottau: Thank you.

651
652 Chair Reckdahl: This is page 3 of the memo that you gave us. There is some, for
653 example, Asians. We only got 15 percent of the people taking the survey were Asian, 26
654 in the population. That's almost a factor of 2. That's 180 people. I do wonder if there
655 would be a difference in answers. It would be useful to look at a few select answers and
656 look at the difference between whites and Asians. That would be a test. Whites and non-
657 whites if you want to lump them together. I suspect it would be better to be white and
658 Asian. The other was male/female. We have 63 percent of the people in the survey were
659 female. That is not 50 percent; that's significant.

660
661 Mr. Mottau: That is a big shift. It is not an uncommon shift in all surveying efforts. You
662 will see that in every single surveying methodology. You will see a 10 point or more
663 spread from the actual population, skewed towards females. Research indicates that they
664 are more willing to participate in research. I don't know if that research was also skewed

665 towards females or not. It is pretty much a universal finding in survey research. There's
666 not a lot I can do about that. We can rebalance for gender. I don't think it would change
667 a lot of the responses.

668
669 Chair Reckdahl: If you look at the youth in household, 35 percent of the people in Palo
670 Alto have kids in the household; 66, almost double, answered the survey. That would be
671 interesting to see do the answers change significantly. I suspect that they would. I
672 wouldn't say you need to that on the whole survey. I would look at some of the big
673 questions that we want and examine the difference between those.

674
675 Mr. Mottau: Would it be useful to examine these ones that we were calling out
676 specifically as these strong findings against some of these demographics? I know that not
677 all of them feel like they are a direct match. I'm just trying to think of the best way to
678 attack. We don't need to do all of them, so which subset should we look at specifically?
679 It does seem like these strong findings that we identified are ones that we are most likely
680 to recommend action based on this tool as opposed to the larger mix of tools. That would
681 be a place to start certainly, those specific findings that we call out in that section.
682 There's a couple others that Commissioners have pointed out that they would like,
683 specifically field-related questions. I'm happy to add that into it. Does that seem like a
684 place to start?

685
686 Commissioner Lauing: I don't think you'd have to go after all of them. For example,
687 expanded use of recycled water or items like that. A lot of those were predictable and
688 common sense and that's good. There's some actionable data here, if we want to go into
689 any of more that. Nobody wants any food service. That was very good information,
690 because there was a lot of anecdotal perception that that was something that would be in
691 demand.

692
693 Mr. Mottau: It also came up with the teams the other day. They do want food service.

694
695 Commissioner Lauing: They always want food.

696
697 Mr. Mottau: I agree. That's an interesting finding.

698
699 Commissioner Crommie: When you start to drill down to teens wanting food service,
700 then you have to drill down to where are teens hanging out. None of this information is
701 useful unless it's linked to other behavioral patterns of teens. We don't know that those
702 teens aren't going to certain quadrants of the City. They tend to hang out near food more
703 often. They like it; that's why they're hanging out near food. Does that mean we have to
704 put food in open spaces? Standing by itself, it's not that meaningful.

705
706 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Markevitch.

707
708 Vice Chair Markevitch: When we were doing the outreach for the Rinconada Master
709 Plan, there was an interest in reopening the snack shack in that park. It's in place. Is
710 there any method to look at that data versus the data that was in the survey?
711

712 Mr. Mottau: We can definitely pull that forward. As we've been saying, the past efforts
713 are definitely one of our research sources for all of this. Pulling that issue forward is
714 something that we could definitely look at. I don't know that it will be directly
715 comparable necessarily, but it's something that we can use as another source.
716

717 Chair Reckdahl: Let's move on to general questions on the survey. The action for you is
718 to go and look at an isolated set of questions and see how they differ on these various
719 characteristics and see if they're there and see if it's something that we should pursue or
720 not.
721

722 Mr. Mottau: Great. Thank you.
723

724 Chair Reckdahl: General questions on the survey. Questions or comments, either one.
725

726 Commissioner Ashlund: I had a follow-up question on the under 35 outreach. Is that
727 something that's already happened? Who on staff is handling that and when is
728 (crosstalk).
729

730 Mr. Mottau: It's something that we've started. We're still working up ways to continue to
731 expand on that. The meetings will be given you as we did for this update that you were
732 handed this evening. On the back page is an update log of other meetings that we've been
733 having with experts in your community. In the next round, you'll be seeing the report of
734 the meetings that I've added onto this trip. I've been meeting basically straight since
735 yesterday morning with various stakeholders in your community on a variety of topics
736 that were identified by staff as being particularly interesting to follow-up on. We're
737 tapping into some expert knowledge, both in the community as well as on staff. Some of
738 that will definitely address that demographic gap, and some of it will address other topics.
739 It is in process and not yet complete.
740

741 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Hetterly.
742

743 Commissioner Hetterly: On the survey memo, I thought the key findings provided a
744 really good summary. It was really interesting information. I was pleasantly surprised
745 how much of it felt like it gave us actionable guidance about where we should head. For
746 instance, the top aquatic improvement was for less competitive, more recreational sports.
747 That's really helpful to us. Commissioner Markevitch is going to spearhead an effort to
748 figure out how to provide more of that. This is a good backup for that. The concession

749 stand stood out. Supporting wildlife habitat and corridors was borne out by the bike
750 bridge decision this last week. Also, it's actionable in the short-term by us as we consider
751 the Byxbee Park loop trails. There's a direct connection there that we've talked about
752 before, and this helps us move forward with that. Outdoor sports at Cubberley showed
753 very strongly. Some loss of those fields in the mid-term future is very likely. Maybe that
754 means we should think more about the 10.5 acres. There's a lot of informative stuff in
755 here. That was great, and I was really happy with the survey results as well as your
756 presentation of it. I do have some questions about a couple of them. On the restrooms,
757 that was a really solid, strong response. I'm curious if we can drill down just a little
758 further to understand is that a general desire, we want restrooms at every park or parks of
759 a certain size, parts in a certain area that are underserved with restrooms, types of users.
760 Is this just at parks where we have a high young kid population? Maybe that's where we
761 put restrooms. That kind of detail could help us prioritize where to invest. The pros and
762 cons for prioritizing youth over adults was really interesting. That was something that we
763 hadn't heard before. Maybe it suggests an unmet demand for adult use of certain
764 facilities, if we could flesh out that question. That raises more questions to me than I
765 thought existed. Finally, in terms of the comfort and convenience items, we didn't
766 include lighting in that list on the survey. It seemed clear from the open-ended response
767 here as well as in the Mapita survey that there are sizable concerns about safety, security,
768 and desire for lighting. Of course, keeping in mind dark sky interests, we ought to
769 consider lighting and ask the question where is it appropriate in neighborhood parks to
770 have lighting, where is it not appropriate. We can work with our stakeholders on that too
771 to figure out where is the best place. This helps us get to that next step. Finally, I had a
772 data question. On page 8, you say something about the open-ended comments being not
773 numerous enough to set direction, but they are very similar to the kinds of open-ended
774 comments we got through Mapita and through intercepts and the community meetings. I
775 wonder if there's not a way to combine all that input in a way that is significant enough to
776 help us set direction, altogether instead of separately. That's all I have. Thank you.

777
778 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Lauing.

779
780 Commissioner Lauing: Just a few things. One, we've got 1,164 responses. That's
781 terrific; we all agree on that relative to this type of survey. It was contrasted in your
782 cover memo by only 400 responses that wouldn't have covered as many topics. Totally
783 true. That's a different kind of survey. From my own limited work with market research
784 and statistics, that would be truly random and, therefore, a bit more projectable. We don't
785 want to lose track of that and put all our weight on these 1,164 people, which is barely 1
786 percent of the population of Palo Alto. A bit of a data question on your graph, in terms of
787 integrity. Maybe there's some errors here or maybe I'm not reading it right. On page 2,
788 the graph says live in Palo Alto 86. Up at the top, it said 84. You also said nearly all
789 respondents as opposed to saying nearly 84 percent of respondents. For your own,
790 candidly, credibility, I just want to make sure it's being presented correctly.

791
792 Mr. Mottau: I see the discrepancy there. I will double check that. I appreciate and
793 certainly respect that point. I'm trying to remember. I did manipulate to get to that chart,
794 because Table 1 is another one where people could choose multiple answers. There's a
795 possibility that in my adjustment, it should have been noted if I did, of aggregating some
796 of those that had indicated multiple responses that it would shift the percentage overall. I
797 will clarify that, so that it doesn't present that apparent or possibly real difference.
798

799 Commissioner Lauing: I just wanted to point that out. One of the things I thought was
800 really interesting from this data coming back is that our residents are saying, "Hey, things
801 are pretty good here. Things are pretty doggone good." They didn't say we have to re-
802 imagine this whole thing or change half the things. Let's make some tweaks here; get a
803 little bit better. We keep that in mind as we go forward. As I said, some things are
804 definitive. I've already mentioned that. Some where we need to drill down a little bit
805 more on some of these factors. I think that's it. Thank you.
806

807 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.
808

809 Commissioner Crommie: Hi. I was really pleased by the respect for nature in this
810 survey. It doesn't surprise me. Our population really holds that dear. I'm glad it was
811 reflected in this. There was a wide distribution of the survey, so I'm trusting that it
812 covered people of all different persuasions and that it rose to the top, even people who
813 have an emphasis on being at athletic fields, using other forms of recreation. I'm really
814 pleased to see that. I did want to echo something that we did here in the public
815 comments. That has to do about the conflict sometimes between the preservation of
816 wildlife and loop trails. Those are asked in two separate questions. That's the kind of
817 thing where the general public doesn't understand that loop trails have a very high impact
818 on wildlife. As you walk by wildlife, if there's not a lot of natural area for the wildlife to
819 go to, they get flushed out as people walk by. We do have to look at that as we review
820 the Byxbee Park plans. Commissioner Reckdahl and I have worked on that a lot, to look
821 at the trail system in there and try to keep it in balance with nature. At least that was my
822 feeling about it. I just want to make sure that we keep that perspective that not everyone
823 who wants a loop trail really understands. On one hand, they might want the loop trail
824 and on one hand they might want the wildlife. Sometimes they're not compatible. I also
825 like to see that there is a great emphasis on dirt trails, to lower impact trails. I saw under
826 the sustainability graph that people really did feel that community gardening was a
827 sustainable practice, and that ranked very high. In some ways I was a little disappointed
828 that that question was hidden in sustainability. We never asked our public, "Would you
829 be willing to give away park space for a community garden?" We didn't get that kind of
830 granularity. Within the context that the question was asked, I was happy to see that
831 getting rated as high as it did. Also, quiet areas in parks really stood out, so that is a wish
832 for a lower impact. One theme in this sampling of the residents is lower impact. Even

833 when we got to the graph where it's asking do you want artificial turf versus natural turf,
834 that came up. I wish I could find that page quickly. Do you remember what graph that
835 is?

836
837 Mr. Mottau: It's Graph 4.

838
839 Commissioner Crommie: Graph 4. If you look at Graph 4, I was interested in that.
840 More people would actually prefer not to have artificial turf. The rankings for natural
841 turf came up higher than artificial turf. That was interesting to me. I don't know where it
842 comes from, but in part it might be that craving to have more natural connections. When
843 you have the natural turf, you can potentially use it for more purposes. It's just like a
844 teaser really. Where do we go with that? Do you have any comments on where you put
845 that question and how far we could take those results?

846
847 Mr. Mottau: We looked at this pretty directly in this question. The reason it's inserted
848 into this question is the environmental sustainability aspects of turf. You'll notice that
849 there's actually three questions about turf in this question overall. The third one being
850 removing turf where it's not needed for sports to reduce the overall water usage. There's
851 an ongoing discussion/debate throughout the State of California and the United States
852 around artificial turf as water-saving versus artificial turf as introducing a synthetic
853 environment essentially. That's part of what you're getting at there. People have pretty
854 strong reactions to those two things. In fact, there is a current moratorium on building
855 additional artificial turf fields based on some ongoing research at the Assembly right
856 now, just working out how to evaluate that very question. Is it more appropriate or
857 sustainable overall to create a synthetic environment that uses less water or to use the
858 water but not have the synthetic environment? Plus there are other concerns around the
859 use of recycled rubber and various other things in those artificial turf fields. It's a lively
860 debate currently. In certain environments, heavy, heavy play environments and also in
861 very, very water-starved environments which we may be approaching or in for the
862 foreseeable future, that equation is not as simple as it may appear. This is informative in
863 terms of how people see it. It is placed in the context of water conservation and
864 sustainability. That's an appropriate place for thinking about this. I don't know that it
865 gives a broad direction, but it definitely expresses an overall preference. That's an
866 important finding overall. As you said, people flip flopped around that artificial turf. If
867 you look at those responses, they're almost a mirror of each other.

868
869 Chair Reckdahl: I do want to add about the artificial turf. I don't want this taken out of
870 context. All the new fields that we've put in, none of them use recycled rubber. I don't
871 want the public to think that we're putting fields in with recycled rubber.

873 Mr. Mottau: No. This moratorium is very recent. This is current research and debate
874 going on right now that is not definitive. It is only a hold on moving forward with certain
875 types of materials, but looking at the research around it right now.

876
877 Chair Reckdahl: This would be a good question to break down. If we had soccer users
878 versus non-soccer users. When they put the fields in over at Page Mill, I thought, "Why
879 would you put in gross artificial turf?" If you talk to the adult players, they want the turf.
880 For them, it is an important feature.

881
882 Mr. Mottau: We heard this again today with field users. Soccer, because it is so high
883 impact, I talk about where the environment warrants that artificial turf in a lot of cases is
884 where those fields get torn up from heavy, heavy use. Regardless of how important it is
885 to have the green and natural environment, you can't maintain green and natural. What
886 you get is brown and muddy in certain play environments. As the Chair is noting, soccer
887 is one of those that we do hear for the intensity of use, for being able to play on it all year
888 round, that is their preference in a lot of situations.

889
890 Commissioner Crommie: I was just going to finish up.

891
892 Chair Reckdahl: Quick question. Do we have any insight who's a soccer player and
893 who's not? The questions don't specify a specific sport?

894
895 Mr. Mottau: Not specifically. We could poll a proxy for that. The vast majority of
896 soccer-interested folks are families with children in the household. While there are vocal
897 adult soccer players, it's a relatively small population in the grand scheme of things
898 compared to the number of youth soccer players in the overall population.

899
900 Chair Reckdahl: At least currently, artificial turf is primarily used for adult games, and
901 the youth soccer is natural turf. It's a very small sample that wants that turf, but they
902 think it's a very important feature. I think we need to be careful you don't throw the baby
903 out with the bath water.

904
905 Mr. Mottau: That's a good point.

906
907 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

908
909 Commissioner Crommie: Just to finish up. That's a place where we have the conflict
910 between sustainability and desire to have the sports outlet, the ability to get onto a field.
911 Most people using artificial turf in the adult population for certain is aware that you can
912 get higher impact on that field. That's governing their feelings about that, and they're not
913 thinking about sustainability at that moment. Both of those things are very real. Lastly, I
914 thought I'd comment on Graph 15. I thought it was interesting. How well do you think

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915 the following would work to enhance the park system in Palo Alto given the geography
916 constraints? It was nice to see that the thing that rated the highest was enhance the
917 walking and biking experience. What that calls out to me is that this was a very active
918 group that responded to our survey. They were recreationally minded. We're not missing
919 that group of people; yet, we have a group of people that are recreationally minded but
920 still support nature. I'm really happy to see that borne out by this survey. Thank you.

921
922 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Markevitch.

923
924 Vice Chair Markevitch: One comment and it's not regarding the survey. It's tied into
925 Cubberley and what Commissioner Lauing said early. We may need a pool. I know they
926 filled in the Cubberley one. If in long-term that possibly gets opened as a high school,
927 they need to think about putting that pool back, because it is a graduation requirement in
928 this City, that you have to be able to swim. I want that noted somewhere that that may be
929 a possibility in the future.

930
931 Chair Reckdahl: Stacey, do you have any questions?

932
933 Commissioner Ashlund: I'm not sure how to phrase it as a question, but I'll try. The key
934 findings under meeting community needs on page 20 includes the importance of
935 universal accessibility and the percentage of responses regarding that. Without looking
936 back at the question, if somebody were reading this key finding, it reads a little bit like
937 accessibility is referring to facilities only. Whereas, the actual question that it came from
938 in the survey referenced both facilities and programming. I'm not on a graph. I'm on
939 page 20 under the importance of universal accessibility. That it mentioned facilities and
940 programming. We didn't call those out as a question. We put them together as a
941 question. In the key findings, it's important that it not look just like facilities. Frequently
942 that is referred to only with regard to facilities.

943
944 Mr. Mottau: I appreciate what you're saying. It's not that it's stated here that this is only
945 facilities, but that's where people's brains go to. Making that clarification is important. I
946 agree. I remember talking about that, and we structured that question intentionally to ask
947 about both topics. The universal perspective really is about all things. That's a good
948 clarification point for us. Thank you.

949
950 Commissioner Ashlund: Thank you.

951
952 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

953
954 Commissioner Crommie: I don't want to take time from other people's comments, but if
955 we're slowing down I want to spend a little bit more time on the dog questions. We are in

956 an active phase of needing to establish policy. Before we get back to that, were there
957 other comments? I've already spoken.

958
959 Commissioner Knopper: Everything I was thinking was already discussed, so I chose
960 just for briefness not to chat. What Commissioner Hetterly said and Commissioner
961 Lauing, I concur whenever we can drill down so we can have actionable points. There's a
962 lot of information here that's really great. If you want to talk about dog parks.

963
964 Commissioner Crommie: Yeah, I wanted to talk a little bit more.

965
966 Chair Reckdahl: I've one more comment.

967
968 Commissioner Crommie: Okay. And bathrooms, I also want to comment on.

969
970 Chair Reckdahl: One thing that caught my eye was on page 18, Graph 14, talking about
971 open longer hours through additional lighting. We've heard complaints over the years
972 about lights, but we've also heard a lot of sports people saying they want that. It'd be
973 really interesting seeing that very last bar graph broken down between field users and not.
974 I'm not sure if we can do that.

975
976 Mr. Mottau: Not directly.

977
978 Chair Reckdahl: I'm not sure if we can do it by age.

979
980 Mr. Mottau: We'll take a look at that and see if there's a way that we can pin that down.

981
982 Chair Reckdahl: See if there's any interesting demographics that break that down or if
983 that's uniform. If that's uniform, that's a big finding, because that has been a source of
984 friction sometimes.

985
986 Mr. Mottau: I'm not going to speak for Palo Alto, because I've not spoken to the
987 neighbors around existing fields here. Our experience across the board has been that the
988 primary objections to that are very proximate. They're very much about the immediate
989 neighbors. That is a very tough call for all communities. Lighting can be a big impact,
990 and that's an understandable concern. The number of people that it's impacting is usually
991 relatively small. When you look at it in this context of a large sample looking across the
992 whole community, not a lot of the community is necessarily directly impacted by that.
993 For those who are, it's high.

994
995 Commissioner Hetterly: There are also a lot of wildlife concerns about lighting.
996

997 Chair Reckdahl: At El Camino Park we're putting the visors on the lights, and it'd also be
998 interesting to see how that changes things. Maybe it's just that the newer lights will have
999 less impact and people will have less complaints about that.

1000
1001 Mr. Mottau: That is also true. There's been a lot of work that's gone into modern lighting
1002 to reduce both the light pollution issues as well as the habitat concerns.

1003
1004 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Crommie.

1005
1006 Commissioner Crommie: I was just going to comment on the same graph, number 14.
1007 There's not a lot of support for allowing more access for competitive teams. If we had a
1008 lot of field users weighing in on this, which it does seem from other questions that we
1009 really did capture field users, that is a significant finding, that particular graph. On the
1010 bar graphs, 50 percent are saying they don't support it. We don't see that on many other
1011 graphs. That's a very, very significant finding. I wanted to talk a little bit about dog
1012 parks, but maybe the bathrooms will be quicker. When I was talking about these
1013 conflicts of interest, it's probably no surprise to any of us who have served for any length
1014 of time on this Commission that people overall want bathrooms at the parks. We
1015 encounter what I call a "not in my backyard" response. When you start to do the outreach
1016 meetings at the neighborhood surrounding that park where they think they might bring in
1017 more transients to use the bathrooms, then we get the push back and that's where we have
1018 to have really strong policy to work that through. Sometimes it's a larger issue at stake.
1019 It's a very hard struggle that we faced. We might feel it's quite important to have a
1020 bathroom there, but yet how do we balance that. With a lot of these issues, we come up
1021 against that. As far as the dogs go, if we could all turn to that particular graph. I forget
1022 now which one it is.

1023
1024 Mr. Mottau: I brought it up.

1025
1026 Commissioner Crommie: I have this sense we're winding down; I don't know if that's
1027 true or not. It's really important before we adjourn to get everything we needed from this.
1028 What we have in the works is some kind of community outreach meeting from ad hoc
1029 committee. This is just one phase of data, and then we're going to have other sources of
1030 data. Did everyone feel like they got enough out of this? Did you write out in the text
1031 how this breaks down between people who own dogs and don't own dogs.

1032
1033 Mr. Mottau: We did.

1034
1035 Commissioner Crommie: What page is that on? Do you have any graphics on that?

1036
1037 Mr. Mottau: We didn't include graphs on that. It is something that we broke down in
1038 detail. The pages are 11 and 12. This overall Graph 8 is on page 12. The text, sorry, it's

1039 not 11; it's farther back than that. It's page 9 and 10 that talk about dog parks. At the
1040 bottom of page 9, we talk about the breakdown of the 662 non-dog owners and 421 dog
1041 owners indicated in the survey. Overall the split, which I tried to quickly summarize,
1042 amounts to dog owners were universally more supportive of all three alternatives to the
1043 existing dog parks than non-dog owners, which is not a huge surprise given their specific
1044 interests. Overall one of the important findings and probably the most useful overall was
1045 that it appeared to us based on the people who said it was not appropriate to essentially
1046 do nothing. The non-action, no additional dog parks answer was equally not appropriate
1047 to both dog owners and non-dog owners.
1048

1049 Commissioner Crommie: To do nothing.

1050
1051 Mr. Mottau: Yeah.
1052

1053 Commissioner Crommie: That's what Commissioner Lauing pointed out. That means
1054 that people who do not own dogs are sympathetic toward the plight of those who do. I
1055 agree with Commissioner Lauing that that's important information. Again, this balancing
1056 act. We only have so much money to put into dog parks. It takes a lot of resources to
1057 work with our existing dog parks. When we go into the community outreach, it might be
1058 really interesting to understand what improvements people think they need. I don't tend
1059 to use the Palo Alto dog parks with my dog. I don't enjoy the dog park at Mitchell,
1060 because it's all dirt. I ironically go to an artificial turf dog park that's on the border of
1061 Palo Alto and Mountain View. That's a choice I make. I'm just giving this anecdotal
1062 information. I don't know how much money it's going to take to improve Mitchell Park.
1063 Sitting on this Commission, I hear that's it's a bottomless pit of resources to try to grow
1064 the grass there. I would opt out of going to that one; I have another one I can go to. I
1065 would support the pot of money going to a new one. What are we going to do to improve
1066 these existing parks? It comes up very strongly in the survey. We really need to
1067 understand what people want. That's the first point I would bring up. What is our data to
1068 support that people want additional dog parks? Can we go back to that? We know a lot
1069 of people want to improve.
1070

1071 Mr. Mottau: The point that I was making is less about people assertively saying they
1072 want more dog parks. It's more that they were saying it was inappropriate to have no
1073 additional dog parks. They were refuting the negative more than they were affirming the
1074 positive. That answer was fairly clear and also fairly consistent between dog owners and
1075 non-dog owners.
1076

1077 Commissioner Crommie: What we see showing up in Graph 8, if we look at the very
1078 appropriate, I see how it is split between these three different categories in the middle of
1079 the graph. I guess we have a little bit more people leaning toward the second bar,
1080 designated times when dogs can be off-leash in parks and partially are non-fenced. When

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1081 I observe what Palo Altans are doing, they're doing just that. We have Palo Altans all
1082 over this City congregating in parks with their dogs off-leash. The reason I was
1083 interested in that question making it onto the survey is because that's what people are
1084 doing. The greatest response on the bar number 2 is that that is not appropriate. The very
1085 thing that people feel is most inappropriate is the thing that is most being done in this
1086 City. That's the dilemma that we face. I'm not sure what to do about that. There might
1087 be nothing to be done about it.

1088
1089 Chair Reckdahl: The dog park people will talk more about it next month. They have
1090 looked into this more. If we had a small dog park at every park, would there be as much
1091 off-leash activity? Even if we had a convenient dog park, people would still want the off-
1092 leash, unfenced activity. I don't know.

1093
1094 Commissioner Crommie: I'm sorry to be so anecdotal here. I live next to Monroe Park,
1095 and our tiny Monroe Park in the last year has turned into a dog park. It's phenomenal.
1096 It's all dogs. Anyone can stop by there an hour before sunset, and you'll just see it full of
1097 dogs. It's a tiny park. We have a dog park that's a 10-minute walk from our
1098 neighborhood. Ten-minute walk. I don't really understand it. As a Park Commissioner, I
1099 do not bring my dog to go off-leash inappropriately in the Monroe dog park, yet most of
1100 my neighbors are doing that. I don't know ...

1101
1102 Chair Reckdahl: Is there a specific request or are you frustrated?

1103
1104 Commissioner Crommie: I'm not frustrated at all. I don't like to see my tiny park turned
1105 into a dog park, because it's using all the existing turf. With a really tiny park, when it all
1106 becomes a dog park, that's very high impact. I support having policy that allows dogs
1107 off-leash in parks. Personally I support that, because that's what I see everyone doing.
1108 It's a very complicated issue. People don't like to go very far away to dog parks. That's
1109 my observation, but I don't know. I wonder if we can figure this out more.

1110
1111 Commissioner Hetterly: There are a lot of issues that are going to be in the Master Plan
1112 that are going to require that kind of noodling around to figure out how do we get to the
1113 right policy. What we're here tonight to talk about is the survey. I wonder if you can tie
1114 your comments back to the survey. Are you suggesting that there's some more
1115 information that we might want to seek to be able to support those policies?

1116
1117 Commissioner Crommie: I'll go back to my statement that the very thing that people say
1118 in this survey is inappropriate is what people are doing. Okay. For that particular bar
1119 graph, which is the second bar down, maybe it would be good to break that out between
1120 dog owners and non-dog owners. It would be very interesting if all the people saying it's
1121 not appropriate are all the non-dog owners.

1123 Mr. Mottau: It primarily is.
1124

1125 Commissioner Crommie: It is, okay.
1126

1127 Mr. Mottau: It primarily is. As I remember, that one in particular was a really big
1128 polarization, that particular answer. What I think you're seeing there overall is the
1129 tension between the 662 versus the 421. If you look at that proportionally, you're close to
1130 that. You're basically seeing dog owners saying it's almost universally appropriate, and
1131 non-dog owners saying it's almost universally inappropriate. You're seeing the
1132 proportion of dog owners versus non-dog owners in those second and third bars for the
1133 most part.
1134

1135 Commissioner Crommie: In some ways that's not surprising. Non-dog owners draw the
1136 line in the sand probably right there. It'd be interesting to understand why. The people
1137 that I've spoken to, it might be because of safety issues and dog poop issues. If you don't
1138 own a dog, you're a lot less likely to be understanding about such a thing. That's
1139 interesting information. All the people with the strong bar to improve existing dog parks,
1140 on the very first bar graph, we have a lot of people weighing in as very appropriate. How
1141 does that break down between dog owners and non-dog owners? Do you know right
1142 now?
1143

1144 Mr. Mottau: I would have to double check that. What I'm hearing overall in terms of our
1145 next step of analysis, this one is one that you need to see the side-by-side on that topic
1146 much like we talked about with some of the others. For other demographic breakdowns,
1147 this is a critical one to get you the side-by-side comparison. I can't recall on that one
1148 specifically. My recollection is that it was pretty heavily by both. In order to get to this
1149 aggregate response, it would have to be supported by both. I believe it was similar in
1150 both dog owners and non-dog owners.
1151

1152 Commissioner Crommie: Would you recommend that we go on to do any pointed survey
1153 in the future? When we hold future meetings with stakeholders, is this tool useful for us?
1154

1155 Mr. Mottau: This tool being the set of questions that we broke out here?
1156

1157 Commissioner Crommie: No, future questions that drill down more. Would this be a
1158 technique that we as a Commission should consider using? Just based on your
1159 recommendation.
1160

1161 Mr. Mottau: Our recommendation overall would be to take this support for what it is.
1162 There is support for dog parks out of this response. The how is unclear from this survey
1163 response, but we can also bring best practices from across the country. Every park
1164 agency in the country is struggling with same question or has recently. There are

1165 established and emerging best practices around the how of this. Those are not solutions
1166 that apply to every community. There is a shortlist of options. You're getting close to
1167 that shortlist of options in this question. The reality is that nobody on the ground in Palo
1168 Alto has seen the other options actually working. They've seen it happening. They've
1169 seen people having their dogs off-leash in an area, but it has always been illegal. There is
1170 a different behavior pattern that's observable when you are already forcing people to
1171 break the rules by having their dog off-leash in the park. They are not behaving the way
1172 that they would if there were rules in place that allowed them to not be rule breakers to
1173 start with. We've seen that in a lot of places. Once the rules are established, then people
1174 start self-policing a little bit more. People also say, "You know what? I can avoid that
1175 park from this hour to this hour when it's an off-leash dog area. That's not a big deal for
1176 me." It might sound like a big deal written down here in this question, but it turns out I'm
1177 okay with it or I'm not. Right now people don't have any actual experience to base their
1178 answers to 2 through 4 on, except for the rule breaking experience. That is skewing how
1179 people here are experiencing that right now.

1180
1181 Commissioner Crommie: Can you provide us with a list of best practices across the
1182 nation? Can we get data on best practices that are emerging in different cities across
1183 California?

1184
1185 Mr. Mottau: Yes.

1186
1187 Commissioner Crommie: Thank you.

1188
1189 Chair Reckdahl: Your point was that if you allow off-leash, unfenced dog activity, you'll
1190 have more compliance?

1191
1192 Mr. Mottau: If you establish a set of rules. We're going back to anecdotes a little bit.
1193 I've seen this in my neighborhood where we do have a number of parks that have areas
1194 designated at certain times as off-leash dog areas. They are open, unfenced areas. The
1195 difference that we have seen between the dog behavior, the dog conflicts, the dog
1196 problems, even complaints about people not picking up after their dogs, since that rule
1197 allowed those things to be happening but said, "IF you're going to be here, you're going to
1198 be here between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. You're going to be here and you're going to clean up
1199 after your dog and you're going to keep them in this part of the park." All of those things
1200 were followed better than the original rule of don't bring your dog here. They were
1201 running into more problems with the dogs that were in the park. It's a very strange ...
1202

1203 Chair Reckdahl: I'm skeptical about that. My experience, again anecdotal. I lived next
1204 to Hoover Park for a year. The kids would go out every night and play in Hoover Park
1205 and every night they'd come back with dog poo on their shoes. Every night. The people
1206 who live there have the same experience. It's effectively an off-leash dog area, but there's

1207 a dog park there. Granted it's not a very good one. Most dog owners are very
1208 responsible. There is a dog population that is not responsible. They either don't care that
1209 the dog is pooping or they're so busy talking to their friends that they don't know it
1210 happened.

1211
1212 Mr. Mottau: I agree that that happens. The observation of having rules in place changed
1213 a lot of opinions in Portland. One of the things that I would add into that dynamic is that
1214 there is a self-policing dynamic that does not happen when everybody is breaking the
1215 same rule. Nobody else has the incentive to make sure that that area does stay cleaned up
1216 if everybody is breaking the same rule. If we all start breaking the rules that we've laid
1217 out, that there's a time and you have to clean up and everything else, then that dog area
1218 may go away, that legal dog area may go away. That was how it was rolled out. It was
1219 rolled out as a pilot project. It stuck after the first year. I wouldn't say it has answered
1220 the problems, but it has improved the situation. We've heard that same story in other
1221 communities.

1222
1223 Chair Reckdahl: Any other questions or comments? If the public wants to speak, they
1224 have to fill out a card please. Howard, why don't you speak first and fill out the card
1225 afterwards.

1226
1227 Howard Hoffman: Okay, thank you.

1228
1229 Chair Reckdahl: In general we don't allow this, but since we did talk about dog parks and
1230 Howard Hoffman is the dog association president, we'll make an exception.

1231
1232 Mr. Hoffman: Thank you, Commissioner. Howard Hoffman, founder of Palo Alto Dog
1233 Owners. I'm one of those people that is illegally off-leash at Hoover Park. I can tell you
1234 why some people stay in the legally fenced area and why some people don't. Most
1235 people do want to follow the rules. Most people don't want to be subject to getting a fine.
1236 Most people would rather that their dogs don't have an opportunity to run off. As a dog
1237 owner who has well-trained dogs, I still would rather have a fence than not have a fence
1238 personally. I would say that's true of most dog owners. The problem is that the dog run
1239 there is pathetic. You have the question posed to the soccer players, what surface better
1240 meets your needs? With dogs, we've got basically three possibilities: decomposed
1241 granite or nicer dirt, grass, and artificial turf. Most dog owners would rather have real
1242 grass. They would settle for a small park with artificial turf, as you said. Dirt is totally
1243 unsuitable. It's good for allowing dog poop and urine to be there and not have to worry
1244 as much. It's much better if we have real grass and people cleaning up. Most of the
1245 people are self-policing. For the privilege of having it made legal and having proper
1246 boundaries and a fence, most people are going to clean up. It goes beyond self-policing.
1247 Dog owners actually police each other. The first time that another dog owner looked at
1248 me like, "Oh, your dog pooped over there." At first, I'm like "Oh." Then I realize this is

1249 great. This is the way it should be. I should be paying attention, but if I missed that my
1250 dog made a mess, I want somebody to tell me. I want to clean up after my dogs. Most of
1251 us go beyond that. If we see dog poop on the grass, even if it's cold and it happened
1252 yesterday, I'm going to clean it up. Most of the other dog owners feel the same way. We
1253 don't want to have dog poop there. We don't want people saying that we're a problem. If
1254 we had decent facilities, you'd have compliance gladly. Better to have it fenced however
1255 that's done, than not fenced. Better to have rules. Better to have it that everybody
1256 understands what the rules are. If people do understand what the rules are, not only do
1257 they police themselves, but they police each other. Is that fair enough?
1258

1259 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Okay, one minute.
1260

1261 Ms. Kleinhaus: The City of Mountain View is doing this experiment. They have dog
1262 parks that are a certain time people can go off-leash with the dogs. I've been taking my
1263 dog to Mountain View for a long time now. I don't necessarily want the area to be
1264 fenced. In our neighborhood, everybody goes to Ramos Park in the afternoon to socialize
1265 with each other. Everybody knows the dogs' names. Everybody knows each other. This
1266 is a huge social value to our community. Thank you.
1267

1268 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Rob, do you want to wrap up? Is there anything you want
1269 to add?
1270

1271 Mr. de Geus: This is really good progress. We've done some good work. These guys in
1272 particular have done some good work with this survey and the analysis. Very interesting
1273 data. As it fits in with all of the other data that we're gathering, I'm starting to feel a little
1274 more hopeful than maybe a month or two ago when we were struggling about some of
1275 this data. We're not there yet; I get that. The binder has helped as well. Important
1276 progress. Thank you for reviewing it and for your feedback.
1277

1278 **3. Debrief the March 20, 2015 Commission Retreat.** 1279

1280 Chair Reckdahl: I won't go through all the details of what we walked through, but I'll
1281 give you the highlights. We did wrap up some topics. The Master Plan Survey ad hoc
1282 has been disbanded since we completed it. There also was a park communications ad hoc
1283 that completed its tasks. Those are the two ad hocs that we closed for this year. We also
1284 had some other PIOs, we had about half a dozen PIOs that were passed. Some of them
1285 are under construction. Some are completed. A PIO is a Park Improvement Ordinance.
1286 We also passed the feeding wildlife ordinance. The field use was an outstanding issue
1287 that is being addressed by the Master Plan. That is taken off our list for now. We kept
1288 the remaining ad hocs. I won't run through the existing ad hocs, but we did add some ad
1289 hocs. We have two ad hocs of one, Commissioner Lauing, Arastradero Preserve,
1290 particularly the parking there. Can we work out a way of improving the parking situation

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1291 there? Also the crossing at Kellogg and Middlefield, which is near the Junior Zoo and
1292 Museum. We also had two ad hocs of one. Commissioner Markevitch will coordinate
1293 with high schools to have open play time. This would be kids can go on the field and
1294 play. Nothing organized, not competitive, just time for the kids to go out and get their
1295 energy out and socialize. Also the Lefkowitz Tunnel, reopening it. It's been a big
1296 improvement. Elizabeth Ames has work on this to scrunch down the time that the tunnel
1297 is closed. Right now it's been closed for quite a while, and it would be nice to have that
1298 open. Commissioner Markevitch is going to be heading up the coordination with City
1299 staff on that. Finally, Commissioner Ashlund will be the new Project Safety Net liaison.
1300 We want some type of interaction with Project Safety Net. Stacey has done other actions
1301 with Project Safety Net. We have some items that we're following. These aren't ad hocs;
1302 these are just items that we are concerned about. The cost of services study tells us the
1303 cost of what we charge and what we get back. That is going to Council for a study
1304 session April 6th. We're following that. The rental spaces, whether we have to change
1305 rental space, change the pricing to improve the revenue flow for the rental spaces. We
1306 will consider that after the cost of services study session. The Baylands satellite parking,
1307 we're just monitoring Council activity. That's not an active matter right now, unless the
1308 Council acts on that. We also want to investigate EIR training with the City. If the City
1309 is going to hold some internal EIR training, it would be very good. This is
1310 Environmental Impact Report. That would be a good experience for us, so we want to
1311 coordinate with City staff to see if we can get a training offered. Finally, the QPR
1312 gatekeeper training, that is just for anyone in stress, to help identify and assist them. We
1313 said we would not have a coordinated effort, but we encouraged all individuals to get that
1314 training. We also added about a half dozen new items of interest. Just the Master Plan
1315 content and delivery, that's a big item. We're all working on that. We're not having a
1316 separate ad hoc for that obviously. Water conservation is something Commissioner
1317 Knopper brought up. After some discussion, for every park improvement we want to
1318 have water conservation as an aspect of the PIO. We are watching the Baylands
1319 Comprehensive Conservation Plan. That will be done fiscal year 2017. That's still a year
1320 and a half off. Baylands Boardwalk Feasibility Study will be performed late this year.
1321 We want to follow that. There's been a lot of interest from the public about the Baylands
1322 boardwalk, and we want to see what the feasibility says. Whether we can repair it;
1323 whether it has to be completely replaced. We also talked about the interpretive center
1324 exhibits, both at Arastradero and Foothills Park. This came out of a discussion about the
1325 Baylands Interpretive Center. All three of those interpretive centers, we want to evaluate
1326 the exhibits on that. There currently is a CIP for the Baylands Interpretive Center
1327 exhibits, but not for the other two. Finally, outreach to seniors and teens. We think that
1328 quite often they're overlooked in the planning. None of us are teens. Some of us are
1329 getting close to seniors. We want to make sure that all the demographics in the City
1330 properly give input into the parks. Was there any other comments? Did I miss anything?
1331



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1332 Commissioner Ashlund: I have a question. Because an ad hoc can be an ad hoc of one,
1333 we talked about that. For example, on Project Safety Net, I signed up for that and the
1334 open playing field space at the high schools. Commissioner Markevitch signed up for
1335 that. One thing I realized after our retreat that didn't come up, was the liaison to the
1336 City/School Liaison Committee. I believe that's its name. We don't currently have any of
1337 us designated to be following that. I'd love to go and I try, but I miss them a lot because
1338 of scheduling conflicts.

1339
1340 Chair Reckdahl: What's the title?

1341
1342 Commissioner Hetterly: School liaison.

1343
1344 Chair Reckdahl: Is that something where we could have two people? If you're interested
1345 in it.

1346
1347 Commissioner Ashlund: I'm interested, but I don't have as much time and availability to
1348 attend it as I'd like. I'd be happy if another person would be willing to be interested.

1349
1350 Vice Chair Markevitch: Is that appropriate? The City/School Committee is usually
1351 School Board Members and City Council Members. Is this somebody who would go to
1352 that meeting and observe it? You don't really have a seat at the table.

1353
1354 Rob de Geus: You don't really have a seat at the table, but you do go to observe.
1355 Oftentimes it is a discussion that's relevant to our department, Community Services and
1356 not infrequently parks and recreation. In fact, the next meeting is April 2nd and it's at the
1357 School District. One of the topics is Project Safety Net. That'll be a discussion. Also
1358 interestingly, the committee has largely been an information sharing committee. The
1359 School District shares with the City about things that they're doing. Maybe Council
1360 Member Filseth can add to this. There's been some Council Members that would like to
1361 see that committee be a little more action oriented, if that's the right word. Problem solve
1362 some issues that both agencies are facing and help work through the solutions a little bit
1363 more than just sharing information. Things like Cubberley, as an example, where there's
1364 obviously interest from both parties. Project Safety Net is another good example. Traffic
1365 and Safe Routes to School is another good example. There's several. There was an
1366 interest from some Council Members that that be more of a working committee than just
1367 sharing of information. That was an interesting development. They're going to be
1368 discussing that on April 2nd. Council Member.

1369
1370 Council Member Filseth: There was some dialog on that at the last City/School meeting.
1371 It remains to be seen where it's going to end up.

1372
1373 Chair Reckdahl: Any other comments or questions?

1374
1375 Commissioner Ashlund: It was originally on our list a couple of years ago, when I first
1376 came on the Commission. I wondered if it had intentionally come off our list or if it was
1377 just lack of interest or time. I'm fine with it either way.
1378

1379 Chair Reckdahl: I looked at last year's list; I did not compare it to the year before to see
1380 if anything else had fallen off last year.
1381

1382 **4. Other Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates.**
1383

1384 Chair Reckdahl: I'll start off with one. Byxbee Park will be coming next month.
1385 Commissioner Crommie and I spent a lot of time with Daren working on that. I think
1386 they've improved it a lot. There's less trails up on Byxbee, but they're better laid out. If
1387 you're up there, sometimes it gets a little disorienting because there's so many
1388 crisscrossing trails. When you get to an intersection, you don't know exactly where
1389 you're at. It is a bit of a maze. The new layout is much simpler and will still be
1390 sufficiently dense to give people options as opposed to just one loop around the outside.
1391 There's some crisscrossing. It's a better design. One thing that we had talked about is
1392 this node. I mentioned this to you, Rob. Maybe we should bring this up.
1393

1394 Commissioner Crommie: I think it is worthwhile discussing.
1395

1396 Chair Reckdahl: I'm not sure if everyone's been to Byxbee. There's one particular spot in
1397 the new area; the spot closer to the freeway. This is the new stuff that was just opened up
1398 last year. There's a very good point with a good lookout where trails crisscross. At that
1399 node, they wanted to make a very large gathering spot. This would be crushed granite
1400 packed down so it'd be firm to walk on. This would be a meeting spot for people. The
1401 size would be 50 feet in diameter. Our first instinct was, "Wow, that's big." That's half
1402 the size of a basketball court. That would be in the middle of the wilderness. We
1403 thought, "Why do you need that much?" If we look at ranger's groups, that's more than
1404 enough size for any type of ranger group that we would have. Any social activities up
1405 there, we didn't think we'd need as many people. The landscape architect wanted
1406 personal space, 8 feet diameter per person, and they sized it that way. We thought that
1407 was a little excessive. After doing some numbers, we squished that down to 35 feet
1408 diameter. That's still a rather large size. For example, if you had a ranger group and
1409 you're listening to the ranger, you're not going to be any further away than 3 feet from the
1410 person next to you. You still could have over 100 people there, and even more if you
1411 wanted to squish it even further. If you had something like a social event, maybe a 4-foot
1412 diameter and you could still have 60 people around there. We thought that 35 feet was
1413 more than enough. After talking to Rob, Rob was saying, "Well, do we want to shrink it
1414 or not? Do we want to oversize it?" Commissioner Crommie.
1415

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1416 Commissioner Crommie: I stand by shrinking it down to 35. I walked it also with
1417 Commissioner Hetterly. It's a place that we saw at the crossroads. It just seems out of
1418 scale. When you are gathering, you're gathering at the crossroads of four paths. You're
1419 in the center and you can also go into those paths a little bit. That provides a lot of extra
1420 space. It wasn't like you walk on a meandering trail up to a place and then you have this
1421 big space. It's this crossroads, so it really adds scale to it. That's where it just felt so
1422 extra big.

1423
1424 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Hetterly, do you have a comment?
1425

1426 Rob de Geus: This is not really a topic for discussion today. You can give an update, but
1427 this isn't on the agenda. We're going to discuss this at the next meeting. This is a good
1428 teaser.
1429

1430 Chair Reckdahl: A teaser for next week.
1431

1432 Commissioner Crommie: People can go see it. It's a really great walk up there.
1433

1434 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, we should do it.
1435

1436 Commissioner Crommie: I recommend it. All Commissioners who are interested. You
1437 could even text Commissioner Reckdahl and I, and we would join you out there, if
1438 anyone's interested.
1439

1440 Chair Reckdahl: In general, if people have comments, email Daren about this. He's
1441 working this. He's working on the PIO for next month. If you do have comments, you
1442 should get them in now, so he can reflect it for the PIO.
1443

1444 Commissioner Hetterly: Is it the PIO coming next month or a discussion?
1445

1446 Mr. de Geus: I think it's discussion actually. I'll double check with him. It's come to the
1447 Commission once before. Given that there is fairly substantive changes that the whole
1448 Commission hasn't seen, I'd be surprised if he's bringing the PIO this time.
1449

1450 Chair Reckdahl: That would make more sense. Any other ad hocs?
1451

1452 Commissioner Knopper: Yes. I have a dog update. On Monday, March 16th, we had a
1453 stakeholders meeting with field users at Daren Anderson's office. Representatives from
1454 Palo Alto Little League, Babe Ruth league and the Mountain View football club or
1455 Mountain View soccer.
1456

1457 Commissioner Hetterly: PSV Union soccer.

1458
1459 Commissioner Knopper: Thank you. I can never get the letters. We presented the three
1460 proposed areas that the Commission has discussed, Greer Park, Baylands, and Hoover
1461 Park for the possible off-leash pilot program. We had a very passionate discussion
1462 specifically from Palo Alto Little League. It didn't impact soccer fields at all. The net of
1463 the meeting was that in Hoover Park we were discussing two areas. One area would be
1464 where the actual baseball diamond and the outfield was. Then there's an outer perimeter
1465 with a partial fence that we would complete. Palo Alto Little League and Babe Ruth
1466 deferred that if we were to present to our public meeting, which is the next step, utilizing
1467 the outside perimeter, they discussed with us the difficulty of grooming the dirt versus
1468 grass, for baseball diamonds and how expensive and time-consuming it is. That is not
1469 optimal at all. They would be open to having off-leash dogs in that outside perimeter of
1470 Hoover Park, wouldn't you say?
1471

1472 Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah. We thought we would change the options for the public
1473 meeting to favor that outside area.
1474

1475 Commissioner Knopper: Right.
1476

1477 Chair Reckdahl: You'd have some fence around the infield?
1478

1479 Commissioner Hetterly: There's the outfield fence that's in the middle of the turf area.
1480 We're talking about doing the shared use dog area outside of that fence, between the
1481 apartment building, the church, and the outfield fence. It would require more fencing.
1482

1483 Commissioner Knopper: It's like a boomerang. Pardon me for interrupting. It's like a
1484 weird triangular shape that's a little more than an acre.
1485

1486 Chair Reckdahl: It would be fenced?
1487

1488 Commissioner Hetterly: Yes.
1489

1490 Commissioner Knopper: Yes, fenced.
1491

1492 Commissioner Crommie: Is it grass or dirt?
1493

1494 Commissioner Knopper: Grass.
1495

1496 Commissioner Hetterly: It's grass.
1497

1498 Vice Chair Markevitch: Give an update. Aren't we going to talk about dogs next month?
1499

1500 Commissioner Knopper: That was the update.

1501
1502 Vice Chair Markevitch: (crosstalk) start discussing it.

1503
1504 Commissioner Knopper: No. I was answering.

1505
1506 Commissioner Crommie: Does asking a question fall under discussion or not?

1507
1508 Vice Chair Markevitch: It leads to a discussion.

1509
1510 Commissioner Hetterly: I just wanted to clarify. The ad hoc group has really been only
1511 looking at this shared use pilot program option. We have not been digging into where we
1512 should put a dedicated park, what size it should be. It may be that this public meeting
1513 on the shared use option is a good opportunity to raise some key questions to get input
1514 from the public. It might be helpful for us to meet or talk with you all with your expertise
1515 from other communities what are the key issues that we should explore further. If you're
1516 open to that, that would be helpful before doing the public outreach meeting.

1517
1518 Commissioner Crommie: Does the ad hoc have a date set for the public outreach?

1519
1520 Commissioner Knopper: No.

1521
1522 Commissioner Crommie: Where do you stand on that? Are you coming back to us
1523 before you do the outreach or are you doing the outreach before?

1524
1525 Commissioner Knopper: We're going to have the public meeting, and then we'll come
1526 back with the results of that.

1527
1528 Commissioner Crommie: Can you please publicize the public meeting to the
1529 Commission, so those of us who might be interested.

1530
1531 Commissioner Knopper: Sure, of course.

1532
1533 Commissioner Crommie: It's always informative to be there while things are being
1534 discussed.

1535
1536 Commissioner Hetterly: If there's a strong feeling on the Commission that you want to
1537 discuss public outreach before we go out, that might be worthwhile, to get your thoughts
1538 about issues that we should explore at that meeting. Maybe it would make sense to put it
1539 on the Agenda in the interim.

1540
1541 Commissioner Crommie: If we have the time, that'd be good.

1542
1543 Chair Reckdahl: It doesn't have to be extended.

1544
1545 Commissioner Hetterly: Just a short, 15-minute discussion.

1546
1547 Chair Reckdahl: It would be useful to have a short discussion about that. We've waited
1548 long enough between the last update. It would be good just to chew on that.

1549
1550 Commissioner Crommie: Are you thinking the public outreach meeting might be months
1551 away? It's open-ended right now?

1552
1553 Commissioner Knopper: Hopefully.

1554
1555 Commissioner Hetterly: Hopefully not months. Hopefully in the next couple of months
1556 we'll be able to do that.

1557
1558 Commissioner Crommie: In that case, yeah. It might be nice to come back briefly.

1559
1560 Chair Reckdahl: Should we put that on the agenda for next month?

1561
1562 Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah.

1563
1564 Chair Reckdahl: Any other ad hocs? Otherwise, we'll move on.

1565
1566 **V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1567
1568 Chair Reckdahl: The one thing I do want to say is the Form 700 is due April 1st. Get it
1569 in if you have not filed it. That is always fun. Rob, did you have any other (crosstalk).

1570
1571 Rob de Geus: You mentioned the cost of services study. Hopefully you have that on
1572 your calendar. There's an event, an all-day event, on May 30th. That's a ways out, but I
1573 thought I'd let you know if you haven't heard about it already. It's called the Summit, and
1574 it's about the Comp Plan for the City. The Commission cares a lot about that. It's an all-
1575 day event. You can learn about the current thinking on the Comp Plan and some of the
1576 results from the Our Palo Alto outreach effort that's been happening over the last several
1577 months. You can put that on your calendar. I believe it's a Saturday. Some things that
1578 are happening a little closer than that. We have a youth forum happening this Friday that
1579 the Mitchell Park Community Center teen staff have been working on with the Palo Alto
1580 Youth Council. It's 5:30 to 9:00. It includes a couple of different things. There's a
1581 dialog circle time happening for teens specifically. There are six different topics that the
1582 teens talk about with some facilitators related to those topics. There's a parent workshop
1583 at the same time. Everyone comes back together at the end, so there's a sharing of what

1584 the teens discussed with their facilitators. There's an empathy hour after that where
1585 there's going to be some food and some fun activities for the adults and teens that are
1586 there. That's happening this Friday.

1587
1588 Chair Reckdahl: What is the target age? All teens?
1589

1590 Mr. de Geus: High school teens. It's on the heels of some tragic suicides. That's heavy
1591 on the minds and hearts of everyone including the students. That's certainly part of the
1592 topics that'll be discussed on Friday evening. That's at Mitchell Park Community Center
1593 if you're interested in participating. April 18th, hopefully you've got this on your
1594 calendars. Does everyone know what that is? The Magical Bridge Grand Opening.
1595 Right, Peter? Here's the guy that's helped make it happen. Of course, Olenka and many
1596 others in the community that have fundraised to help build that really awesome
1597 playground. That's going to be a lot of fun. Hopefully, that's on your calendar.
1598

1599 Commissioner Crommie: I know that's all day, but can you remind us what time the
1600 actual presentation is?
1601

1602 Peter Jensen: It's at 10:00 a.m. It's scheduled to go 30-45 minutes, the opening
1603 ceremonies. It's starting at 10:00. Daren and I met with the contractors on Scott Park
1604 yesterday. They are starting the renovation work there. I believe Monday is the actual
1605 day they're going to be working out there. It's a couple-month process to do the park.
1606 That's on its way.
1607

1608 Chair Reckdahl: Bocce is almost here.
1609

1610 Mr. de Geus: Daren had something he needed to be at tonight, so he couldn't be here. He
1611 did let me know that Hopkins Park is completed, that CIP. He was happy to say it's done.
1612

1613 Chair Reckdahl: That came up after you left on Friday. He was quite happy.
1614

1615 **VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR APRIL 28, 2015 MEETING**
1616

1617 Chair Reckdahl: We're going to have the dog park. A discussion about the public
1618 meeting.
1619

1620 Commissioner Hetterly: And Byxbee trails.
1621

1622 Rob de Geus: And Byxbee trails. I had a suggestion here. You may have talked about it
1623 at retreat after I left. We were trying to put together a second retreat or workshop around
1624 the Parks Master Plan and the matrix we looked at a little while back. We think by the
1625 end of April we'll have the matrix ready for a first hard look and have it completed

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1626 including some of the summary of needs that would be generated from the data that's
1627 been collected. By April 28th, that's the next meeting, we think we would be ready for
1628 that. One thing we were thinking might be an option is rather than having a separate day
1629 for a workshop, to start a little earlier and do it that evening. We could provide some
1630 food and so on if that would be of interest to the Commission to avoid having another
1631 meeting day. Start at 5:30 or 6:00, and have a couple or three hours on the Parks Master
1632 Plan and the matrix. Have a couple of items after that and still be done reasonably early.
1633 If the Commission would rather have another day, certainly we can do that.

1634
1635 Chair Reckdahl: What is the general feel? Would you rather have a longer meeting one
1636 night as opposed to having a separate day?

1637
1638 Vice Chair Markevitch: Mm-hmm.

1639
1640 Chair Reckdahl: Abbie?

1641
1642 Commissioner Knopper: Yeah (inaudible).

1643
1644 Commissioner Crommie: I like it.

1645
1646 Peter Jensen: For the Parks Master Plan portion of it, we were discussing it in another
1647 room, perhaps the one on the corner, so we can sit around a round table.

1648
1649 Chair Reckdahl: It would be good to be at a table. If you have stuff to look at, it's nicer
1650 to gather as opposed to being spread out. Meeting times, what can people make? 6:00,
1651 5:30? What's too early?

1652
1653 Commissioner Crommie: 6:00 is better for me. 5:30 is too early for me.

1654
1655 Chair Reckdahl: Eric, do you have a preference?

1656
1657 Commissioner Crommie: I vote for no earlier than 6:00.

1658
1659 Chair Reckdahl: Let's go with 6:00, and maybe target 6:00 to 8:00 and then have the
1660 Commission meeting start at 8:00. Is that reasonable? 8:30?

1661
1662 Mr. de Geus: It might be good to have the food arrive at 5:30, and then people can come
1663 and eat for that half hour. If you can't get there until 6:00, it's fine. Have your food as we
1664 get started.

1666 Chair Reckdahl: 5:30 dinner and we're going to target 6:00 to 8:00? What's the ending
1667 time? Let's target 8:30. It always seems like it's a gas that expands to fill all available
1668 space.

1670 Mr. de Geus: That's what the team thinks as well. It's probably in the end going to be
1671 three hours. There's a lot to go over there. It's an important topic. Let's aim for 8:30.

1673 Chair Reckdahl: We would just come into here when we would start the regular
1674 meetings or we'd have the regular meeting in there?

1676 Catherine Bourquin: It's in the new, it's finished. That's what we were scheduled for to
1677 begin with. At the Chambers this year.

1679 Mr. de Geus: Our regular meeting is scheduled in that room already.

1681 Chair Reckdahl: That's convenient then. The entire meeting will be there. That gives us
1682 more flexibility. We may be there until midnight if that's the case. Any other agenda
1683 items?

1685 Commissioner Ashlund: Trying to clarify the schedule. The next stakeholder meeting
1686 for the Master Plan, do we have a target date for that?

1688 Mr. de Geus: I don't think so. We haven't scheduled it, because we put the brakes on the
1689 next stakeholder meeting to ensure that we were comfortable with the data gathering
1690 portion. That's where we develop the matrix. If everything goes well this next month as
1691 we develop the matrix and then we have our workshop, essentially study session, on the
1692 28th, we'll evaluate it at that time. If things are looking good then, we will try and have
1693 the stakeholder meeting fairly soon after that. Probably late May at the earliest.

1695 Commissioner Ashlund: Are there more sub-stakeholder meetings such as the
1696 community gardens meeting that was today?

1698 Mr. de Geus: There probably will be, particularly as we dive deeper into the survey
1699 results and we start to see certain trends or patterns. It's particularly helpful to have those
1700 conversations. We know we haven't hit all of them. You mentioned one, the younger
1701 generation up to 35. There's still more work that we need to do there in terms of some
1702 smaller focus groups. Every time the consultants are here, we try and fill their time so
1703 they can speak with residents about what we're learning or partner organizations, field
1704 users, that sort of thing.

1706 Commissioner Crommie: If you want to go back to the farmers market, that was great. I
1707 saw so many young people there. It was striking that there were young people with

1708 children and singles, that demographic. That's really that under 35 group. They're either
1709 going to be married with their first kids or still single.

1710
1711 Chair Reckdahl: A farmers market is just a random set of people. Does that buy us value
1712 now?

1713
1714 Ryan Mottau: The reason that worked so well early on is a defined short set of questions
1715 that we were able to ask without having to grab a lot of people's time. I think that's right
1716 in the demographic, as Deirdre was saying, that we're looking to add some more
1717 perspective from. Unfortunately, that method of going out and intercepting people is
1718 going to be harder to get a more detailed view which is what we're trying to get to at this
1719 stage in the process. We'll definitely be thinking about some other alternatives. You're
1720 right, that's a great place to catch that demographic, and we did catch that the last time
1721 around. I'm happy to hear any other ideas. We're also following some leads with the
1722 director at the YMCA who has a variety of connections in other parts of the community
1723 and would have some of those same age groups involved there. We're going to see what
1724 we can track down over the next week or two.

1725
1726 Chair Reckdahl: If we're going after teens, do we want to visit high schools at all?

1727
1728 Vice Chair Markevitch: That's not really appropriate. Their instructional day is so full
1729 already that I can't even imagine trying to pull that one off. There's enough stress going
1730 on at the schools especially this time of year with college acceptances and rejections. I
1731 wouldn't do that.

1732
1733 Chair Reckdahl: I'm thinking about if you hung out at Town and Country at lunch, but
1734 that would be such a zoo that you'd probably be overwhelmed.

1735
1736 Vice Chair Markevitch: They have a very short lunch time, and you're only getting one
1737 high school at that point. There's got to be a better way than going to do that. Also
1738 getting onto the campus has a whole other set of problems. I just don't think that's a good
1739 fit. There has to be a different way.

1740
1741 **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

1742
1743 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Hetterly and second by Commissioner
1744 Knopper at 10:10 p.m. Passed 7-0