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**MINUTES  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
December 8, 2015  
CITY HALL  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, California**

13 **Commissioners Present:** Jim Cowie, Anne Cribbs, Jennifer Hetterly, Abbie Knopper, Ed  
14 Lauing, David Moss, Keith Reckdahl

15 **Commissioners Absent:**

16 **Others Present:** Eric Filseth

17 **Staff Present:** Daren Anderson, 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 Chair Reckdahl: Does anyone have any changes?

23  
24 Daren Anderson: I just had one comment on the agenda. It had been my intent to bring a  
25 discussion item under Capital Improvement Projects, and I missed the window. I  
26 apologize. While I'll have a brief presentation this evening, the discussion will have to  
27 wait until the January meeting. I'll return at that time, and we can ask our questions and  
28 have a thoughtful discussion on the topic.

29  
30 Chair Reckdahl: There's no way to make it a discussion item at this point?

31  
32 Rob de Geus: I think we can discuss it but just more limited. It is an ad hoc committee,  
33 and it's an ad hoc committee update. We would have preferred to have it listed  
34 specifically on the agenda. The ad hoc committee has met, and we've had some  
35 discussion. Unfortunately, it wasn't posted that way. We just want to be sensitive to that.  
36 Some limited discussion, a broader discussion in January which is fine with the timeline,  
37 we believe.  
38



39 Chair Reckdahl: I don't think there's going to be any deep conversations about it. If  
40 people have questions, we want them to be able to ask questions.

41  
42 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

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44 Chair Reckdahl: I have no speaker cards, so we'll move on.

45  
46 **IV. BUSINESS:**

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48 **1. Welcome New Commissioners.**

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50 Chair Reckdahl: The first piece of business is Welcome New Commissioners. Did you  
51 want to say something?

52  
53 Rob de Geus: I'll say something. I'll introduce myself first of all. I'm Rob de Geus; I'm  
54 the director of Community Services. We have three commissions within Community  
55 Services. The Parks and Rec Commission is one of them. We have the Public Art  
56 Commission, and we have the Human Relations Commission. I have a favorite; no, I  
57 don't really. I've been with the Parks and Rec Commission for a long time and appreciate  
58 what the Commission does and how they support staff in design of parks and policies  
59 around parks and recreation. It's extremely helpful to the staff. Welcome aboard and  
60 congratulations. I'll also have these guys introduce themselves, because you'll see them a  
61 lot. They're at almost every meeting. This is Peter Jensen right here.

62  
63 Peter Jensen: Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect for the City of Palo Alto. I actually  
64 work in a different department than Daren and Rob do; I'm in Public Works, mostly  
65 focusing on Capital Improvement Projects of renovation of parkland and City landscape  
66 space. You will see me a lot. Along with them, I don't really consider myself the lead of  
67 the project because the project is so big, for the Parks Master Plan. That is probably the  
68 most important project that the PRC is working on this year as far as its vast size and  
69 what it has entailed in it. Nice to have you on the Commission.

70  
71 Daren Anderson: Good evening. Daren Anderson, I'm with Open Space, Parks and Golf  
72 which is with Community Services. I'm fortunate to work closely with the Commission  
73 on a lot of projects for many years, and looking forward to doing so with our new  
74 Commissioners and this whole Commission going forward.

75  
76 Catherine Bourquin: I'm Catherin Bourquin. If you need any assistance, please call me.  
77 I'm sure you all have my email address and phone number. I've spoken to a few of you.  
78 Nice to meet you guys.

80 Mr. de Geus: Catherine helps us stay organized. She did prepare some binders for the  
81 three new Commissioners. It includes some information about protocols and roles of the  
82 Commission, the Brown Act around that, how agendas get set up, those types of things.  
83 There's a variety of things in there for you. It's a big binder, so you can add things to it.  
84 It's going to take a little bit of time to get up to speed on some of the projects, particularly  
85 the Parks Master Plan which is not just a Parks Master Plan but it's Parks, Natural Open  
86 Space, Trails and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. It hasn't been done in decades; it's a  
87 very, very big endeavor. Staff and the Commission has been working on this for well  
88 over a year. There's a lot of information to go over. I invite the three new  
89 Commissioners to come and meet with myself and some of the staff maybe before the  
90 holidays if that works, if not soon after, so we can just talk for some time about some of  
91 the big projects that we've been working on, particularly the Parks Master Plan, and help  
92 you get caught up. We can also do a tour of facilities or other things if you're interested  
93 in doing that.

94  
95 Chair Reckdahl: When Abbie and I started, you brought us around and showed us the  
96 facilities. That was very nice. It helped me get an idea of what we're worried about.  
97 There will be a lot of stuff; just ask questions. We can answer them now or answer them  
98 later. We will be having a retreat in February usually. There we'll go through all the  
99 items, and that will give you a nice overview. Between now and then, you'll be  
100 frantically swimming to keep up. February, you'll have a much better idea of what's  
101 going on.

102  
103 Mr. de Geus: Chair Reckdahl, it might be nice to hear from the three new  
104 Commissioners and how they did in their interview and why they chose to join the  
105 Commission.

106  
107 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Moss, do you want to start?

108  
109 Commissioner Moss: Sure. I've been a volunteer on a number of different activities, Boy  
110 Scouts and AYSO and other activities, Gunn High School Sports Boosters and Gunn  
111 Foundation Scholarship. I've always had a little bit of that in my activities, but I have  
112 been here for 40 years doing program or business analyst. Also, our family has always  
113 enjoyed the open spaces. We go practically every week to one of those three open  
114 spaces. We really have a vested interested.

115  
116 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Cribbs.

117  
118 Commissioner Cribbs: I'm Anne Cribbs, and I am a longtime resident of Palo Alto. My  
119 children all went to Palo Alto schools. I worked for the Recreation Department in the  
120 mid-'80s and went on to work in Palo Alto. I head up the Bay Area Sports Organizing  
121 Committee which seeks to bring national and international sporting events to the San

122 Francisco Bay Area. Since we're not having the Olympic Games here anytime soon now,  
123 I am looking forward to working on the Park and Recreation Commission. I absolutely  
124 love sports and believe in the value of sports for children and for adults and for senior  
125 citizens, and love Palo Alto as well and think we live in an absolutely great, wonderful  
126 place. I'm absolutely so happy to be here, especially when we're starting, at least I feel  
127 like we're starting, on this Park Plan. Thank you.

128  
129 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Cowie.

130  
131 Commissioner Cowie: My name is Jim Cowie. I've lived in Palo Alto for 15 years. For  
132 most of those years, I served as a basketball coach for my three daughters who are now  
133 too old to have dad coaching them anymore. I feel like I have a lot of free time that I can  
134 contribute to the community in other ways. I took on a role with the School District on  
135 the Oversight Committee for the bonds a couple of years back and felt like I could do  
136 more. Like the other new Commissioners, I'm passionate about open space and  
137 recreation opportunities, sports for kids. I am a consistent user of the facilities that we  
138 have here in Palo Alto and am excited about the opportunity to help the City do  
139 everything it can to preserve what we've got and make what we've got even better.

140  
141 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Speaking of binders, are they going to get copies of the  
142 Parks Master Plan binders?

143  
144 Mr. Jensen: Yes. We'll be working on that, and we'll have that for them at the next  
145 meeting or perhaps sooner. Yes, they will.

146  
147 Chair Reckdahl: Are there any updates for us? We haven't had any updates. My binder's  
148 been sitting on the shelf for the last few meetings.

149  
150 Mr. Jensen: Yes, there are updates to the binder now. I've started to collect those  
151 together, and we will add those to the binders next time. There's some updated plans that  
152 need to go in there as well as some of the sections that we have material for now that you  
153 didn't have before.

154  
155 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you.

156  
157 **2. Approval of Draft Minutes from the October 27, 2015, Parks and Recreation**  
158 **Commission Meeting.**  
159

160 Approval of the draft October 27, 2015 Minutes was moved by Commissioner Hetterly  
161 and seconded by Commissioner Lauing. Passed 4-0, Cowie, Cribbs, Moss abstaining  
162

163 **3. Update on the Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Facilities Master**  
164 **Plan.**  
165

166 Chair Reckdahl: Peter Jensen, take it away.  
167

168 Peter Jensen: Good evening, Commissioners. Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect for the  
169 City of Palo Alto, here to continue our ongoing discussion of the Parks Master Plan.  
170 Tonight we'll be discussing three specific areas, two at length, and then we'll review a  
171 plan at the end that was updated. We'll be talking about firstly the evaluation process and  
172 the ranking and the scoring of those things as far as our list goes of potential project and  
173 program ideas. Then we'll be looking and introducing the list of project and program  
174 ideas, which I'll go through in the second phase of this presentation and bring it up on  
175 your monitors. We'll talk about how it can be filtered and reviewed in different ways.  
176 The final thing, as I alluded to before, we'll be talking about a change to one of the plans  
177 in our geographic study. We've added some information to that, most importantly in the  
178 brown. If you want to look at it now, sitting in front of you is the City land that's owned  
179 which includes parking lots and other things that weren't on the plan before. We'll get  
180 into more detail of that as it goes along. First though, I do want to start out with the  
181 evaluation process and the criteria and how it's ranked and scored. We're going to go  
182 through this process. I have some examples to talk about. Then we'll talk about and have  
183 a little discussion about this first thing after that. Then we'll move into the list and have a  
184 discussion about that. Without further ado. Just to talk about the purpose of the plan, to  
185 bring everyone up to speed and briefly give a description, since we do have some new  
186 Commissioners here tonight. The Parks Master Plan, which also includes programming  
187 and facilities, has put together the idea to guide decision-making for future development  
188 of the parks, trails, open space and recreation system. We have a great park and  
189 recreation system now. We want to make sure we have that in the future and, where we  
190 can, enhance that, enhancing it in a way based on data collected in the first phase of this  
191 project, so we make good decisions and choices when we do decide to use capital funds  
192 to enhance or renovate our park and recreation system. This next slide represents the  
193 process that we've been moving along to get to the final Parks Master Plan. We are at the  
194 criteria and prioritization phase, which you see is getting down closer to the end. Of  
195 course, the majority of the first phase of the project was doing site analysis and data  
196 collection of our current system as well as a lot of community feedback and input, that  
197 went along into this. Just recently over the last few months, we've been working on the  
198 framework to develop this list of projects and the way it can be prioritized. The first step  
199 of that was creating a list of master principles, which you see here. These principles  
200 provide a vision of what Palo Alto would like to see in its park and recreation facilities,  
201 programs and its parks. They are drawn from data and analysis and community output  
202 from the first phase of the project. I did bring, for everyone who knows what it is and for  
203 those of you who don't, the matrix of the opportunity summary that was put together and  
204 that basically starts to break down all the data into a matrix that you can start to



205 understand it a little better. You'll understand what I'm saying by this. If you don't have  
206 a project binder, it is very thick and packed with a lot of information. This data matrix  
207 was used to compile information as well as to relate back to where that information was  
208 from when conclusions are being drawn. From that came the initial principles which was  
209 worked on by the Parks and Recreation Commission for a few months to get them where  
210 they are now. From our initial Study Session with the Council, actually our second one,  
211 one has been added. I don't think we discussed this in the last meeting. Is the word  
212 "nature" there? That was felt by the Council as well as members of the community that it  
213 should stand alone as its own principle. Another thing developed over the last few  
214 months was prioritization criteria. This criteria is what we're going to get in more depth  
215 tonight, because this is the meat of how we're going to prioritize our list of projects. In  
216 the package, if you've had a chance to look through it, you'll see that most of the pages  
217 are this very extensive list of potential project and program ideas. We're at the stage now  
218 of how do we rank or score and get a prioritized list of what we want to do here. It's  
219 going to be done using these criteria. Again, these criteria were developed with the  
220 Commission over the last few months and represent key areas of focus that we want to  
221 consider while evaluating the potential projects. That brings us then to recommendations,  
222 and that's kind of where we are tonight. We are introducing the list of these  
223 recommendations. The final steps in developing the Master Plan involve refining,  
224 prioritizing and documenting the recommendations generated throughout the process. A  
225 list of potential project and program ideas have been developed for review. This review  
226 will go on for the next meeting at least, because the list is so extensive. That is kind of  
227 the second part of our topic tonight, the list itself. We want to introduce it tonight, talk  
228 about it a little bit, and then give you the time between now and next meeting to have the  
229 list and review it. At the next meeting, we'll talk about it more in-depth. This is  
230 something else that we've been working on, refining over the last few months, the  
231 potential project and program ideas and the steps of prioritization and how they're going  
232 to be ranked and scored. This is more a flow diagram of how that will be. We are mostly  
233 going to be talking about this center circle here and the filtering of the list and then the  
234 prioritization of that. How do we do this? We have our list, and we have all these  
235 projects that we want to put together. I'm going to go through a few examples tonight.  
236 Each example represents a different, I guess, area of specificity. This one being one that  
237 is about a park and renovation to a park. The second example deals with an issue that  
238 we've dealt with a lot; that's having a dog park and where that should go and how that is  
239 ranked. The third one is an actual one about programs. We'll look at a facility upgrade  
240 with a park improvement and then a program improvement. This first one is a connection  
241 to Adobe Creek from Mitchell Park. That example comes from the list of projects that  
242 we have. What happens here in this sequence of how we got to this point and are going  
243 to get through to the criteria to judge this is, first of all, our consultant MIG has put  
244 together our list of recommended projects from the opportunities and community  
245 feedback. That's where this example comes from. They've composed and compiled a list  
246 of that. Staff has taken a look at it over the last month and been reviewing that with them



247 to get you to the list that we have today. This represents one of those projects from the  
248 list. How it got to the list is in the steps, looking at again the matrix and the community  
249 feedback that we have received, then applying the principles to the project. The  
250 principles give us an understanding of the overall areas of scope or vision that we would  
251 like to see involved in all the projects. We would like for each project to fulfill as many  
252 of the principles as possible. This initial review goes through, and you can see there's  
253 checkmarks next to the ones that were felt were covered by this project. The principles  
254 come back later in the project at the end when we actually have a real specific project.  
255 We look at this list again and then start to talk about what are the principles that are  
256 missing and how can those things be incorporated into the scope of the project to make  
257 the project better and more enhanced. That's also based on feasibility. Not all those  
258 things, of course, can be done just probably due to budget and costs. They do play a role  
259 at the beginning and also, I think, a more important role at the end. The other that's done  
260 for each of these projects is it draws again from our matrix. The project team or City  
261 Staff will assess the idea based on available data. The opportunity summary describes  
262 what the planning team knows about the site. The process uses the same measures the  
263 PRC and project team used to develop the opportunity matrix. A sample of the project  
264 information is shown in the next slide. For each one of these potential projects, they  
265 looked at the areas of the matrix that we have, and it recognizes what's in that matrix for  
266 each specific project. It goes through our upper heading which is in the dark green  
267 section of this layout. Then it describes in each one how they fulfill that or how they're  
268 associated with that specific column. This first sample I'm using because it gets to this  
269 point. In Step 3a is where you look at the principle and you look at the data driven from  
270 the matrix. At that point, a decision is made if there's enough information to have a real  
271 project. In this specific project, where it's calling out to re-establish the natural bank of  
272 the stream or a natural area next to the creek itself, that needs a feasibility study. The  
273 project that will be first recommended will be to do a feasibility study to see how that can  
274 be done. That won't happen to the majority of the projects, but a few of the projects will,  
275 so I do want to bring that up as being a step that is considered in the process of this. For  
276 our purposes here, the example, we go on to just rank the project. This is where really  
277 the conversation tonight is about this. Using the criteria, we've set up a sample scoring  
278 card that each project will go through. Each project will be scored in the whole list.  
279 Currently our list is 386 projects. It's 143 ideas, but some of those ideas can be applied to  
280 different parks, different facilities which gives you the 386 total. All 386 projects will go  
281 through this criteria ranking. It's an evaluation set up with numbers in our case. In your  
282 packet I put one through five as it being scored. Further discussion after that felt that the  
283 zero should be applied to, because some of the projects may not hit one of our criteria.  
284 Allowing that to be marked as a zero is something that should have been considered in  
285 there. Further discuss too is the point system. That's what we can have further tonight, is  
286 a zero through five point system adequate enough to evaluate the projects. There was  
287 also some conversation that I had with MIG, the consultant, about using fraction of points  
288 too, a half point, a quarter point, to give a varying degree of points. It could eliminate



289 some of the logjam if you had a bunch that were scored the same. How would we then  
290 decipher between those? We can get a more accurate description of that. We'll talk  
291 about that a little bit more as we go along. This is the score card that will be used. The  
292 consultant is going to go through the list initially and score it. Staff is then going to work  
293 with them to review that list. The list will be brought back in the next few months as a  
294 ranked, prioritized list that we'll have further discussion about. That's the idea that's  
295 recommended right now. Again, we can have discussion on that too and how that is set  
296 up. That's basically what we're shooting to do. For this project, you can see the total, if  
297 you start, add up to the scores of those things. Again, zero being the lowest and five  
298 being the highest. This project scores a 19. That is significant when we get to this end of  
299 this, because that's how you start to prioritize this list, ranked upon their score. With the  
300 maximum amount of five points, the maximum score a project can get is 25 points.  
301 That's the process that we'll go through to rank each of these. This slide starts to talk  
302 about the principles. What you have then is your project, going back and looking at what  
303 principles were not checked off in the initial review and how we can incorporate those  
304 principles into the scope of the project to make it a much better project. I would also say  
305 too that for our Parks Master Plan, the scoring and evaluation of projects is going to be  
306 more significant because we have a full list of all these projects that we want to have.  
307 The same criteria, though, and the scoring is being proposed to be used in the future as  
308 well. When new projects pop up, this would be the process that those new projects would  
309 also go through to be ranked and scored and judged and set against the list that we're  
310 going to generate now. This, I guess, process of evaluation is not just for the Master  
311 Plan, but it's for continuous set up or structure of evaluating projects in the future that do  
312 come up. The second example is having an off-leash dog park in the north section of the  
313 City where we are lacking it now. Again, it goes through and reviews the principles set  
314 up with that. I think we all agree that developing more dog parks or a better dog park is  
315 definitely a project that's high on the list that we do hear a lot about. This is definitely  
316 something that's going to be considered. Again, the consideration that runs through our  
317 opportunities matrix would consider these for each of those headings and is the  
318 background information for why the project was made a project. This one is then scored.  
319 You can see that the question of do we have adequate information, which we didn't have  
320 in the last project, we needed a feasibility study for the development of the creek side.  
321 For this one we do have enough available information, so we move past that stuff and  
322 then go into the judging of its criteria. In this case, the criteria totals to be 17 as the  
323 score. Again, you'd go back through and look at the principles that were not checked off  
324 and try to develop them into the actual scope of a specific project. Example Number 3 is  
325 a program. This has to do with the Boost yoga program, expand the Boost drop-in  
326 program beyond the indoor facilities in the system to include programs held on lawns in  
327 Palo Alto parks. Yoga is a good program to start with this, but this idea could expand to  
328 additional programming types. This is a way to move out of our limited facilities space  
329 and have programming in the park that is for drop-ins. These are things that have, again,  
330 been cited by the community as well as from the analysis of the data we have of our park





331 and program system. It's run again through the Master Plan principles. You can see here  
332 that health, walkability and balanced are the ones checked for this; there are a few that  
333 aren't. Again, this is an example of how that information is tied back to the information  
334 from our opportunities matrix and where the information and background information  
335 came for making it a project. Going through its scoring system, this one gives us a score  
336 of 21. This goes through, again, the principles and reassigning them to the project to  
337 enhance the scope. We go through this whole list. We just ranked three as our examples.  
338 From that, we get a grand total of points. From those points, you can see that the Boost  
339 yoga in the park hits more criteria and ranks higher than the other two projects. What  
340 that means is that on the compiled list of prioritized projects that we get, it'll be ranked  
341 from the highest scoring to the lowest scoring. That will give us a good, solid foundation  
342 of considering those projects. Of course, there will be a scrutinizing by staff as well as  
343 the Parks and Rec Commission as well as Council, that will review the list and how it is  
344 prioritized and what is on that list. This will establish our initial draft list to review and  
345 provide backup data and information that, I think, supports how they are prioritized and  
346 ranked. The use of the scoring. It provides an indication for which projects should  
347 advance in the budget and capital planning process. The results can be filtered to  
348 compare competing projects or program ideas that would utilize the same space and  
349 resources. We can talk about how that is done with our bigger list. It provides a clear  
350 and defensible ranking system. The process is designed to continue to be used for  
351 evaluating new project or program ideas that come up in the future. These are the main,  
352 core ideas of developing this evaluation process. For tonight's purposes, I know that you  
353 just got the package last week, so your initial review of it. I do also want to continue this  
354 discussion at our next meeting as well. This is definitely a very important process in this  
355 whole thing. The things that I think staff and the consulting team is looking for as far as  
356 information and guidance kind of go along with the next discussion points. Does the  
357 point ranking system provide a clear and concise method of prioritizing projects? Does  
358 the zero through five point scoring scale for each criteria work for ranking the proposed  
359 projects and program? I also added in this one that this would include do we want to use  
360 half or quarter points to help broaden the range of scoring. Are the criteria used for the  
361 method enough for prioritization? Finally, if the Commission would like to form an ad  
362 hoc committee that works with the staff and project team to help develop the list before it  
363 comes back to continue the process of discussion of the prioritization, that's something  
364 we'll consider tonight.

365  
366 Chair Reckdahl: How is cost and value going to be worked in here? I see down in the  
367 next circle we have some iteration that includes that. Even if it isn't perfect, but it has  
368 very low cost and very high value, you think that that should make it percolate up earlier.

369  
370 Mr. Jensen: That goes along into our potential list. That is going to be—it's not currently  
371 now. That's something the consultant is working. There are additional, I guess, columns  
372 in our list. One of them being budget or funding. Right now, from our discussion and we



373 can talk about that here in a minute, they're going to do it as a dollar sign. We haven't set  
374 what those limits of each dollar sign mean. If it has one dollar sign, meaning that it's less  
375 funding to do. If it has two, three, four—I don't know what our range of that's going to  
376 be, but we will be considering that as one of the items on the list.

377  
378 Chair Reckdahl: That will still be in the prioritization circle?

379  
380 Mr. Jensen: Yes.

381  
382 Rob de Geus: I was just going to add that there's a lot to take in there. It looked  
383 confusing. It's a work in progress. We have to, somewhat like a funnel, get to a  
384 prioritization of projects and programs. There's going to be many more, as you see in the  
385 list, than we're going to be able to do in a short period of time. How do we do that? This  
386 is sort of the process that we're trying to create with you all about that process. I think  
387 that's important to say, that it's still a work in progress. The examples that were listed up  
388 here was sort of for illustration purposes; they weren't actual point system that we had  
389 fully developed. In fact, a point system the way we've been talking about it would need  
390 to be a group of stakeholders, the Commission, staff and others, that would all score  
391 together to develop sort of an average on those five criteria. I wanted to certainly  
392 mention that. The other point I wanted to make was about the dollar amount. This was  
393 something that the Commission has discussed before and, I think, intentionally did not  
394 want the dollar amount to be a deciding factor of whether a project should be a priority or  
395 not a priority. We think it's important that it's on the list so we have an understanding of  
396 sort of order of magnitude. Some of these thing are big, particularly expanding the  
397 system where we might think about adding parkland, purchasing land. It was a conscious  
398 decision not to have cost be a factor there. It's a reality check that we have to deal with  
399 but not a factor in terms of prioritization. I wanted to mention that.

400  
401 Mr. Jensen: When the list is prioritized, there is a sequencing step that does happen after  
402 which does review. That's about the short-term, mid-term and long-term and how these  
403 projects all fit into those different areas. Those will consider budget and the cost of the  
404 project, will consider how it balances the system. It either balances a specific park so we  
405 have passive and active areas or we have a dog park at the north—actually that's the third,  
406 geographic distribution that's also considered in that, where you look at how our facilities  
407 are broadcast throughout the City. We'd like to have a dog park in the north. Those three  
408 things are considered when sequencing when these things will happen in which  
409 timeframes. I will open it up for discussion on this topic now.

410  
411 Chair Reckdahl: Before we start with the Commissioners, we have one public speaker.  
412 Howard Hoffman.

413

414 Howard Hoffman: Thank you. Welcome to the new Commissioners. I'm Howard  
415 Hoffman, and I represent Palo Alto Dog Owners. We have more than 300 members. The  
416 reason I've been coming to a lot of these meetings for a long time is that the City of Palo  
417 Alto really is lacking in facilities for dog recreation. We have a dog leash law in Palo  
418 Alto; you can get cited and fined for having your dog off leash. Interesting about the  
419 yoga versus dog parks, how that just worked out in that example. There's all kinds of  
420 commercial places to do yoga all over Palo Alto. I left my yoga class early this evening,  
421 after only 30 minutes of the 75-minute class, to be here. I appreciate yoga. I started my  
422 yoga in the City yoga program. You can do yoga anywhere, but you can't do recreation  
423 in Palo Alto with your dog off leash except in fenced areas. I did take an early look at the  
424 Master Plan and where it was going. It's a little hard to decipher at this point; I guess it's  
425 still a work in progress. I just want to say that I'm thankful that there are some provisions  
426 in there for some new places for dog recreation, but I'm not sure they are enough. The  
427 walkable is one thing that our dog owners really like, having places they can walk. Right  
428 now, they walk to their local park, and they walk to their local school, and they take a  
429 chance of getting a ticket by doing off-leash recreation. We would like legal places so  
430 people like me don't have to run from the dog catcher. It's really not a fair situation. In  
431 your deliberations, we hope you'll take that into consideration. Thank you very much.  
432

433 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you, Howard. I think the scoring up there was just an example.  
434 I don't think that was meant to be final scoring. It was just an arbitrary example. We do  
435 value dog parks, and we will do our best to bake them into the plan.  
436

437 Mr. de Geus: I wanted to add something, if it's okay, Chair Reckdahl. Howard made me  
438 think of it. As we've been thinking about how would we look at something like this when  
439 it's all scored, in my view and I'm interested to hear what you think, to have all the  
440 projects and programs together with a score and evaluate it that way probably isn't very  
441 effective, in my view. I think that having it categorized by the elements, in other words  
442 we look at all recreation programs and how well they scored, because I think we want to  
443 invest in all of these things in one way or another, open space, trails, recreation programs.  
444 There's not a lot of value in yoga classes against dog parks. That wouldn't be a good way  
445 to look at it. That's one thing that I think would be important in terms of categorizing the  
446 scoring in that way. I thought I'd mention that. Looking forward to hearing your  
447 feedback.  
448

449 Chair Reckdahl: We'll open up for Commissioner questions. Anything?  
450

451 Commissioner Knopper: Thank you for saying that. That was the first note that I was  
452 going to say, how we can subgroup the different categories, programming, nature, land,  
453 facilities, buildings, etc. Very helpful. I thought that was a perfect example, the yoga  
454 versus dogs. With regard to the money comment, when these projects are eventually  
455 plotted out onto the immediate, five-year, ten-year, fifteen-year or hundred-year line,

456 today's dollar is different than a project that would be ... It's almost impossible to affix a  
457 physical dollar amount, because a project today might cost something very different  
458 based on the circumstance of whatever is happening when it's being implemented seven  
459 years from now. I wanted to say that in particular. I do agree with breaking the score  
460 down a little bit. I know it might become a little more cumbersome than five through  
461 zero. Where you can have the quarter point, half point, I think that would be very helpful  
462 because of just the mass of all the information being discerned. Lastly, how you take all  
463 of those points, I guess, is what I'm struggling with. You have a 19.6, how do you then  
464 prioritize? There's got to be a subjective thing attached to each project too. For instance,  
465 knowing how many people come to the Commission meetings or write letters with regard  
466 to a certain subject. That might not have the same value point; it might look lower. In  
467 the example, dog parks looked lower than yoga by a four-point margin, but there might  
468 be more community interest for dog parks. Do you know what I mean? It just kind of  
469 feels like the number can't be the only thing to represent the project. There's a lot of  
470 subjectivity. Am I articulating?

471  
472 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, I completely understand. It is going to be challenging. We have to  
473 take in some insights from a number of different angles. The matrix over there is an  
474 important part of that. For the new Commissioners, what it really represents is 11 or 12  
475 different sources of information that we went out and sought from the community, focus  
476 groups to surveys to intercepts and a variety of other things including staff input and  
477 Commission input. That's going to be a very important part of testing projects and  
478 programs. Is it something we really heard is a gap, for instance, from the community?  
479 Those types of things. We'll have to provide our own sort of perspective as well as staff  
480 that are close to this and are working on it all the time, communicating with the public  
481 every day and hearing things. Commissioners too who are very close to this and thinking  
482 about the park system and recreation. In some cases, as Peter mentioned, we may find  
483 that we're short on information. We don't have enough information, and we have to go  
484 back out or we have to do a targeted request about a specific project or program to see if  
485 we got it right. It's going to be challenging.

486  
487 Chair Reckdahl: Other questions? Commissioner Lauing.

488  
489 Commissioner Lauing: Could you get back to the question list that you have for us  
490 tonight? I appreciate the presentation which helped on top of the thick packet. I have a  
491 number of questions. When we're talking about the prioritization criteria after the areas  
492 of focus and the principles, we see how that all fits together. It strikes me that these  
493 prioritization criteria might need to be weighted. As we look at what's going on here,  
494 filling existing gaps, addressing community preferences and responding to growth, in the  
495 ad hoc those were prioritized as more important than leveraging public resources, which  
496 is almost an apple pie kind of thing, because we definitely want to do that in all cases.  
497 Multiple benefits is a goal, but we also said we can't restrict it to that. It strikes me that

498 slightly modifying your system, if you wanted to stay with this, then I would suggest that  
499 maybe those first three get five and the last two only get two or one and zero. Zero to  
500 five and then zero to one or zero to two, so that it's not overwhelming the vote in that  
501 case. I'm not enamored with fractions. What these are trying to do is just get order of  
502 magnitude valuations as we just said a couple of times here. I don't think that helps, to  
503 get it down to the decimal points. I think we need to get that sorted out before we're  
504 ready to look at all the different things that have to be decided in terms of the specific  
505 projects. The other thing that concerns me about that is the whole thing seems to be a bit  
506 tactical rather than big picture with respect to the timeline and with respect to what's most  
507 important. You guys know that eventually it has to get very tactical when you're putting  
508 in turf fields. I'm glad you raised the timeline issue which was really important to me.  
509 This is a 25-year program. If at some point in the future we need three more swimming  
510 pools, it's going to get scored a lot differently if we're going to do that in 15 years than if  
511 we're going to get it in 2 years. The scoring has to be, I think, within a context of some  
512 sort of timeline. We might want to be starting that eventually. I'm not saying we should  
513 be here tonight, but eventually we should be coming up with sort of strategic direction  
514 over the next 25 years of what do we need. If we feel that lacrosse is overtaking baseball,  
515 that's even tactical. If indoor sports are starting to overtake outdoor sports, that ought to  
516 be at the frontend of this analysis to give direction to Council about what this scoring  
517 means. It's already been kind of referenced, so I'll just put a small point on that.  
518 Programming stuff that is prioritized at any score, is very low cost and can be done by  
519 staff is not a capital improvement project. If we're going to put up a gymnasium, that  
520 might be really important, and whether it gets a lower score or a higher score, it has to do  
521 with the longer term. I'm missing the timeline here, and I'm missing kind of a strategic  
522 overlay of directionally where do we want to go beyond things that are maybe slightly  
523 fuzzy like the principles, valuable but slightly fuzzy. Maybe at some point we have to  
524 get, in certain areas, here's what the Commission thinks are sort of the top ten things in  
525 parks or recreation or whatever when we get to the end of this. I do think that there is  
526 some sort of quantitative value that has to go on this if we're going to benefit 5,000  
527 swimmers versus three dog owners. I particularly use that crazy example. The former  
528 might get a little bit more consideration because of the quantitative benefit. Those are  
529 sort of my kind of big picture questions. I'm not sure exactly; maybe you guys can tell us  
530 why you don't want to do the first prioritization rather than MIG. You know the City;  
531 clearly they're going to be giving us input on best practices and trends. Some of the  
532 things that are already in here, I'm not even sure actually why they're in here, because  
533 they didn't poll very well, like food carts. There are a lot of those things in here. We  
534 want to make very sure that we don't do things because we can do them. I'll go back to  
535 one of our very important projects, the acreage in the Baylands. To the extent that we  
536 can find other ways to just not do anything with that and leave that resource there for the  
537 future, that would be good. If it looks like we want more fields and we can put them  
538 there, we want to make sure that we're not just scoring more fields really high and we  
539 jump right to the Baylands. Just as an example, again, of the judgment that has to go into



540 the prioritization on the part of staff and others. Those are my kind of overall, general  
541 comments.

542  
543 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Hetterly.

544  
545 Commissioner Hetterly: I agree with all those comments. I like the idea of (inaudible)  
546 the rankings by element. Just to start with the principles. The addition of nature, I think  
547 that it should have added to it, not just incorporating nature for the benefit of people, but  
548 also respecting and enhancing ecosystems. I think that was one of the big pieces Council  
549 was trying to get at in adding that. For the criteria, I absolutely think we should weight  
550 the first three criteria more than the other criteria. We're serving the community, so if we  
551 have identified gaps in our services and clear preferences, those should rank highly.  
552 What was the third one? Response to growth. The same thing. I think that's a key part  
553 of planning. For existing gaps, I think we have to define that a little more clearly. As it's  
554 written here, it says gaps in areas of the City and user groups. I think gaps shouldn't  
555 necessarily be limited by geography or demographics. It also has to include unmet needs  
556 and preferences. I think there's some overlaps between the gaps and the community  
557 preferences piece. For example, gyms is certainly a gap, but the location of it is not  
558 really critically important for ranking purposes. It's not like we want to have a gym in  
559 south Palo Alto and Midtown and north Palo Alto necessarily. The distribution isn't as  
560 important. Community preference, I want to be sure that that reflects not just the  
561 prioritization survey but all of the input that we've received from the public. I want to  
562 know what the status is of the prioritization challenge and whether the number and nature  
563 of ideas that are in here reflect that. When is that going to come back to us?

564  
565 Chair Reckdahl: Do you know that answer, Peter? Are we still running it? Is it still  
566 online?

567  
568 Mr. Jensen: It's still online. We haven't promoted it in about a month, so nothing has  
569 really happened to it. It was in the mid-300s the last time we had. We've been  
570 transitioning and getting the Council brought up to speed, so we've just left it there. It is  
571 hanging there. The end of January is when we will close that. At the first of January, we  
572 will promote it again and spark some more interest to get more voting to happen. That  
573 way it will help to feed the criteria of community input; it will also use all the analysis  
574 from community input before in that section as well.

575  
576 Chair Reckdahl: I think that a lot of people do have breaks over the holidays, and they  
577 have more time. Promoting it before the holidays may be a good way of getting people  
578 who have just been too busy to do it.

579  
580 Commissioner Hetterly: Moving on to realizing multiple benefits, that criteria. As it's  
581 written, it suggests that the multiple benefits we care about are overlap with other City

582 efforts. I think really the primary multiple benefit we're looking for is multiple  
583 community benefits. I think if you wanted, we could maybe add a criteria about overlap  
584 with other City efforts, but I don't think they're the same. I think it's apples and oranges,  
585 and they shouldn't be together. Do you want comments on the idea list?  
586

587 Mr. Jensen: I will do those in a second.  
588

589 Chair Reckdahl: Other Commissioners have any comments or questions?  
590

591 Commissioner Cowie: I apologize if I cover areas that the Commission has already  
592 covered in prior discussions. There are a couple of things that, in my first pass, were not  
593 entirely intuitive to me. When we have separate criteria for address community  
594 preferences and respond to growth, they both seem to me roughly equivalent to demand.  
595 I'm not sure that we don't have a fair amount of redundancy when we score those as  
596 separate categories. I'm a little confused by the leverage public resources piece, because I  
597 assume the ultimate decision-making body will take into account the return on investment  
598 of whatever the project is. That seems like a rough equivalent of ROI, just by the  
599 definition. I guess on a related point to that, I understand we're not really intended to  
600 factor in cost as a swing either way. It's not intuitive to me why that would be the case.  
601 If that's already been debated and settled, fine. I just thought I'd raise that I didn't  
602 understand why that would be. In terms of making a recommendation, it seems to me we  
603 have to take into account the cost. I think this is related to what Commissioner Lauing  
604 said earlier. It seems to me actionability or some rough equivalent of that, which is  
605 related to the timeline, how quickly can you get something done, how painlessly can you  
606 get something done, ought to be a factor. We ought to take into account, exactly as he  
607 said, a longer-term strategy. If there are things that we can do that are not controversial,  
608 even if the impact is relatively small, but we can do them quickly for no expense or  
609 perhaps even to save money, why wouldn't we just do them? I'm a little concerned that if  
610 we literally follow the score card as we have it now, a project like that might come out  
611 with a score of 4, but it has no downside and it's free. I'd hate to see that fall to the  
612 bottom of the list for years. I just wanted to reiterate the point about—I suppose this  
613 factors into the ROI equation as well—I think we need to factor in how many people are  
614 going to benefit from the project somewhere in the scoring. That was all I had. Thank  
615 you.  
616

617 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Moss.  
618

619 Commissioner Moss: I agree with many of the comments. We've got like 50 years worth  
620 of projects on this list. The timeframe is really a factor. What we prioritize today may  
621 not be the same priority we give them in two years or five years from now. It's going to  
622 be a moving list, I suspect. The prioritization we give today may change in the future. I  
623 don't know how often you're going to come back and revise the priorities, but it's

624 something to think about. Several people have mentioned the size of the stakeholders  
625 groups. You have dozens and dozens of stakeholder groups. Dog owners is just one of  
626 them. It would be nice to have an idea of how many people are affected. Also, this is the  
627 first time I've seen this list of 370, and obviously I could see more added from my own  
628 personal experience. How do we update this list over time and maybe push some new  
629 things on and push some old things off? I don't know. I don't want to get into exactly  
630 which ones I want to add, but it should be factored in that the list might change. I don't  
631 know with the Brown Act how much influence my personal experience will have on this.  
632 I guess the purpose of the scoring and the criteria is to minimize that as much as possible,  
633 the personal views of us as individuals. It's something I'm curious about. When  
634 somebody said that some things could be done for free right now, even if they're lower  
635 priority, I think the search area of looking for new parkland, if somebody tomorrow  
636 donated something or we could buy a piece of property tomorrow that just came on the  
637 market, never been on the market, we might jump on it even though it's lower down on  
638 the priority list. The last thing is that you're going to get this list of high priorities and  
639 lower priorities and lowest priorities. There may be some juggling among the higher  
640 priorities by us. I just want to know how that's going to happen, how that fits in. That's  
641 it.

642  
643 Chair Reckdahl: Peter, do you want to talk at all about changing prioritization? You  
644 broke it up into three. We're going to talk about first just the prioritization. What was the  
645 middle section that we're talking about?

646  
647 Mr. Jensen: We're going to talk about the list.

648  
649 Chair Reckdahl: The list is next?

650  
651 Mr. Jensen: Yep.

652  
653 Chair Reckdahl: What's the last?

654  
655 Mr. Jensen: The last is just a review of this updated plan that we looked at last time,  
656 which is not going to take very long.

657  
658 Chair Reckdahl: Peter, do you want to answer David's question about your thought  
659 process about how things are going to be juggled around?

660  
661 Mr. Jensen: Prioritizing the list is definitely the first step in the process. There definitely  
662 will be multiple chances as it comes before different commissions, definitely the Parks  
663 and Rec Commission, to have the conversation and a discussion about that and how the  
664 projects are evaluated and ranked. That's just going to be a discussion of the projects on  
665 the list and getting down into the list and having a constructive discussion about it that



666 gets us to the point where we all feel comfortable of how the ranking is. We'll take more  
667 feedback; we will be requesting further feedback from MIG, our consultant, about that  
668 and how they feel that that should be done. If there is other feedback from the  
669 Commission of how they would like to structure that, then that's something that is open  
670 for discussion as well.

671  
672 Commissioner Hetterly: Can I just clarify? The rankings are intended to inform but not  
673 determine the recommendations. The rankings, whatever that process is, will produce  
674 lists and then there will be a follow-on process that imposes the kind of big picture  
675 judgment.

676  
677 Mr. Jensen: Right.

678  
679 Mr. de Geus: The way I would see this working—it may be specific to David's  
680 question—it won't be one ranking exercise and we're done. With one ranking exercise,  
681 we'll have a certain picture, but it'll still be fuzzy. We'll take the highest level and have to  
682 have another look at all of those. We look at the criteria and say how do we evaluate  
683 these higher priorities against the filling of gaps and these other criteria. We might have  
684 to go through two or three times before we really get to a recommendation.

685  
686 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Cribbs.

687  
688 Commissioner Cribbs: I think all my questions have been answered. I think there were  
689 some very good comments among all of the Commissioners. A couple of things that are  
690 of interest to me and a little bit of concern are the fact that we really want to understand  
691 how many groups we're representing and are able to have input into the whole process.  
692 Obviously, there's a lot of input and it's been going on for a long time. Secondly, the cost  
693 piece. When we talked about the fact that cost wasn't factored into this, I'm really  
694 interested in knowing what the cost is before we go very much further on. Not as a  
695 limiting factor, but just understanding the opportunities that exist with the cost or if it's  
696 something that we can get done for no cost and who our partners might be. Finally, I  
697 love the idea of the top priorities and a timeline. I think that's really important for  
698 everybody to feel like things are getting accomplished.

699  
700 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. I have a couple of comments here. A lot of these are  
701 similar to what other people said. I do think there's going to be a lot of apples and  
702 oranges when we're comparing these. I do think Rob's point about dividing them up into  
703 categories will improve the comparison. Sometimes you just can't compare two things  
704 that are drastically different. By definition we want balance, so we want to take things  
705 from all the categories. Even if we ranked them on a single category anyway, we  
706 wouldn't necessarily just take the top. I'm a little overwhelmed by looking at this list. I  
707 agree with David that there's a lot that you could add to it. When I look at it, there's a lot

708 of things that could be missing. That's going to make it even more imposing. I'm a little  
709 worried about being swamped with data and being able to sort through this. That's the  
710 process. Another thing that is hard for comparison is, at least in my opinion, we  
711 eventually will have to start expanding the system, if the population growth continues the  
712 way it is. Putting money aside to fund future expansion does not compare well when you  
713 start ranking it, because it doesn't do much for you. If I have only a certain amount of  
714 money right now and I want to put some of that aside or build a new building or build a  
715 new playground, that immediate effect is going to grade much higher than putting  
716 something away for future expansion in 10, 15 years. I don't know how that's going to  
717 come out. I suspect that if you ranked all these things, expansion would be at the bottom.  
718 If you just blindly rank everything, that means that we're kind of painting ourselves  
719 further into the corner than we are right now. We should take that into account as we are  
720 scoring these things, that there may be some overriding things that the scoring doesn't  
721 reflect. You did say that the scoring is not the end-all and be-all. Community input, I  
722 think, is quite high; it should be ranked higher. Some of these people mentioned that they  
723 should be weighted. If the community really wants something, then we should be  
724 receptive to that if we think it's a good use of resources. Realizing multiple benefits  
725 doesn't do a lot for me. If a project does multiple benefits, that to me doesn't mean  
726 anything unless it does them well. If something serves this group and serves this group  
727 but doesn't do a good job of serving either of those groups, it may not be the best. The  
728 thing that's attractive about doing multiple things is you get better value. You build one  
729 field and one season you can use for one sport and the next season you can use it for the  
730 same sport, so for the same cost you get double the benefit. That's where multiple  
731 benefits weigh highly. Just the fact that it has multiple benefits doesn't necessarily mean  
732 that it should score highly. It really comes down to value again. If this realize multiple  
733 benefits is—by value, I don't necessarily mean just money, I mean also land. In some  
734 ways land is more scarce in Palo Alto than money. If we only have a certain area and we  
735 can do a lot of things well with that area, that is high value. I still am torn about the way  
736 we're prioritizing them and the fact that value comes in fairly late in the process. It's in  
737 the process, so I think we can go as is. It still makes me a little nervous that we may end  
738 up spending a lot of time looking at things that don't have high value. Eventually when  
739 we get down to the second blue circle, in that iteration we may throw things out that  
740 looked really fun but didn't have a lot of value. That's part of the prioritization. We're  
741 going to do a lot of work regardless, and lot of it's going to get thrown out. I'm not  
742 objecting to it; it makes me a little uncomfortable. That's all the comments I have, so let's  
743 move on to the—did you want to respond, Rob?

744  
745 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, because there were a lot of questions and comments. Maybe we can  
746 talk a little bit about the questions. I don't know that I caught them all. I can try and talk  
747 about the questions a little bit and try and respond to those. I'll just start with the last one  
748 on the question of value. I wasn't quite sure what you were saying there, Chair Reckdahl.  
749 The criteria is intended to be sort of the highest value of the programs, that fills a gap,

750 that we know the community wants or is a high community preference. The values are  
751 built into that, because that's what we heard from the community. Maybe I just  
752 misunderstood what you were trying to say.

753  
754 Chair Reckdahl: Realize multiple benefits, to me, in itself—you could have something  
755 that would be mediocre and have lower scores in the first four, but it does do multiple  
756 benefits and you get a five for that. All of a sudden, that's now in the contender where it  
757 really should just be a lukewarm idea. If it doesn't do the things that it does well, I don't  
758 see why you should be rewarded by doing a lot of things mediocre.

759  
760 Mr. de Geus: That I completely understand. I like woodworking, and a tool that tries to  
761 do three different things usually can't do any of them very well. I totally get that. We  
762 could probably reword that. You're right. If it's multiple benefits, it needs to be really  
763 multiple community benefits that are of high value. I think that's what I'm hearing.

764  
765 Chair Reckdahl: When we iterate, I think that will come out. After we do one round of  
766 this, we may find out that some of the things that percolate to the top are not what we  
767 want percolating to the top, and we'll have to reassess the scoring. Probably the best way  
768 to assess whether the scoring is accurate or not is do it and see whether we think the  
769 things that are percolating to the top are what we want.

770  
771 Mr. de Geus: That may be the best way we learn how this works.

772  
773 Mr. Jensen: That's one of the reasons of having MIG take a first pass at it. It does allow  
774 a little bit more expedited process, just because of the manpower that they can put behind  
775 getting those numbers together than staff. Staff will definitely be involved in that process  
776 of reviewing what they've come up with. I do think that it is a good idea to get them  
777 ranked and then start to look at them. That will start to tell us some things about how it's  
778 prioritized, how it's being evaluated, and if the rankings are coming out the way we think  
779 that they should.

780  
781 Mr. de Geus: I just wanted to follow up on a couple of other things. Commissioner  
782 Cowie mentioned the difference between Criteria 1 and 2, fills existing gaps versus  
783 addresses community preferences. I think we did see a distinction between the two,  
784 particularly to staff who are very close to the park system, the trail system and even the  
785 Commission. We may know of a need that is very specific, but that the community is  
786 just not really aware of, because they're more passive users. It would be different than  
787 what we heard in community surveys and focus groups, which is really the community  
788 preference which came up a lot. That's the difference there. You had mentioned  
789 actionability and if it's actionable quickly, should it get a higher score. That's kind of an  
790 interesting one. We have to think about that, because it makes a lot of sense to do that,  
791 but it has to score high though. Nothing's free, certainly it'll take staff time. Any time

792 staff is working on something, they're not working on something else. If it scored low, it  
793 doesn't cost anything but takes staff time, it still may not be worth doing. I think that's  
794 important. Commissioner Moss asked about the personal experience versus public  
795 benefit. That's a good question. Maybe other Commissioners want to weigh in here. It's  
796 a really difficult question, because you were appointed to this Commission in part  
797 because of your personal experience, I think, and your history here and your  
798 understanding of the parks and recreation system. That has to play a role, and it should.  
799 Ultimately, I think, you're trying to find out what is in the public's best interest as a  
800 whole. You're applying your experience to that goal. If that helps. It's very difficult to  
801 know what is in the public's best interest, as Council Member Filseth can certainly attest  
802 to. It's going to be very challenging with 68,000 people in the community. That's the  
803 goal. Commissioner Cribbs asked the question about—actually several people mentioned  
804 it—how many people are impacted by the particular program or project and shouldn't that  
805 be in the criteria. I believe that was the thinking around addresses community  
806 preferences and fills existing gaps, at least in there. As we would go through ranking  
807 these, that's one of the things that I would be thinking about, how many people are  
808 impacted by this, is it filling a significant gap, are people not accessing a program or a  
809 park or something. It's interesting having new eyes on this, because maybe that's not as  
810 clear as I thought maybe it is. We can look at that again. That's, I think, a really  
811 important point. How many people will benefit from investing in that sooner than later is  
812 a really important part of the ranking system that should be built in. Do you have  
813 anything to add?  
814

815 Commissioner Hetterly: I'd like to just add a clarification to Commissioner Cowie. I  
816 think that you asked about a redundancy between growth and preferences. Did I hear that  
817 wrong?  
818

819 Commissioner Cowie: Actually it was the second and third items that I thought were  
820 overlapping somewhat.  
821

822 Commissioner Hetterly: I think the way we saw it as this was taking shape was  
823 preferences was what does the community currently want, what is our unmet need now.  
824 Growth was looking at demographic changes and what we expect to happen in the future  
825 that your neighbor might not expect to need in the future.  
826

827 Commissioner Cowie: It's maybe current demand versus future demand.  
828

829 Commissioner Hetterly: yeah.  
830

831 Commissioner Cowie: I understand. Thank you. That's a helpful distinction.  
832

833 Commissioner Lauing: Can I just add one other clarification, maybe for the new people?  
834 We talk about community input. We have to remember that these are impressions from a  
835 few hundred people compared to the 68,000—is that what you just quoted that are in the  
836 City? We need to keep reminding ourselves and eventually Council there have been no  
837 scientific studies done in any of this gathering. It's good data, but it's essentially  
838 subjective data based on those folks that have voted. We can't really apply that to  
839 numbers of people that would benefit from X or Y or Z program, but they're valuable  
840 indicators. We always have to keep reminding ourselves of that. We can't go to Council  
841 and say the community has voted. And the press, the press needs to understand that as  
842 well.

843  
844 Council Member Filseth: I just want to comment on something that Keith said a little  
845 while ago. Obviously something that requires a huge amount of resource or money is  
846 going to be hard to do. I think if one of the answers that comes out of this effort is we  
847 need X, Y, Z thing and it's going to cost \$20 or \$30 million, it's probably going to be a  
848 while until we get it. If that is the answer, we need it, then I think this group shouldn't  
849 shy away from that. If this group doesn't do that, then the rest of the City will never  
850 know. I think it's important that if the answer is we need X, Y, Z facility in Search Area  
851 C, then we need to know so we can start planning for it.

852  
853 Commissioner Lauing: That's why we have to stay at kind of the strategic level as  
854 opposed to scoring all these projects which could take a gazillion years and we just have  
855 projects scored and we're still leaving out the big picture items.

856  
857 Male: (inaudible)

858  
859 Commissioner Lauing: We should do it and justify it and say the whys and the  
860 wherefores of that.

861  
862 Chair Reckdahl: Peter, do you want to go through the table?

863  
864 Mr. Jensen: Yes. This next section of the presentation is discussing the list of potential  
865 project and program ideas. It is long and, as we discussed and has been mentioned a few  
866 times, definitely has the opportunity to grow. This is again a draft list looking at the  
867 community input as well as the data found in the opportunities matrix. I'd like to go  
868 through the actual digital list so we can look at how it is broken and filtered, and then I or  
869 Catherine will email you the list in the next few days, and then you'll have the list to go  
870 through over the next few weeks before the next meeting.

871  
872 Mr. de Geus: We're not going through the list. I think we're going to orient to the list.  
873

874 Mr. Jensen: Right, we're not going to go through the list one-by-one right now. The list  
875 is composed and broken into our 12 areas of focus. The list that you got in your package  
876 was divided in two different ways. You got two lists that are all the same. One broken  
877 down into site-specific and one broken down into the area of focus, so you could see how  
878 they were grouped. The original list was just a list composed so there is no ranking of  
879 how the list was put together. Projects or ideas that could be spanned through multiple  
880 facilities or parks are all grouped together. If we recognize that we need community  
881 gardens, then in a section there's three or four different site locations where community  
882 gardens could go. The list then has these little pull-down tabs. You can see what's  
883 happening over here is this is for each section and we're looking at—I wish I had a closer  
884 monitor to see what section that is. Hang on one second. Let me pull this up here. The  
885 areas of focus, you can go and check all the boxes of the areas of focus that you wanted  
886 to look at. If you wanted to look at one—I cannot see this list up here. There is a way to  
887 ... Whatever one that I did select up there, then it regroups it into that. You can start to  
888 divide them in separate ways. Each one of these pull-down arrows works the same way  
889 for each one of the columns. Each column, of course, has a group of items that you can  
890 filter and divide the list to start looking. If you wanted to look at everything that was  
891 planned for Rinconada Park, then you could go into the site one. All the parks and  
892 facilities are in there, and you can check them out. The easiest way I found to do that is  
893 to—right now, they're all selected to show you the full list—click the top box which is  
894 blank, they all go blank, and then go through and start checking the ones you want or just  
895 the one you want. It's the easiest way to navigate through there. This list has been pared  
896 down a little bit. Column 4, the funding or budget needs of each project, is not included  
897 in this because that has not been figured out yet. That will become a column in this to be  
898 able to go through and filter the ones that cost the most to the ones that cost the least, so  
899 we can look at it in that way. It also starts to look at elements themselves that were from  
900 the matrix. We have the three main elements: the parks, trails, open space; facilities is  
901 the second one; and programs as the third. You can start to group and look at all the  
902 programs together at one time. I think we talked about this before in our examples, that  
903 it's very difficult to try to weight or judge between yoga and a dog park. This allows you  
904 to look at and rank the programs or rank the facility upgrades or enhancements and look  
905 at it in that way. It definitely does help a lot to start to break down the list and look at it  
906 in these different ways. Yes, when you start to look at the list of 360 ideas, which could  
907 become more, it's not the easiest thing to try to decipher. Again, I think what we're  
908 looking for is for the Commission to spend the next month looking at the list and coming  
909 back to us in January and us talking more about the list, how it's made, what we think is  
910 missing on the list, what needs to be added, what different ways that we can filter.  
911 Maybe there's more rows or columns that we want to add. This is kind of the homework  
912 that we're giving the Commission to do before the next meeting, so we can have a more  
913 detailed conversation about this list and what has gone into it.  
914



915 Chair Reckdahl: One thing that jumped out at me when I looked through is a lot of things  
916 were just best practices. When you remodel a park, adding bottle fillers and making it  
917 ADA compliant. There's signage, integrate nature, rainwater swales. Would we go in  
918 and retrofit any park outside of its remodel period? I would think instead we would want  
919 to lump all those characteristics into some guidelines for remodeling and say, "as we go  
920 through the five-year process of remodeling parks, look at all these things." Adding  
921 rainwater swales, do we really want to rank that against yoga or dog parks? To me,  
922 they're apples and oranges again. The best practices kind of muddy this list and make it  
923 hard to pull out what you really want to separate, what you want to rank.  
924

925 Commissioner Lauing: You're not going to go back to Johnson Park which has all these  
926 things and do them now if Johnson Park's not up for its normal cycle. Right?  
927

928 Mr. Jensen: Right.  
929

930 Commissioner Lauing: I'm not sure why they actually even should be on here, because  
931 you know you're going to do those.  
932

933 Mr. Jensen: We should decipher between the list that we're looking at here is things that  
934 are new. There is also a list of things that exist in the parks now or facilities that we have  
935 now that are in a schedule to be maintained or renovated, that don't show up on a new  
936 list. Things that will continue to keep happening. Yes, if there are things on this list that  
937 are prioritized high for, let's say, Johnson Park. It's up in five years from now to do a  
938 renovation there, like we did Scott Park and Monroe Park that we're working on now.  
939 We would look at including the new items off this list into that scope of work and  
940 expanding it to include new as well as upkeep and maintenance items.  
941

942 Commissioner Lauing: Why are these even listed as projects then? Why wouldn't that  
943 just be considerations when the normal cycle comes up for Johnson Park?  
944

945 Mr. Jensen: Because in our current list of those things that you're mentioning, the water  
946 bottle fillers, retaining water on site, those are not in the parks currently, so they're not in  
947 a list of a project, they're not in the scope of our projects. These would be new things to  
948 consider doing that.  
949

950 Commissioner Hetterly: They're here so that we can advise about whether or not we  
951 want to recommend to Council that those get added to the regular list of things that get  
952 considered when you do a (crosstalk).  
953

954 Commissioner Lauing: When Johnson Park gets done.  
955

956 Daren Anderson: Another way of looking at it could be, you could consider having it be  
957 a policy as opposed to a project or a program. The policy would apply, as you said,  
958 broadly. The next time you renovate any park, do these five things, whatever they may  
959 be.

960  
961 Mr. Jensen: I would say too the policies is another list we're going to look at. Of course,  
962 it's not going to be as extensive as this list because we aren't going to think up 300  
963 policies. It is going to be a list that we'll generate, that we'll be looking at over the next  
964 few meetings, that we'll discuss of which ones we do want to recommend as far as going  
965 into the Master Plan. That is actually another step from this. It's interesting to note that  
966 staff's initial review of the list, we did remove a few things on there that were just direct  
967 policy. It didn't really specifically call out a project, but more of an overall policy that we  
968 eliminated from the list because again we have to generate another list of actual policies  
969 that we want to carry forward.

970  
971 Mr. Anderson: I could tack on one thing to the list. This may be helpful as you review  
972 them. As you look through all the projects and programs that MIG had pulled together,  
973 we thought it would be helpful if you also saw the lists that live elsewhere, that is in our  
974 existing capital budget. You'll see that called out as CIP project. These are existing ones.  
975 You're not saying, "Where is this? It lives in a separate document. You're going to have  
976 to look elsewhere." We added it all to this. The other one is called the—you'll see it  
977 down there—IBRC, Infrastructure Blue Ribbon Committee project that may not be in the  
978 existing CIP book, may not be in this document, and lives on a second one. This pulls  
979 them altogether and gives you one shot to see did we capture everything, are we missing  
980 things, or is this right one.

981  
982 Commissioner Moss: You have a whole lot of Capital Improvement Projects. Many of  
983 them are already in progress. What are you asking us to do about those? They're already  
984 being done.

985  
986 Mr. Anderson: I think part of it is to help you again see is there a hole. If you weren't  
987 savvy to that or aware of what those CIPs are, it could lead you to believe, "Wait a  
988 minute. When is this going to happen?" Part of it's to paint the full picture. The second  
989 part is some of these CIPs are outlying years. They'll probably need to go through this  
990 process. They'll probably need to be prioritized via the Master Plan. Almost to your  
991 point when you said, "We create a master list. At some point, don't we renew that?" Just  
992 like our CIP process, we do it every year. We plan out five years, but every year we look  
993 at it again and everything gets shuffled up. I can't see a way that we wouldn't have to do  
994 that with this Master Plan list too. There's a lot more discussion that has to happen  
995 around that. I can't envision how you wouldn't continually update it when you've got 386  
996 programs and projects.



998 Mr. Jensen: What arises from this list as far as future or new projects go, if we do have a  
999 CIP for a specific park and then on this list there's something new that can be considered  
1000 as well, then that is something that we would consider in the discussion next year with  
1001 the CIPs. We have X park and from our Parks Master Plan now we see that there's a  
1002 project or something new that we would like to add to that. Is it feasible as far as budget  
1003 goes to add it now into that project thing? That will definitely be considered in the  
1004 projects. Even though they may exist now, we have the opportunity to enhance or  
1005 expand them depending upon what we find in this list or in the prioritization (inaudible).

1006  
1007 Commissioner Hetterly: Do you want comments about the list?

1008  
1009 Mr. Jensen: Yes.

1010  
1011 Commissioner Hetterly: I think first of all the program descriptions need to be more fully  
1012 articulated, and they need samples that you provided that were more specific, less vague  
1013 and include more language about why that's on the list. Is the implication from your  
1014 examples that you're going to have a similar workup for every single project on this list?  
1015 None of the items in your examples are actually in here. Are we likely to see things like  
1016 those? Should we expect to see what you presented on the screen today or is this really  
1017 what we're working with in terms of rankings and explaining what the projects and  
1018 programs are? That's my first question.

1019  
1020 Mr. Jensen: MIG will go through and compile all the information that ranks the projects.  
1021 There will not be an individual sheet made for every one that calls out each individual  
1022 line of the matrix. We're relying on them to put that together and ranking them in that  
1023 respect.

1024  
1025 Commissioner Hetterly: I guess in terms of level of detail, let me use the yoga example.  
1026 You do have some things in here about expanding Boost, but there are no specifics about  
1027 what particular parts of Boost. Yoga is not the only program that's offered through  
1028 Boost, right? Do you want us to be engaging in that level of detail of specific  
1029 programming or are you wanting us not to do that? Whether we generally want to  
1030 support expanding Boost or do we want specific areas of Boost, that level of detail would  
1031 be helpful to have some guidance. Also, I think the locations that are designated for  
1032 several of these didn't make any sense to me. I would like to see a little more explanation  
1033 of why those sites were selected. For example, for dog parks you picked—I don't  
1034 know—five or six locations there. What was it that led MIG to recommend those sites as  
1035 opposed to other sites? I think that's information that we need to know because it may be  
1036 that we think a different one should be on the list. There's several places that that comes  
1037 up. All over this, I'm saying "why" next to the locations. As Commissioner Lauing  
1038 mentioned, there are also several items in here that received very low rankings from the  
1039 public when we surveyed them directly about that particular issue. I'm not sure whether

1040 they belong on the list at all. It's not the comprehensive list of every idea that was  
1041 proposed; it's already gone through a filtering process. It made me concerned that having  
1042 gone through one filtering process already, there were several items that, in my opinion,  
1043 should have fallen out based on what we have already learned. I'd like a little more  
1044 working of the details in that regard. I guess I have several of those. I don't know if it's  
1045 helpful for you to have me point them out. I could send them in an email. I don't want to  
1046 take the whole night tonight to go through my particular edits. Also, I think there are  
1047 several things that need to be added.

1048  
1049 Mr. de Geus: Just feedback to Commissioner Hetterly. I had a similar reaction to  
1050 reading it. There's a lot there. I think most of us did. It still needs quite a bit of work. I  
1051 would actually describe this list as a rough draft. What we need to do is develop the list  
1052 so that we can actually rank them. There's not enough information to fully rank. That is  
1053 what we need from the Commission. It is work to go through it and ask the questions.  
1054 Some of them are obvious, that we heard that through the outreach process. I get it.  
1055 Those where you think "I didn't hear that. Where did that come from?" note it and then  
1056 go to the next one. Go through that kind of process. Things like you need more  
1057 specificity, you need to understand why that is on there. If there's things that you think  
1058 ought to be on there and it's not listed anywhere, then add that so that can be evaluated.  
1059 The idea is by the end of January hopefully we'll have a much better list. It might be  
1060 smaller but much more specific, that can actually be gone through the process of the  
1061 ranking that we talked about. By that time, hopefully our ranking process will have  
1062 tightened and you're more comfortable with and we're more comfortable with.

1063  
1064 Commissioner Hetterly: Would you like us to do that individually and send it in to you?  
1065 Do you want us to cover them all in a Commission meeting? What's your preference?  
1066

1067 Mr. de Geus: My preference is to take the time to do it individually, just because it's so  
1068 long and it does require some real time just to sit with it. We can collect all of that data  
1069 and then merge it all. Where there's conflict between feedback, we'll highlight that, point  
1070 that out and then we'll have a discussion about those areas.

1071  
1072 Mr. Jensen: I think for ease of collecting that data, I will add a row onto the end that will  
1073 say "Commissioner remarks." In that you can type whatever you would like into those  
1074 things. We'll collect them all, submit them to MIG and start to massage and rework the  
1075 list per those comments.

1076  
1077 Commissioner Hetterly: Do it electronically on the ...  
1078

1079 Mr. Jensen: Yes, do it electronically on the thing. Type it and then email it either back to  
1080 Catherine or myself. We'll collect the comments that way initially.  
1081

1082 Commissioner Lauing: I'm still not quite with the process here. What is it that you really  
1083 want? You don't want us to go through all of these and score them, right?

1084  
1085 Mr. de Geus: Not score them.

1086  
1087 Commissioner Lauing: You want us to go through them and say which ones shouldn't be  
1088 here or should be here?

1089  
1090 Mr. Jensen: You have questions about, yes. Items on the list, if you feel that they  
1091 shouldn't be there, weren't from information that we thought we'd heard in the past, you're  
1092 not sure how they got onto the list, those are the questions that we're looking for. If  
1093 there's things that don't appear on the list, those are the things that we're looking for.

1094  
1095 Commissioner Lauing: When you get to a park, it just randomly opened to page 19  
1096 which is Hoover and there's 13 things on there. You want comments on those 13 things  
1097 or do you just want comments on Hoover Park is a good priority for now?

1098  
1099 Mr. de Geus: They're all things that we've heard from the public through the variety of  
1100 outreach that we've done. What we're looking for is for you to look through this list to  
1101 make sure that it's understandable, that it reflects what you think we heard, if it's a  
1102 specific enough project or program or is it more of a policy that was suggested. There's  
1103 some things in here I think that were more like best practice, policy that ought to be  
1104 withdrawn from a project list and be somewhere else. It's that kind of feedback we need.

1105  
1106 Commissioner Lauing: Does that mean that you want to go from a rough draft to a draft  
1107 before we get it or shall we use what we've got now?

1108  
1109 Mr. de Geus: You should use what we've got now, this rough draft, so we can improve it.  
1110 We're doing the same thing as the Commission.

1111  
1112 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Cribbs.

1113  
1114 Commissioner Cribbs: On an earlier screen there was something about other cities that  
1115 you had contacted for best practices or ideas. Are you at liberty to talk about which cities  
1116 those were?

1117  
1118 Mr. Jensen: That is actually through the consultant, MIG. One of their areas of focus is  
1119 Master Plans. There's not many landscape architectural firms that do just Master Plans.  
1120 They are taking their experience from the Master Planning they do all over the United  
1121 States, and they do a lot of them, and then applying it to our particular situation and  
1122 changing it per what they've heard from us. They're looking at that information that  
1123 they're gathering from other reports that they're doing and applying it to us. The list is

1124 quite long. At some point they did present some samples of Master Plans that they had  
1125 done for other cities for the Commission to review to get an idea of what that was. That's  
1126 something that we can talk offline and start to give some examples of that.

1127  
1128 Mr. de Geus: I would just add to that. They are in close contact with the National  
1129 Recreation and Parks Association and the California Recreation and Parks Association.  
1130 They collect a lot of data from cities, best practices. They're feeding a lot of information  
1131 to MIG and to staff.

1132  
1133 Commissioner Cribbs: I have another really silly question. That wasn't a silly question;  
1134 this might be a silly question. Are you able to, just from your gut or from your instinct,  
1135 create a top 20 or 30 list of programs or athletic fields or open space that you think would  
1136 be great?

1137  
1138 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, I think I can do that. I think Daren can and Peter can as well. We're  
1139 talking with the consultant all the time about this as they bring things forward. We push  
1140 back all the time and say, "That's not what we're hearing. That's not what the public  
1141 wants here."

1142  
1143 Commissioner Cribbs: I think that would be really interesting to be able to see that.  
1144 Maybe I'm just the only one, but it just would be interesting to see how that would go  
1145 against or be compared with this incredibly long, very specific list of things.

1146  
1147 Mr. de Geus: I think it's an important piece of input, significant piece of input. We're  
1148 probably the closest to the park system and the public to some extent. We fully  
1149 appreciate and recognize that we are limited too in our perspective. We need to hear  
1150 from a lot of sources, Commission, public, Council and staff as well. I appreciate that.

1151  
1152 Mr. Jensen: I think the list goes a step further than just putting the list together, because  
1153 it does discuss some overarching things, dog parks, community gardens, nature in parks,  
1154 athletic fields. Those things that we've heard from the community. We have data  
1155 analysis on it that we've done by looking at our current system, but not really attached or  
1156 applied to a specific park yet. We have general ideas of things that we'd like to do, but  
1157 this list starts to recognize the space that we actually can do it in, which I think is one step  
1158 more accurate than just having the idea.

1159  
1160 Chair Reckdahl: When I looked through list, I thought "There's a lot of chaff here."  
1161 There's a lot of stuff that I've never heard of. Art for dog parks, I don't think any of the  
1162 dog people are asking for art; I think they're asking for dog parks. I think a lot of this  
1163 came from MIG, and they have some ideas that they think are good, but I don't  
1164 necessarily think they're all good. Turf for fields, AYSO, I don't think they want artificial  
1165 turf on their fields; I think they want grass. They listed a whole bunch of small fields that

1166 are used for AYSO and add artificial turf. I don't think that's something that the public  
1167 wants. As Jennifer mentioned, I'll compile a list of things that I just don't think should be  
1168 on the list. You always can cast a net really wide and do a lot of work and sort out the  
1169 stuff, or you can cast your net smaller. I think we should be casting our net smaller than  
1170 we have here. That's an iteration. They also mentioned about camping. The camping in  
1171 Foothills Park, I thought, was a decent program that they've suggested. They also said  
1172 Arastradero. If I have a tent, can I go into Arastradero and nature?  
1173

1174 Mr. Anderson: No, neither Baylands nor Arastradero have camping available.  
1175

1176 Chair Reckdahl: Should we be taking that out? There was one line for Baylands and one  
1177 for Arastradero.  
1178

1179 Mr. Anderson: That was in my initial four pages of notes for MIG as well. Their counter  
1180 was it's a very popular program to learn camping, was their idea. If we expand that to  
1181 these other areas, it could be very valuable. Almost like a class as opposed to a regular  
1182 camping set up. It'd be more of a one-time program or class.  
1183

1184 Chair Reckdahl: It would be ranger led?  
1185

1186 Mr. Anderson: Something like that.  
1187

1188 Chair Reckdahl: If a ranger wanted to bring people into Arastradero, is that permitted?  
1189

1190 Mr. Anderson: We'd have to change the rules. Right now there's no overnight camping  
1191 allowed there.  
1192

1193 Chair Reckdahl: Even by permit?  
1194

1195 Mr. Anderson: Perhaps on a permit basis through the Director's approval, something like  
1196 that would be permissible.  
1197

1198 Chair Reckdahl: Baylands, I don't see any place you'd even want to camp in the  
1199 Baylands. Maybe if Byxbee was done, then maybe that would have some flat areas  
1200 where you could camp. Anyway, that was another thing that I looked at and I said, "That  
1201 doesn't seem to agree with what I think is in the top 100."  
1202

1203 Mr. de Geus: That's exactly the kind of feedback we need, so we can cull down this list.  
1204

1205 Commissioner Knopper: To Keith's point and other Commissioners' points, some of the  
1206 lack of detail. You just clarified it's a camp class versus real camping where you'd need  
1207 real facilities and garbage and bathrooms. Just overall, the first couple of times I looked

1208 at this list, I was like, "I don't understand what I'm looking at." It took me a few minutes  
1209 to go, "I get it." From a formatting perspective, there just wasn't enough room to give  
1210 enough detail to make an informed comment. Now I know that I'll just put my comment.  
1211

1212 Chair Reckdahl: I mentioned this earlier. After thinking about it, I really think we  
1213 should have a separate list for best practices or guidelines for remodeling. There we can  
1214 do the same scoring and same prioritization and say where does swales compare to bird  
1215 habitat or whatever, and do those on just a generic. Right now, they have all these that  
1216 list the bird habitat and have all these parks. There's a half page right there. That's why  
1217 this thing is so thick. I think we're making it harder than it has to be. I think we should  
1218 break it apart and say guidelines for general remodeling and, if there's some special  
1219 features that we want to attach to specific parks, have that in this list. We shouldn't have  
1220 general bottle filling stations on this list. I think that's just too detailed. Those are my  
1221 comments.  
1222

1223 Commissioner Moss: I think it's important to have this master list. Maybe we can  
1224 shorten it, but have all the original list somewhere safe so that we can refer back to it in  
1225 the future. If somebody in the public says, "Where is my ... I recommended this; why  
1226 isn't it on the list," we can point to it.  
1227

1228 Chair Reckdahl: Yeah, for reference. I don't think we want to go through and score  
1229 everything that's on this list, because we'd spend a lot of time that most likely will be  
1230 wasted.  
1231

1232 Mr. de Geus: I complete agree. That's great feedback. Regarding the bird habitat, what  
1233 we want to see is increasing sort of bird habitat, if that's the topic, at a specific park is  
1234 recommended because that park has a unique set of qualities and characteristics that it's  
1235 going to be of value there. If that's the reason, then it should be defined in that way, so  
1236 that we can (inaudible) it. We gave that feedback to MIG as well.  
1237

1238 Mr. Jensen: I think on some of those things, you didn't get a list of 1 through 386. At the  
1239 end MIG started to pull from the Urban Forest Master Plan and the Comprehensive Plan.  
1240 You'll see a big block of things that are related to policies or programs that want to be  
1241 accomplished in the Urban Forest Master Plan that have a reflection on parks. They're in  
1242 there as well. Some of those are a lot more specific, and they kind of stand out on the  
1243 list. Just to give you an orientation of that in there.  
1244

1245 Chair Reckdahl: Peter, do you want to walk through the maps? Is that the next step?  
1246

1247 Mr. Jensen: Yes. MIG had produced this geographic map last time. It is virtually the  
1248 same map that we looked at before. What the map is, the light blue sections that are in  
1249 here represent areas of town that don't have an accessible outdoor, open space within a

1250 half mile and a quarter mile depending upon driving and walking. These blue areas are  
1251 lacking park space or open space. What has been added onto this is the brown sections,  
1252 which include all property owned by the City. A lot of those are parking lot areas that  
1253 weren't shown on the plan before. What we'd hoped to find is that in some of these blue  
1254 areas there would be a distinctive area of brown that the City owns, so we could say that  
1255 maybe we want to consider changing that parking lot into a park to meet our park  
1256 requirements there. Unfortunately, as you can see, that doesn't happen, but that is added  
1257 to it. What mostly this is looking at is if we were ever going to consider purchasing or  
1258 someone donated land, these would be the main areas that we would concentrate on  
1259 doing that. They're the areas lacking open park space for the community around them.  
1260 As you can see, there is an interesting correlation between the areas that are lacking space  
1261 and schools. It seems to be schools located in some of those areas that are lacking park  
1262 space. How do we have dialog with the School District in the future to maybe help  
1263 relieve some of that space? A lot of these schools are already being used as open park  
1264 space, that we should recognize as being that way. If there is a part of town that doesn't  
1265 even have a school located in it, maybe that has a higher priority of acquiring parkland to  
1266 fulfill that need. That's this updated plan, which is now showing all the land owned by  
1267 the City on it as well in brown. The green is of course parks.  
1268

1269 Commissioner Hetterly: Peter, does the City have any substantial easements that would  
1270 be worth considering for the same purpose? If so, it would be great to have them on the  
1271 map as well.  
1272

1273 Mr. Jensen: I will discuss that with them more. I'm not quite sure how that was  
1274 highlighted on the plan. I don't think there was anything that was significant. You can  
1275 see over by Seale Park there's the easement that we looked at before. I'm not quite sure it  
1276 has a name. Daren, what is it called over there? It's by Greer Park.  
1277

1278 Mr. Anderson: (inaudible).  
1279

1280 Mr. Jensen: That shows the easement way on there. It would probably be good to update  
1281 the map to show, maybe in a different color, what the easements are, so they're not just  
1282 property owned lands. Most of them are just little straight lines that could be a trail. We  
1283 can work on that.  
1284

1285 Chair Reckdahl: There's also that utility, we talked about this before, at Colorado and  
1286 West Bayshore that may not be easy to convert into parkland but is at least possible. I  
1287 had one question for Daren. Esther Clark, are there restrictions? If we wanted to put a  
1288 playground in Esther Park, can we or is that designated open space where you can't put  
1289 structures on it?  
1290

1291 Mr. Anderson: It is designated open space.

1292  
1293 Chair Reckdahl: That was one of the things also in the list, doing stuff for Esther Park.  
1294 It's similar to Arastradero, where you can't put buildings.

1295  
1296 Mr. Anderson: I wouldn't quite go that far. I don't think it has the same stipulations as  
1297 Arastradero necessarily, but the dedication does say to be used for open space purposes.  
1298 It differs a little bit from urban parks. I think it's a good question, what exactly is  
1299 appropriate there or not. I think it probably needs some more fleshing out.

1300  
1301 Chair Reckdahl: That is one area that is not served by a traditional park. We have Esther  
1302 Clark; that's a very nice open space. If you want your kids to play in a playground,  
1303 there's nothing over there.

1304  
1305 Commissioner Lauing: Peter, what's the brown on Rinconada? Is that parking lots or the  
1306 zoo or both?

1307  
1308 Mr. Jensen: The zoo and Lucie Stern on the left side of the page, and the Art Center and  
1309 the library on the other side.

1310  
1311 Commissioner Moss: Is the Stanford Industrial Park owned by Stanford and, therefore,  
1312 we can't do things on it? That whole park to the south of Page Mill is all owned by  
1313 Stanford, isn't it? All the way to Bol Park and including Gunn High School, which you  
1314 have there. The light brown is not Palo Alto land or—what's the difference between the  
1315 white and the brown?

1316  
1317 Mr. Jensen: The browns are, I think, School District land.

1318  
1319 Commissioner Moss: No, I meant the land that Stanford is lighter brown than the School  
1320 District. I can see Gunn High School. Stanford land is a different color than the School  
1321 District. I was thinking that area around the Stanford Industrial Park should be the same  
1322 color as the rest of Stanford.

1323  
1324 Commissioner Hetterly: I think the Stanford Research Park is owned by Palo Alto and  
1325 leased by Stanford.

1326  
1327 Commissioner Moss: I didn't realize that.

1328  
1329 Chair Reckdahl: I think the difference is that Stanford owns the Industrial Park; they  
1330 lease it out to the various companies for a long-year lease, but Stanford actually owns the  
1331 land still. It's not incorporated. The Industrial Park is part of Palo Alto; it's in the City  
1332 Limits. The top or whatever, the light tan that's Stanford, that is not part of Palo Alto.



1333 That's not incorporated. I think that's the difference. I think it's correct as is. White is  
1334 private property still.

1335  
1336 Mr. Jensen: The white is representing those things that fall within the boundary of Palo  
1337 Alto. Even though that land may be owned by Stanford, it's still in our City Limits. The  
1338 tan color of Stanford is their sole priority of land outside of our City Limits. That's all I  
1339 have for this evening. I do want to thank the Commission again. Your feedback is really  
1340 valuable in this process and putting it together. As you can see from tonight, you've  
1341 provided a lot of feedback that is good, that is going to guide this process and make it a  
1342 lot better. We do thank you for that. We will be incorporating your comments into the  
1343 list as we develop the criteria more and talk about it next month. With that, I'll end my  
1344 presentation for the night.

1345  
1346 Commissioner Lauing: One question that was asked, do we want to do an ad hoc  
1347 committee. We actually have an ad hoc. Are there things on this that we want to talk  
1348 about in ad hoc before the next meeting? For example, reviewing the scoring system  
1349 based on comments tonight.

1350  
1351 Mr. Jensen: The ad hoc is a—if you'd like to proceed with having an ad hoc, the ad hoc  
1352 would be focused on the criteria and making sure the scoring and judging and more  
1353 conversations about that. That ad hoc group can also include the review of the list as well  
1354 or that could be another ad hoc or we just leave that to the full Commission and just come  
1355 back again. Up to you and how you want to tackle that. For some things, of course, I  
1356 think for the criteria and the list itself as well, it would be nice to have an ad hoc group so  
1357 we can convene and get feedback from the Commission sooner than once a month, which  
1358 would help move the project along. I also wouldn't mind having just a Parks Master Plan  
1359 ad hoc that wasn't specifically tied to a certain topic, so we didn't have to keep having  
1360 new ones over and over again. We'd just have a core group of the Commission working  
1361 on the project until we're done with it. That's something for you to discuss further, of  
1362 course. I don't know if Rob has any recommendations on that.

1363  
1364 Mr. de Geus: I think we discussed that at the inception of the Master Plan. Because it's  
1365 such a big and broad scope of a plan, the Commission wasn't comfortable with that.  
1366 That's what I recall. Rather to have the whole Commission involved because also there's  
1367 so many elements that need to be worked on, there was enough opportunity for numerous  
1368 ad hoc committees to work on specific areas that needed additional work. It's just really  
1369 up to the Commission how you want to handle that.

1370  
1371 Commissioner Hetterly: I think we should clarify to the new Commissioners that ad hoc  
1372 committees, they are not decision-making bodies. They're just trying to take the  
1373 temperature of the Commission and weigh in as things are being sorted out. Everything  
1374 that's considered in an ad hoc committee is then presented to the full Commission.

1375  
1376 Mr. de Geus: We often do our best work that way. You have a smaller number of  
1377 Commissioners working with Staff. Something like the criteria, where we can actually  
1378 discuss different options about scoring, run a couple of programs through to see how it  
1379 works, and then change language and then staff will write it up and bring it to the full  
1380 Commission and say, "Here's what the ad hoc came up with, with staff. What do you  
1381 think?" It just makes for a little more productive Commission meeting, but it does  
1382 require another meeting outside of the regular monthly meeting. It can be very, very  
1383 helpful, I find.

1384  
1385 Chair Reckdahl: In general, I'd like to avoid it because this is a big thing. At this point,  
1386 this list is so rough that I think it would be useful for an ad hoc to get one iteration just so  
1387 we don't waste too many meetings on this. When I look at this and see how far it is from  
1388 being useful, I think it would be August by the time we're done with this thing. I would  
1389 be open to having an ad hoc iteration. If we're going to do that, we should do it before  
1390 the next meeting. As this converges, I think we want the whole Commission to be taking  
1391 a look at that.

1392  
1393 Commissioner Lauing: Even before the list issue, this issue of should there be weighting,  
1394 should we drop of some of these criteria entirely, should we add quantitative impact on  
1395 people, that's something we might be able to distill everything that happened here and  
1396 come back with a recommendation and why, and then have another discussion about it.

1397  
1398 Chair Reckdahl: As long as we present it like that, I'd be happy with that. What do you  
1399 think?

1400  
1401 Mr. de Geus: Staff recommendation is actually an ad hoc committee on the process and  
1402 criteria and scoring and how we would manage that given the information and  
1403 presentation today. Not an ad hoc committee on the list. I can appreciate what you're  
1404 saying. I had trouble with it too. When I first took a look at it, I had to go to it like three  
1405 different times. What helped me was to actually set aside just a couple of hours and go  
1406 through it. You begin to get a rhythm and go through and add your comments. You can  
1407 do it in a couple of hours. I would appreciate hearing from all the Commissioners on the  
1408 list.

1409  
1410 Chair Reckdahl: I think all seven should be sending Peter our assessments. When we  
1411 give those assessments to MIG and they come back ...

1412  
1413 Mr. de Geus: I see what you mean.

1414  
1415 Chair Reckdahl: ... I think we need another beat on the head with MIG before we have  
1416 something that's going to be useful for another meeting.

1417  
1418 Commissioner Hetterly: It may be worthwhile to wait and see what comes out if  
1419 everybody submits their comments and then you have another draft. If we see that and  
1420 find that it still needs substantial work, then we do an ad hoc at that point.

1421  
1422 Chair Reckdahl: I'd be happy with that.

1423  
1424 Mr. de Geus: That would be good.

1425  
1426 Commissioner Moss: How do ad hoc committees work? How many is minimum in an  
1427 ad hoc committee?

1428  
1429 Commissioner Lauing: (crosstalk) one. Max is three.

1430  
1431 Chair Reckdahl: Yeah, we can't have a quorum. There's no decision-making being done.  
1432 Once you have four people, that's part of the Brown Act. I'm sure that they have that in  
1433 the binders. Once you have four, you can't talk shop unless it's a public meeting. You  
1434 can have two or three people sit down with staff and go through things and give some  
1435 feedback to staff, and that's not considered a public meeting. It doesn't require a public  
1436 meeting.

1437  
1438 Commissioner Hetterly: I'll move that we establish an ad hoc committee to work with  
1439 staff on the process.

1440  
1441 Commissioner Lauing: Don't we already have one that we've been working on this exact  
1442 same process? It already exists. I don't think we have to ...

1443  
1444 Female: (inaudible)

1445  
1446 Commissioner Lauing: We can reconstitute it if we want to.

1447  
1448 Mr. de Geus: I think that's why we brought it up. We know we have new  
1449 Commissioners. We ought to do that.

1450  
1451 Commissioner Knopper: Who was on it? I've lost track.

1452  
1453 Chair Reckdahl: It was us three. We didn't lose anyone off of it. We could keep it  
1454 unless we want to—personally I think it's most efficient to just keep the three of us and  
1455 do an iteration if needed.

1456  
1457 Mr. de Geus: That would be great.

1458

1459 Chair Reckdahl: The new Commissioners are going to be ...

1460  
1461 Mr. de Geus: They're going to get their green binder, so they'll have enough to read.  
1462 The binder is all of the data on the matrix and the background. There will be a lot there.

1463  
1464 Commissioner Hetterly: I would be happy to give up my spot if any of the new members  
1465 would like to participate on the ad hoc. Not because it's a horrible group to work with.

1466  
1467 Commissioner Moss: I can do it, if you want. Up to you. If you want to do it, fine. I'm  
1468 sort of a deer in the headlights right now. If you don't want to do it, I'll do it.

1469  
1470 Chair Reckdahl: I think my preference would be to keep Jennifer on it for this next  
1471 month while you come up to speed. We can reevaluate the assessment. Are you happy  
1472 staying on it?

1473  
1474 Commissioner Hetterly: That's fine.

1475  
1476 Chair Reckdahl: I think Jen's history in it would help to be efficient with the iteration if  
1477 needed. Peter will be sending via email the updated spreadsheet. We'll go through that  
1478 spreadsheet. Either type your response via text or put them in the comments and mail it  
1479 back. They will digest that and find out if they get indigestion or not.

1480  
1481 Commissioner Moss: Are you going to send us a soft copy of the spreadsheet?

1482  
1483 Mr. Jensen: Yeah. I'm going to email you a copy. Usually how I do that—this is  
1484 another Brown Act thing—I do blind cc you all so you can't reply to all. Replying to all,  
1485 you're not supposed to do. If that doesn't happen, if you do see a list, just note that you're  
1486 not supposed to reply to all.

1487  
1488 Chair Reckdahl: Reply to all is not a good thing to do.

1489  
1490 Mr. de Geus: We'll have to put some type of deadline on that, fairly early, just so we can  
1491 get it back to MIG so we can merge the list again so we're ready for our January meeting.

1492  
1493 Chair Reckdahl: Mail it out and give your requested due date.

1494  
1495 Mr. de Geus: We will.

1496  
1497 Chair Reckdahl: Any closing questions, comments?

1498  
1499 Commissioner Moss: What was that about January 11th? I thought this was every third  
1500 Thursday.

1501 Mr. Anderson: That's the Council meeting.

1502  
1503  
1504 Chair Reckdahl: Are we going back to Council on the 11th?

1505  
1506 Mr. de Geus: On January 11th we have a Study Session with the City Council on this  
1507 plan. I hope you all have that on your calendar; it would be great to have Commission  
1508 presence and participation at that meeting.

1509  
1510 Chair Reckdahl: The updated memo, when is that due?

1511  
1512 Mr. de Geus: I know it's due to our City Manager by next Wednesday. After all the  
1513 internal reviews are done, we can get that out to the Commission.

1514  
1515 Chair Reckdahl: Do you need any more Commission input to that?

1516  
1517 Mr. Jensen: I don't believe so.

1518  
1519 Mr. de Geus: I don't think so. We got a lot. We had tried to get a Study Session earlier,  
1520 a month ago. We were right there with the report and MIG's report and the Commission's  
1521 input at that time. It's just been on hold really for the new date.

1522  
1523 **4. Other Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates.**

1524  
1525 Chair Reckdahl: The next item is the ad hoc. The first one would be the CIP.

1526  
1527 Daren Anderson: Thank you so much. Again, I'm Daren Anderson with Open Space,  
1528 Parks and Golf. I want to just share with you ...

1529  
1530 Chair Reckdahl: Can you give a two-minute introduction of what a CIP is for the new  
1531 Commissioners?

1532  
1533 Mr. Anderson: I'd like to give you just an update about our capital budget. We call them  
1534 CIPs, Capital Improvement Projects. Typically they're projects that cost \$50,000 or  
1535 more. They go into a five-year budget cycle. I'll get into some of the examples in just a  
1536 minute that will help kind of give you context for what they look like, what we've  
1537 recently accomplished. Then we'll get into a little bit more of what we're looking at  
1538 going forward. I'd be glad to answer any questions that you have further regarding CIPs.  
1539 Let me just start with what we have accomplished in 2015. El Camino Park, we had the  
1540 ribbon cutting today. It was a great, great achievement, finally seeing the completion of  
1541 that park and reopening it to the public. We actually reopened it on target. We shot for  
1542 November; we hit November. November 20th was the soft opening. The public came in.

1543 The second the temporary fencing came down, people just started seeping in, enjoying  
1544 the park which made staff very happy to see that. Of course, the grand opening today.  
1545 Scott Park, you can see from the photo another ribbon cutting. That was completed and  
1546 the park reopened to the public on July 30th of the year. We have the new playground,  
1547 the new picnic area, a basketball court and our City's first bocce ball court. It's up and  
1548 running and doing really well. We also provided free bocce balls at that site, and they're  
1549 well used. The Magical Bridge Playground was opened on April 18th, 2015. Hopkins  
1550 Park was another Capital Improvement Project. This one was opened also in April 2015.  
1551 This CIP is a little different. The previous ones you've seen were to reconstruct a park.  
1552 Sometimes they're studies. In this particular example it's a feasibility study looking at the  
1553 Boardwalk that stems off the Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center. It's been closed  
1554 for quite some time, because it was in structural poor repair. The feasibility study came  
1555 back, gave us some information. One piece of the information was if you carry out these,  
1556 I guess for lack of a better term, low-cost repairs, you can open up the first 200 feet. In  
1557 the example in the photo, you can see the arrow indicates where our own staff and  
1558 Rangers went underneath and fixed up what we could and were able to open up that.  
1559 Great to have that CIP accomplished. This is another example of an accomplished CIP,  
1560 but this is a different one. It's an ongoing CIP. This one is tennis court resurfacing.  
1561 You'll see this one when you look at a capital budget book repeats year after year, same  
1562 monetary value. That's because it's on a cycle of replacement or fixing. In this last fiscal  
1563 year we redid Hopkins, Terman and Weisshaar. That's in a nutshell some of what we  
1564 accomplished in 2015. We probably have five other ongoing CIPs. Some of them are for  
1565 benches, signs and fences. Others for lakes and ponds. Though you don't see one project  
1566 that you can say, "Look at this. We accomplished this." It's a lot of little pieces here and  
1567 there. It's also a tremendous amount of staff time that goes into accomplishing those little  
1568 pieces. Oftentimes they augment or supplement a project like El Camino Park. There  
1569 was a tremendous amount of funding, but still there were shortfalls or things that were  
1570 missed. One small example was \$35,000 in trash receptacles and recycling containers.  
1571 That came out of one of those recurring CIPs; that's where the benches, signs and fences  
1572 come in. Another park project where we go over budget and there's not enough for a  
1573 sign, and we lean on one of our ongoing CIPs that does signage. These are projects  
1574 underway in 2015, not yet completed. Monroe Park is under construction right now.  
1575 We're looking at early February for completing that. We've got the Byxbee Park Interim  
1576 Plan. That was a CIP where the plan was completed, but the actual renovations have  
1577 started but aren't completed yet. We've got about 90 percent of the trails constructed.  
1578 The area is being hydroseeded right now. The next steps will be constructing the habitat  
1579 islands, installing the seating areas and putting in the interpretive signage. Stanford-Palo  
1580 Alto turf replacement is underway right now. We just got the contract signed, and we  
1581 should be starting construction in a few weeks. It'll be a 45-day construction window for  
1582 that project. That's replacing the synthetic turf fields at that site. That's what we've  
1583 accomplished, and now we're looking at this next CIP cycle. We update it every year. I  
1584 mentioned it's done in five years. This current cycle we're going to be working on is the



1585 FY '17 to FY '21 cycle. Only the first year in that cycle is funded. This FY '17 that we're  
1586 just kind of finalizing now will be the one that's funded. The rest are more of a plan that  
1587 says, "In '18 through '21, where do we think we're going to accomplish? What does it  
1588 look like? What does it cost?" We build that out. Each year, that kind of gets updated.  
1589 Is that still right for 2018 or do we lack the capacity to implement it? Are there other  
1590 priorities that supersede it? That's kind of how we re-envision that CIP plan every year.  
1591 What I'd like to do is just walk you through some of the things that we've highlighted.  
1592 The following list that you see on your screen, these are proposed projects not in the  
1593 existing CIP; they're new. Most of them are coming from either the City's—I mentioned  
1594 the IBRC, Infrastructure Blue Ribbon Committee. Most of these projects are coming  
1595 from that or some other staff need that we've identified that hasn't been captured yet. It's  
1596 a new CIP. I'll just briefly cover some of these. In FY '17, we've got a few. The  
1597 Children's Theatre black box, this is a particular room also known as the Castle Theatre.  
1598 It needs some repairs. It was never built up to Code; it lacks insulation. To make it work  
1599 and function properly, it needs a Capital Improvement Project. The Magical Bridge  
1600 replacement, I'm not referring to the playground but the actual bridge that leads across the  
1601 creek to the playground is in need of replacement. The Cubberley tennis courts, they're  
1602 probably one of our poorer conditioned tennis courts. The nice part about this project is  
1603 it looks like we'll have funds outside of our general fund revenue. There's a special fund  
1604 for Cubberley that will help fund this particular one. We're looking at a one-year increase  
1605 to one of those existing, ongoing projects, the trails CIP. Up at Foothills Park there's a  
1606 trail called Los Trancos that's got some substantial issues that need to be addressed  
1607 fundamentally, not through some of our existing funding. It's a one-time bump that we're  
1608 hoping can address that and fix it on a long-term basis. The Baylands Comprehensive  
1609 Conservation Plan, this one is already in the plan. It's already in our existing budget for  
1610 2017. A comprehensive conservation plan, as backdrop, is to look at the habitat, the  
1611 wildlife, the vegetation and give a guide to staff that manages, in this case, the Baylands  
1612 Preserve and say this is how you best take care of this. This is how you prioritize your  
1613 volunteer efforts and your restoration and where you allow recreation. Just recently, in  
1614 conversations with other groups and within our department, we thought we should be  
1615 augmenting that with a few things. We can expand the funding and the scope just  
1616 slightly to include a Baylands Interpretive Master Plan. While we're looking at all these  
1617 other elements, it really lends itself to say, "We're looking at your wildlife. We're  
1618 looking at your vegetation, your recreation." Now is the perfect time to say, "Is the  
1619 interpretive messaging supporting that? Is it comprehensive? Is it thematic? Are they  
1620 done piecemeal?" We believe if we just add a little bit of money we could get that done  
1621 at the same time. Likewise, there's a public arts component. There's a lot of projects  
1622 happening in and around the Baylands. Just one example is Ming's is going to be used by  
1623 Mercedes, it will be taken over as a Mercedes dealership. They're obligated to have some  
1624 piece of public art there. Rather than having it done piecemeal, that Ming's would do a  
1625 little piece, the golf course would do a little piece, does it make more sense, as we're  
1626 looking at the entire Baylands, to say let's have a Public Arts Master Plan tied into there



1627 too, just for the Baylands. That's another CIP where we'd ask for some. We also are  
1628 looking for an ongoing increase into that CIP trails project. Unlike the one-time bump  
1629 that I mentioned for Los Trancos Trail, this would be an ongoing slight increase to  
1630 increase the level of service. We've gotten some feedback that the trails and open space  
1631 haven't been maintained to the standard that the City would like to see. To do so, we  
1632 need a little extra money. What that would actually look like is the trail contractor that  
1633 comes out and services those trails does it twice a year now. We'd get a third service out  
1634 there, so it's be three brushing trail services with that increase. The same for the benches,  
1635 signs and fences CIP, another kind of ongoing CIP that we'd like to bump up  
1636 incrementally just a little to help address and keep up with demand. As I mentioned, it  
1637 gets drawn on often. El Camino Park was a recent example where \$35,000 was sucked  
1638 off into one project. We'd like to fund an ongoing restroom CIP. This had been in place  
1639 before, and it was defunded as we started the Master Plan process. Rather than choosing  
1640 locations for restrooms somewhat arbitrarily, it made sense to defund it, wait until the  
1641 Master Plan presented a bunch of options. Is it still a priority? In this preliminary phase  
1642 where we're at with the Master Plan, we clearly see that park restrooms are a very high  
1643 priority. It made sense to us to go ahead and refund that CIP. We have a couple of ideas  
1644 for things, but really the Parks Master Plan could help fill that out. What had been done  
1645 previously was there was \$200,000, I believe, every year or every other year, and you  
1646 could do a park restroom. Something like that is what we're going to be proposing for  
1647 park restrooms. In FY '19, we're looking at a Foothills-Arastradero-Esther Clark  
1648 Comprehensive Conservation Plan much like that Baylands one I mentioned. This would  
1649 apply to the Foothills, Arastradero and Esther Clark collectively. We envision something  
1650 like that is going to take about a year and a half. It is demanding. We specifically  
1651 staggered the Baylands one so it wouldn't overlap with our efforts on this Park Master  
1652 Plan, because it's so staff intensive. I'm sure each one of these, the Baylands and then  
1653 this FY '19 Foothills-Arastradero-Esther Clark one, will be similar. Very heavy public  
1654 outreach, very staff intensive project. FY '20 Foothills Interpretive Center displays, this  
1655 would hopefully be something that we learn from that aforementioned in the prior year  
1656 comprehensive conservation plan for that site, where it informs us and tells us what  
1657 should the interpretive displays be at the Foothills Interpretive Center. This will be a  
1658 follow-up CIP to fund that and implement it. In FY '21, we looked at Foothills Park  
1659 irrigation. This is one where it's reached the end of its lifespan. It's slated out for 25  
1660 years; it was 25 years ago from that date that it was previously installed. This CIP would  
1661 fund its replacement. Likewise ...

1662  
1663 Chair Reckdahl: This is irrigation for the meadow or is this elsewhere in the park?  
1664

1665 Mr. Anderson: No. The only irrigated spots we've got in Foothills are the upper and  
1666 lower turf. This is near the entrance and down in front of the Interpretive Center, about  
1667 15 acres of turf. With that also the Sunfish Island Bridge replacement. This is the little  
1668 island in Boronda. The bridge is antiquated and needs to be replaced. Also in FY '21,





1669 Pearson-Arastradero, there was a myriad of items, the fences, the gates, the bridges, were  
1670 all in this infrastructure backlog listed in 2021. We want to pull them together as one  
1671 CIP. We'd also like to lump in a seasonal trail improvement element to that Capital  
1672 Improvement Project. There are a number of trails that are closed every winter, and we  
1673 believe with minimal upgrades, that is probably rocking and maybe a little reshaping, you  
1674 wouldn't have to close them as often if at all, if we can do it right. That's some of the  
1675 things we're looking at. This, is again, a draft; it's not complete. There will be more  
1676 projects probably. At some point soon, we'll have to kind of filter them down. I didn't  
1677 mention this yet, but it's also a very competitive year to be proposing projects. The City  
1678 Council has a number of priorities such as the police building and fire stations that are  
1679 going to consume a lot of the available funding. At the same time, we feel we've got  
1680 some important projects that we'd like to move forward and see if we can get them done.  
1681 The CIP schedule. November and December is typically when staff is pulling these ideas  
1682 and consulting with our ad hoc committee from the Commission to vet them, make sure  
1683 we're on track. We recently met with the ad hoc committee with our Commission to  
1684 discuss these. In mid-December, our CIP submissions are due; we have to put them in.  
1685 In January, they go through a review committee. The City review committee is  
1686 predominantly department heads. They help filter down what can make it kind of  
1687 realistically to the budget. In February, it goes to the City Manager. In early May, it  
1688 goes to the Planning and Transportation Commission. The Planning and Transportation  
1689 Commission's role is to make sure that the projects are consistent with the  
1690 Comprehensive Plan. This is typically when we ask a representative or two from the  
1691 Commission to attend and just kind of listen and observe. Lastly, in May it'll go to the  
1692 Finance Committee, and in June it would be adopted by the Council. Again, I'll bring  
1693 this back to the Commission in January as a discussion item, and we can get into some  
1694 more details. That concludes my presentation.

1695  
1696 Chair Reckdahl: Do people have questions either about the process or about the  
1697 individual projects? Do you want to say anything, Ed?

1698  
1699 Commissioner Lauing: No. Keith and I met with Daren and Rob to kick it off, a little bit  
1700 later than last year, but we'll pick up the pace and get it done. For the new  
1701 Commissioners, the year '17 starts July 1st of '16.

1702  
1703 Chair Reckdahl: The Foothills fire plan, that is in the operating budget now?

1704  
1705 Mr. Anderson: That's correct. A former CIP that's been moved to operating.

1706  
1707 Chair Reckdahl: The bike bridge, do you have a date of when they're going to start  
1708 construction?

1709  
1710 Mr. Anderson: I don't. I can look into it and get back to you.

1711 Chair Reckdahl: Do you know where we are in the process?  
1712

1713  
1714 Mr. Anderson: I don't. It's not a Community Services managed project.  
1715

1716 Commissioner Knopper: Can I ask a question on an update on a project?  
1717

1718 Chair Reckdahl: Sure.  
1719

1720 Commissioner Knopper: The hydrologic study at Buckeye Creek on the 7.7 acres, I  
1721 haven't asked about it in a while. I was just wondering if you could give me some  
1722 context, where we are.  
1723

1724 Mr. Anderson: Great question. It's a high priority for our staff. We've been working  
1725 closely with Public Works to finalize the scope. The more we started working with the  
1726 scope, the more we saw we needed to bump it up and make it very robust. We're just  
1727 finalizing that now. I hope within the next two weeks to have it out to bid. We're  
1728 anxious to get going, to get a hydrologist firm on and start analyzing this, especially to be  
1729 timed with El Nino so they can see the impacts of the rain on this creek and how it  
1730 impacts both Foothills, our shop area and the 7.7 acres.  
1731

1732 Commissioner Knopper: A quick follow-up. When they start, how long is their process?  
1733 How long would it be before you would potentially have results.  
1734

1735 Mr. Anderson: I think some of it will depend on the consultation with the hydrologist.  
1736 Right in the beginning as we go out to bid and they submit their bids, we'll get to see how  
1737 long they need. I'm not in a position to answer what length of time is enough. Do they  
1738 need to physically see it, will testimony from prior creek studies be enough? We don't  
1739 have one on Buckeye Creek proper in Foothills Park; we have studies of adjacent creeks  
1740 in Arastradero. Is some of that usable? I'm not quite sure. We are hoping that in one  
1741 calendar year it would be completely done, I'd be back to the Commission to discuss the  
1742 findings and make a recommendation for Council.  
1743

1744 Rob de Geus: I just wanted to add, if you're interested, the City Council is having a  
1745 special meeting tomorrow evening, a second meeting this week. There is a Study Session  
1746 on the infrastructure plan update on the IBRC report. As Daren mentioned, there is some  
1747 really large commitments that have been made and important commitments. The police  
1748 building is at the top of that list, the fire station, bicycle bridge, bike-pedestrian Master  
1749 Plan, still Byxbee park and completing that project. There's a lot of demands on the  
1750 capital budget. I think once we finish the Master Plan, we'll have a much better idea of  
1751 what we want to include in future five-year plans. There is that staff report that's online.  
1752 If you're interested, you can attend that meeting tomorrow evening.

1753  
1754 Chair Reckdahl: Commissioner Moss.  
1755

1756 Commissioner Moss: I heard that there was an urban forest meeting tomorrow. If I go to  
1757 that, how much input—I guess I can't give any input. Is that correct? I can just listen.  
1758

1759 Mr. de Geus: You can always give input as an individual citizen, as long as you make  
1760 that clear, that it's not input from the body of the Commission.  
1761

1762 Commissioner Moss: I've been interested in that all along.  
1763

1764 Mr. de Geus: That's something that you would want to state, that this is an individual  
1765 perspective that I'm sharing. You certainly are able to do that.  
1766

1767 Chair Reckdahl: Other ad hocs. Do you want to talk dog parks at all?  
1768

1769 Commissioner Hetterly: Yep. I think that was supposed to be on the agenda this month.  
1770 I don't know why it got bumped. It'll move to next month I guess.  
1771

1772 Chair Reckdahl: It got bumped to January.  
1773

1774 Commissioner Hetterly: That's all I know.  
1775

1776 Mr. Anderson: We're seeking City Manager advice and guidance on a couple of the ad  
1777 hoc recommendations. We need that input before we can move forward. We'll have that  
1778 by January, for sure.  
1779

1780 Commissioner Hetterly: That'll be as an action item, right?  
1781

1782 Mr. Anderson: That could be. I think I'd like to convene one more time with the ad hoc  
1783 post-meeting with the City Manager and talk that through.  
1784

1785 Chair Reckdahl: We're done with ad hocs.  
1786

1787 **V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
1788

1789 Chair Reckdahl: Rob?  
1790

1791 Rob de Geus: I have a few that I would like to share. We had a successful tree lighting  
1792 event last Friday. I don't know if you had a chance to attend. It's the fifth time we did  
1793 that at Lytton Plaza. The lights went on, very happy about that. That looks nice. This  
1794 weekend on Saturday, we're having an event called Frozen, after the movie Frozen still

1795 very popular, at Mitchell Park Community Center and Library, sort of celebrating the  
1796 first year of being open at that center. The library staff and recreation staff and Children's  
1797 Theatre have got a whole lot of programs planned for that day. I think 11:00 to 1:00 is  
1798 when most of the activity happens there. If you're interested in that. We also have a New  
1799 Year's Senior Brunch for seniors in our community. We've been running that event for  
1800 many years now. It gets great attendance. We can always use volunteers and help with  
1801 that. It's on the last day of the year. A countdown that happens at midday. I also wanted  
1802 to mention tomorrow evening the infrastructure Study Session. There's also another item  
1803 on the agenda, that is the discussion by Council on the natural environment—I think  
1804 that's what it's called—element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Council will be  
1805 reviewing the vision and goals of that particular element. That will then inform the  
1806 Citizen Advisory Committee that's working on the update to the Comprehensive Plan.  
1807 That might be of interest to the Commission as well. The last thing I wanted to mention  
1808 is I've made some decisions on some hiring, which is really exciting. Thank you to  
1809 Commissioner Lauing who spent a day with us in the interviews. We have a new  
1810 Assistant Director; she started today. Her name's Kristen O'Kane. She comes from the  
1811 Santa Clara Water District. Very bright and brings a depth of knowledge in  
1812 environmental studies I think will be very helpful for our Master Planning process and  
1813 some of our comprehensive conservation plans that we're invested in making happen.  
1814 Look forward to introducing her to the Commission. She'll be the key liaison to the  
1815 Commission going forward. We also hired a Superintendent of Recreation, which is a  
1816 position that was removed from the budget for a number of years. The Council  
1817 generously added it back last year, which we're very appreciative of. We've gone through  
1818 that process and hired someone. Her name is Stephanie Douglas. She comes from  
1819 Milpitas. A great individual, and I look forward to introducing her to you all as well.  
1820 That's what I had.

1821  
1822 Chair Reckdahl: They both sit over by you?

1823  
1824 Mr. de Geus: I'm sorry?

1825  
1826 Chair Reckdahl: Their offices are in Lucie Stern?

1827  
1828 Mr. de Geus: Kristen O'Kane will be at the Lucie Stern Community Center. Stephanie  
1829 Douglas will be at the Cubberley Community Center. There's so much going on at  
1830 Cubberley right now and the future of Cubberley and the Master Planning of that site,  
1831 we're going to have her stationed there initially.

1832  
1833 Commissioner Lauing: You have one more opening still?

1834  
1835 Mr. de Geus: There's another promotion that we made. A long time Ranger, Curt Dunn,  
1836 28 years, has been promoted to Senior Supervising Ranger for Foothills Park. A terrific

1837 individual. He did outstanding in the interview process. Daren's been mentoring him for  
1838 some time. It's a thrill to see him step up in that way. He's now a new manager. We now  
1839 have a vacant Ranger position that we need to fill. Was that what you were referring to?  
1840

1841 Commissioner Lauing: I thought you had another supervisor?  
1842

1843 Commissioner Hetterly: Superintendent.  
1844

1845 Commissioner Lauing: Superintendent, excuse me.  
1846

1847 Mr. de Geus: The Superintendent of Parks has been vacant for a year. We finally feel  
1848 like we have a good pool of candidates for that. We'll be interviewing later this month,  
1849 hopefully before the end of the calendar year, so we can make some movement on that.  
1850 Daren would appreciate that. That reminds me there's a lot of recruiting and hiring  
1851 happening. The Project Safety Net Director position is also in play right now. We've had  
1852 first interviews. Second interviews are tomorrow. There's three applicants left. It's a  
1853 long process, largely because there's so many stakeholders involved and need to be part  
1854 of the process of hiring that person. Those interviews happen tomorrow. The final  
1855 candidates will meet with Dr. Max McGee from the School District and City Manager  
1856 Jim Keene. Hopefully we'll have a decision by the end of the calendar year also, if we  
1857 can.  
1858

1859 Chair Reckdahl: I have a couple of things to add. You mentioned the Baylands  
1860 Boardwalk. A big king tide is coming Christmas. I think the 23rd, 24th, 25th are the big  
1861 days for the king tide. The Boardwalk will be under water. If you want to see that, that  
1862 would be ... It's always impressive. I think it's like 10:00 a.m. to noon roughly on those  
1863 days. A question for Peter. The infant mortality of the items in Magical Bridge. How  
1864 are they holding up? We have a lot of new items there that we haven't had in parks  
1865 before.  
1866

1867 Peter Jensen: Daren can answer some of this too, because he's been working on it as  
1868 well. In general, I would say that the playground is actually holding up very, very well  
1869 for the thousands of users that come to it every week. I think the weakness is that some  
1870 of the synthetic turf isn't doing as good as we wanted it to. We are looking at different  
1871 options of repairing or replacing that. Generally though, the equipment is all very good.  
1872 I think the demand of keeping the area clean, just because of the amount of use, required  
1873 more attention than was first given to it. In general, I think the playground is doing very,  
1874 very well. It is holding up very, very well. It's good to see that happening. I will also  
1875 add that this week the Magical Bridge Playground won a parks design award for its  
1876 inclusive and cutting edge design for inclusivity. That was very exciting as well.  
1877

1878 Mr. de Geus: I'm not sure if I've shared this with the Commission. It's been really  
1879 interesting opening up this playground, the Magical Bridge Playground. The new  
1880 Commissioners have been there. It's a universally accessible playground that people of  
1881 all abilities can play. It's one of the best in the country, so it's getting a lot of attention,  
1882 not only nationally but internationally. What we've experienced is, one, the maintenance  
1883 is a big job because it gets so many visitors. There's 150 people there every day or at any  
1884 time almost. Another thing that we're experiencing is there are so many people there and  
1885 most of the kids that are playing there are actually able-bodied kids. I spoke to a couple  
1886 of parents that have kids with disabilities, and they go there and it's overwhelming. They  
1887 actually can't get access to some of the play equipment. It's really a challenge and a  
1888 problem. This is a new area and we need to work on it. The Friends of the Magical  
1889 Bridge who raised the money to build the playground have been tremendous support of  
1890 the playground and are there a lot and have started an ambassador program where they  
1891 have actually children learn about people with different abilities. They get T-shirts and a  
1892 little bit of training. They look out for kids that may need some help or make sure they  
1893 get access to certain play equipment. There is a programming element to this particular  
1894 playground that needs attention and focus and some resources. We're working with the  
1895 Friends to see how we can keep them in play and helping support that playground with a  
1896 volunteer program or some other thing. Pretty interesting. Great addition to the system,  
1897 but there's some challenges that we're learning about.

1899 Commissioner Moss: That's our neighborhood park. It's an incredible number of people.  
1900 Talking to some of the parents who have autistic children, you can't tell that they're  
1901 autistic. They bring along their siblings who don't have a problem. Having the  
1902 combination of all those is pretty incredible. It's really amazing.

1904 Chair Reckdahl: I'm always mobbed when I go there. It's very impressive. Let's move  
1905 on.

1907 Commissioner Hetterly: I have a couple of calendar items, since we got our important  
1908 dates calendar. I just thought to add on January 11th along with the Master Plan Council  
1909 Study Session, Council will be reviewing the Community Services and Facilities element  
1910 of the Comprehensive Plan as revised by the Community Advisory Committee. I guess  
1911 the last action by the Community Advisory Committee will be next week,  
1912 December 16th. That's a subcommittee for that element, then Council will review it on  
1913 January 11th, when I saw it last. January 19th, there is a joint Council session with the  
1914 Community Advisory Committee for the Comp Plan and Council on the Comprehensive  
1915 Plan Draft Environmental Impact Review.

1917 Chair Reckdahl: Anything else? Okay.

**VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR JANUARY 26, 2016 MEETING**

Chair Reckdahl: Next month we have dog parks, either a discussion item or action item, hopefully action item. Commissioner Hetterly and I, after El Camino Park, went over and checked out the area. It does look very promising. It's a slippery slope whenever you start—it's very rough. We don't expect it to be polished, but I think it would be a good learning experience for the City. Dog parks next month.

Commissioner Lauing: The Boardwalk?

Chair Reckdahl: Yeah, Boardwalk is coming in January. Are we coming back with the Master Plan also? We have the Master Plan.

Male: (inaudible).

Chair Reckdahl: Master Plan, dog parks and Boardwalk.

Rob de Geus: I'll have to check in with the Junior Museum and Zoo team to see if they're ready. I suspect they will be.

Chair Reckdahl: We have CIPs also. CIPs and perhaps Junior Museum.

Mr. de Geus: We also generally select the Chair and Vice Chair at the January meeting.

Chair Reckdahl: Are we planning to do the retreat as our regular February meeting or are we going to schedule that between meetings?

Commissioner Lauing: My guess is we're going to have to schedule it separately, because of the workload of the Master Plan.

Chair Reckdahl: We'll talk about then in January. Schedule retreat.

Commissioner Cowie: Could you talk a little bit more about that? So I can get a sense for it and get a sense for what the calendar looks like.

Chair Reckdahl: The retreat usually occurs typically on a Friday morning. Do we go like 9:00 'til noon, something like that? We just get together. It's basically another meeting, but we just get together and not talk about new meetings but talk about planning for the year, talk about what the ad hocs we want, what issues we want to work on. It's an organizational meeting, big picture and it's both the little picture stuff that we do here each week.



1961 Commissioner Cowie: Could we schedule it now? I'm just concerned if we wait 'til late  
1962 January that it might be challenging to make it work.

1963  
1964 Mr. de Geus: We can send out a poll. Friday seemed to work best for most people in the  
1965 past couple of years, like a Friday morning. Look for a date in February, see what works  
1966 for most people.

1967  
1968 Commissioner Cowie: As long as we do that relatively soon, that would be helpful. As  
1969 long as I have enough notice, I can probably pull it off. If it's two or three weeks in  
1970 advance, it might be tricky.

1971  
1972 Mr. de Geus: Fair enough.

1973  
1974 Chair Reckdahl: Cat is sending out a poll then.

1975  
1976 **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

1977  
1978 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Hetterly and second by Commissioner  
1979 Cribbs at 10:00 p.m.