

TO: PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

FROM: COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENTS

DATE: MARCH 22, 2016

SUBJECT: PARKS, TRAILS, NATURAL OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION
MASTER PLAN

RECOMMENDATION

No action to be taken.

BACKGROUND

The City of Palo Alto has 37 parks and open space preserves covering approximately 4,165 acres of land, which includes Foothills Park, Pearson Arastradero Preserve, and the Baylands Nature Preserve. A Capital Improvement Project for a Parks, Trails, Open Space, and Recreation Master Plan (Master Plan) was adopted by Council for the 2013 fiscal year. The purpose of this project is to provide the necessary analysis and review of Palo Alto's parks and recreation system for the preparation of a Master Plan. The Master Plan will provide the City with clear guidance regarding future renovations and capital improvement projects aimed at meeting current and future demands on the city's recreational, programming, environmental, and maintenance needs, establishing a prioritized schedule and budget of future park renovations, facility improvements and expansion of recreational programs.

The Master Plan process consists of three phases: Phase 1) Analysis and community input; Phase 2) Recommendations and prioritization; and Phase 3) Master Plan drafting and adoption. The planning process is currently focused on the second phase of the Master Plan developing and prioritizing recommendations for the overall parks and recreation system as well as drafting revised and new policies that will support the recommendations.

DISCUSSION

This report is a continuation of the discussion from the February 23, 2016 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting regarding Master Plan policy development. An updated draft policy list is being brought back to the commission for further review and discussion. The Master Plan Ad Hoc committee has completed an initial review of the revised policies. To assist with the development of the policies, the Ad Hoc committee and staff have further refined the definition of a policy for the purpose of the Master Plan. The proposed revised definition is:

A values-based framework that provides clear direction and guides an action or actions toward achieving a goal.

The draft policies include comments provided by the commissioners (Attachment A), which have been incorporated into the revised policy document (Attachment B & C). Several policies have been identified that need additional discussion and resolution with the commission.

Policies that require further commission discussion include the following:

1.B - Retain the standard of five acres of park land per 1,000 residents for developed parks and follow best practices for measuring service levels. This standard does not include developed or undeveloped open spaces.

Proposed Recommendation:

The purpose of this policy is to increase parkland as population growth increases. Due to the lack of available land and the high cost of property values, this policy will be difficult to realize. The recommendation is to revise the policy to one that is more realistic and attainable, while still increasing parkland over time.

1.C was 1.D – Ensure the maximum distance between residents' homes and the nearest public park or preserve is ½-mile, ¼-mile preferred, that is evaluated using a walkshed methodology based on how people travel.

Proposed Recommendation:

The policy has been revised to only call out having a park within a ½ mile service area. Specific park amenities: play experiences, picnic areas, community gardens, and dog parks have been removed from this policy. The project team will develop proposed site plans for each park that will locate these specific amenities per factors within the parks themselves, which will be reviewed by the PRC. Additional policies are proposed for dog parks and restrooms that are further discussed in the separate reports presented at the meeting.

2.C – Design and maintain high quality turf fields with adequate time for resting to support maximum use in parks by multiple organized sports and casual users with areas large enough for practice or play. Invest in tournament-quality high-wear sports field turf (see Natural vs. Synthetic Turf Analysis) at designated sports fields used full time for sports where lighting is possible. Policy Direction Needed: Should the policy be written to encourage more synthetic turf, to retain existing synthetic turf and replace it, to exclude synthetic turf, or to consider it on a case-by-case basis?

Synthetic Turf

The synthetic turf industry is rapidly evolving. New and improved products are continually being developed with a movement towards improved play conditions, improved player safety, cooler temperatures, and more environmentally friendly materials.

Proposed Recommendation:

- Continue to monitor and track industry developments and the latest reputable scientific studies regarding synthetic turf in order to:
 1. understand the environmental and human safety impacts of our existing synthetic turf fields;
 2. determine if the City should continue to use synthetic turf where we currently have synthetic turf fields, and whether the City should consider expanding its use of synthetic turf;
 3. determine which type of synthetic turf product to use when it comes time to replace an existing synthetic turf field.

- Sustain the existing synthetic turf fields, and, as they need to be replaced, use the information learned from industry developments, scientific studies, and best practices from leaders in the field to select the most appropriate products (Re-evaluate this policy based on the analysis from reputable scientific studies).

- Whenever possible, synthetic turf playing fields should have lights in order to maximize use of the field.

- Synthetic turf fields should be striped for multiple sports to maximize use.

Natural grass playing fields

The City should invest in its natural grass playing fields in an effort to provide a safe and high quality playing experience.

Proposed Recommendation:

- The City should hire a sports turf consultant to complete an athletic fields master plan, in an effort to improve the condition and sustainability of the City's natural grass fields. The report should include analysis and recommendations regarding the soil profile, agronomy, irrigation systems, field slope, drainage, field-use demand, and maintenance.

- The City should review the various improvement options recommended in the athletic field master plan, and fund the appropriate improvements.

2.E was 2.D – Policy Direction Needed: Should the Master Plan retain existing policy (requiring dogs to be on-leash) and strongly push for building more off-leash areas OR should it change the policy to allow dogs off-leash during specified hours in some parks. In either case, the policy should continue to exclude off-leash dogs from open space preserves.

Proposed Recommendation:

Refer to Draft Dog Park Policy Report

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Revised Draft Policies (Clean version)
- B. Revised Draft Policies (Red line)
- C. Commissioner Policy Comments Summary Spreadsheet

NEXT STEPS

A City Council Study Session tentatively scheduled in May 16 will review the master planning process activities completed to date and obtain feedback on the goal and policies.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The proposed CIP recommendations are consistent with Policy C-26 of the Community Services element of the Comprehensive Plan that encourages maintaining park facilities as safe and healthy community assets; and Policy C-22 that encourages new community facilities to have flexible functions to ensure adaptability to the changing needs of the community.

PREPARED BY

Peter Jensen
Landscape Architect
City of Palo Alto



ATTACHMENT 'A'

DRAFT POLICIES

Overview

The project team has also been working on developing policies that will give overarching direction to City staff and the PRC, and will also provide a foundation for the projects and programs that will be included in the Master Plan. A cross-departmental work session was convened on January 25, 2015 to review and provide feedback on the draft policies.

This document provides each of the six goals, accompanied by the relevant areas of focus and policies. The goals are numbered 1 through 6. Under each goal, the policies are numbered for reference (1.A, 1.B, 1.C, etc).

The definition of a policy is a course or principle of action that provides clear guidance regarding recreation program provision, park maintenance and operations or future renovations and capital improvement needs for parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities.

Goal 1: Provide high-quality facilities and services that are accessible, affordable, inclusive and distributed equitably across Palo Alto.

Areas of Focus

- Distributing park and recreation activities and experiences across the city
- Improving the accessibility of the full range of park and recreation opportunities
- Exploring new types of programs, classes, events and activities for all ages and abilities

Policies

- 1.A Emphasize equity and affordability in the provision of programs and services and the facilitation of partnerships, to create recreation opportunities that:
 - Advance skills, build community and improve the quality of life among participants, especially Palo Alto youth and teens; and
 - Are available at a wide range of facilities, at an increased number of locations that are well distributed throughout the city.
- 1.B Retain the standard of five acres of park land per 1,000 residents for developed parks and follow best practices for measuring service levels. This standard does not include developed or undeveloped open spaces.

- Ensure the maximum distance between residents' homes and the nearest public park or preserve is ½-mile, ¼-mile preferred, that is evaluated using a walkshed methodology based on how people travel.
- 1.C Adopt the wayfinding signage used at Rinconada Park as the standard for Palo Alto parks and provide standardized directory signs for all large parks, preserves and athletic field complexes.
- 1.D Apply universal design principles as the preferred guidance for design solutions in parks, striving to exceed Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- 1.E Continue to apply the Field and Tennis Court Brokering and Use Policy as well as the Gymnasium Use Policy (as well as any subsequent updates) to guide the allocation of these recreation facilities with a preference for youth and Palo Alto residents.
- 1.F Encourage walking and biking as a way of getting to and from parks, supporting implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan.
- 1.G Incorporate diversity in projects and programs to encourage and enhance citizen participation.
- 1.H Increase volunteerism by creating and promoting opportunities for youth and adults to participate in parks, recreation, open space events, projects and programs..
- 1.I Periodically collect and evaluate data on the changing needs of the community and adjust programs and plans accordingly.
- 1.J Explore options to expand access to Foothill Park for non-residents.

Goal 2: Enhance the capacity, quality and variety of uses of the existing system of parks, recreation and open space facilities and services.

Areas of Focus

- Improving and enhancing community center and recreation spaces across the community
- Enhancing capacity and quality of sports fields
- Increasing the variety of things to do in existing parks
- Improving spaces and increased options for off-leash dogs

Policies

- 2.A Sustain the community's investment in recreation facilities. .
- 2.B Provide opportunities for creative expression in park and recreation facilities and programs.
- 2.C Design and maintain high quality turf fields with adequate time for resting to support maximum use in parks by multiple organized sports and casual users with areas large enough for practice or play. Invest in tournament-quality high-wear sports field turf (see Natural vs. Synthetic Turf Analysis) at designated sports fields used full time for sports where lighting is possible. Policy Direction Needed: Should the policy be written to encourage more synthetic turf, to retain existing synthetic turf and replace it, to exclude synthetic turf, or to consider it on a case-by-case basis?

- 2.D Policy Direction Needed: Should the Master Plan retain existing policy (requiring dogs to be on-leash) and strongly push for building more off-leash areas OR should it change the policy to allow dogs off-leash during specified hours in some parks. In either case, the policy should continue to exclude off-leash dogs from open space preserves.

Goal 3: Create environments that encourage active and passive activities to support health, wellness and social connections.

Areas of Focus

- Enhancing comfort and making parks more welcoming
- Increasing health and wellness opportunities in parks and programs

Policies

- 3.A I Implement the City's Healthy City Healthy Community resolution with the community's involvement. (reword to be a policy and have specific programs for implementation)
- 3.B Incorporate artistic expression into park design and recreation programming (consistent with the Art Master Plan).
- 3.C Require that proposed privately owned public spaces that are provided in lieu of park fees meet Palo Alto design guidelines and standards for publicly owned parks, allow public access, and are designed to support self-directed exercise and fitness.

Goal 4: Protect natural habitat and integrate nature, natural systems and ecological principles throughout Palo Alto.

Areas of Focus

- Integrating nature into Palo Alto parks

Policies

- 4.A Incorporate nature into recreation programs to connect youth and adults to the outdoors and introduce outdoor skills.
- 4.B Connect natural areas, open spaces and contiguous vegetated areas in parks and on public land as wildlife, bird, pollinator and habitat corridors by planting with species that support pollinators or provide habitat values.
- 4.C Prioritize development of comprehensive conservation plans for Baylands Preserve, Foothills Park, Esther Clark and Pearson-Arastradero Preserve to identify strategies to balance ecosystem preservation, passive recreation, and environmental education.
- 4.D Support regional efforts to control the spread of invasive species and plant pathogens.
- 4.E Promote, expand and protect habitat and natural areas in parks.

Goal 5: Develop innovative programs, services and strategies for expanding the system.

Areas of Focus

- Expanding the system
- Offering more of the existing programs, classes, events

Policies

- 5.A Identify and pursue strategies to activate underused parks and Recreation facilities
- 5.B Support innovation in recreation programming and park features and amenities.
- 5.C Expand the overall parks system through repurposing public land, partnering with other organizations for shared land, incorporating public park spaces on parking decks and rooftops and other creative means to help address shortages of available land.
- 5.D Explore and experiment with parklets and other temporary park spaces for both long and short-term uses.
- 5.E Encourage new parks and identified neighborhood needs as part of the Development Agreement process for new residential and commercial developments.
- 5.F Enhance partnerships and collaborations with Palo Alto Unified School District and Stanford University to support access and joint use of facilities where appropriate for effective delivery of services and programs.
- 5.G Pursue other/private funding sources for recreation programming, capital improvement projects and facility maintenance.
- 5.H Partner with Mid-peninsula Regional Open Space District and other land conservation groups to expand access to open space through new acquisitions and improved connections.
- 5.I Encourage new parks and identified neighborhood needs as part of the development agreement process.

Goal 6: Manage Palo Alto’s land and services effectively, efficiently and sustainably utilizing quantitative and qualitative measures.

Policies

- 6.A Continue to implement the Cost Recovery Policy for recreation programs, refining the cost figures and expectations using the most current information available.
- 6.B Limit the exclusive use of Palo Alto parks (booking an entire park site) for events by outside organizations that are closed to the general public.
- 6.C Periodically review and update existing guidance for development, operations, and maintenance of Palo Alto’s Parks, Trails, Natural Open Spaces, and Recreation system based on the best practices in the industry and this Master Plan, including:
 - Park Rules and Regulations;
 - Open Space Policy & Procedure Handbook;
 - City of Palo Alto Landscape Standards; and
 - Tree Technical Manual.

- 6.D Incorporate sustainable best practices in the maintenance, management, and development of open spaces, parks, and recreation facilities where consistent with ecological best practices.
- 6.E Continue with the Integrated Pest Management (“IPM”) policy as written. While some parks may be managed as “pesticide free” on a demonstration basis, IPM should continue to be Palo Alto’s approach, grounded in the Best Available Science on pest prevention and management.
- 6.F Strategically reduce maintenance requirements at parks, open spaces, natural preserves and community centers while maintaining Palo Alto’s high quality standards.
- 6.G Continue to coordinate with and/or use other relevant City plans, including:
 - Urban Forest Master Plan;
 - Urban Water Master Plan;
 - Long-term electric acquisition plan (LEAP);
 - Water Reclamation Master Plan;
 - Recycled Water Project;
 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan
 - Comprehensive Plan; and
 - Others adopted in the future.
- 6.H Continue to involve other relevant City departments and divisions in planning, design and programming, drawing on the unique and specialized skills and perspectives of:
 - The Palo Alto Art Center;
 - Library, including Children’s Library;
 - Junior Museum and Zoo;
 - Children’s Theatre;
 - Public Art;
 - Transportation;
 - Urban Forestry;
 - Planning; and
 - Public Works.
- 6.I Participate in and support implementation of regional plans related to parks, recreation, natural open space and trails, such as:
 - 2014 Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Vision;
 - Clean Bay Pollution Prevention Plan; and
 - Land Use Near Streams in Santa Clara County.



ATTACHMENT 'B'

DRAFT POLICIES

Overview

The project team has also been working on developing policies that will give overarching direction to City staff and the PRC, and will also provide a foundation for the projects and programs that will be included in the Master Plan. A cross-departmental work session was convened on January 25, 2015 to review and provide feedback on the draft policies.

This document provides each of the six goals, accompanied by the relevant areas of focus and policies. The goals are numbered 1 through 6. Under each goal, the policies are numbered for reference (1.A, 1.B, 1.C, etc).

The definition of a policy is a course or principle of action that provides clear guidance regarding recreation program provision, park maintenance and operations or future renovations and capital improvement needs for parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities.

Goal 1: Provide high-quality facilities and services that are accessible, affordable, inclusive and distributed equitably across Palo Alto.

Areas of Focus

- Distributing park and recreation activities and experiences across the city
- Improving the accessibility of the full range of park and recreation opportunities
- Exploring new types of programs, classes, events and activities for all ages and abilities

Policies

- 1.A Emphasize equity and affordability in the provision of programs and services and the facilitation of partnerships, to create recreation opportunities that:
 - Advance skills, build community and improve the quality of life among participants, especially Palo Alto youth and teens; and
 - Are available at a wide range of facilities, at an increased number of locations and that are well distributed evenly throughout the city.
- 1.B Retain the standard of five acres of park land per 1,000 residents for developed parks and follow best practices for measuring service levels. This standard does not include developed or undeveloped open spaces.

- ~~1.C1.A Evaluate park service areas to maintain accessibility by applying a walkshed methodology that evaluates how people travel to parks and recreation facilities on the street and trail system.~~
- ~~1.D1.A Adopt the following service areas~~Ensure the maximum distance between residents' homes and the nearest public park or preserve is ½-mile, ¼-mile preferred, that is evaluated using a walkshed methodology based on how people travel. -as the desired maximum distance between residents' homes and the nearest park or recreation facility, in order of priority:
 - ~~Public park or preserve: ½-mile, ¼-mile preferred;~~
 - ~~Play experiences: ¼-mile;~~
 - ~~Picnic shelter, picnic area or amphitheater: ½-mile;~~
 - ~~Community garden: one mile; and~~
 - ~~Dog park: one mile.~~
- 1.E1.C Adopt the wayfinding signage used at Rinconada Park as the standard for Palo Alto parks and provide standardized directory signs for all large parks, preserves and athletic field complexes.
- 1.F1.D Apply universal design principles as the preferred guidance for design solutions in parks, striving to exceed Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- 1.G1.E Continue to apply the Field and Tennis Court Brokering and Use Policy as well as the Gymnasium Use Policy (as well as any subsequent updates) to guide the allocation of these recreation facilities with a preference for youth and Palo Alto residents.
- 1.H1.F Encourage walking and biking ~~as the preferred method of~~ as a way of getting to and from parks, supporting implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan.
- 1.I1.G Incorporate ~~cultural~~ diversity in projects and programs to encourage and enhance citizen participation.
- 1.J1.H Increase volunteerism by C~~creating~~ing and promoting opportunities for youth and adults to participate in parks, recreation, open space events, projects and programs, through volunteerism.
- ~~1.K1.A Affirm the Child's Right to Play adopted by the International Play Association alongside the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of the Child in a play policy recognizing:~~
 - ~~Play is a part of education;~~
 - ~~Play is an essential part of family and community life;~~
 - ~~Children need opportunities to play at leisure; and~~
 - ~~The needs of the child must have priority in the planning of human settlements.~~
- ~~1.L1.A Explore and support the City's potential designation as an AARP Age-Friendly Community.~~
- 1.I Periodically collect and evaluate data on the changing needs of the community and adjust programs and plans accordingly.
- 1.J Explore options to expand access to Foothill Park for non-residents.

Goal 2: Enhance the capacity, quality and variety of uses of the existing system of parks, recreation and open space facilities and services.

Areas of Focus

- Improving and enhancing community center and recreation spaces across the community
- Enhancing capacity and quality of sports fields
- Increasing the variety of things to do in existing parks
- Improving spaces and increased options for off-leash dogs

Policies

2.A Sustain the community's investment in recreation facilities, ~~by completing all "Catch Up" projects identified in the Infrastructure Blue Ribbon Committee recommendations and continuing to budget adequate funding for "Keep Up" projects.~~

2.A.2.B Provide opportunities for creative expression in park and recreation facilities and programs.

~~2.B.2.A~~ ~~Strive to provide the following features in every public park, appropriately scaled for the size and intended character of each site:~~

- ~~○ Provide restrooms except where alternatives (adjacent businesses or public facilities) exist or site is under 1 acre in size;~~
- ~~○ Provide a looped walking path or hiking trail within the site or around its perimeter;~~
- ~~○ Provide an open lawn area suited for flexible play and uses; and~~
- ~~○ Provide an active recreation facility (e.g., bocce, pickleball, basketball, tennis, skate park, athletic field, climbing wall, playground structure).~~

2.C Design and maintain high quality turf fields with adequate time for resting to support maximum use in parks by multiple organized sports and casual users with areas large enough for practice or play. Invest in tournament-quality high-wear sports field turf (see Natural vs. Synthetic Turf Analysis) at designated sports fields used full time for sports where lighting is possible. Policy Direction Needed: Should the policy be written to encourage more synthetic turf, to retain existing synthetic turf and replace it, to exclude synthetic turf, or to consider it on a case-by-case basis?

2.D Policy Direction Needed: Should the Master Plan retain existing policy (requiring dogs to be on-leash) and strongly push for building more off-leash areas OR should it change the policy to allow dogs off-leash during specified hours in some parks. In either case, the policy should continue to exclude off-leash dogs from open space preserves.

Goal 3: Create environments that encourage active and passive activities to support health, wellness and social connections.

Areas of Focus

- Enhancing comfort and making parks more welcoming
- Increasing health and wellness opportunities in parks and programs

Policies

- 3.A ~~With the community-i~~ Implement the City's Healthy City Healthy Community resolution with the community's involvement. (reword to be a policy and have specific programs for implementation
- 3.B Incorporate artistic expression into park design and recreation programming (consistent with the Art Master Plan).
- 3.C Require that proposed privately owned public spaces that are provided in lieu of park fees meet Palo Alto design guidelines and standards for publicly owned parks, allow public access, including Master Plan policies 1.C, 1.D and 2.B and are designed to support self-directed exercise and fitness.

Goal 4: Protect natural habitat and integrate nature, natural systems and ecological principles throughout Palo Alto.

Areas of Focus

- Integrating nature into Palo Alto parks

Policies

- 4.A Incorporate nature into recreation programs to connect youth and adults to the outdoors and introduce outdoor skills.
- 4.B Connect natural areas, open spaces and contiguous vegetated areas in parks and on public land as wildlife, bird, pollinator and habitat corridors by planting with species that support pollinators or provide habitat values.
- 4.C Prioritize development of comprehensive conservation plans for Baylands Preserve, Foothills Park, Esther Clark -and Pearson-Arastradero Preserve to identify strategies to balance ecosystem preservation, passive recreation, and environmental education.
- 4.D Support regional efforts to control the spread of invasive species and plant pathogens.
- ~~4.B~~4.E Promote, expand and protect habitat and natural areas in parks.
- ~~4.C~~4.A ~~Reduce the urban heat island effect in Palo Alto by using asphalt and concrete only where necessary, using pervious surfaces where feasible and expanding tree canopy in parks in accordance with the Urban Forestry Master Plan.~~
- ~~4.D~~4.A ~~Explore options to expand access to Foothill Park for non-residents.~~
- ~~4.E~~4.A ~~Update the City's ecosystem management and planning to account for the ongoing hotter and drier climate by applying ambient rainwater standards (currently used in open spaces) to urban parks.~~

Goal 5: Develop innovative programs, services and strategies for expanding the system.

Areas of Focus

- Expanding the system
- Offering more of the existing programs, classes, events

Policies

- 5.A ~~Refine Special Event programming within Community Services~~Identify and pursue strategies to activate underused parks and Recreation facilities ~~on a more regular basis. This includes developing a series of smaller scale events held at more locations, more frequently.~~
- 5.B Support innovation in recreation programming and park features and amenities, by:
- ~~○ Creating an exception to cost recovery and performance requirements for the first full year of a new program;~~
 - ~~○ Reviewing program data based on clearly communicated objectives for reach, impact, attendance and financial performance;~~
 - ~~○ Retiring, ending or refreshing programs that require staff, facility and financial resources but do not achieve program objectives, thereby freeing up resources for new programs; and~~
 - ~~○ Actively developing a small number of pilot programs each year to test new ideas, locations and target audiences.~~
- ~~5.C~~5.A ~~Designate park-like spaces at public facilities (such as the King Plaza at City Hall, the Secret Garden at the Children's Theatre, outdoor spaces at the Art Center and libraries) as Public Spaces to recognize their role in providing space for recreation programming, informal park activities and enhancements to public health.~~
- ~~5.D~~5.C Expand the overall parks system through repurposing public land, partnering with other organizations for shared land, incorporating public park spaces on parking decks and rooftops and other creative means to help address shortages of available land.
- ~~5.E~~5.D ~~Allow and encourage~~Explore and experiment ~~with~~ parklets and other temporary park spaces for both long and short-term uses.
- ~~5.F~~5.E Encourage new parks and identified neighborhood needs as part of the Development Agreement process for new residential and commercial developments.
- ~~5.G~~5.A ~~Explore options to expand access to Foothill Park for non-residents.~~
- 5.F ~~Continue~~ Enhance partnerships and collaborations with Palo Alto Unified School District and Stanford University to support access and joint use of facilities where appropriate for effective delivery of services and programs.
- 5.G ~~Facilitate partnerships and sponsorships with corporate entities for funding and to support recreation programming and capital projects.~~ Pursue other/private funding sources for recreation programming, capital improvement projects and facility maintenance.
- 5.H Partner with Mid-peninsula Regional Open Space District and other land conservation groups to expand access to open space through new acquisitions and improved connections.
- 5.I Encourage new parks and identified neighborhood needs as part of the development agreement process.

Goal 6: Manage Palo Alto's land and services effectively, efficiently and sustainably utilizing quantitative and qualitative measures.

Policies

- 6.A Continue to implement the Cost Recovery Policy for recreation programs, refining the cost figures and expectations using the most current information available.
- 6.B Limit the exclusive use of Palo Alto parks (booking an entire park site) for events by outside organizations that are closed to the general public.
- ~~6.C 6.A Facilitate partnerships and sponsorships with corporate entities for funding and to support recreation programming and capital projects.~~
- ~~6.D 6.A Expand the memorial program to include additional options for donations to support low-maintenance park features in memory of a person or event. All memorial fees should include a fully loaded endowment and clear expectations for maintenance following the model of the memorial bench program.~~
- ~~6.E~~ 6.C Periodically review and uUpdate existing guidance for development, operations, and maintenance of Palo Alto's Parks, Trails, Natural Open Spaces, and Recreation system based on the best practices in the industry and this Master Plan, including:
- o Park Rules and Regulations;
 - o Open Space Policy & Procedure Handbook;
 - o City of Palo Alto Landscape Standards; and
 - o Tree Technical Manual.
- 6.D Incorporate sustainable best practices in the maintenance, management, and development of open spaces, parks, and recreation facilities where consistent with ecological best practices.
- ~~6.F 6.A Increase energy efficiency in Palo Alto parks, including allocating funding to retrofit facilities for energy efficiency with increased insulation, green or reflective roofs and low-emissive window glass where applicable and sustainable.~~
- ~~6.G~~ 6.E Continue with the Integrated Pest Management ("IPM") policy as written. While some parks may be managed as "pesticide free" on a demonstration basis, IPM should continue to be Palo Alto's approach, grounded in the Best Available Science on pest prevention and management.
- ~~6.H 6.A Reduce the amount of waste produced at park facilities and by park operations.~~
- ~~6.I 6.A Reduce GHG emissions produced by Department equipment and fleet.~~
- ~~6.J~~ 6.F Strategically reduce maintenance requirements at parks, open spaces, natural preserves and community centers while maintaining Palo Alto's high quality standards.
- ~~6.K 6.A Provide leadership in water conservation.~~
- ~~6.L~~ 6.G Continue to coordinate with and/or use other relevant City plans, including:
- o Urban Forest Master Plan;
 - o Urban Water Master Plan;
 - o Long-term electric acquisition plan (LEAP);
 - o Water Reclamation Master Plan;
 - o Recycled Water Project;
 - o Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan
 - o Comprehensive Plan; and
 - o Others adopted in the future.
- ~~6.M~~ 6.H Continue to involve other relevant City departments and divisions in planning, design and programming, drawing on the unique and specialized skills and perspectives of:
- o The Palo Alto Art Center;

- Library, including Children’s Library;
- Junior Museum and Zoo;
- Children’s Theatre;
- Public Art;
- Transportation;
- Urban Forestry; ~~and~~
- Planning; and-
- Public Works.

6.N6.I Participate in and support implementation of regional plans related to parks, recreation, natural open space and trails, such as:

- 2014 Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Vision;
- Clean Bay Pollution Prevention Plan; and
- Land Use Near Streams in Santa Clara County.

ATTACHMENT 'C'

| |
|--------------------------------------|
| No change or minor change |
| Deleted or moved to program |
| Policy kept with significant changes |
| Need further PRC discussion |

| Policy | Summary of comment(s) | Best Practice | Program | Staff changes |
|--|---|---------------|---------|---|
| 1.A Emphasize equity and affordability in the provision of programs and services and the facilitation of partnerships, to create recreation opportunities that: o Advance skills, build community and improve the quality of life among participants, especially Palo Alto youth; and o Are available at a wide range of facilities, at an increased number of locations and distributed evenly throughout the city. | Not a policy as written. Appie pie statement. Needs something measurable. | | | Made commissioner recommended edits to language. Keep as policy. |
| 1.B Retain the standard of five acres of park land per 1,000 residents for developed parks and follow best practices for measuring service levels. This standard does not include developed or undeveloped open spaces. | Needs further PRC discussion. If it is not attainable or unrealistic then consider alternatives including focusing on high density areas that currently lack public park and rec spaces. | | | Needs PRC discussion. Should align with Comp plan. |
| 1.C Evaluate park service areas to maintain accessibility by applying a walkshed methodology that evaluates how people travel to parks and recreation facilities on the street and trail system. | What is the meaning of this? Delete. | | | Combined with 1.D then deleted. |
| 1.D Adopt the following service areas as the desired maximum distance between residents' homes and the nearest park or recreation facility, in order of priority: o Public park or preserve: ½-mile, ¼-mile preferred; o Play experiences: ¼-mile; o Picnic shelter, picnic area or amphitheater: ½-mile; o Community garden: one mile; and o Dog park: one mile. | Needs further PRC discussion. 1 mile is too far for a dog park. | | | Added language from 1.C. Needs PRC discussion. |
| 1.E Adopt the wayfinding signage used at Rinconada Park as the standard for Palo Alto parks and provide standardized directory signs for all large parks, preserves and athletic field complexes. | Keep as policy (EL) | X (KH) | X (JH) | None |
| 1.F Apply universal design principles as the preferred guidance for design solutions in parks, striving to exceed Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. | Keep as policy | X | | None |
| 1.G Continue to apply the Field and Tennis Court Brokering and Use Policy as well as the Gymnasium Use Policy (as well as any subsequent updates) to guide the allocation of these recreation facilities with a preference for youth and Palo Alto residents. | Keep as policy | | | None |
| 1.H Encourage walking and biking as the preferred method of getting to and from parks, supporting implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan. | Suggest deleting. Not needed. Excludes those who can't walk or bike. | | | Deleted "as the preferred method". Added Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan to Policy 6.L. |
| 1.I Incorporate cultural diversity in projects and programs to encourage citizen participation. | Keep as policy | X | | Kept policy. Made PRC suggested language revisions. |
| 1.J Create and promote opportunities for youth and adults to participate in parks, recreation, open space events, projects and programs through volunteerism. | Not helpful, apple pie. Needs measures. | | | Kept policy. Made PRC suggested language revisions. |
| 1.K Affirm the Child's Right to Play adopted by the International Play Association alongside the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of the Child in a play policy recognizing: o Play is a part of education; o Play is an essential part of family and community life; o Children need opportunities to play at leisure; and o The needs of the child must have priority in the planning of human settlements. | Suggest deleting. Unclear. What does it mean? What would be done? | | | Deleted |
| 1.L Explore and support the City's potential designation as an AARP Age-Friendly Community. | Wants more information as to what this means. Not a policy, staff project. Suggest deleting. | | | Deleted |
| 2.A Sustain the community's investment in recreation facilities by completing all "Catch Up" projects identified in the Infrastructure Blue Ribbon Committee recommendations and continuing to budget adequate funding for "Keep Up" projects. | Make this a program under another policy; e.g., "Sustain the community's investment in recreation facilities." Using the IBRC report as a foundation, evaluate "Catch up" and "Keep Up" projects for relevancy to the current and future needs of Palo Alto residents. Could also add program about developing an Asset Management Program. | | X (JH) | Policy revised to state, "Sustain the community's investment in recreation facilities." Add IBRC recommendations as a program. Add development of an asset management program as a program. |
| 2.B Strive to provide the following features in every public park, appropriately scaled for the size and intended character of each site: o Provide restrooms except where alternatives (adjacent businesses or public facilities) exist or site is under 1 acre in size; o Provide a looped walking path or hiking trail within the site or around its perimeter; o Provide an open lawn area suited for flexible play and uses; and o Provide an active recreation facility (e.g., bocce, pickleball, basketball, tennis, skate park, athletic field, climbing wall). | Needs further evaluation/PRC discussion. Add playground structures to last bullet. | X | | Needs PRC discussion. |
| 2.C Design and maintain high quality turf fields with adequate time for resting to support maximum use in parks by multiple organized sports and casual users with areas large enough for practice or play. Invest in tournament-quality high-wear sports field turf (see Natural vs. Synthetic Turf Analysis) at designated sports fields used full time for sports where lighting is possible. Policy Direction Needed: Should the policy be written to encourage more synthetic turf, to retain existing synthetic turf and replace it, to exclude synthetic turf, or to consider it on a case-by-case basis? | Needs further evaluation/PRC discussion. Consider on a case-by-case basis due to improving technology on synthetic turf and improvement of natural turf varieties. Need to know cost to city (initial and ongoing maintenance), water usage, environmental impacts. | | | Needs PRC discussion. |
| 2.D Policy Direction Needed: Should the Master Plan retain existing policy (requiring dogs to be on-leash) and strongly push for building more off-leash areas OR should it change the policy to allow dogs off-leash during specified hours in some parks. In either case, the policy should continue to exclude off-leash dogs from open space preserves. | Needs further evaluation/PRC discussion. Retain existing policy. Push for more off-leash areas with proper amenities distributed evenly across city. | | | Needs PRC discussion. |
| 3.A With the community implement the City's Healthy City Healthy Community resolution | Does this need to be a policy since it is already a resolution? What does "community implement" mean? | | X (JH) | Kept, but with language change. Create programs to collaborate with the stakeholder group and complete resolution objectives. |
| 3.B Incorporate artistic expression into park design and recreation programming (consistent with the Art Master Plan). | Keep as policy. Add "including climbable art". | X | | None |
| 3.C Require that proposed privately owned public spaces that are provided in lieu of park fees meet Palo Alto design guidelines and standards for publicly owned parks, including Master Plan policies 1.C, 1.D and 2.B and are designed to support self-directed exercise and fitness. | Keep as policy, but needs further PRC discussion. Ensure continued public access. Provide a mandatory directive to all future development projects that any outdoor spaces include recreation and conservation component. | | | Kept, but with language changes. Deleted reference to other Master Plan policies. Generally supported, but needs PRC discussion. |
| 4.A Incorporate nature into recreation programs to connect youth and adults to the outdoors and introduce outdoor skills. | Keep as policy. What is meant by outdoor skills? | X | | None |
| 4.B Connect natural areas, open spaces and contiguous vegetated areas in parks and on public land as wildlife, bird, pollinator and habitat corridors by planting with species that support pollinators or provide habitat values. | Needs measures/specific actions. Add regional trails. | X | | None |
| 4.C Reduce the urban heat island effect in Palo Alto by using asphalt and concrete only where necessary, using pervious surfaces where feasible and expanding tree canopy in parks in accordance with the Urban Forestry Master Plan. | | X | X | Move as a program under new sustainability policy in Goal 6. |
| 4.D Explore options to expand access to Foothill Park for non-residents. | Needs further PRC discussion. | | | Moved to Goal 1. Needs PRC discussion. |
| 4.E Update the City's ecosystem management and planning to account for the ongoing hotter and drier climate by applying ambient rainwater standards (currently used in open spaces) to urban parks. | Part best practice and part program. Needs specific actions. What are ambient rainwater standards? | X | X (JH) | Deleted as a policy. Move as a program under new sustainability policy in Goal 6. Changed language to be clear on what this is (drought tolerant plants) |

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| 5.A Refine Special Event programming within Community Services to activate parks on a more regular basis. This includes developing a series of smaller scale events held at more locations, more frequently. | Program. Policy would be more like: Pursue strategies to activate underused parks. | X | X (JH) | Revised policy per PRC comment. Move example to a program. |
| 5.B Support innovation in recreation programming by: o Creating an exception to cost recovery and performance requirements for the first full year of a new program; o Reviewing program data based on clearly communicated objectives for reach, impact, attendance and financial performance; o Retiring, ending or refreshing programs that require staff, facility and financial resources but do not achieve program objectives, thereby freeing up resources for new programs; and o Actively developing a small number of pilot programs each year to test new ideas, locations and target audiences. | Keep "support innovation in recreation programming" as policy. Make bullets programs. Program advocates should estimate impact. | X | X (JH) | Revised policy per PRC comment. Move bullets to programs. |
| 5.C Designate park-like spaces at public facilities (such as the King Plaza at City Hall, the Secret Garden at the Children's Theatre, outdoor spaces at the Art Center and libraries) as Public Spaces to recognize their role in providing space for recreation programming, informal park activities and enhancements to public health. | Some concern. What does it mean to designate as a "public space?" Staff project not policy. | | | Needs PRC discussion. |
| 5.D Expand the overall parks system through repurposing public land, incorporating public park spaces on parking decks and rooftops and other creative means to help address shortages of available land. | Needs specific actions. | | | None |
| 5.E Allow and encourage parklets and other temporary park spaces for both long and short-term uses. | Delete "and encourage." Does this city not allow this now? If not, why? | | | Kept, but with language changes. |
| 5.F Encourage new parks and identified neighborhood needs as part of the Development Agreement process. | Keep as policy, but needs clarification on what this means. | | | Kept, but with language changes. Staff added "for new residential and commercial developments." |
| 5.G Explore options to expand access to Foothill Park for non-residents. | Delete. Already mentioned and not an expansion. | | | Included twice so deleted here. Moved to goal 1 for further PRC discussion. |
| 5.H Continue partnerships and collaborations with Palo Alto Unified School District and Stanford University to support access and joint use of facilities where appropriate for effective delivery of services and programs. | Replace continue with enhance. Maybe not a policy. | | | Kept, but with language changes. Replaced continue with enhance. |
| 6.A Continue to implement the Cost Recovery Policy for recreation programs, refining the cost figures and expectations using the most current information available. | Keep as policy. | | | None |
| 6.B Limit the exclusive use of Palo Alto parks (booking an entire park site) for events by outside organizations that are closed to the general public. | Suggest deleting. Can be case by case. Does it generate revenue? How often does this happen? Why a policy? Director approves permits anyway. | | | Kept, but staff to continue discussions on whether this is needed. |
| 6.C Facilitate partnerships and sponsorships with corporate entities for funding and to support recreation programming and capital projects. | These could be programs under a policy to pursue additional/private funding sources for programming, capital projects and maintenance. Other programs could include more frequent updates to the in-lieu fee formula to reflect real estate values, or a "% for parks" applied to commercial development. Could move to Goal 5. | | | Moved to Goal 5 and revised policy to "Pursue other/private funding sources for recreation programming, capital improvement projects and facility maintenance". Add specifics to a program(s). |
| 6.D Expand the memorial program to include additional options for donations to support low-maintenance park features in memory of a person or event. All memorial fees should include a fully loaded endowment and clear expectations for maintenance following the model of the memorial bench program. | These could be programs under a policy to pursue additional/private funding sources for programming, capital projects and maintenance. Other programs could include more frequent updates to the in-lieu fee formula to reflect real estate values, or a "% for parks" applied to commercial development. Could move to Goal 5. Have limitations. | | | Deleted as a policy, but add as a program under revised 6.C (now 5.I) |
| 6.E Update existing guidance for development, operations, and maintenance of Palo Alto's PTNOSR system based on the best practices in the industry and this Master Plan, including: o Park Rules and Regulations; o Open Space Policy & Procedure Handbook; o City of Palo Alto Landscape Standards; and o Tree Technical Manual. | PRC hasn't reviewed the information in the bullets. Add "Periodically review and..." to beginning of policy. | X | | Kept with language changes per commissioner comments. |
| 6.F Increase energy efficiency in Palo Alto parks, including allocating funding to retrofit facilities for energy efficiency with increased insulation, green or reflective roofs and low-emissive window glass where applicable and sustainable. | | X | | Deleted as a policy. Move as a program under new sustainability policy. |
| 6.G Continue with the Integrated Pest Management ("IPM") policy as written. While some parks may be managed as "pesticide free" on a demonstration basis, IPM should continue to be Palo Alto's approach, grounded in the Best Available Science on pest prevention and management. | What are the issues? | X | | None |
| 6.H Reduce the amount of waste produced at park facilities and by park operations. | Programs. Could go under a more general policy about sustainability. | X | X (JH) | Deleted as a policy. Move as a program under new sustainability policy. |
| 6.I Reduce GHG emissions produced by Department equipment and fleet. | Programs. Could go under a more general policy about sustainability. | X | X (JH) | Deleted as a policy. Move as a program under new sustainability policy. |
| 6.J Strategically reduce maintenance requirements at parks, open spaces, natural preserves and community centers while maintaining Palo Alto's high quality standards. | | X | | None |
| 6.K Provide leadership in water conservation. | | X | | Deleted as a policy. Revise language and move as a program under new sustainability policy. |
| 6.L Continue to coordinate with and/or use other relevant City plans, including: o Urban Forest Master Plan; o Urban Water Master Plan; o Long-term electric acquisition plan (LEAP); o Water Reclamation Master Plan; o Recycled Water Project; o Comprehensive Plan; and o Others adopted in the future. | Not necessary. Not a policy. | X | | Needs staff discussion. |
| 6.M Continue to involve other relevant City departments and divisions in planning, design and programming, drawing on the unique and specialized skills and perspectives of: o The Palo Alto Art Center; o Library, including Children's Library; o Junior Museum and Zoo; o Children's Theatre; o Public Art; o Transportation; o Urban Forestry; and o Planning. | Not necessary. Not a policy. | X | | Needs staff discussion. |
| 6.N Participate in and support implementation of regional plans related to parks, recreation, natural open space and trails, such as: o 2014 Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Vision; o Clean Bay Pollution Prevention Plan; and o Land Use Near Streams in Santa Clara County. | Not a policy. Add regional trails such as SFB Trail, Bay Ridge Trail, Bay to the Sea Trail and regional bike routes. | | | Needs staff discussion. |
| NEW PROPOSED POLICIES | | | | |
| 1.L Add policy about keeping abreast of changing needs of the community? Programs could include periodically reviewing barriers to participation or changes in usage patterns or demographics? JH | EL Definitely not a policy! | | | Added to Goal 1. |
| 1.M Add policy about optimizing participation by teens and/or seniors? JH | EL NO. We have to optimize for MANY groups | | | Added to Goal 1. |
| 4. a. Add policy supporting/prioritizing comprehensive conservation plans for Foothills and Arastradero. JH | EL It feels like a program to me. | | | Added to Goal 4. |

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| Support regional efforts to control and eradicate invasive species and plant pathogens. (DM) | EL IF it is a regional effort we support it is a best practice | | | Added to Goal 4. |
| Partner with Mid-peninsula Regional Open Space District and other land conservation groups to expand access to open space through new acquisitions and improved connections. | EL Would need lots of discussion. How does this benefits PA Parks?? | | | Added to Goal 5. |