



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

Planning & Transportation Commission Action Agenda: November 29, 2023

Council Chambers & Virtual
6:00 PM

Call to Order / Roll Call

6:00 pm

Vice Chair Chang: I'd like to call to order the Planning and Transportation Commission meeting, today is Wednesday November 29th. Can we take the Roll Call please.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Dao: Vice-Chair Chang?

Vice-Chair Chang: Here.

Ms. Dao: Commissioner Akin?

Commissioner Akin: Here.

Ms. Dao: Commissioner Hechtman?

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1 Commissioner Hechtman: Here.

2

3 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Lu?

4

5 Commissioner Lu: Here.

6

7 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Reckdahl

8

9 Commissioner Reckdahl: Here.

10

11 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Templeton?

12

13 Commissioner Templeton: Here.

14

15 Ms. Dao: We have a quorum.

16

17 Vice Chair Chang: Thank you. Alright, first order of business is public comment. Members of the
18 public may speak to any item not on the agenda. Do we have speaker cards?

19

20 **Oral Communications**

21 The public may speak to any item not on the agenda. Three (3) minutes per speaker.^{1,2}

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1

2 Ms. Dao: Yes, we have one from David Hirsch... yes so David Hirsh and Peter Baltay.

3

4 Vice Chair Chang: Okay, so my understanding is that they'll take six minutes to speak together,
5 is that correct?

6

7 Ms. Dao: Yes.

8

9 David Hirsch (ARB): Can I say an introduction before you start the clock? So, the subject matter
10 is why Palo Alto should create a development office to be responsive to the State's Housing
11 Development requirements and I just want to say that the first part of this presentation is
12 based on my personal experience, but the entire content represents our mutual and
13 coordinated realization and commitment. Peter and Mine. So, do you want to start the clock?
14 Oops... Now? This always happens. Okay, so when I completed graduate school and returned to
15 New York, I had the opportunity to work with a group of motivated architects, planners, and
16 transportation engineers who saw the need for a more radical urban design methodology to lift
17 up a run down area of downtown Brooklyn. In the several years I was there, we revamped the
18 entire major shopping center into a busway with many pedestrian amenities, we repropose a
19 zoning change in the four story neighboring streets as a denser midrise housing around the
20 commercial core. We extended the shopping areas to ultimately include big box store, we
21 interested Chase Bank to relocate much of their back office space to a new high rise structure

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1 near the shopping street and we began improvements to the nearby East River waterfront
2 including a floating restaurant and a parklet, an area that was later broadly developed to
3 become hugely successful landscaped Riverfront Park with expansive views of lower
4 Manhattan. The basic principle of our special development office was to comprehensively
5 modify and revitalize a major deteriorated downtown area and alter outdated zoning by
6 championing innovative, action oriented, forward-thinking development concepts. The creative
7 model, and this is really important... the creative model or development plan must come first.
8 The zoning follows, with regulations provided in what's called an Urban Design Zoning Overlay.
9 There are many examples of this successful procedure. To note one, is Los Angeles whole
10 center city was an overlay scheme. I suggest that Palo Alto needs the same kind of actionable
11 program guided by separate development office and a partnership with planning because we
12 are tasked by the State to provide more than 6,000 units of new housing which increases the
13 population by nearly 22%. And which, if undirected, will have a significant impact on our
14 community's quality of life. Let me give you an example of this. What is it that we're going to
15 have to build? Realize that if you have twenty-five projects, 250 units each, that's 6,250 units,
16 times an average apartment size of 800 square feet, that's more than five million square feet...
17 times more than \$400 dollars per square foot, that's probably low by today's standards, that's a
18 grand total of \$2 billion dollars. Enormous cost, many more projects than are presently
19 processed by planning, or constructed in any eight year period. And, does not include the many
20 other projects that will continue to burden the planning department. It's up on the board... is

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1 the whole.. yeah. As one response to the obvious impending housing deluge, fellow
2 Architectural Review Board (ARB) member Peter and I, developed a study more than two and a
3 half years ago now, of the twenty-nine open parking lots in the adjacent to ... or Twenty-nine
4 parking lots adjacent to our downtown. We proposed to the previous Council, a fully developed
5 architectural scheme for the Hamilton lot behind CVS, that's what's on the board here in front
6 of you. This retains the entire capacity of the present parking in a well lit basement below five
7 stories of housing. Buildings with a potential of eighty to a hundred units above on this ¾ acre
8 lot. It was our hope that the Council would see this study as an appropriate method of
9 determining how to maximize the City potential. Parking lot size of the housing, while being
10 sensitive to the specific context. That is, you know, the AT&T building next door so you can see
11 in the scheme what our intention is. We, again, recommit to this opportunity, noting that it is
12 relevant to the immense task ahead and that there needs to be a development office to define
13 and to proactively direct this process. We note that the twenty-nine city parking lots are ideal
14 for development because they are owned by the city and could be leased rather than sold.
15 Leased to private developers rather than, if they were purchased, they are extremely high cost
16 of land in the downtown areas, I think it would be prohibitive to have housing in the downtown
17 because of the cost of the land. This will be a huge attraction to developers who's biggest initial
18 cost is the purchase of property. We would expect that a development office would, as their
19 first determination, show the Council a proper presentation of all of the twenty-nine parking
20 lots describing their potential schematically as housing. Because the downtowns are unique

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1 mixed use development area physically separated from our single family residential zones and
2 because all of the parking lots are PF zones owned by the city, and finally because these areas
3 are a mixed fabric of larger block buildings, more massive structures and adjacent to low rise
4 smaller structures, the guidelines for development can be tailored to this very nature and
5 scaled based on the following comments: Public parking capacity maintained in accessibility and
6 high quality parking facilities, site planning and building bulk plan to relate to existing
7 neighboring building volumes, context of the development directed to respect the diversity of
8 building typologies, mix of income levels to be controlled by city requirements, downtown
9 streetscapes standards maintained, aesthetic quality control of each project guaranteed
10 because of City ownership, apartment size and distribution based on proven percentage of
11 needs, percentage and location of commercial uses based on specific neighborhood
12 considerations. These should be noted as only the first list of considerations. We would expect
13 the development office to expand this as needed.

14

15 Vice Chair Chang: Can you wrap it up Mr. Hirsch please?

16

17 David Hirsch (ARB): Yes. I'm just about to finish up. Clearly this response to the State's
18 requirements is a very, very big task. We need a dedicated group of architects, urban designers,
19 planners, and transportation engineers, plus a leader with development experience. It is

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1 reasonable to expect that some existing staff would be re-assigned to work with this group.
2 There's no time to waste. Thank you very much.

3

4 Vice Chair Chang: Thank you. Ms. Dao do we have additional speakers?

5

6 Ms. Dao: That's it for Oral Communications.

7

8 Vice Chair Chang: Thank you. Okay, on to Agenda changes, additions and deletions.

9

10 **Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions**

11 The Chair or Commission majority may modify the agenda order to improve meeting management.

12

13 Ms. Amy French, Chief Planning Official: There are no changes for this evening.

14

15 Vice Chair Chang: Great, then City Official Reports, please.

16

17 **City Official Reports**

18 1. Directors Report, Meeting Schedule and Assignments

19 Ms. Amy French, Chief Planning Official: Yes, so we do have the upcoming PTC items in the staff

20 report packet today, we are adding one more item to December 13th, just in time for our

21 notices, regarding some carryover sites, so that's a topic that we will be talking about next time,

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1 as well as a couple of current planning projects. Next meeting will be a bit longer. And then we
2 have been informed that we are going to be working towards a joint meeting with the City
3 Council in February to talk about the Housing Element Visions necessary to respond to the
4 Office of Housing and Community Development. So, looking towards February 12th as a
5 potential date for that meeting, if you can check your calendars and get back to me as to your
6 availability. If this works out, then we would cancel the February 14th meeting and I'll have a
7 nice Valentine's Day. Other matters, we have recent Council action on several ordinances, three
8 ordinances. Rental Registry program, and thanks to Commissioner Akin, for attending. That
9 passed through the City Council. We had an interim ordinance pass regarding the outdoor retail
10 through ... extending that through 2024, and we had the Stanford University Medical Center
11 ordinance for the development agreement. So, all of those are on Monday. A lot to come back
12 to, after Thanksgiving. And then coming up, matter's that the Planning Commission has
13 participated in, the Safe Parking ordinance is scheduled for December 4th, and I believe member
14 Lu is the December rep so... then on December 11th the Elsworth Planned Community item has
15 been targeted for that date. And, then let's see, there's nothing on the 18th at this point that
16 I'm aware of, that will require Planning and Transportation Commission representation. And I
17 think we have... do we have Sylvia tonight for Transportation items? Okay. Alright.
18

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1 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Good evening, Commissioners, we don't actually
2 have a report for you tonight, a director's report, but we do have an item that we are bringing
3 to you tonight. I just wanted to say hello. Back to you Amy.

4

5 Ms. French: So, that concludes the Director's Report.

6

7 Vice Chair Chang: Do any members of the Commission have questions? Alright.

8

9 **Study Session**

10 Public Comment is Permitted. Three (3) minutes per speaker.

11

12 2. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan (BPTP) Update: An Active
13 Transportation Plan - Introduction & Overview, Community Engagement, Context &
14 Baseline Conditions, and Next Steps.

15

16 Vice Chair Chang: On to the first Agenda item for tonight, which is a study session on the Bicycle
17 and Pedestrian Transportation Plan (BPTP) update. And if we could start with the staff
18 presentation, please.

19

20 Mr. Ozzy Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Yes, and let me just quickly introduce myself, my
21 name is Ozzy Arce. I'm a senior transportation planner with the Office of Transportation, happy
22 to be here with you all tonight, to present the City's update to the Bicycle and Pedestrian
23 Transportation Plan, locally known as the BPTP update. We have with us tonight, Sylvia who

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1 you just saw, as well as Amanda from Kittelson & Associates, the consultants on this project,
2 who's been great to work with. Just wanted to also, high level, let you all know that tonight's
3 presentation, there's no action, it's simply a soft introduction to the effort and at later phases
4 of the project, which Amanda will go through, we will get more into the details, into the weeds,
5 and there will be opportunities for PTC to help shape the priority projects and ultimately the
6 draft and final plan. So, at this time, we'll have a quick flyover presentation of what the project
7 overview is, kind of our roadmap and again, ways that PTC can get involved. Appreciate the
8 help with the slide advancement. Next slide please. Again, just wanted to do a quick flyover of
9 the presentation and I will also be staying online but I will definitely pass it over to Amanda
10 who's online to lead us through this presentation. Thank you.

11

12 Ms. Amanda Leahy, Kittelson & Associates Consultant: Once again, I'm Amanda Leahy, I am an
13 associate planner with Kittelson & Associates and I'm the project manager of the consultant
14 team, supporting this work. Today really, as Ozzy mentioned, want to give you an introduction
15 to the project as well as an overview of what we see your role and responsibilities, so we'll be
16 coming to you three times over the course of the plan. We're talking today about the project
17 context and background, the engagement activities, and we'll also share some next steps. The
18 next time we see you will be in May or June, and we'll be going through our existing conditions
19 analysis, the results of the technical work that we've done, and then again, we'll come to you in
20 Fall of 2024 to talk through the project recommendations as well as prioritization and

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1 implementation. And we would really appreciate your input and feedback on materials that we
2 share with you and I'm looking forward to the study session today to hear your vision and goals
3 for this plan as well as share what we have in our scope. So next slide please. So again, today
4 we'll just be providing an overview of the project and key milestones and establishing our
5 understanding and expectations for your involvement. Next steps. This plan is really a critical
6 planning, policy, and implementation document that supports efforts to improve the safety and
7 attractiveness of walking, biking, and rolling as a means of transportation and recreation in the
8 City. The main objectives of this update are to seek community feedback to evaluate
9 implementation progress from the previous plans and adjust recommendations for new
10 policies, facilities, and programs and to determine the appropriate criteria and metrics to
11 prioritize those recommendations for implementation. This update will also explore the roll of
12 emerging transportation technologies, so we're using an expanded definition of biking and
13 walking, we're considering ebikes and micromobility devices and really trying to establish a big
14 picture of planning view, a big vision to expand bicycling and walking for all users in the city.
15 And this is also done in support and consistent with the City's 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the
16 Sustainability Climate Action Plan and a Safe System Approach. Next slide. And, speaking of Safe
17 System Approaches, just want to talk about the similarities and differences between two
18 planning processes going on right now. So, I'm here today to talking about the Bicycle and
19 Pedestrian Transportation Plan update. You may have heard, or be about to hear about the
20 Safe Streets for All Action Plan, these are both multi-year mobility focused planning documents

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1 with a shared vision of enhancing safety and accessibility on the streets. They both have a focus
2 on vulnerable road users and by that I mean people walking and biking, older adults and
3 children, people who are more likely to be killed when they're traveling around our streets. But
4 there are some key differences. This plan will focus on walking and biking and rolling, focus on
5 active and sustainable travel and also consider streets, as well as off-street paths and trails. And
6 this plan will culminate a set of recommended programs, policies, and infrastructure
7 recommendations to support walking and biking. The Safe Streets for All Action Plan will also
8 look at vehicle collisions and vehicle travels and will be developing recommendations to
9 proactively implement safety measures that eliminate traffic deaths and injuries for all modes.
10 We'll also be conducting an equity analysis as part of that work. Next slide. This plan update
11 process began about four months ago and will be carried out over the next year and a half.
12 We're currently developing the vision and goals and commencing work to understand the
13 existing needs and concerns related to walking and biking in the city and also look at how those
14 have changed since the prior update, which was about ten years ago. Next summer we'll be
15 developing recommendations for those infrastructure projects and programs and policy
16 changes that support active transportation and we're aiming to take a final plan to Council for
17 adoption in about eighteen months. Next slide. Next slide. Over the next eighteen months we'll
18 have multiple touch points across three phases of engagement and those are shown on this
19 slide. Each phase will include a series of working group and committee or commission
20 meetings. So, in addition to the Planning and Transportation Commission, we will meet with the

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1 Pedestrian And Bicycle Advisory Committee (PABAC). We actually met with them earlier this
2 month. We'll be meeting tomorrow with the City School Transportation Safety Committee
3 (CSTSC) and with the Rail Committee next Tuesday. And then we're also getting the a City
4 Council meeting scheduled, or getting on the Agenda, likely end of January or early February.
5 And in addition to these standing committees and commissions, we've convened an inner
6 agency staff working group, who you met earlier this month and will also be guiding this
7 technical work. In the first visioning phase we've also created a project website and an
8 interactive map and hopefully you all have seen those and maybe plugged in some comments.
9 We've gotten a lot of engagement already over the past few months and we'll be keeping that
10 live for another month. We have also participated and partnership with the SS4A team on a
11 safety survey that they've released so we'll be sharing information and using that to also inform
12 our work. And we participated in the Bike Palo Alto event the first of October. To round out this
13 first phase, we'll be holding a visioning workshop, I think we just got that scheduled for January
14 31st, and that will be a community meeting, virtual, to talk through a vision and ... basically
15 create a vision statement along with the community. In the second phase, we will include more
16 in person meetings, and we'll be going to come community events, neighborhood meetings,
17 and also host project specific design targets and walk audits, and we'll be conducting a public
18 survey and again, meeting with committee, commissions, and working groups. In the third and
19 final phase, we will do one more round of committee and working group meetings and have
20 one larger public meeting to talk through recommendations and prioritization. Next slide. This

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1 is an illustration of that map I mentioned earlier, you can see some of the comments that we
2 got early on, and then some photos of the Bike Palo Alto event, which was well attended, and
3 we got good input and engagement there. Next slide. Thank you. So, we've also had a number
4 of background and context analysis completed, we have reviewed over twenty planning
5 documents and started to develop an updated inventory of existing programs and policies that
6 are relevant to walking and biking and identify the gaps or needs that could be addressed by
7 the Plan. We've completed a demographic analysis and conducted a bicycle friendly community
8 assessment, which I will share some highlights with you later on. Looking ahead, we will be
9 completing a bicycle level of traffic stress analysis and bicycle level of traffic stress or LTS is a
10 rating given to a road segment or crossing that indicates the stress it imposes on bicyclist,
11 basically on how comfortable or not it is to be on that street. The ratings range from one to four
12 with one being a low stress facility, four being a high stress facility and the analysis is very data
13 intensive so it considers roadway functional classification, vehicle volume, posted and
14 prevailing speeds, number of vehicle lanes, presence of on-street parking, vehicle parking and
15 bike lane wets, and also at intersections it looks at the right turn lane configuration and length,
16 so whether it's a mixing zone for bicyclists or whether bicyclists have a separated approach, and
17 it also looks at vehicle turning speeds and presence of median refuge islands. So, we are
18 currently collecting all of the data, and creating our existing facilities inventory so that we can
19 conduct this LTS analysis and map the low stress and high stress parts of the city. And we'll be
20 using that to inform the locations as well as the types of treatments and facilities we'll

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1 recommend to ultimately create a low stress network that allows people of all ages and abilities
2 and skill levels to ride a bike and access different parts of town. We'll also be conducting an
3 analysis of barriers; looking at freeways and creeks and rail lines and barriers near transit like
4 gaps and sidewalks to understand the locations and types of treatments that will help create
5 more direct connections and reduce the length of walking trips for people walking. We'll be
6 conducting a safety and collision analysis that spatially looks at collision data and identifies fatal
7 and sever injury collisions to develop the high injury network for people walking and biking. The
8 SS4A team will also be doing... creating high injury network, but that one will include vehicle
9 collisions again, so it will be slightly different, though I do expect a bit of overlap. And we'll be
10 doing a network screening to look at high risk locations and corridors in the city. And finally, for
11 the technical analysis we'll be looking at where people will be walking and biking and
12 estimating existing and future potential or latent demand for walking and biking to help us
13 understand where the most benefit might be in investing in the network. Alright. Next slide.
14 This is an illustration of documents reviewed and the topics for the literature review that I
15 mentioned. I expect many of you are familiar with these plans, we were looking to again,
16 establish that baseline understanding of existing policies and programs related to active
17 transportation and needs and issues and concerns raised in previous relevant plans that we
18 might want to consider in our work. Next slide. This is an illustration of the draft facilities
19 inventory. We're currently gathering feedback on this back. We know that the data sets we
20 were working with were incomplete and before we started that analysis we wanted to make

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1 sure we had corrected all of the errors or emissions that just happen when you have ten years
2 of a network built out and the GIS data basically just doesn't keep up. So, we're collecting
3 feedback through this committee, commissions, and working groups and will be incorporating
4 and addressing those comments and have a final map for the analysis at the end of this month.
5 Next slide. And, getting to the end of the presentation here, just wanted to share some
6 highlights from the Bicycle Friendly Community Review that we conducted. So, the bicycle
7 friendly community is a designation that the League of American Bicyclists gives. Cities apply
8 and they evaluate the application, and the intent is really to reward excellence and raise
9 standards for what constitutes a bicycle friendly environment. Palo Alto has been a bicycle
10 friendly community since 2003 and a Gold Level community since 2010, and of course, wants to
11 do better, right? So, we're trying to understand how Palo Alto could progress up to Platinum
12 and we took a look at what was ... what future opportunities might be based on a new
13 application that the League has developed and found that increasing the overall mileage of
14 bicycle network with a specific gap in building out the low-stress network, as well as increasing
15 high quality bike parking, and expanding education efforts were strategies and opportunities
16 that we should be looking at with this plan as well. Alright, I'll turn it over to Ozzy now for next
17 steps and to get us started with Q & A.

18

19 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Thanks Amanda. And we can come back to this slide if
20 folks want to talk through these opportunities and areas of excellence, but just to close us out,

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1 we are again, not just ramping up... we're in full motion here with Phase I: Roadshow and going
2 before different bodies, as well as gathering our data for existing facilities map and our existing
3 conditions analysis which we will present to folks come spring, including PTC; which will be the
4 next time we come before you. Again, like Amanda mentioned, we're deep into developing that
5 technical analysis for the map as well as the conditions analysis and working through our
6 Roadshow currently and looking to start publicizing that community visioning workshop that we
7 are looking to host on January 31st of next year. It will be a virtual workshop so look out for the
8 publicity on that starting soon. And then, I think, just one thing I forgot to mention at the
9 beginning is the last time the City updated its Plan was in 2012 and I know this is something
10 that the City has been wanting to do for several years. So, we're excited to get this effort going
11 and as Amanda noted, many cities are looking at this from a wider scope and not just focusing
12 on the bicycle/pedestrian efforts, and looking at other wheel and transportation options such
13 as ebikes, which grew during the pandemic and micromobility as well as scooters. So I'll
14 conclude the presentation there, but again tonight, we're just wanting to present the effort,
15 give you all a sense of where we're heading with this road map, and hear just your preliminary
16 thoughts on where you're headspace is in terms of again the slide that outlines those areas of
17 excellence and areas for opportunities as we're looking to reach a platinum level rated Bicycle
18 Friendly Community. Thank you.

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1 Vice Chair Chang: Thank you. Do any members of the commission have clarifying questions
2 before we move to public comment? Alright. Commissioner Akin is that a light you had on from
3 the beginning... or...

4

5 Commissioner Akin: That was an accident, apologies.

6

7 Vice Chair Chang: Okay. Commissioner Lu.

8

9 Commissioner Lu: Just a few technical questions to start off with. Can you talk a little bit more
10 about the League of American Bicyclists and really what value we get from being Gold to
11 Platinum, is that tied to any funding or is that just something we do to benchmark ourselves.

12

13 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Right, I'll start and then Amanda please dive into
14 more on the League. I know that the city has, through the SCAP or even through the Comp Plan,
15 has goals whether are literal metrics that you see in the SCAP or just active mobility goals that
16 we hope to address via reaching a platinum level. So, it's just... while it's not necessarily stated
17 in let's say a goal, currently I know that's something that we're looking to strive to do in our
18 efforts to reach those SCAP and Comp Plan goals. But Amanda if you want to dive further into
19 the League and the designations that they provide.

20

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1 Ms. Amanda Leahy: Yeah absolutely, so, it is more a point of pride than anything. I would say
2 the designation itself, but it speaks to more than that. The League itself is a member supported
3 group, they have over 200,000 members across the county. Mostly advocacy and bike groups,
4 but the work they do is pretty wide ranging, and their biking knowledge is pretty deep and so
5 they score card that they've developed really is an excellent benchmarking tool. There are I
6 think, almost a thousand cities that have applied and not all of them get awarded a status. It
7 allows us to see how Palo Alto ranks against peer cities. For example, one of the metrics they
8 look at is mode share, Palo Alto is pretty high right now, but not quite platinum level so
9 platinum level cities have a 14% mode share, which reflects the quality of the infrastructure as
10 well as the community members themselves, but a valuable benchmarking tool and like, the
11 criteria they use, again, are metrics that are pretty like proven and useful tools for
12 understanding how well the city is performing.

13

14 Commissioner Lu: Got it. Makes sense, and I recognize how useful it can be to have an outside
15 party grade our work. On page 20, there's a reference to the share of transportation budget
16 spent on bicycling and Palo Alto's is stated as 76%, what does that really involve and how's that
17 calculated?

18

19 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Alright, Amanda do you ... I think that's from the lab
20 report...

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1

2 Ms. Amanda Leahy: Yeah, I was also curious about that, and I don't have the insight or look
3 into the calculation, so that would have been provided in the application. Sylvia is off mute, do
4 you know Sylvia?

5

6 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Yes, that's for the question Commissioner. Yeah,
7 that was something that we put together as part of our application for our last certification.
8 And I think we looked at RCIP budget to see which projects had something to do with bicycling
9 and since almost everything we do has something to do with bicycling we counted it. That's
10 how we got that really high number.

11

12 Commissioner Lu: Okay. Maybe one last question, just about the potential goal of being a
13 Platinum community... It seems like one of the most important criteria is just the mileage of just
14 the bicycle network and we're at 33%, whereas an average Platinum community is seemingly at
15 80%, is there any realistic path to Like is that metric seemingly as important as I would
16 intuitively expect it to be, and if we can't get it close to 80%, is there any path to actually even
17 become platinum?

18

19 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Right, I think we're slowly trying to get our efforts
20 going through plans like this but I think Amanda if you can speak to the weight that these

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1 different categories carry and specifically how much the one around the mileage have active
2 transportation facilities.

3

4 Ms. Amanda Leahy: Yeah, it is a good question. I can't say the exact weighting of it, I can say
5 that bicycle boulevards and slow streets, neighborhood greenways, I see as another
6 opportunity for the city and that can account for a lot of mileage while being pretty
7 infrastructure light. So, I think there is a pathway to getting that number. I also think that
8 number isn't a target, and I think that if the city preforms well in other ways that that is not
9 really ... like that's not the objective.

10

11 Commissioner Lu: Makes sense.

12

13 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Yeah, can I take a stab at that too?

14

15 Commissioner Lu: Yeah, of course.

16

17 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Thanks. When they came to visit us for the last
18 ... either the last application or the application before that, I think it was the application before
19 that, they came actually in between... so they came prior to our last application. They came to
20 see ... so they did a tour. They were shocked at the number of students who biked and walked

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1 to school here, and that visit actually helped change their scoring criteria for bicycle friendly
2 communities. So, you're question is a great one and we are also... so we've also helped the
3 league expand their criteria. I had a great conversation with the League representative... saying
4 where are our points, for Safe Routes to School? So, that was fun. Anyway, I just wanted to say
5 that they do change their criteria as they see good ideas getting implemented. It's not all about
6 the mileage.

7

8 Commissioner Lu: Got it. Thanks. I have a few other questions but I'll hold them for the next
9 round.

10

11 Vice Chair Chang: Alright. Commissioner Templeton.

12

13 Commissioner Templeton: Thank you. As always I want to thank this team for working on this,
14 putting this together and our city staff for encouraging all of the dialogue around bike and
15 pedestrian activity. I think it's really important so thank you. Thank you for bringing it to us for
16 feedback. I get really excited about this topic so, I'll share with you some questions that can
17 give you some sense on where I'm going and of course, like Commissioner Lu, will have some
18 comments in the next round. So, I'm looking on your slide 14, where you have the document
19 review, and I want to talk about the CalTrans District 4 Bike Plan and Pedestrian Plan and you
20 know, recently we've had a community discussion around El Camino, which is owned by

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1 CalTrans and what kind of safety improvements we'll have in this City, on sidewalks, you know,
2 intersection, ingress and egress for the pedestrians and bikes and what we can do to make it
3 safer for bikes. And so I was just looking at those plans and there's nothing in there about it. So,
4 I want to say... Kudos for looking at the CalTrans information, but also an opportunity for us, I'm
5 wondering if we can talk with them about that, can we figure out how to put our thoughts into
6 their report and make sure we're communicating for major thoroughfares and our city, even if
7 we don't own the entirety of it.

8

9 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Right, and I think ... and thank you for that. I think for
10 us, we have and will continue to work with CalTrans on any of their facilities, including El
11 Camino Real, I know that conversation is the top of mind for folks at the moment, and what I
12 would say is we will continue to work with CalTrans to make the improvements that I think is
13 right for Palo Alto, understanding that it's a CalTrans facility.

14

15 Commissioner Templeton: Are the sidewalks indeed a CalTrans facility?

16

17 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: That I don't know off the top of my head.

18

19 Commissioner Templeton: Um, it would be worth looking into, I'm not sure if they are, I think
20 I've heard they may not be. That's one of the reasons why I brought it up as part of this

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1 discussion, is to encourage you to figure out what parts are whose because I walk on those
2 sidewalks with my family and they could be improved. They're not the best sidewalks in the
3 city, and even if we don't own them, I'm wondering if there's an opportunity for us to say to
4 CalTrans... Here's the things that we want to see. And that brings me to next point is, an item
5 that's not on this list is any kind of Grand Boulevard stance from the City of Palo Alto. Other
6 cities nearby have it and we do not. I think that's a missing item that's an opportunity for us to
7 have dialogue about that street. About El Camino with the State.

8
9 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: I hear that, and I think to the point earlier, I think
10 we'll just continue working with CalTrans around what we can do on their facilities and
11 especially on El Camino Real, look to the sidewalks, I think that's a fair point... to see where the
12 property lines are, maybe they are different in different locations. But I think that's a fair point
13 and I appreciate you bringing that up.

14
15 Commissioner Templeton: Yeah, so it's also the bike lanes, which as we know is something that
16 CalTrans is interested in implementing but that we have some say so over as a city, in terms of
17 possibly bringing it before this body to talk about those things, or maybe they'll go directly to
18 Council about whether we want to rezone and reimagine how the parking is done along El
19 Camino in exchange for bike lanes and that is in the CalTrans District 4 Bike Plan... it shows that

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1 it's not here, it's going to be in our adjacent cities but not in between in this city unless we can
2 get on that. Did the Council discuss that recently? Is there any update on that?

3

4 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: The only update I have, and maybe I'll defer to Sylvia
5 on this, is I know that the City recently responded to CalTrans' letter, and I think that letter was
6 made public. I think that's the only update that I have. But Sylvia feel free to jump in if you have
7 any other updates.

8

9 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: No other updates at this time.

10

11 Commissioner Templeton: Can you just briefly summarize for the community what we said in
12 our letter to CalTrans?

13

14 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: The letter made several points, I would like to
15 refer to it before I just speak off the top of my head about it.

16

17 Commissioner Templeton: That sounds fine, do you want to maybe work on that... we have
18 another round.

19

20 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Yeah, let me pull it up. Thank you.

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Commissioner Templeton: Great. Thank you.

Ms. Amy French, Chief Planning Official: In the meantime, I'd just like to alert the Planning and Transportation Commission, I believe this letter was sent ... the city's response to CalTrans was sent on November 17th if you need to consult your emails.

Commissioner Templeton: Thank you, Ms. French, I appreciate that.

Ms. French: Sure.

Commissioner Templeton: And then the other thing was regarding the safety goals, on slide 16, it doesn't say anything about safety on our Bicycle Friendly Community Review and as we try to understand what makes a great bike friendly city, I would think something about it being safe would be helpful for us to measure. Understand how successful we've been, which I ... my understanding is pretty successful compared to other communities but also to have something to aspire to. So, I notice that that work isn't here with the exception of Safe Routes, and I understand that's not a safety measurement, it's just ... do we have recommended routes. So, I'm wondering if safety is a goal that we want to describe and aspire to, is that part of our plan?

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1 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Just to clarify, you're referring to the Bicycle Friendly
2 Community Review? Right, I don't know if this is an exhaustive list or this might just highlight
3 you know ... those at the top for Palo Alto. I'll defer to Amanda on if safety is a part of the
4 scoring criteria, but just overall from a city standpoint... I mean every policy document I've read
5 refers to enhancing safety in our roadways for all users.

6
7 Commissioner Templeton: That's my understanding as well, that we have a really good track
8 record there, and I think we need to talk about it, but we need to understand it in terms of
9 what can we improve. So, and to that point, I notice not on the list on slide 14, is any kind of...
10 unless I missed it, and it's entirely possible, but what are we reviewing from the police. Like in
11 terms of collisions or incidents and are they with children or with adults... (interrupted)

12
13 Vice Chair Chang: Are you referring to the... from the staff presentation slide 14. Ms. Dao could
14 you pull that up for us so the rest of us can see it?

15
16 Commissioner Templeton: Thank you. Sorry about that. It's an I-chart anyway so I'm not sure if
17 it will help but thank you Vice Chair. Yeah, I just want to make sure that we don't lose sight of
18 safety in the discussion because you all are working very hard on it and our community
19 members on the PABAC team are working really hard on it, and the School City Safety team is
20 working hard on it, and we need to understand it. I remember I went to your meeting a few... in

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1 October and we were talking about recent incidents, and you know, it's easy for our hearts to
2 pour out to people that are affected, but we also have no way of knowing what ways to
3 understand the frequency and the intensity of those kinds of collisions in context of what's
4 happening on a day to day basis; and I think that would be helpful.

5

6 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Yeah, I will divert to Amanda, but I know that maybe
7 Sylvia wants to speak to how we will look at the safety as well as collision data as part of our
8 collision analysis, but I know that the safe systems approach really puts that into drive and
9 wants to acknowledge and strengthen the link between the police department, collision data,
10 and traffic safety and infrastructure. So...

11

12 Commissioner Templeton: Totally agree, I think that's why we need to put it front and center
13 to make that we have a clear understanding of why it's important to move that program
14 forward.

15

16 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Right. I don't know if Amanda has something more to
17 add.

18

19 Ms. Amanda Leahy: Yeah, thanks. I'm glad safety is foremost on your mind, it's certainly is on
20 ours too, the slide you referenced first, the lab summary, like Ozzy mentioned it doesn't include

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1 all of the criteria. The gold rate... I can share that based on that application that was submitted
2 in the past, Palo Alto did have a slightly higher rate of crashes than peer Gold cities but we will
3 be taking a pretty comprehensive look at collision data as part of our work on this plan and we
4 will have access to police reports but the one that we will be looking at like, is not the most up
5 to date, so... I think the latest approved like, safety data that we'll be using is from 2021, so
6 there will be a gap in the more recent collisions, which we could close in a number of ways, but
7 also just wanted to share that. Um, yeah, that's it.

8

9 Commissioner Templeton: Did Sylvia have something to add as well? I don't want to cut you
10 off.

11

12 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: I don't think have more to say about the safety, I
13 did present to PTC the safe systems for all...

14

15 Commissioner Templeton: The previous meeting.

16

17 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Yeah at the previous meeting, so I don't want to
18 go back over that territory, I do have the response letter to the CalTrans letter up if you would
19 like me to share that information now.

20

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1 Commissioner Templeton: Yes, briefly, that would be fantastic, after that then I'm done with
2 my questions for now. Thank you.

3

4 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Okay thanks. So the CalTrans letter explained
5 that they did a safety audit that led them to request that bike lanes be added to the entire
6 length of El Camino Real in Palo Alto, and the City's response made several... had several
7 questions including a request for the collision data that was used in the CalTrans report, a
8 request that intersection safety and bicycle amenities be included in their plans, and a request
9 to see the latest plans. There was a question regarding whether or not space for parking or
10 space for travel lanes should be reduced in order to install the bike lanes, there was a question
11 about the continuity of the bike lanes, did they intend for these bikes lanes to go all the way
12 through Palo Alto or would there be a gap somewhere in town, and there was a question about
13 buffered or protected bike lanes ... what was the intention by CalTrans there, for what kinds of
14 lanes they were proposing. There was also a ... pointing out to CalTrans that given the ongoing
15 closure of the California Avenue Travel lanes to cars, that the left turn from El Camino on to
16 California Ave is not unnecessary in that that space needed to be integrated into what ever
17 CalTrans is planning for El Camino. And then there were questions about the process for
18 notifying and doing outreach in the community about these bike lanes and adopting a parking
19 removal resolution for bike lane installation, that's something that we're asking questions
20 about... about that... that CalTrans has requested. And yeah, lead time required for community

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1 engagement and decision making. They would like for our Council to make a to vote about
2 removing parking by at some point in April and we have questions about that and their
3 commitment to providing support for the meetings that would need to occur, leading up to
4 that. The public meetings that would need to occur leading up to that. So, that is the... those
5 are the main points in the letter.

6
7 Commissioner Templeton: Thank you for the summary, I just want to say that this would
8 definitely count as a transportation update for the beginning of the meeting if that's something
9 that monumental just happened with Council in the previous intervening weeks. I did realize
10 when you were talking that I had one more question and I don't know if it's for Oscar or for
11 you, but on the VTA bike plan... Cal Trans bike plan that was referenced, on page 57 there's a
12 rendering of the El Camino at Embarcadero intersection that... this document is from 2018 or
13 2019, something like that, that was a vision that somebody was going to implement, that hasn't
14 been implemented. Is that something we're still looking at getting from CalTrans?

15
16 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: So that was actually... if it's the one that I am
17 imagining, it was a city led redesign of that intersection and that project is on hold until our
18 grade separation conversation can inform whether or not those improvements can happen
19 there.

20

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1 Commissioner Templeton: Great, thank you very much.

2

3 Vice Chair Chang: Ok, next up we have Commissioner Reckdahl and then Commissioner Akin.

4 And then I would like to just check if we have any public comments because these are supposed
5 to be clarifying questions. Thank you.

6

7 Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah so I have one question about Level III Bike lanes. When I look at
8 the map, right on level 3 they seem like just a regular neighborhood street so what has to be
9 done to a residential street to make it qualify as a level 3?

10

11 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Right, that's a good question, I'll defer to Amanda for
12 the technical expertise, but I know there are potential street marking designations such as
13 sharrows for example, that would designate a street. I know that we're in a current
14 conversation around potentially including different classification for what's locally known as the
15 "bike boulevards" which isn't technically a standard classification throughout, you know,
16 California. We have the Class 1,2,3,4 that folks are most familiar with. So, we are maybe looking
17 to make it context specific, to your question around class through facilities, I will defer to
18 Amanada on the specifications.

19

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1 Ms. Amanda Leahy: So, the Class 3 bicycle lane is a shared lane and to be a designated bike
2 lane, all that is required is signing or marking. So, marking would be the sharrows on the ground
3 that Ozzy mentioned, and marking would be a sign posted on the sidewalk that says Bike Route.

4

5 Commissioner Reckdah!: Okay. So, we could really increase the number of bike lanes ... our...
6 yeah, one of the criteria is your mileage of bike lanes and so with a little signage we could really
7 gain the system. Another question, on the next item, which is We're not covering right now,
8 one of the programs is on packet page 102, the very last program is... talks about bike counts,
9 and that's an ongoing program, and I've never seen those. Where are those available? Bike
10 counts of how many are using our bike lanes.

11

12 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Right, I'm not well versed in that but I will defer to
13 Sylvia, the Transportation Planning Manager, she's aware the line about the bike counts.

14

15 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Yeah, so I don't have the packet in front of me
16 so I'm not sure exactly what you are referring to, but we do conduct bike counts, as needed in
17 particular locations for particular projects. So, it's just kind of... it's done in our standard work.
18 We don't normally publish them, they're not super useful to just have... because they're just
19 spotted in different places in town.

20

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1 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, but it's associated with projects, it's not just once a year you go
2 out to Bryant Boulevard and count the number of bikes that run by.

3
4 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Yeah. Correct. Though that is something that ...
5 that I believe is part of the scope of the Bike Plan, is to think about how we could do yearly or
6 some other period of time... bike counts to better understand the biking behavior in town. That
7 is something that is definitely something that we want.

8
9 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. That's something that I want too. Okay, Thank you.

10
11 Vice Chair Chang: Commissioner Akin.

12
13 Commissioner Akin: Thank you. It seems to me that there's an opportunity here to collaborate
14 with the makers of the commercial navigation apps not only to make sure that our preferred
15 routes are also their preferred routes, but even to make sure that the facilities inventories are
16 consistent. So, is there any interest in pursuing that as part of the program?

17
18 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: From a professional standpoint, yes. I don't know if
19 we're necessarily scoped to look at that as part of this plan, but I think that could be made into

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1 the recommendation piece either as a goal or program that we develop as part of the Plan
2 update.

3

4 Commissioner Akin: Great, thank you. For those of you who are not from Atlanta, you may not
5 know about Peachtree City, which is a planned community south of Atlanta that has a
6 completely separate transportation network for bicycles, pedestrians, and golf carts. So, when
7 you mentioned the use of alternative vehicles for the network, I'm curious as to whether a golf
8 cart qualifies.

9

10 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: My initial response is no, but I know that we're
11 entering kind of space around fleet types that start to blend a lot of these different pieces. So, I
12 think the State is looking to help cities by defining bicycle classification types as well, I know
13 they are doing it with ebikes but I did catch that article about Peachtree and flipped through
14 some of the photos and was really inspired. So, appreciate you bringing that up.

15

16 Commissioner Akin: Yeah, it's an interesting place. I recommend reading more about it. Thank
17 you, that's it.

18

19 Vice Chair Chang: Okay, I have three quick questions. So the first one is, I think I heard
20 somebody say that the website survey is up for one more month, is that correct? Because it

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1 was November 30th deadline, but it sounds like you were going to keep it up until the end of the
2 year?

3
4 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Right, we are extending it, recognizing that we are in
5 the midst of this phase I roadshow, going to City Committee Traffic tomorrow, Rail Committee
6 next week, so we want to make sure that as we're publicizing this effort and really ramping up,
7 that folks still have a chance to complete the interactive map and the survey. So, yes, it will be
8 extended through the end of this year, December 31st.

9
10 Vice Chair Chang: Great, glad to hear that. Then also, on packet page 21, you know, this is the
11 platinum versus Palo Alto Chart, are there examples... it talks about how Palo Alto's bike
12 friendly laws and ordinances are below average for platinum communities. Can you give me an
13 example, or what are examples of bike friendly laws and ordinances that we don't have that we
14 could have. I'm trying to get a sense of what those are.

15
16 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: That's a great question. I'll definitely defer to Amanda
17 on that.

18
19 Ms. Amanda Leahy: Yeah, so one would be the amount or type of bike parking that's required
20 of new development. Another might be the ... like making riding on sidewalks legal or the level

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1 of enforcement of riding on sidewalks, or restricting access to certain places for people walking
2 or biking. We have... I don't... I might be able to pull it up, but we have provided a few examples
3 in a technical memo we prepared, that identifies a few opportunities, we've also been
4 reviewing the zoning code and have identified a few more based on that review. But that's an
5 example of (interrupted)

6
7 Vice Chair Chang: Okay, great, thanks. And then finally I think this was sort of answered when
8 Commissioner Reckdahl was asking questions, but that same package page 21 refers to total
9 bicycle network mileage, and so I was wondering what defines bicycle network mileage, is it the
10 same answer that you have earlier about having a sign or sharrows, or is it something else?

11
12 Ms. Amanda Leahy: Do you want me to take that one? I can say that it is all of the bicycle
13 facilities Class 1, Class 2, Class 3, like regardless of separation, if it is a bike route on the bike
14 network, then it is included.

15
16 Vice Chair Chang: So, if you just put them on to our... we have tons and tons of neighborhood
17 streets that I don't... I could see... I didn't go look at the color view of the map, but they're not
18 clearly included on the map, but yet, as a bicyclist, I certainly bike on all of them and I see... if
19 we think about where our the kids biking to school bike, they bike everywhere, so I'm just... I
20 mean I'm glad to hear the earlier comment that this number of 80% is not a goal because I

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1 don't see the need to spend a lot of money saying that everything is a bike lane or a bike... or
2 part of the bike network when it just automatically is and we don't need to spend the funds
3 that way, but I'm just wondering if there really is something that we should be doing to make
4 things safer for example or to make drivers aware that there are bike.... I just don't know what
5 that number means and sort of the relevance of having it there given that it does look like we
6 look so bad relative to everybody else.

7

8 Ms. Amanda Leahy: I'll offer that I agree quality is more important than quantity and that's one
9 thing we're getting at with the level of traffic stress mapping. I do think that a number of
10 neighborhood streets would be better quality bike routes than ones that might be striped or
11 signed or marked on the network. But, yes also like that is why it's not a target exactly. We'll
12 look at what's appropriate, you know, for the City. Sorry Ozzy if I cut you off.

13

14 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: No, that's great, I was just going to say what's best,
15 and obviously I think folks can ride on what's most comfortable for them, but I think we want to
16 prioritize those facility types.

17

18 Vice Chair Chang: Okay thanks, so I look forward to seeing what we ultimately end up with for
19 this map, because it doesn't ... yeah. It doesn't quite jive with sort of what I think the reality is
20 on the ground. And hopefully we have a map that more accurately reflects reality, particularly

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1 when it comes to an office rider trying to plan out a path or when, you know, google is planning
2 out a path for me to bike. Okay, so with that, I want to see if there's any more clarifying
3 questions, otherwise just quickly check in for public comments because I see that we have at
4 least one. So... Alright, let's go to Public Comment please.

5

6 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

7 Ms. Dao: Yes, we have one in person and one on zoom. First in person is William Chrisman.

8

9 William Chrisman: Oh, I don't have any prepared thing to read like Mr. Hirsch did, so I'm afraid I
10 won't shine.

11

12 Vice Chair Chang: Could you please speak into the mic..

13

14 William Chrisman: I don't have anything prepared to read but Mr. Hirsch did. Nice job there.
15 First off, I want to say for Amanda I believe it was, who did a in-school at Juana Briones, I don't
16 know, possibly a month a go as part of the safety education for the kids on bikes. Great job! It
17 was fantastic. She really engaged the kids in a way that's, well, it's hard to do, talk to the kids
18 about traffic safety ... it goes right over their head. I believe it was Amanda, I was there, I was
19 saw it, she did a fantastic job. I don't know how much you hear about that kind of thing so I'm
20 taking the time to say it. And please do more of it, because I'm all about traffic safety, that's

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1 why I'm here. If I could refer you to, I'm not sure if this is going to be possible, to the email that
2 I sent to Council on May 8, 2019, is that possible?

3

4 Vice Chair Chang: We don't have the ability to easily pull that up.

5

6 William Chrisman: Okay. The point of that was about safety, on, especially on routes to school
7 in the Green Acres, Green Acres II, and Baron Park region. On the ground, I live there, so I
8 really... I like the thinking of Commissioner Templeton and Commissioner [Vice Chair] Chang, a
9 few people have talked about what's it really like, what's the temporal and spatial of reality like
10 day to day right there on the street. And I see it every day. I can tell you what I saw this morning
11 it would scare you all if you were really listening to what I said, in terms of traffic safety for
12 bikes. So, back in 2019, I've been having this conversation with this gang for more than a
13 decade and all I see is the situation on the street getting worse for ... let me narrow that down.
14 Don't freak out... I'm not talking citywide, let's say the Arastradero corridor, and the
15 neighborhood streets surrounding that that lead to Juana Briones and Dunn High School,
16 Fletcher Middle School and such. Do any of you know those streets? I know that Amanda and
17 Sylvia know them. I've talked to them, I've talked to Mark Hurd back in the day, and Sue
18 Dremon who's a staff writer for the Weekly, I got her on the phone and she came out and she
19 wrote in the Weekly an article about where Egress... forget the fancy words, where the bikes
20 and there's hundreds of them per day, go into the Gunn High School campus, on the pedestrian

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1 bike path in the morning and in the afternoon they come out. And there's many many hundreds
2 of them every day. So, and there's many many hundreds of them cars every day, because the
3 parents don't like... who likes to go on Arastradero anymore... basically it's a broken street. So,
4 where's the traffic go? Let me narrow that comment down a little bit. I don't want to offend
5 anybody. You know it did calm the traffic on Arastradero, but it made the traffic that goes
6 anywhere else angry, and in a hurry. And a lot of the cars are going to drop off their students
7 especially at Gunn High School that I just mentioned that intersection, or pick them up. So
8 you've got tons and tons of cars on the same blacktop as the bikes or the elementary school
9 kids walking, bicycling or rolling. So Sue Dremon wrote this article in the Weekly, Wednesday
10 May 8, 2019 I wrote a long email to City Council and I know you guys all got the same email, I
11 spelled out pretty carefully which I have write here... I'm not going to read it.

12

13 Vice Chair Chang: Okay thank you. You're time is almost up sir, if you could just wrap it up.

14

15 William Chrisman: I will.

16

17 Vice Chair Chang: Thank you.

18

19 William Chrisman: Back in those days, 2018, 2019 in my conversations with Mark Hurd and
20 Sylvia, I kept on asking has the traffic temporal and spatial study been done on neighborhood

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1 streets, that's been mentioned and how the changes on the Arastradero corridor impacted the
2 neighborhood streets in Barron Park in Palo Alto, Green Acres and Green Acres II and to my
3 surprise the answer that I got from Sylvia and Mark was that hadn't done such a study because
4 Council had not asked them to. And I said come on do it... well that's easy for me to say. But
5 Sylvia and Mark said they couldn't do the study because they had not been asked by the
6 Commission for Traffic and Safety, or City Council to do it. So, I'm asking a question if possible...
7 I think if somebody here probably knows ... has that study been done or authorized.

8

9 Vice Chair Chang: Thank you.

10

11 William Chrisman: Thank you very much.

12

13 Vice Chair Chang: Thank you.

14

15 Ms. Dao: Next is Penny Ellson on zoom if you can unmute yourself, you have three minutes.

16

17 Ms. Penny Ellson: Thanks, can you hear me okay?

18

19 Ms. Dao: Yes.

20

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1 Ms. Penny Ellson: Oh great, thank you. First, I want to thank Sylvia Star-Lack for the information
2 about numbers of basic lists, citywide. So, this is something that I've been thinking about quite
3 a lot over time, excuse me... I'm speaking as individual tonight, by the way, I should say that. I
4 am very interested in getting some very solid counts of the number of bicyclists we have
5 citywide, including all school commute bicyclists to provide and to look at the injury collisions to
6 get an injury collision rate. That's a real baseline that includes all the bicyclists including school
7 commuting students. I think it would be a very helpful thing if we started that this year, so we
8 have it going forward. We really don't have good solid citywide bike counts and I think that
9 would be a very useful thing to have. I think we've made a pretty strong effort to do that for
10 motorists, I think it would be a very useful thing to do that for the people who are the more
11 vulnerable road users. And, I would be interested if we could separate out collisions involving
12 juveniles, that would probably be a relatively easy thing to do, but it would be very interesting
13 to even separate out PAUSD school commuters because that's where we're going to see the
14 largest number of youth commuters because their being encouraged to bike to school. I really
15 want to understand whether our collision rates are going up or down because that is going to
16 be our strongest indicator of the advocacy of our efforts to improve routes, to improve bike
17 safety education. I mean we really need this data to understand how well our program is
18 working. So that's something that I would like to see included, as a policy actually, in the next
19 bike plan. Is a policy that requires us to report on collision rates, not just raw numbers, but
20 collision rates and that really requires us to have rock solid counts of the number of bicyclists,

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1 including all of our bicyclists. And... I think that's all for now. Thank you very much for your
2 service to our community on this commission. I appreciate it. Have a good evening.

3

4 Vice Chair Chang: Thank you. Okay. So back to the Commission with Commissioner Questions
5 and Comments as you may have them. Let's go to Commissioner Hechtman.

6

7 Commissioner Hechtman: Thank you and thank you to staff and our consultants for starting
8 this work and bringing it to us, clearly, it's a very comprehensive undertaking, it's ... and I'm
9 happy to see the robust community input aspect of it and I think I've heard from my fellow
10 colleagues and the members of public some really good input to help us think through what this
11 product should look like when it's completed ... I think in 2025, if I was seeing that slide
12 correctly. And I wanted to ask a general question... I don't know which one of them wants to
13 look into their crystal ball and try to answer it... but I'm curious... we've got a plan, 2012 plan,
14 and now we are basically doing an upgrade. Refining, bolstering, and I'm curious what staff,
15 who have been wrestling with this for a while now, are expecting to see... what are the
16 significant differences that they're expecting when we get to 2025 and have this new plan
17 compared to the plan we had in 2012?

18

19 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Right, I can try to just answer that initially. As a two
20 year employee, but I definitely defer to Sylvia on the longer context for that, I think. I'll tell you

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1 just from a best practices, cities typically update bike and ped plans on a five to eight year cycle
2 and typically they're use for grant applications or again to provide new policies and programs
3 and from a practitioner standpoint I think we have learned a lot since 2012 in the active
4 transportation space and so looking at updating it in today's context. What that means is either
5 mode share changes, technology changes... like I mentioned, ebikes and eschooters, different
6 policies that the city might have implemented since our 2012 update and bringing those to
7 light. I know the Comp Plan, for example, was adopted in 2017, after the 2012 BPTP update, so
8 again, looking at those policies and incorporating them as well. It expands a variety of topics
9 not again, but policies, programs, and facilities in the context of today's mobility. That's at a
10 high level I would answer and then if Sylvia wants to provide more of the Palo Alto context I'll
11 defer to her.

12

13 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Yeah, thanks Ozzy, that was great. In 2012
14 protected bike lanes were not really a thing, so that's a humungous change in the bike planning
15 world, at least they weren't really a thing here. And so, I think our new plan will probably make
16 recommendations for where those might be appropriate in town. At the time, even sharrows,
17 the markings for a shared lane, those were kind of new. There's been a lot of changes to put an
18 underscore under what Ozzy just said. I don't know Amanda, if you want to say more. Level of
19 traffic stress for bicyclists, I don't know that that was around in 2012, or at least we had not
20 heard about it here. So there really are a lot of things that have changed and so I'm really

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1 looking forward to this level of traffic stress analysis that will help us kind of focus in on where
2 we can make changes for folks so that people have low stress ways to get around town. I mean
3 some of us feel pretty confident riding on almost any street, but it's important to have low
4 stress networks. I think there's also probably going to be a focus on intersections in a way that
5 maybe I think prior bike plans were kind of, you know, maybe didn't focus so much on what
6 happens at intersections, and for example protected intersections like the one that was just
7 referred to by a commissioner about El Camino and Embarcadero... protected intersections are
8 something that weren't really discussed ten years ago. Well, at least, here. So, yeah there are
9 many changes.

10

11 Commissioner Hechtman: Okay. Thank you. Next, I guess there's a comment and a request, a
12 couple of the Commissioners have mentioned that discrepancy we have in the bike miles as a
13 percentage of overall road miles in the city. When I look at that 80% figure for the average
14 platinum city, and I'm thinking well ... what that has to be is ... it's basically any road that that
15 platinum city thinks it's not crazy for a bicyclist to be on. So like, Oregon Expressway, for
16 example, right? Don't bike on Oregon Expressway. And there are a few more streets like that.
17 But most of the residential street that our kids come out of and ride down, those are fine, and I
18 suspect that these other cities are including all of those. But I appreciate our focus as described
19 by staff that we don't want to be so broad. We're really focused on the high quality bike streets
20 where the kids as they come out of their homes are sort of encouraged to go... the bike

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1 arterials. Maybe you can call them. And I personally don't want us to lose that focus but I do
2 think that we could fairly simply collect the data of you know... these are our arterials, whatever
3 that figure is... 33%, right, but we've got another 40% of say streets that aren't crazy to bike on
4 and when you add those two components together, which we keep separate, you know, we're
5 going to be up around the 80%. So, if we're trying to pitch platinum without selling out to get
6 platinum, maybe that's an approach on that issue, to collect the data, but don't lump it in with
7 what we really think are the places that people should congregate to bike. And then the last
8 point, comment I had, I think it was at our last Planning Commission meeting, or maybe the one
9 before that, where we were talking about the Safe Systems... I think that's what we called it...
10 Safe Systems and how the philosophy is shifting and the Council guidance... like point #3 was
11 bicycle and pedestrian safety and some of us commented that in the planning over there, we
12 weren't actually seeing a lot of language about bicycle and pedestrian safety... it was kind of an
13 undercurrent. And my memory is that that plan is supposed to be done in 2025. Sylvia, maybe
14 you can help, my memory may be is faulty, but I think there was kind of slow roll out with that
15 was going to be in place in 2025 and we were trying to decide when were we... what's our
16 milestone for having no fatalities, we were talking about 2025 to 2030. So, one thought I had is
17 here we have this bike plan and we have this related traffic planning effort that are both rolling
18 toward a conclusion in 2025 and the work that this staff is doing on the bike plan I think can
19 really inform a piece of that Safety Systems plan. Because the point of the Safety Systems plan
20 it's sort of this consistency from jurisdiction to jurisdiction... it's regional, it's state, it's even

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1 federal. But I think it will be important for us to have consistency between that Safe Systems
2 Plan and our ... this pedestrian and bicycle plan. So I would encourage staff as you're moving on
3 these parallel timelines ... but it's the same staff working on both to some extent... to really
4 focus on that cross connectivity so we can ensure consistency and ensure that the Safe Systems
5 program really houses the Safety aspect of the bicycle and pedestrian traffic plan. Those are my
6 comments, thank you. Great job... so far.

7

8 Vice Chair Chang: Alright, Commissioner Lu.

9

10 Commissioner Lu: That was a great segway to my main set of questions, I am unclear at how
11 this overlaps the Safe Streets for All plan in practice, can you talk a little bit more about how the
12 plans will run in parallel?

13

14 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Right, and maybe it will be helpful to shift to that slide
15 that has the comparing contrasts. Ultimately as was noted, I think both of these efforts are
16 getting to an enhancement of the safety around just all mobility types, right. I think ... the way
17 that I describe it to folks and then maybe Sylvia or Amanda feel free to chime in here. But, cities
18 have been doing bike and ped plan updates for many decades, Palo Alto initially had it's first
19 one in 2003, and 2012, and now we're building off of that. So you can consider the bike and ped
20 plan efforts more on the traditional active transportation planning side. The Safe Systems

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1 approach is a new approach, it's federal, and it looks at a more contemporary approach.
2 Looking at inclusion of the data, and not just looking at bikes and peds but looking at vehicle
3 travel data. So, with that kind of high level context, I think Sylvia or Amanda if you ... I'll defer to
4 you. That was right slide. You had the right slide. Actually, sorry, it is slide 7 in mine. And
5 ultimately, both will be used for grant applications and to obtain resources to build what's
6 ultimately a projects list. I think to the point earlier and this is the last bit I'll say is... from a staff
7 level, we are trying to coordinate these two efforts and an example of that is we have a singular
8 internal staff working group that's made up of a variety of divisions and departments and it's
9 the same group for both of these efforts. The interactive map and the survey that's available
10 right now is going to be used, again, for both efforts. So, those are ways that we're trying to link
11 these two.

12
13 Commissioner Lu: Got it. That's helpful and the specifics about how the working group is
14 organized is helpful, I was going to ask a follow up question on how community engagement
15 would work given that the community engagement and public comments could probably be
16 overlapping and we wouldn't want people to necessarily give feedback into one silo and not be
17 heard on the other silo, but that's not going to be a problem because it's all combined right?

18
19 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Right, and that's something we want to reinforce,
20 specially tomorrow with City School Traffic Safety Committee, who already received the Safe

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1 Systems presentation and were pointed to the interactive map and survey. We're anticipating
2 them asking a similar question and letting them know that we are collaborating on this effort,
3 to minimize that engagement fatigued.

4
5 Commissioner Lu: Okay. I had one more specific question about the working model on the data
6 analysis. I think I heard maybe in response to Commissioner Templeton's question that the bike
7 and ped plan data goes up until 2021. In our conversation, I was just going through the minutes
8 a month and some change ago, we were saying how the Safe Streets for All program had the
9 latest data as of 2022. Is there risk that we are doing two sets of analysis and not sharing the
10 latest or best data across them?

11
12 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Maybe...

13
14 Ms. Amanda Leahy: I mis-spoke. Big solution, I mis-spoke. We are in fact using the same exact
15 data set and coordinating closely with the other consultant team.

16
17 Commissioner Lu: Okay so the analysis would effectively be the same and maybe the city would
18 saving some money by not doing the analysis twice with two different sets of consultants...

19

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1 Ms. Amanda Leahy: It's a subset of the data that we're using, we're only using pedestrian and
2 bicycle involved collisions. So the analysis is separate, but the dataset is shared which is ... more
3 efficient.

4
5 Commissioner Lu: Okay, so it sounds like there's this some risk that the data analysis would
6 substantively give the same results off the same data and we would be paying for it twice, but I
7 don't know what to do about that. Okay. One more question on the longer term plan for both
8 of these. For Safe Streets for All, I think according to the presentation last time the timeline was
9 something like September to November of 2024 for the actual plan adoption, here it's
10 November to May 2025, so there's overlap right there, just in November. Can we coordinate so
11 that both plans can be reviewed together at and adopted at the same time?

12
13 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: That might be a bit more difficult just simply because
14 of the schedule that we've developed ... Sylvia, feel free to jump in.

15
16 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Yeah, so the Safe Streets for All plan is ... it does
17 have some ... it does have community engagement, it has less community engage then the bike
18 plan. It's very, it's a much more data driven document so it's going to finish soon... sooner. It's
19 still going to take over a year... or a year. But the bike plan is really about... is really going to ...

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1 it's going to take longer, it has more pieces to it and the Safe Systems is a different document
2 and it has a different budget and it's going finish sooner.

3

4 Commissioner Lu: Got it. Thank you. Really appreciate the clarification and I'll save my over all
5 comments for after my other commissioners questions. Thank you.

6

7 Vice Chair Chang: Commissioner Reckdahl.

8

9 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, I have a few comments here. Packet page 16 you're talking
10 about all the good reasons to bike and one thing you don't bring up is it reduces traffic. And so
11 this bike plan isn't just good for bicyclists, it's good for everybody. It reduces the traffic and
12 even if you're driving you should hope that there's a good bike lane there because it will make
13 your drive easier. So I think that's an important context to put. Another one, packet page 18,
14 you're talking about directness and one big impediment to directness is the rails. There's this
15 huge gap from Cal Ave all the way down to Meadow and adding bike tunnels or bike bridges
16 across that rail is a huge... would be a huge benefit to the bike network. And we don't talk
17 about that at all in here. I'm not sure ... obviously you can't fund that, but are you going to be
18 studying rail crossings?

19

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1 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Short answer is yes. They will be looked at as part of
2 the development of the network but even before that we received direction from the City's Rail
3 Committee and the City Council to look at specific areas. Seal versus Kellogg comes to top of
4 mind, I know we're considering two areas around Adobe Creek and then Matadero Creek, so
5 we do have pointed areas that we're looking at for grade separation so short answer is yes and
6 that will be part of the overall network discussion.

7

8 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, very good. That... I think is important. Then also on packet page
9 21 we're talking about all these... we talked about this earlier about network mileage. I really
10 thing network mileage is not a good thing. It's not a bad thing to have, but if you have two bike
11 lanes very close to each other, they're really not adding anything. It's really the gaps between
12 them. How far do you have to get... to get to a bike lane. And I think that's a better criteria than
13 just mileage. On packet page 23 we're talking about bike unfriendly policies and it says "the City
14 seems to require cyclists to use bike lanes where available" and that's not the case. Unless,
15 Sylvia correct me if I'm wrong, but I think State law requires that bikes can always use any
16 traffic lane if there's impeding traffic they have to move to the right but they're free.. we
17 don't... only bikes can use bike lanes, but bikes can also use car lanes if they want. So I'm not
18 sure exactly the point to that paragraph was. And then finally, on packet page 14, that map, I
19 live near Wilkey Way and it's not marked ... part of Wilkey way is marked as a bike lane but it is
20 heavily used by bicyclists even though it's not on the map. So I would go back and check the

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1 Wilkey Way and see if that really qualifies as a bike lane, because it's heavily used by bicyclists.

2 And that's it. Thank you.

3

4 Vice Chair Chang: Sorry, Commissioner Akin.

5

6 Commissioner Akin: Thank you. This is a cautionary note related to the integration between the
7 bike and ped plan and SS4A, I always like to draw everyone's attention to the CEQA Addendum
8 for the Housing Element which shows that our RMP is going to go up 24% over the duration of
9 this project. And proposals like the Molly Stone proposal are pretty strong clues that the vehicle
10 traffic is going to go up, even in the AB 2997 areas. So, we do have to maintain a highly
11 functional vehicle network. And before I would buy into the idea that we would go for the
12 Platinum rating, I would have to have some confidence that we're not compromising the other
13 things that we need to do as part of our overall transportation plan. And safety very much plays
14 into that. I'm thinking what does the Idaho stop look like in a place where traffic has gone up
15 24% and the word that comes to mind is risky. So, that's it. Thank you.

16

17 Vice Chair Chang: Commissioner Templeton.

18

19 Commissioner Templeton: Thank you so much Vice Chair. Okay. So, I'm going to say some
20 things that show that I am at heart a skeptic and it doesn't mean I don't appreciate our staff

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1 and I don't appreciate this program but I have some questions that have come up through the
2 course of this discussion so I hope you'll take it with that intention of just clarifying and
3 understanding. I look at some of these numbers, like my colleagues, and some of them stick out
4 to me like high speed roads with bike facilities. Again, perhaps it's a definition of the facilities,
5 but El Camino Real, Alma, and Oregon don't have those and those are our only high speed
6 roads, 35 and up in this city. So I would say we're zero percent not 80% and I'm not exactly sure
7 where that comes from, you're welcome to speak to it. I'm going to continue with my
8 comments and if you want to address that feel free. Bike plan is current and being
9 implemented, 2012 is a long way in the past, I'm not sure if that is current, we've marked it as
10 yes. Trying to get to the bottom of this platinum designation as a goal being indicated by at
11 least one factor of total bicycle network mileage to total road network mileage. I thought for a
12 minute this was a typo. Many of us have discussed it tonight, but it is not in fact a typo. The
13 only City in California with a platinum road designation is Davis. Because you see Davis, which
14 also has that same designation is in Davis. So I will reiterate, there are no cities with Platinum
15 designation, there are campuses, including Meta Campuses, University of California Campuses
16 and others, that's not to say we shouldn't go for it, but it's a completely different type of
17 situation and we should also understand our stretch goal in that light because... unless we are
18 University Campus that has control over everything and unlimited land, it's very unlikely that
19 we're going to achieve that level of Campus zen. I love it. I worked on a Campus, it wasn't Meta,
20 I worked on a campus that also prioritized biking and had an amazing bike network, I dream of

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1 having Palo Alto being able to implement that, but that is not currently feasible and certainly
2 not for 2023. I also want to challenge the team because through as I was researching some of
3 these data points, I learned that these criteria have all changed since 2021 and whenever we
4 got this designation. They've currently been updated to completely different criteria. So I would
5 suggest that from a study session perspective feedback, that we realign when this is brought
6 back up to whatever entity sees it next, possibly want to realign it to orient it to the current
7 application which has the same kind of stuff that we saw Ms. Star-Lack present with the 5E's,
8 and I think it was at the... we saw your presentation... or presentation at your meeting for that
9 as well. So a lot of this discussion and this detail that we've gotten into because this particular
10 body, we love detail, maybe moot. I would encourage if anybody wants to see the list of cities
11 in California and what designations they have, it's at bikeleague.org/bfa/award-database and
12 then you can click on California and it will present you with a list. Palo Alto is doing really well in
13 this light and understanding you know, we're on par with San Francisco as far as biking oriented
14 cities, that's ... I always thought San Francisco is very bike oriented and if we're able to do that
15 here in our less urban environment that's amazing. Right... yes we want to push further, but I'm
16 not sure that the presentation included the peer ... any peers at all with platinum designation
17 and what that means, right. So, I'll leave it with that. Actually, I'm going to sum it back up. I
18 would love to see this presentation be more realistic and things that are out of line like high
19 speed roads with bike facilities have some kind of explanation. Things that don't make sense
20 need to be clarified in the presentation, because it is somewhat misleading in the way it's

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1 currently presented and I don't believe it's intentional in any way, I'm not saying that... I would
2 love to see the next version of this be a little bit more clear about what we're aspiring to do,
3 how reasonable it is and what some of these datapoints are based on. Thank you.

4

5 Vice Chair Chang: Okay. I don't see any other lights so I'm going to go with some of my
6 comments. So I think you've heard a lot of the Commissioners talk or kind of point to a couple
7 points, one is goals both what ... the way that the data is laid out for us it seems to indicate that
8 being platinum is a goal and I hope that when.. you know the plan is completed there's more of
9 a consensus as to what like the goals and the recommendations would actually be for us. Also, I
10 think it would be helpful to understand what the outputs for this project are versus the Safe
11 Streets for All outputs because I think that might clarify some of the confusion between the
12 two. I mean I certainly support everything that Commissioner Lu said about let's try not to pay
13 two groups of people twice for the same work and make sure that everything is coordinated as
14 tightly as possible. And then I would also reiterate both what our public commenters have both
15 said, as well as what Commissioner Reckdahl said about the desire for bike counts and some
16 data. I think anicdoteally Commissioner Templeton and I have both heard this and it's also our
17 own experiences... we Palo Altans know where the trouble spots are. Our public commenters
18 know where the trouble spots are, so a question I have is... What's going to be the output of the
19 interactive map? Is that where these high incident What was the word?

20

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1 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: High Injury Corridor.

2

3 Vice Chair Chang: High injury corridor... I think what we Palo Altans would like to see is... the
4 data is kind of digested and then read back to us... to have some confidence that all the
5 feedback that we've given has been heard and that there's documentation of what we
6 experience day to day and that somebody in the city staff knows where these are. I'm sure that
7 city staff does know where many of these hot spots are, but we Palo Altans don't know that city
8 staff knows. And so I think that would be an incredibly useful piece of information and data to
9 have read back to the community in combination with incidents or reports. A related question
10 is that I had heard that there was some collision incident data that was going to PABAC, but has
11 it been sent to and shared with PTC? Is this... maybe Ms. Star-Lack knows about this. Is that
12 information that can also be shared with the PTC?

13

14 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: And so, Sylvia I think she's referring to the PAPD
15 police reports provided by Lt. Ben...

16

17 Vice Chair Chang: We would love that because we've been asking for that for years and years
18 and years. And it's now been I think two months since I heard that it was sent to PABAC but
19 would love it if we could get that sent to us as well, since it now exists.

20

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1 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Yeah, so we ... Rafael is actually the ... Rafael our
2 Senior Transportation Engineer Rafael Rius is our PTC liaison, and he should be sending those to
3 you. If he's not, then ... I thought that he was sending those to you, but if he's not I will ask him
4 to send them to you. I'm sorry about that. We are getting them from PB to go to PABAC and
5 Rafael can also send those to PTC.

6
7 Vice Chair Chang: I think he meant to, it probably just fell off his.... Oh really... my apologies, I
8 didn't see the one in September 6, I've got to check my scan. But he should keep sending them,
9 we would love to keep seeing them. And then as I go down my list... oh. I wanted to make sure
10 that our consultants look at the Housing Element as part of the document review because Ms.
11 Leahy mentioned that looking at... trying to look into the crystal ball and see where our future
12 demand might be, is going to be part of the output for the bike and ped plan and so I think that
13 the housing element and the opportunity sites is going to be really revealing in that way. And
14 then finally, yup, I think that's about it. That's about it. So, I don't see any other lights here, oh..
15 one more from Commissioner Lu.

16
17 Commissioner Lu: I can give my comments now, so, I first just want to really thank staff, this
18 work is really important and we care about doing well and on an aggressive timeline. Can you
19 pull up the second to the last slide in the presentation where there were a bunch of bullet
20 points that we could respond to? Thank you. I agree with the others, Platinum doesn't feel like

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1 an achievable goal, that said, we still should have very aggressive and very objective metric
2 goals. I also don't necessarily think that these metric goals would have to be aligned with the
3 application criteria, as much as I want to go with the application criteria and be graded and
4 aligned with an external body, I'm just pretty skeptical of the system where we claim we have
5 76% coverage and other cities claim they have 80% coverage, well other cities, other platinum
6 cities claims to have 80% coverage but there are other's outside of California, yeah yeah.. it's
7 like ... it doesn't quite make intuitive sense, Santa Monica is way ahead of us but is also gold, it's
8 just difficult to interpret. And, if these applications take significant staff effort, I would ask the
9 City to consider just not bothering to apply at all if we're pulling metrics and trying to crunch
10 numbers in a way that's ultimately kind of going into a game of bowl system or a system that
11 doesn't really get us anything directly in terms of grants or anything like that. If it takes
12 significant staff effort, maybe it's not worth the squeeze. Okay, on a few things on the
13 demonstrated excellence (interrupted)

14

15 Mr. Arce, Senior Transportation Planner: Can I ask the consultant to respond to that because I
16 do know that Lab is an industry standard and I just want to make sure we highlight and
17 underscore the need and why we're heading in that direction.

18

19 Ms. Amanda Leahy: Yeah, that's for that Ozzy. I want to say a couple of things and to carry your
20 points are well taken. Here, I feel like we are hyper focused on the slide and perhaps I

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1 mischaracterized our use of this tool. The areas that were indicated as demonstrated excellence
2 is based on an old report card. The future opportunities is based on our review of the 2023
3 updated criteria and our desire to progress towards platinum. The evaluation criteria included
4 in this Bicycle Friendly Communities application will not be exactly the same as the
5 performance measures we select to evaluate progress of implementing the plan document.
6 We're right now, just developing the vision and plan goals and in a next phase, and we'll bring
7 back to you an opportunity to help us establish more meaningful context specific criteria and
8 performance measures to evaluate this plan and the city's progress towards achieving a bicycle
9 friendly Palo Alto. So, they will be slightly different. We understand they are incomplete
10 alignment and that's why we're making that choice. There will likely be overlap in the hopes of
11 easing an application process should staff choose to do that. The applications, they do ask for a
12 lot but often it's data that's at hand. So, it's you know, there's still a decision to be made there.
13 But yeah, I definitely wanted to clarify that and so this is part of our exercise, to benchmark and
14 understand where Palo Alto is relative to peers. So, hopefully that clarifies a few things and
15 definitely appreciate you all digging deep on this too.

16

17 Ms. Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Manager: Yeah and if I could just add a little bit to that.
18 The application is really ... it's kind of a 360 review because local cyclists who are involved in the
19 community are asked to also rate the community so while gold communities might look and
20 feel different, you know when you look at them on ... when you ride on them, but ride on them,

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1 but the review is really quite comprehensive and goes into what educational you know,
2 programs there are, enforcement, lots of different things. It's a very very useful tool for staff.
3 And the fact that the criteria changed to keep the... they keep modernizing the criteria,
4 progressing the criteria, is also useful for staff. So I would really hate to not use the league's
5 Bicycle Friendly Community program as ... because they're doing great work and it's forcing all
6 of us to do great work and lift, you know, all the votes. So, I wanted to say that. And the other
7 larger context to this is something that Ozzy mentioned earlier, is that we need to move the
8 needle on people biking in town if ... as part of our adopted sustainability climate action plan
9 goals and this is a great way, using the league's criteria, even if we don't make it to platinum.
10 But just looking at their criteria is helping us, is informing our bike plan, and so... in the direction
11 we need to go. Thanks.

12
13 Commissioner Lu: Thank you. I appreciate that context, quantify that as an option for staff to
14 consider but of course staff has way more expertise on the logistics and value of the application
15 and the grading process. Okay, one comment on demonstrated excellence, we'll just comment
16 on future opportunities, these sound like programs that definitely make sense. I think, thinking
17 high level about how bike and pedestrian access connects with businesses is also just a broad
18 opportunity area for actually goaling or measuring on these opportunities, my hope is that we
19 can take direct goals on safety metrics and ridership counts. Yep, and those are my comments.

20

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1 Vice Chair Chang: Great. Thank you. So, I think that is it for this item, do we want to take a
2 break, a quick break before the next one? Okay, let's take a five minute break and then we'll
3 come back.

4

5 **PTC returned from break with all members present except for Chair Summa (absent).**

6

7 **Action Items**

8 Public Comment is Permitted. Applicants/Appellant Teams: Fifteen (15) minutes, plus three (3) minutes rebuttal.
9 All others: Five (5) minutes per speaker.

10

11 3. Review Draft 2023 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Annual Progress Report and
12 Draft 2023-2031 Housing Element Annual Progress Report and Recommend City
13 Council Authorize Transmittal of the Reports to the Office of Planning and Research
14 and Department of Housing and Community Development, Respectively, by April 1,
15 2024.

16

17 Vice Chair Chang: Okay, we are back. So on to the next item on our agenda, which is an action
18 item, this is a review of the 2023 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Annual Progress Report
19 and the draft 2023-2031 Housing Element Annual progress report. So, what we need to do is
20 recommend that City Council authorize the transmittal of these reports to the Office of
21 Planning and Research and Department of Housing and Community Development. Could we
22 have the staff report please.

23

24 Ms. French: Yes, so this evening we have Clare Campbell virtually attending, as well as Chitra
25 Moitra. So, take it away staff.

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Planner Chitra Moitra: Good evening, Commissioners, I am Chitra Moitra, planner from long-range planning section. So, this is that time of the year again, when you get to review, do your annual review of the Comprehensive Plan and the Housing Element Implementation programs. This time staff is requesting also tonight for PTC to provide feed back and recommendation and authorize transmission of the two reports to OPR and HCD and all PTC comments and recommendations would be included in the staff report, which we are preparing for City Council in March. Next slide please. The next one. So, this is a... these two reports are required reportings, these are mandated by the Government Code Section 65400, where we have to annually report to HCD and OPR on the... on how we have done in the current year on our own implementing our programs, as well as meeting the RH in the numbers. This is also... this reporting is also required by the Palo Alto Municipal Code section 19.4.030 where the PTC gets to yearly review these programs and see how much progress we've made in the current year. Next slide please. This slide shows the distribution of the existing 2030 Comprehensive Plan as well as the newly adopted Housing Element 2023-2031 Housing Element and shows the distribution of the programs for Comprehensive Plan, it shows the distribution by elements and we can see that the natural environment element is the one that has the higher number of programs, implementable programs. For the Housing element, these ... we see that these are the sixth major topics, and each of these topics have the following number of implementation programs and each of these topics does have subcategories and these programs fall in this

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1 subcategories. Next slide please. This slide talks about the implementation table format when
2 the Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2017, this format was used and the lead agency, or the
3 lead department, is the one which is responsible for executing or implementing the plan. We
4 have a column on the timings, showing that if the program is a short term program, or a
5 medium term program or a long term program or a routine program. And the next column
6 shows the level of effort or the magnitude of [2:16:03 Unintelligible] of the complexity even in
7 terms of costs, how big or how small these programs are. From twenty.... After the adoption of
8 the plan from 2018, when we are doing this annual reporting, staff has added another column
9 called the Status Column; which phase ... is the program complete, or partially complete, or if
10 it's an ongoing program and so on. For the Housing Element, we have also maintained the same
11 format and they are closely following the Comp Plan's format so they will have some ease of
12 reporting to the OPR or HCD. So the next slide please. So this slide shows the status of the
13 Comprehensive Plan, what we have done in 2023 and this slide shows that the complete... we
14 have completed about thirteen programs this year, which is double the amount we did for last
15 year in 2022. And about 301 programs are ongoing which says that when you combine the
16 ongoing section and the complete section, which makes up about seventy-seven percent and
17 this should say that staff, City staff is working on seventy-seven percent of the Comprehensive
18 Plan implementation programs. And as for the pending programs goes, the number of these
19 pending programs has also dropped from last year. Last year there were eighty-five pending
20 programs and this year we have 63 of the pending programs, which is a reduction in the

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1 number of pending programs showing that city staff has started working on them. Next slide
2 please. So this slide shows the implementation status change from last year, in 2022 these are
3 the '21 programs which have changed their status from 2022 to 2023 and of these, twelve of
4 them belong to Land Use and Community Design Element and the next is safety, and so on. So
5 this slide basically shows that the change in status which these programs went for was mostly
6 about twenty-one of these programs went in pending state and out of those twenty-one, ten of
7 those programs when on to ongoing state and nine of them to partially complete from pending
8 to partially complete and two from pending to complete. Next slide please. That was about the
9 Comprehensive Plan, now I'm going to talk about the Housing Element annual program report.
10 And as we all know, Council had adopted the 2023-2031 Housing Element on May 8 of this year,
11 and staff is now ... staff received the HCD comments in August of this year and staff is diligently
12 working towards responding to those comments and getting ready to finish up the questions
13 asked by HCD or making clarifications to them. And after that, the next stage would be to
14 submit to HCD staff's rep... undated revised Element and for the Boards and Commissions
15 review. We anticipate that in early of 2024 or early spring of 2024, Council will get to adopt the
16 revised Housing Element. And as I have said before, these... this adopted Housing Element has
17 122 implementation programs and the reporting is done for the Housing Element APR (Annual
18 Progress Report) it covers two components. One is reporting on the programs, how we have
19 done, how the City has done on the programs and the second is reporting on RHNA numbers.
20 So we keep track of the building permits, which were approved for a particular year and we

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1 have to report it to HCD. So, these are the two reporting's for Housing Element APR we do
2 every year. Next slide please. So, based on that, the newly adopted Housing Element, we have
3 completed six of the program already, and we have started working on fifteen of those
4 programs. Staff has also identified that of these programs, twenty-six of them are standard
5 operations or ongoing programs which you will be reviewing every year. And about 60% of the
6 programs are left for us, for staff to work on them. And we are going to tackle them, you know,
7 next year. Next slide please. So, the next slide shows that staff has already previously
8 completed six of those programs and that includes programs 1.1A and 1.1B which was
9 implementation of the various code changes, which went to City Council on November 13th.
10 Twenty-six of these 122 programs were as I said, are standard operations and they will be
11 worked on [2:22:06 Unintelligible] the term of the Housing Element. And what we have seen
12 based on the timeframe, that bulk of these programs would be completed in 2024 and 2025,
13 and as we have said, that the allocation for RHNA, our allocation for sixth cycle in Palo Alto is
14 6,086 and we will also be reporting yearly on the number of building permits issued, in order to
15 meet these numbers. Next slide. So, this year, until October 31st, the number of building
16 permits issued was 103, and of these 103, 102 was ADU's, and there was only single family
17 home which received building permit approval this year. So, in a nutshell, this is an
18 achievement for both Comprehensive Plan and the Housing Element which we have achieved
19 for the year 2023. So, next slide please. This is the motion which staff requests PTC to review
20 these annual progress reports and recommend transmittal of these reports to OPR and HCD.

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1 Next slide please. And in terms of next steps, we will be communicating all the input which we
2 have received, which we will be receiving tonight from you, and we will be communicating
3 them to the different departments, City departments, forward them and forward any
4 recommendations or changes which you will be recommending tonight to the City Council and
5 the City Council will be reviewing this item tentatively in March and the OPR, the two Housing
6 Elements and the Comp Plan APR is due on April 1st of each year. So, this concludes my staff
7 presentation, and we welcome any PTC questions we have now. Thank you.

8
9 Vice Chair Chang: Thank you so much Ms. Moitra. Alright, looks like we've got a couple of
10 Commissioners with clarifying questions already, Commissioner Akin.

11
12 Commissioner Akin: Thank you. I've got five, three of these are going to be trivial, but I'm going
13 to do them in Packet Page order. So, Packet Page 48, Program C3.3.4, so I had read that HCD
14 might be concerned about our fees still being assessed per unit rather than per square foot, so
15 the question is do we have an estimated date for when the feasibility study will be completed
16 and this will go back to Council.

17
18 Ms. Moitra: I will defer this question to Clare.

19

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1 Clare Campbell: Let me just find that item, could you please repeat the packet page number
2 again please? Thank you.

3

4 Commissioner Akin: Sure, it's Packet Page 48. Item C3.3.4. I think all we really need here is a
5 date.

6

7 Clare Campbell: So I don't know... I'm sorry, we will need to look into the timing of this, I'm not
8 too sure we have a status from the other departments but we can look into that and bring that
9 forward. I'm not sure if we have any.... I know it's definitely on our to do list, because this is a
10 very important issue with our park land dedication and how it impacts our development fees,
11 but I don't think we have a specific date, to find here in our Comp Plan.

12

13 Commissioner Akin: And also, what concerns will be expressed by the public with respect to the
14 Housing Element, so, that's all we need on that. The next one is Packet Page 101, Item T1.11.2,
15 this is about the expansion of service between Stanford Research Park and the Cal Ave Transit
16 Center, I was just puzzled here by the odd change from ongoing to pending. What caused that?

17

18 Ms. Moitra: That is going around the... is Sylvia there? I think she could better answer this
19 question but, I will get back to you on that.

20

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1 Commissioner Akin: Okay. It's not important that I know, just that it be documented in what's
2 transmitted. Next one, Packet Page 106, Item T3.10.4, this is the Quarry Road extension, and
3 again, the question is really just ... Can we document the reason for why this is on hold?

4

5 Ms. Moitra: I have to get back to you on that too.

6

7 Commissioner Akin: Right. Now for two easy ones to wrap it up, on Packet Page 117 and Packet
8 Page 137, these are program 1.4 and 6.4, both of these have the same problem. They're due by
9 December 31st of this year but the status is pending or not started. So, it sounds like we need an
10 update for these two things, and once again...

11

12 Clare Campbell: Thank you.

13

14 Commissioner Akin: Yeah, you got them both? That's it for me. Thank you.

15

16 Vice Chair Chang: Commissioner Reckdahl.

17

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, great minds think alike, I went through and I noticed that there
19 were six programs that are due between now and the middle of January and they haven't been
20 started and I was wondering, are we slipping them? Now one of them we're going to be talking

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1 about in two weeks, so I think it will be underway, but they're So, that was on Page 116 and
2 that was program 1.3.A, the very last one on that page. And we will be talking about that so we
3 can skip that. The next one is on page 120, and that talks about affordability, it's 2.1C, it's the
4 bottom one on Packet Page 120, and again, due by the end of the year and it's marked
5 "pending/not started". Do we know, is that going to slip? I'm on Packet Page 120.

6
7 Clare Campbell: Yes, Thank you. I can just respond, so as everyone is aware, we are working on
8 some revisions for some of these programs, so we will be looking at some of these dates and
9 where we think it's appropriate, we're going to go ahead and make those date changes and
10 you'll see that in the revised Housing Element that will be coming back to you, right now
11 scheduled for February.

12
13 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, and so the fact that they haven't been started doesn't bother
14 us, we'll slip... they don't seem to be time critical except for that first one that I talked about.

15
16 Clare Campbell: Right... right... yes. And I think as we all know, we've been working on this for
17 quite some time so when we initially put that in there, we had higher hopes of getting through
18 some of this work sooner, but we just haven't had the staff resources to focus in on it yet.

19

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1 Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, we thought we'd be approved a year ago and we'd be working
2 on this kind of stuff ... okay, thank you.

3
4 Vice Chair Chang: Okay so, I don't see other lights so I'm going to go right now to a bunch of
5 questions. So on packet page... I have a host of questions that were similar, I did the same
6 thing, I went through everything and I just want to... I assume that some body's going to
7 through the Housing Element program with a fined tooth comb so that anything that says going
8 to begin implementation in December '23 that's pending/not started will be revised, is that
9 correct Ms. Campbell?

10
11 Clare Campbell: That is the intent, yes. Otherwise we will see what we can do before January.
12 Yes, we're aware, we're very aware.

13
14 Vice Chair Chang: Just looking at the optics, it won't look good right? If it says we're going to
15 have done it and we haven't started... From HCD, because I went through and I think there are
16 more than six of them actually that...

17
18 Clare Campbell: We have it.

19

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1 Vice Chair Chang: Great. And then I have a bunch of questions about Attachment C which
2 begins on Packet Page 144, mostly about questions about things that were partially complete
3 and then are now ongoing, which seems to make sense to me, but then things like... there are a
4 bunch that were ... ok so if you look at Packet Page 146, there's S1.5.2, I don't know, is it
5 ongoing or is it complete? Because in one column it says it's ongoing and in the other one it
6 says it's complete.

7

8 Ms. Moitra: It was ongoing , you're talking about S1.5.2?

9

10 Vice Chair Chang: Yes.

11

12 Ms. Moitra: Yes, it was pending in 2022, and in 2023 the status changed to ongoing, so this is ...
13 sorry, the last column, it should be ongoing instead of complete.

14

15 Vice Chair Chang: Okay, thanks. Yea that one looked like a typo to me. And then on Packet Page
16 147 there's a whole bunch that went from pending to ongoing and I'm just wondering what
17 happened there, was it just a housekeeping thing, where we decided that all of these things are
18 no longer ... we're not actually pending, they're ongoing matters, that we actually suddenly
19 starting working on them.

20

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1 Ms. Moitra: I think as the department have pointed out, they have designated the status, I think
2 some of these activities were stopped for the pandemic or things like that, you know, and then
3 the work resumed on it, so that's why there's been so much change in the status reporting this
4 year.

5
6 Vice Chair Chang: Okay, so you believe it's a reflection of actual change in work and status
7 rather than just housekeeping. That's helpful. Kind of going backwards a little bit, I had a
8 specific question on Packet Page 145, this is the L10.1.1, it's about relocating the terminal
9 building for the airport. I was wondering what it means for that to be ongoing.

10

11 Ms. Moitra: I have to get back to you on that too because this has been... these status' has been
12 defined by the individual departments...

13

14 Vice Chair Chang: Yeah, Yeah, so there's quite a few questions like that as well as N1.5.1, like
15 what does it mean that that one is on... if it was pending before, what does it mean that it's
16 ongoing, so I guess what I'm saying is that I'm guessing there will be some questions like this
17 from City Council, where it's a little confusing what it means for something to be ongoing, or
18 what's actually been done on it. Okay. On to Packet Page 148, so these are a lot of
19 transportation ones and because we are the Planning and Transportation Commission I had ... I
20 would love to see the next level of detail on a whole bunch of these, the ones that are pe... like

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1 there's one that's I think Commissioner Akin may have referred to it on Packet Page 148,
2 T1.11.2, and it was ongoing and now it's pending, so we're wondering about why that is, but on
3 many of the others, I think that the Commission would like to know what is the status on these
4 a little bit more specifically. So, in the same way that the housing element attachments,
5 Attachment B gave a little status, sorry, there's a little comment I think, about what was done,
6 maybe it wasn't the Housing Element, one of these tables that's in the Attachment, there's a
7 little bit of a comment on the status as to what's being done, so if you could pass on to the
8 Transportation folks that we would love a little bit more of update on where some of these
9 stand that are being worked on.

10

11 Ms. Moitra: There are some which are ... there is a status column for the Comprehensive Plan
12 Implementation programs too, which is the right most column and some of them provide an
13 explanation as to what is happening or if there was any change.

14

15 Vice Chair Chang: Okay. That's helpful. That's what I was thinking of. Alright, I see that
16 Commission Lu has his light on, so I'm going to let him go for a little while because I have a
17 whole bunch more questions, but we'll come back to me.

18

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1 Commissioner Lu: Yeah, I have a bunch of specific questions too, but I'll only ask a couple of
2 framing questions for this first round. So, does HCD or OPR actually comment on these
3 transmittals and what are the overall consequences.

4
5 Ms. Moitra: HCD and OPR collates the data from different jurisdictions, that's what they do, and
6 you know, when the General Plan or the Housing Element is adopted, like when we list the
7 implementation programs, we are supposed to work on them, that's the assumption and you
8 know, yearly reporting of this is what HCD requires the jurisdictions to do. I'm sure you know,
9 they attend... the term, they would like ... they would see how much of these implementation
10 programs have been actually worked on.

11
12 Commissioner Lu: Okay, so we expect them to read through the individual rows and then give
13 feedback to us if they think we're being too slow or if they think 102 units isn't sufficient, like will
14 we actually hear back in any way, will there be direct consequences?

15
16 Clare Campbell: If I could just respond Chitra, so separating Housing Element from the Comp
17 Plan, because they really are two different situations completely, the Comp Plan programs, we
18 don't get feedback from... after we send in our report, we don't get a letter saying oh.. you're
19 running late on certain programs, you know, what's going on so, you know at some point
20 perhaps you know, this is something really internally for the City to be tracking, how we're

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1 progressing with the work that we're doing and maybe at some point in the future we'll have a
2 specific kind of follow up to say... City of Palo Alto you haven't done these things and there's
3 some consequences but I am not aware of any specific consequences of the city not reaching
4 certain program goals and policies. On the Housing Element though, it's a completely different
5 story, there's lots of tracking, there's required reporting, there's thresholds to be met and there
6 are consequences that come into play, so it's two different sets of protocols for these different
7 annual progress reports.

8
9 Commissioner Lu: That's helpful. So, we will expect them to look in detail, see if our progress is
10 too slow, see if 102 units feels insufficient and that would affect their... all those other
11 enforcements or potential issues you mentioned would be applied through potential rejection
12 of the Housing Element again if they think our plan is insufficient or is there anything just
13 innately tied to this report that we're sending them?

14
15 Clare Campbell: I don't think there's anything specific to this report but there are other
16 implications. So, when we complete our Housing Element and our processes are getting
17 comments right now from HCD about how we're responding, how we're meeting the
18 thresholds or meeting Housing Element Law, all of those things, and when at the certain point
19 that we do the certification process, once that's done, we know that we have a solid
20 conforming Element according to HCD. When we do our annual progress reports there's

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1 nothing specific that's coming back related to the Housing Element, but there are other State
2 Legislation, regulations like the SB35 or other things, if we're not meeting certain thresholds for
3 the number of permits that we've been getting out the door and meeting certain thresholds, it
4 impacts some of our development review processes and I also want to say that for the Housing
5 Element, they do have another, I'm not sure the entity of this group, but there is a stronger
6 enforcement program that they're going to be looking at the city, so, I don't know what that's
7 going to look like yet, but we do anticipate of course, you know, stronger, or more supervision
8 or oversight of these reportings that we do.

9

10 Commissioner Lu: Got it. Thank you.

11

12 Clare Campbell: And I just want to add one more thing just for everyone's benefit, the
13 attachment, the first attachment, Attachment A, does provide like staff comments for all of
14 those programs that we listed in Attachment, I think C, so we just didn't include those staff
15 comments in that last attachment, but there are many staff comments in Attachment A related
16 to the different programs, but we'll definitely make sure next year we include those staff
17 comments on those other attachments as well. Thank you.

18

19 Vice Chair Chang: Thank you. Okay, Commissioner Templeton.

20

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1 Commissioner Templeton: Thank you, and thanks for that explanation, I was just thinking back
2 to previous years where this particular action item was very proforma and it wasn't a review of
3 how well or not staff is accomplishing the goals listed, but that the report exists. And, so I hear
4 that that is reflected in your comments Ms. Campbell, so, the... can you just clarify really
5 directly if you want us to give you feedback on these changes or if you want us to say yes
6 there's a report.

7

8 Clare Campbell: Under our local ordinance the Planning Commission has the purview to provide
9 comments and feedback on these Comp Plan programs, so that is part of your role if you feel
10 that that's appropriate. So, definitely that is the Planning Commissions role. The Housing
11 Element is ... we're in a little bit of a weird position right now because we know we're coming
12 back in February with some revisions and changes, so some of those comments might be more
13 appropriate when we move forward with that, but definitely we welcome any of your
14 comments on these programs, and we can take note of those.

15

16 Clare Campbell: You're very kind. What I'm trying to get it is we have no end of comments we'll
17 give you on these programs, what I'm trying to just narrow down is like do you want us to
18 question the status or is there some way you can help us scope what you need from us here
19 with regards to feedback on the Comp Plan programs, do you want us to say you should do
20 more of this and less of this, or...

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Clare Campbell: Yeah, that's exactly right.

Commissioner Templeton: Okay. But not necessarily status guys. Thank you.

Clare Campbell: Thank you, yes.

Vice Chair Chang: Okay, Commissioner Reckdahl, so let's keep it to clarifying questions right now, and

Commissioner Reckdahl: (microphone off) Okay, I'm done clarifying.

Vice Chair Chang: Does anybody have any other clarifying questions? Nope? Okay, then on to ... we need to take Public Comment. So, it looks like we have ... anybody? Is there anybody?

Ms. Dao: No, I have no requests to speak.

Vice Chair Chang: Okay, fantastic. On to comments then. Go ahead Commissioner Reckdahl.

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1 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, my comments are on the Comprehensive Plan programs... the
2 Comprehensive Plan and it's a comprehensive list so I guess that's appropriate. And
3 comprehensive lists are good and bad, it lists everything that you might want to do, but it also
4 kind of buries kind of the high priority programs with a whole bunch of just kind of routine tasks
5 and it's hard to understand what the priority is and so I think we would be well served to kind
6 of identify the handful, or ten programs out of here that we really want to give high priority.
7 There's a column that talks about priority but that's really a time frame, it's not if I hired one
8 more person what would I want him to do. That's what I consider priority, and not a time
9 frame. And so I kind of get lost in all this. Do we have any ability to modify that? Is this a
10 question for planning or a question for Chitra? Or Clare?

11

12 Clare Campbell: I think, you know, we can definitely take into consideration a different way of
13 reporting out, I think over these years, we're learning... every year we learn something new
14 about how to report this information out differently or hopefully better ... hopefully every year
15 we'll get better at it. But even, I think as staff, I've questioned like mmm is this really the best
16 way to categorize some of this or to prioritize, does this really make sense, because back in
17 2017 it made sense to everybody at that moment but maybe today it really doesn't matter... I
18 mean it doesn't make as much sense. So, certainly you can provide feedback to maybe give
19 some direction to staff on a different way of reporting the information next time, and we can
20 work on that for our next annual report.

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Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. For example, there are some things with seismic improvements, and that sounds really important to me. But it doesn't seem to be a high priority task which makes me think that maybe it's just kind of nice to have. Or same with back up water or back up power supplies, I would think that those would be like at the top of the list, and we'd be dropping everything to make sure that if there is an earthquake and Hetch Hetchy doesn't give us any water that we have some capability to provide some water. So, putting that in perspective, I think, would be a good addition. I like the comprehensive list, but I think, like I said, things get lost in it. We also have other things with the Housing Element, we're adding a whole bunch of housing down in south Palo Alto and there are some programs there we have to work with VTA to improve public transit down there, we have to plan bike paths, we have to plan parks down there, and those all should be programs. And so, that may be next year's iteration but that's... those are really important topics that we can't just kind of wait on. And, some of them for example, at the top of Packet Page 61, Bird Safe Rules, I wouldn't think that would be much work and we're putting up... if we're planning to have a lot more taller buildings, that we think we should clarify that sooner than later, or every time someone comes forth we're going to have to on the fly, figure out what we want for bird safe. Considering that we're doing a lot of development, I think going through and identifying those that will shape that development would add to that priority. That's all I have, thanks.

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1 Vice Chair Chang: Thanks, Okay, Commissioner Akin.

2

3 Commissioner Akin: I'll start with the procedural question, since this is the first time I've gone
4 through this exercise, I took seriously the suggestion that we could offer proposals for changes.
5 Now, it was not my assumption that we as a body would be voting on any of these changes
6 tonight, but simply recommending them to staff as potential work items in the future or quick
7 fixes to the document. So, is that a reasonable interpretation?

8

9 Vice Chair Chang: Yeah, I think that's reasonable and one of my thoughts also when I doing the
10 same exercise was sort of what do we want to flag for Council, because some of this stuff, if it
11 really is a prioritization, you know, requires dollars, which means Council needs to give dollars,
12 so I think that according to Ms. Moitra, she would be passing on everything to both
13 departments and Council, so that's how I look at it.

14

15 Commissioner Akin: Okay, so I've got six of these, I think what I'd like to do is do the first two
16 because the remaining four are transportation related and probably should be done together.
17 So I'll start with Packet Page 58, bottom item, L4.2.3, this is about support, potentially support
18 new creative and innovative retail in Palo Alto. So, two years ago Cushman and Wakefield did a
19 great study on how retail changes as density increases. Very relevant for us. And the main take
20 away for me is that as density increases, retail space per resident goes down. You have to get

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1 used to the idea of the retail venues themselves becoming smaller. So, the suggestion is should
2 we consider zoning changes to support smaller retail spaces or spaces shared by multiple
3 tenants, as a way of increasing retail support in the city. The next one is on Packet Page 90, this
4 is S1.13.2, roughly in the middle of the page. This is about adopting emerging residential off grid
5 capabilities and technologies. The word microgrids does not appear here. But I think it should.
6 Because that is clearly relevant technology, and it is used explicitly in other items in the plan.
7 So, we're aware of the concept, it's just that this is a place it should be called out that it isn't.
8 Alright, let me stop there because the remaining four are transportation related, and give
9 everyone else a chance to speak.

10

11 Vice Chair Chang: Commissioner Templeton. Oh no, sorry, wrong light. Commissioner
12 Hechtman.

13

14 Commissioner Hechtman: Thanks. Let me... first, a little bit of clarification having been through
15 this three or four times now, these program texts, for example what Commissioner Akin was
16 recommending a change to, my understanding is this is the program text from our Comp Plan.
17 And so, to change the text here, is really to change the Comp Plan, which I think we have to do
18 in that order. Change the Comp Plan, and then... then next year this text gets changed and it
19 wasn't clear to me. Similarly, Commissioner Reckdahl was suggesting, something he didn't see
20 that he thought should go here in the Housing Element, and that's the same thing. So the

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1 Housing Element that Council adopted over the summer, it has a series of programs. And so, if
2 we want to see a program here, we need to communicate to the Council and this is actually a
3 good time to do it, right, because they are looking at changing the Housing Element, to make
4 the change there, so that staff can pick it up next year in their report to us. So I would suggest
5 on those kinds of issues that my fellow Commissioners.... And particularly the Housing Element
6 ones, because that is... I don't know when we're going back for another Comp Plan change, but
7 they're looking at the Housing Plan right now. So, maybe that's for Commissioner Reckdahl's
8 suggestion, maybe that's something staff could fold into what they are looking at in terms of
9 changes to the Housing Element.

10

11 Commissioner Templeton: Sorry, I just want to interject here, and be really explicit, because I
12 know we had the little conversation with Ms. Moitra but changing the Comp Plan and changing
13 the Housing Element are not Agendized. All that's Agendized is this report. Just clarifying.

14

15 Commissioner Hechtman: Alright, so, I think our comments are consistent, but just to clarify,
16 and again, it's because the first time you tackle this, and we had a couple of Commissioners as
17 their first time, it's overwhelming. I mean, I... I remember my first year and 'what do you mean
18 we have 410 programs', you know we see staff, there's not that many of them. How are they
19 working on 410 things or 77% of 410 at one time, and that didn't include the Housing Element.
20 This is the first year that I've been on the Commissioner where we get to see the companion

-
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1 Housing Element aspect of it. And I will say that in the time that I've been on the PTC, and Clare
2 mentioned this, every year we have some comments about format and sort of usability and
3 every year staff comes back with a better version. And so, for example, Attachment C, which is
4 just the table of what's changed, didn't exist my first year. Right? We had comments, and Ms.
5 Moitra took it upon herself to come back the next year with that document for the first time to
6 isolate, because I remember I thought, that's really where the action is, right? Otherwise,
7 you're reading 410 things once a year and you can't tell what's different. Right? And so they've
8 done that, and as Clare pointed out, if you're curious about why the change happened in
9 Attachment C, there should be an explanation in Attachment A. Sometimes it's not much of an
10 explanation, but ... so that's something that staff could think about, is just carrying the
11 explanation from Attachment A into C, since we're going to be making C so you don't have to
12 look two places, and maybe that will handle that. Oh, I did want to mention... there were a
13 number of questions that were asked of Ms. Moitra that she has to get back to us on and
14 that's... I just wanted to say, in her defense, because this had to be explained to me, tonight
15 she's really the head of the spear. Right. She is here representing all the departments that
16 contribute to this and every department gets to decide themselves when status changes. And
17 they don't necessarily sit down with Ms. Moitra and fully brief her on that. And so, it's tough for
18 her to know all of those things, again, I think she does a great job of corralling the cats and
19 getting this report to us, but that's... when she can't answer the question, I think a lot of times,
20 that's why. And then the final thing, it's just a correction, and I noticed this from one of

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1 Commissioner Akin's comments on Packet Page 48, program number C3.3.4, we've got a couple
2 of dates in there that are more than 18,000 years into the future, and I'm a bit fan of long-range
3 planning, but I'm pretty sure those are typos. And so maybe you could clean those up on the
4 way to Council.

5

6 Ms. Moitra: Sorry about that.

7

8 Commissioner Hechtman: Alright, thank you very much.

9

10 Vice Chair Chang: Okay, so I have a couple comments since I don't see any other lights. Yes, I
11 also wanted to thank Ms. Moitra for the attachment, it's actually really really useful this year
12 and I was able to get kind of, to the big questions, some of the big questions that I wanted to
13 ask, so what I did was I looked through the prioritization as Commissioner Reckdahl pointed
14 out is more of a timing issue and that's just by nature how we, the city, created the Comp Plan.
15 But, as I was looking at kind of what to flag for Council, which is how I approached this exercise,
16 it's what... if something is short term, if it's done in five-ish years, we're already passed that,
17 which means if we haven't done it, we should be making a conscious decision not to do it.
18 Meaning if it's staying in pending, is it staying in pending because of you know, lack of funds,
19 which I saw was flagged as one of the items or is there something else that's going on. And so,
20 or is it staffing, for example. And so, I did have kind of question because I looked at how many

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1 of the things in Attachment... I noticed that there's a large number of items in Attachment ...
2 sorry, Attachment D which are the pending items that were transportation, like, a
3 disproportionate number of them, were transportation related items, and again, because we
4 are the Planning and Transportation Commission I wanted to focus a little bit on that, and was
5 concerned that there's also a bunch of items that are listed as "R" priority which is supposedly a
6 routine priority that are also pending, so I don't think, Ms. Moitra, I don't think that you can
7 help answer this question, like can you tell us a little more about some of the thinking that went
8 into the R prioritization, because I don't remember seeing that in the past, maybe I just didn't
9 read carefully enough, but it concerned me that there were supposedly routine things that we
10 thought were kind of no big deal, that maybe we're not doing.

11

12 Ms. Moitra: Yes (interrupted)

13

14 Vice Chair Chang: I can't speak to whether or not it is important or not because I don't ... we
15 don't have the relevant staff member here. Yeah, go ahead Ms. Moi...

16

17 Ms. Moitra: Yes, again, these status' or these priorities were given in 2017 and at that point,
18 maybe that was routine action, or priority was not, so these things change over time and that's
19 what, you know, was reflected here I guess, we need to change... we need to make the routine
20 a higher priority or something like that.

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1
2 Vice Chair Chang: So I think that would be my biggest flag to Council, is to take a look at the
3 things that have ... you know... short term, which means less than five years, which means
4 should have already been done, and isn't being touched, it might be intentionally not being
5 touched, which is fine, or they just might have fallen to the wayside for some reason, and that
6 would be concerning, if they are actually important... if it's important that they are done. And I
7 also wanted to flag several safety related things that, I mean personally, as a Commissioner
8 since we're supposed to talk about prioritizations, seem that they should be high priority. So,
9 one way the back up ... in case of emergency... it was internet for first responders, I'm trying to
10 find the item, I have two many ... there it is... Packet Page 165, 3.12.3, like I would give pretty
11 strong feedback actually, that that seems important, because for the next natural disaster or
12 disaster, whatever it is, we need our first responders to be able to communicate with each
13 other and then similarly, as the parking Transportation Commission, Packet Page 160... Planning
14 and Transportation Commission, sorry, I'm tired, thank you... thank you Commissioner
15 Templeton. Packet Page 169, T6.1.3, there's an item called Address Pedestrian safety along
16 Alma Street between Embarcadero Road and Litten Street, was supposed to be a short term
17 item, and is currently pending and I... you know, I guess my feedback... I wish they were here,
18 but please please, please incorporate that in the two projects that are being done, the Safe
19 Streets for All, as well as the Bike and Ped Plan, and hopefully we'll get action actually on those
20 items since six years ago we thought it was important for it to be done. I just don't have any

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1 context for this item, so those are the two I wanted to flag. And in general, I think I have
2 questions about why it is that there's so many short term items in the Transportation bucket
3 that short term and routine items in the transportation bucket that are pending. I'd love to ask
4 the transportation team also but wanted to kind of make that a matter of public record as well.
5 Does anyone else have any other comments?

6

7 Clare Campbell: Can I just take a quick moment to interject if I could? Sorry, I would just like for
8 the... if there are any actual specific recommendations for changes to the text and priorities, we
9 would need to have the Commission vote on that, to bring that forward, because you're
10 essentially kind of initiating a change to the Housing Element document, not Housing Element,
11 the Comprehensive Plan document, so we do want to have a majority consensus or majority
12 vote to say that yes, we should look at these things and make these changes and then we can
13 bring that forward to the Council as a Planning Commission recommendation for making these
14 changes.

15

16 Vice Chair Chang: So, point of clarification, like we're not... if we actually change... if what...
17 what we would be recommending is recommending that we think about making a change to
18 the Comp Plan, correct? Because we're not actually allowed to make changes right now, it's not
19 been advised.

20

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1 Ms. French: It's not Agendized so we should not go down that path, however if there's some...
2 and sorry to jump in Clare, but I think if there are some recommendations on formatting as we
3 have over the years modified formatting to bring to this Commission, I think that feedback is
4 welcome and part of this item tonight.

5
6 Vice Chair Chang: I don't think we need to vote on that then, but like, do we need to vote on
7 you know, kind of our comments which are 'hey, City Council, please take a look at these items'
8 ... I think the report seems accurate, I'm not saying that we should change the report, it's just
9 pay attention to these ones, like do you really want to leave them as is, or do you want to fund
10 them.

11
12 Ms. French: So, I guess I'm not sure a vote is required either for flagging things like that,
13 typically when we send something to Council, we'll also send the Commission minutes so if
14 there's a desire to do some kind of straw pull I think you can do that, but I don't think it's
15 required.

16
17 Vice Chair Chang: Commissioner Lu has his light. Okay so then, Commissioner Hechtman.

18
19 Commissioner Hechtman: Yeah, so, what we're Agendized and tasked to do tonight is
20 recommend the transmittal of the report. Period. But I do think that staff, in their report to

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1 Council on this report, when they are describing the Planning Commission discussion, has, you
2 know, heard these concepts and can include that, these items were raised by the
3 Commissioners as concerns that the Council may want to look at, right? So, it's not a motion,
4 it's just items of concern yeah, that various commissioners want to bring to the Council's
5 attention. And so I think that way we stay within our Agenda Item, but also communicate
6 effectively with the Council.

7

8 Vice Chair Chang: Yup, sounds good. Okay, so Commissioner Lu you have your light on?

9

10 Commissioner Lu: Yeah, thank you. I think all the clarification has been helpful, I'll try to keep
11 my comments on what is Agendized or is in scope, which I think largely is the priority and the
12 comments and the organization. I think it would be helpful, in addition to having clear
13 prioritization, to indicate which programs are kind of de facto deprioritized, even if it's not an
14 actual change to the Comp Plan or Housing Element. There are some programs which, or a
15 bunch of programs which I think are a bit misleading to have scoped as is, and maybe there
16 could be additional filter or additional report we give to Council that clarifies things like that.
17 There are a bunch of examples which I can send offline, but like for example, there's one on
18 Page 122 what we have Program 3.2 which is to, let me pull this up, which is to continue to
19 monitor new local policy initiatives for effectiveness in combating identified constraints for
20 housing development. You know, this was probably a mistake to having the Housing Element to

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1 begin with because it's kind of meaningless in terms of what we would actually do there, but
2 when we try to summarize our progress for at least our awareness, there should be a
3 prioritization column with some indication as to why things are actually actionable or kind of de
4 facto deprioritize, there are a bunch of examples throughout the document where the
5 comments reference another program and how the Comp Plan programs kind of rolled into
6 another program and should kind of be disregarded almost, and I think it's just so difficult to
7 interpret when there are all those kind of side references to other programs and maybe there's
8 a layer of clean up and abstraction we can do on our own. Some also scope for prioritization
9 because that is in our scope, there are a lot of programs that reference Cal Ave and the
10 pedestrianization of Cal Ave obviously is an important priority and a huge change, perhaps we
11 can fold that into one of the already addressed programs and change the priority for that to be
12 a short term immediate project. Similarly, I think, there's a program on page 63, L9.6.1, which
13 talks about allocation of public space and improving parks and things like that, and maybe
14 increasing the priority of that from medium to short term is the right way for us to like, I guess
15 just to clear our prioritization of improving San Antonio, because that program I think could
16 reasonably incorporate everything we'd want to do in San Antonio. So, I have a bunch of other
17 specific comments like that, I'll actually just try to transmit them offline I think. I did have a
18 couple of actual questions programs I wasn't sure how to interpret though, on page 37, on
19 program 8.1.1, there's a mention of how office space has declined by 32,000 square feet. Is
20 there any context on that number? Is that part of a trend that's actually worth noting or is that

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1 some sort of temporary fluctuation as something gets knocked down and reconstructed or
2 something like that.

3

4 Clare Campbell: Can you please repeat the Packet Page number again and the Policy number?

5

6 Commissioner Lu: Packet page 37, policy B1.1. So, the very first one actually in the entire
7 Attachment A.

8

9 Clare Campbell: So, typically what that's referring to is that maybe we had a project that came
10 through and there was demolition and I apologize if you said this already or if you're asking this
11 question, but we probably had a replacement project that came through and in that process
12 there was some... there was a net loss of office square footage as a result, and maybe there
13 were multiple projects related to this. I wouldn't know without having to look specifically at the
14 permits that were... or the entitlements that went through, to give you the specific details.

15

16 Commissioner Lu: Yeah, I mean if it does turn out that over the last couple of years or the year
17 over year we are chipping away and losing office space, that is really notable and really
18 interesting for us to discuss. Did you have...

19

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1 Commissioner Reckdahl: West Bayshore. West Bayshore we lost more than 32,000 of office
2 space where we put up townhouses now.

3

4 Commissioner Lu: Ahh, okay. That's useful.

5

6 Commissioner Reckdahl: That by itself could be the reason.

7

8 Commissioner Lu: Okay.

9

10 Commissioner Reckdahl: We've been adding office space still, so I don't think we're in a long
11 term decline.

12

13 Commissioner Lu: Yeah. On Page 55, program L2.4.2, the Stanford Shopping Center housing is
14 described as partially complete? Is that just referencing that it's in the Housing Element and so
15 there's some progress here or is there any substantive discussion.

16

17 Clare Campbell: L2.4.2?

18

19 Commissioner Lu: Yes, Packet Page 55, allow housing at Stanford Shopping Center.

20

-
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1 Clare Campbell: We do have, so... as the staff denotes there, it does reference that we do have
2 a program in place for addressing this particular topic and you know, do be frank, there's been
3 ongoing discussions with the shopping center about this whole potential housing development,
4 so it's been an ongoing conversation that's been happening but we do have it in our Housing
5 Element specifically as a program, so that's why it's called partially complete, because it's in
6 progress or we're working on it.

7
8 Commissioner Lu: I think if you flipped to the program 1.5 in the Housing Element which is on
9 Packet Page 118, it says that that is kind of pending and not started. So I think there's just a
10 disconnect, if there's anything interesting to note about discussions with Simon Properties, I
11 think that's very interesting to me, at least, and worth flagging. And so also there's potentially
12 this discrepancy here of it being partially complete in the Comprehensive Plan and maybe not
13 started in the Housing Element. Okay, that's all for now.

14
15 Vice Chair Chang: Alright, Commissioner Templeton.

16
17 **MOTION**

18
19 Commissioner Templeton: Yes, I was wondering if we could just move the staff
20 recommendation.

-
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SECOND

Vice Chair Chang: Second. Are there any comments? Further discussion? Okay, Ms. Dao can we take a vote?

VOTE

Ms. Dao: Commissioner Akin

Commissioner Akin: Yes.

Ms. Dao: Vice Chair Chang

Vice Chair Chang: Yes

Ms. Dao: Commissioner Hechtman

Commissioner Hechtman: Yes

-
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1 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Lu

2

3 Commissioner Lu: Yes

4

5 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Reckdahl

6

7 Commissioner Reckdahl: Yes

8

9 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Templeton

10

11 Commissioner Templeton: Yes

12

13 Ms. Dao: Motion carries 6-0.

14

15 **MOTION PASSED 6** (Akin, Chang, Lu, Hechtman, Reckdahl, Templeton) -0 -1 (Summa Absent)

16 **Commission Action**: Moved by Templeton, seconded by Chang. Pass 6-0-1

17

18 Vice Chair Chang: Wonderful. So we're on to Approval of Minutes.

19

20

21 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

22 Public Comment is Permitted. Three (3) minutes per speaker.

23

-
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1 4. Approval of Planning & Transportation Commission Draft Verbatim Minutes of
2 October 11, 2023

3
4 Vice Chair Chang: So, we have two minutes... two sets of minutes we need to approve, the first
5 one is Approval of the draft verbatim minutes of October 11, 2023. Do I have a motion?

6
7 **MOTION**

8
9 Commissioner Hechtman: Move approval as revised.

10
11 **SECOND**

12
13 Commissioner Akin: Second.

14
15 Vice Chair Chang: Ms. Dao.

16
17 **VOTE**

18
19 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Templeton.

20
21 Commissioner Templeton: Yes

- 22
-
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1 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Reckdahl

2

3 Commissioner Reckdahl: Yes

4

5 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Lu?

6

7 Commissioner Lu: Yes.

8

9 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Hechtman?

10

11 Commissioner Hechtman: Yes.

12

13 Ms. Dao: Vice-Chair Chang?

14

15 Vice-Chair Chang: Yes.

16

17 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Akin?

18

19 Commissioner Akin: Yes.

20

-
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1 Ms. Dao: Motion carries 6-0-1.

2

3 **MOTION PASSED 7** (Akin, Chang, Lu, Hechtman, Reckdahl, Templeton) 6-0-1 (Summa Absent)

4 **Commission Action**: Motion by Hechtman, seconded by Akin. Pass 6-0-1

5

6 5. Approval of Planning & Transportation Commission Draft Verbatim Minutes of
7 October 25, 2023

8

9 Vice Chair Chang: Alright and now onto the draft verbatim minutes of October 25, 2023?

10

11 **MOTION**

12

13 Commissioner Hechtman: Move approval as revised.

14

15 **SECOND**

16

17 Commissioner Lu: Second.

18

19 Vice Chair Chang: Ms. Dao.

20

21 **VOTE**

-
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1

2 Ms. Dao: Vice-Chair Chang?

3

4 Vice-Chair Chang: Yes.

5

6 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Akin?

7

8 Commissioner Akin: Yes.

9

10 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Hechtman?

11

12 Commissioner Hechtman: Yes.

13

14 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Lu?

15

16 Commissioner Lu: Yes.

17

18 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Reckdahl

19

20 Commissioner Reckdahl: Yes.

-
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1

2 Ms. Dao: Commissioner Templeton

3

4 Commissioner Templeton: Yes

5

6 Ms. Dao: Motion carries 6-0-1.

7

8 **MOTION PASSED 7** (Akin, Chang, Lu, Hechtman, Reckdahl, Templeton) 6-0-1 (Summa Absent)

9 **Commission Action**: Motion by Hechtman, seconded by Lu. Pass 6-0-1

10

11 **Commissioner Questions, Comments or Announcements**

12 Vice Chair Chang: Alright, and for the final item of the night, Commissioner questions,
13 comments, announcements, or future meeting agendas. Anybody? I think we're all ready to go.

14 Okay, no lights, no comments, so we are adjourning this meeting. Thank you.

15

16 **Adjournment**

17 9:08 pm

18

19

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