



PALO ALTO



**PARKS
TRAILS**

**NATURAL OPEN SPACE
& RECREATION**

MASTER PLAN



ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 2017

Dear Palo Alto Residents,

On behalf of the City Council, City staff, Parks and Recreation Commission and the many stakeholders that helped develop this plan, it is my privilege to present the Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan (Plan).

Creating a vibrant community, improving people's lives, and fostering a safe and healthy environment are essential for a strong and healthy community where people live, work, grow up, and age.


The Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan was developed in partnership with our community, through a multi-layered public participation process. The Plan is comprehensive and should serve residents and staff well as a guide for capital and program investment for the next 20 years. The plan strikes a balance between aspirational goals and policies and practical programs, with a methodology for prioritizing limited resources. More importantly, the Plan reflects deeply held community values that will span the test of time. The plan projects a vibrant picture of a healthy and connected community, and provides a clear path forward in enriching our city.

A city, and by extension a community, is a system, of which parks, trails, natural open space and recreation is an essential subsystem interwoven with other subsystems such as housing and business, transportation and mobility, libraries and schools among others. With this Plan we have written a narrative that aligns our shared values of community, stewardship and service within the context of our whole community and its essential subsystems.

Peter Block and John McKnight provide a particularly relevant and moving perspective in their book *The Abundant Community*. They argue that the greatest strength of a community lie in its neighborhoods, and its citizens who appreciate that they are not simply consumers of services but are rather owners, stewards and partners with the City in fostering a strong and healthy community. The effective implementation of this plan, as with companion City master plans that drive and shape our evolving city landscape, will only be possible with citizens working alongside our Mayor and Council and staff to realize our shared vision.

With the Council's adoption of this Plan we should expect greater community enthusiasm and optimism for our future. The citizens of Palo Alto, Parks and Recreation Commission, City Council and staff have all helped develop this plan from the beginning, and together we move forward inspired and resolute in continuing our journey in building and strengthening this great City.

With gratitude,


H. Gregory Scharff
Mayor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



CITY OF PALO ALTO

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Special thanks to the dedicated Palo Alto residents and community members who contributed their time, energy and ideas to this effort, particularly the members of the Stakeholder Advisory Group.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY


To build on and continue the legacy of its strong parks system, the City of Palo Alto developed the Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan (Master Plan) to guide ongoing investment in one of the community's most treasured assets.

The Master Plan presents the vision for the future of Palo Alto's parks, trails, natural open space and recreation system, based on guiding principles, goals and concepts developed through a rigorous analysis of the existing system and a robust community engagement process. It builds on this framework with a set of policies, projects and programs and recommendations for future renovations and capital improvements. It also includes guidance on how to prioritize future recreation, programming, environmental and maintenance investments to meet our community's changing needs and evolving demands for the next 20 years.

Planning Process

The Master Plan process consisted of three phases:

- **Phase I: Community Engagement, Specific Site Analysis and Program Analysis.** This phase included development of a comprehensive inventory and analysis of all Palo Alto parks, trails, developed natural open space areas (picnic areas, parking lots) and recreational facilities and programs; analysis of current and forecasted demographic and recreation trends; and analysis of community recreation needs. It also included identification of community and stakeholder needs, interests and preferences for system enhancements using a proactive community engagement process with a broad range of activities.
- **Phase II: Developing and Prioritizing Project and Program Opportunities.** During this phase, Palo Alto developed goals, policies and programs; identified capital projects, needed renovations and other improvements; and prioritized actions into short, medium and long-term implementation timelines using what was learned in Phase 1. The Palo Alto community provided feedback on priorities and programs through several activities.
- **Phase III: Master Plan Drafting, Review and Adoption.** In Phase 3, the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC), City Council and Palo Alto community reviewed and refined the draft Master Plan, and Council adopted it.



PHASE I:
Community
Engagement,
Specific Site Analysis
and Program Analysis



PHASE II:
Developing
and Prioritizing
Project and
Program
Opportunities



PHASE III:
Master Plan
Drafting,
Review and
Adoption

MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METHODS

- A project webpage
- Public information updates through a variety of online and print communication channels
- A series of face-to-face “intercept surveys” at popular locations and community events
- A variety of interactive community workshops
- A series of online surveys
- Interviews with City staff and community experts to better inform topics that emerged from community engagement
- Consultations with the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) and other appointed commissions
- City Council updates and study sessions

Community engagement opportunities were infused throughout the planning process. Engagement methods included a wide variety of tools and activities, offered within a range of formats, time frames and levels of interaction, to engage with Palo Alto’s diverse community members in ways that were comfortable and convenient for them.

Opportunities

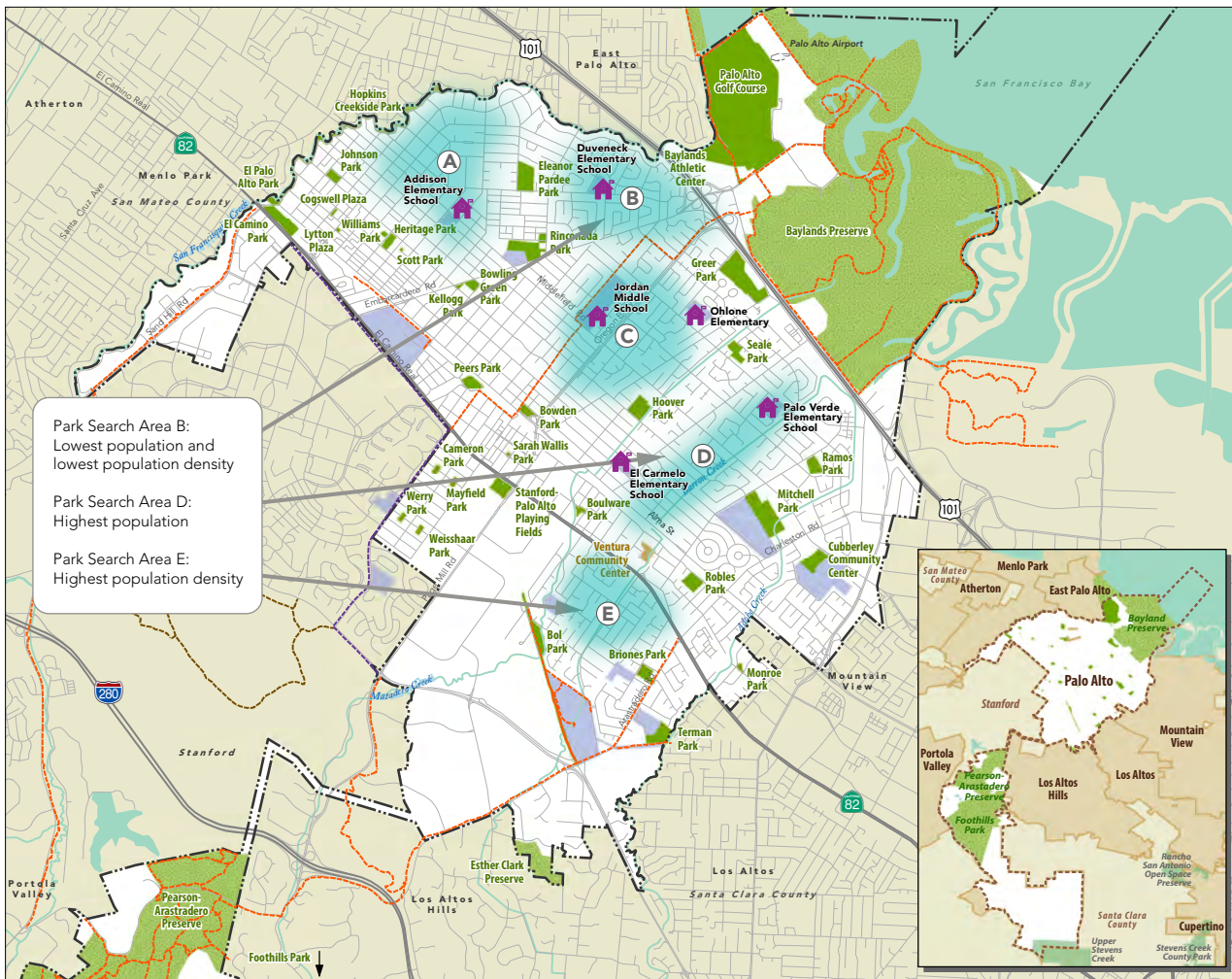
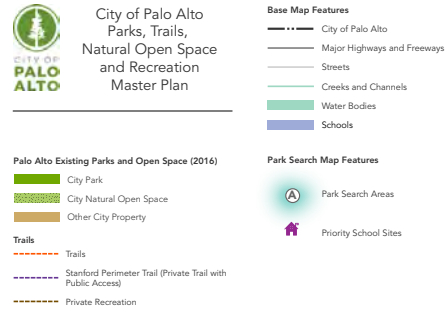
The input from the community, combined with analysis of the many aspects of the park system, generated a wide range of opportunities. In the overall context of limited land, three properties in Palo Alto represent unique opportunities, as they are already owned by the City and are not yet designated for a specific use :

- **Cubberley Community Center:** The City owns 8 of the 35 acres of this former high school campus and has managed leases within the buildings with a number of community organizations and businesses while also scheduling the gym and field space. The City and the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) have agreed to jointly master plan the redevelopment of the site by 2020.
- **Foothills Park Expansion:** The City acquired 7.7 acres of land adjacent to Foothills Park and has dedicated it as an expansion of the park. The expansion is cut off from the developed portion of the park by the existing maintenance facility. Discussion of the future of this site is pending the results of the Buckeye Creek hydrology study, which will be completed in summer 2017.
- **Baylands Athletic Center Expansion:** As a result of the redesign of the Palo Alto Golf Course, 10.5 acres of land was added to the adjacent Baylands Athletic Center site for future recreation opportunities.

In addition, three concept maps illustrate high-value opportunities to further create a multi-layered system of parklands and connections that serves both people and natural systems. The maps can also serve as tools for supporting decisions on individual policies, programs and projects.

Expand the System

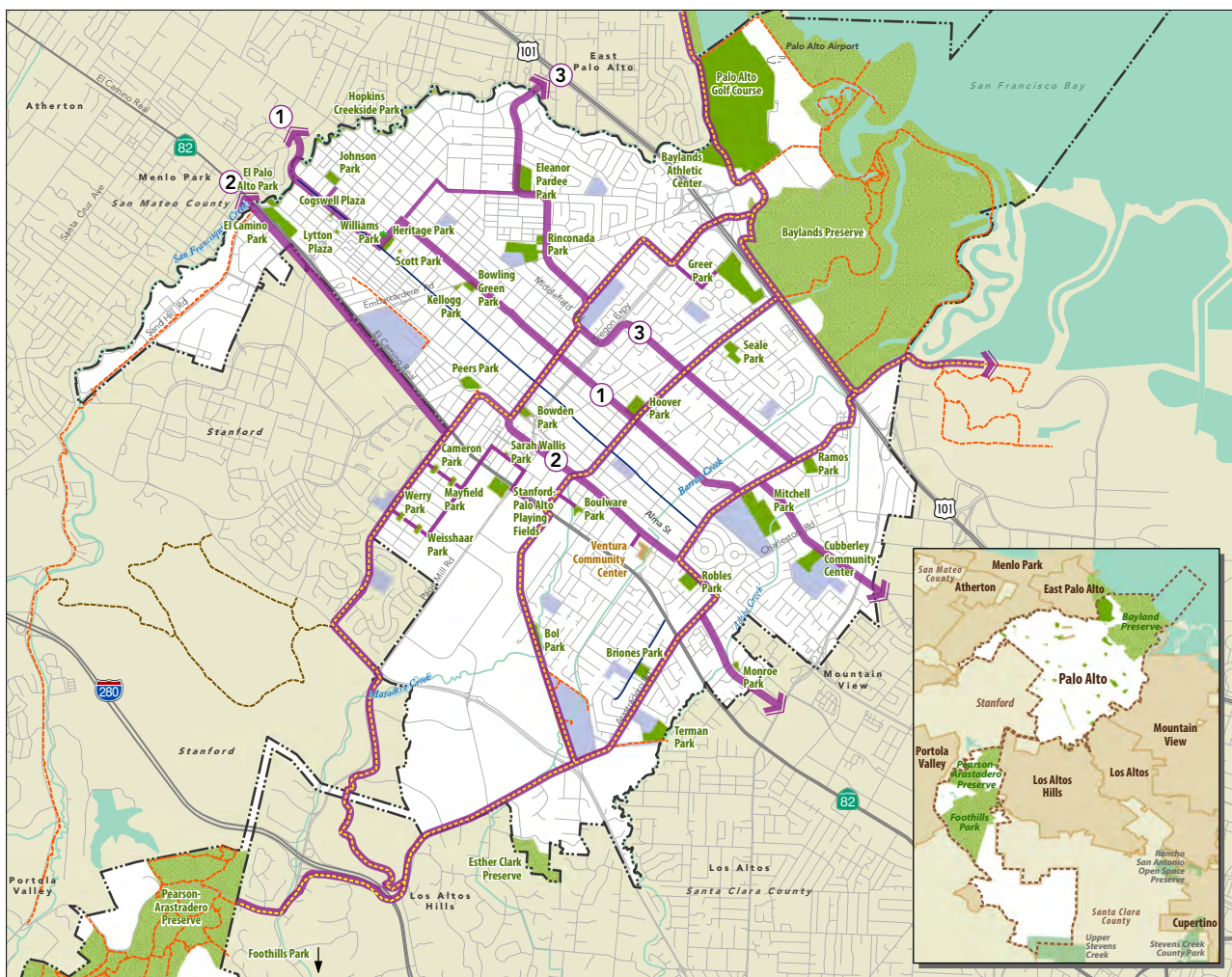
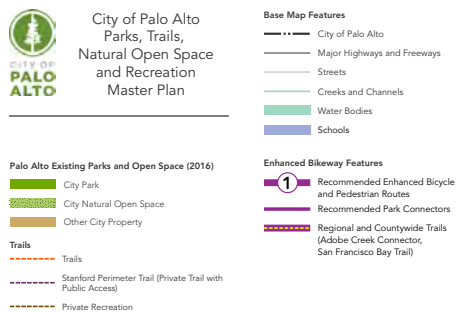
This map identifies areas of Palo Alto where residents lack access to parks and natural open spaces within ¼ mile of their homes. These “park search areas,” labeled A through E for planning purposes, will help Palo Alto focus future park additions in neighborhoods with the greatest need: for example, those with the highest density and/or largest population. Meanwhile, this map shows the importance of public access to school grounds that fall within park search areas (noted in purple), which have the potential to be maintained and expanded.



Park Search Areas

Connect the System

A selection of Palo Alto’s existing and planned bikeways and pedestrian routes can be leveraged to improve park and recreation access. This map illustrates this potential network of trails and enhanced roadways that connect neighborhoods to local and regional parks, recreation facilities and natural open spaces. These routes are part of the City’s adopted Bicycle Pedestrian Transportation Plan and related work on Safe Routes to School. Recommended enhanced routes, labeled 1 through 3 for planning purposes, provide main north to south travel corridors between Palo Alto’s parks and into neighboring communities. Regional trails like the Bay to Ridge and San Francisco Bay trails provide similar travel corridors from Foothills Park and Arastradero Preserve in the southwest to the Baylands Preserve and other shoreline parks and natural open spaces to the northeast. Recommended park connectors complete the network by linking the remaining park sites.



Park Connections

Connect Natural Systems

This map illustrates how the same corridors recommended for bike and pedestrian enhancements can also provide connectivity for natural systems. Landscape design features such as increased urban forest canopy, native species plantings and stormwater bioswales can create safe paths of travel and provide habitat value for local wildlife. Creek and riparian enhancements, supported by these “pollinator pathways,” would improve water quality and habitat connections between regionally significant habitats in the hills and in the bay. New street and park trees would benefit areas that currently have low tree canopy coverage, highlighted in tan.



**City of Palo Alto
Parks, Trails,
Natural Open Space
and Recreation
Master Plan**

Base Map Features

- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools

Natural System Features

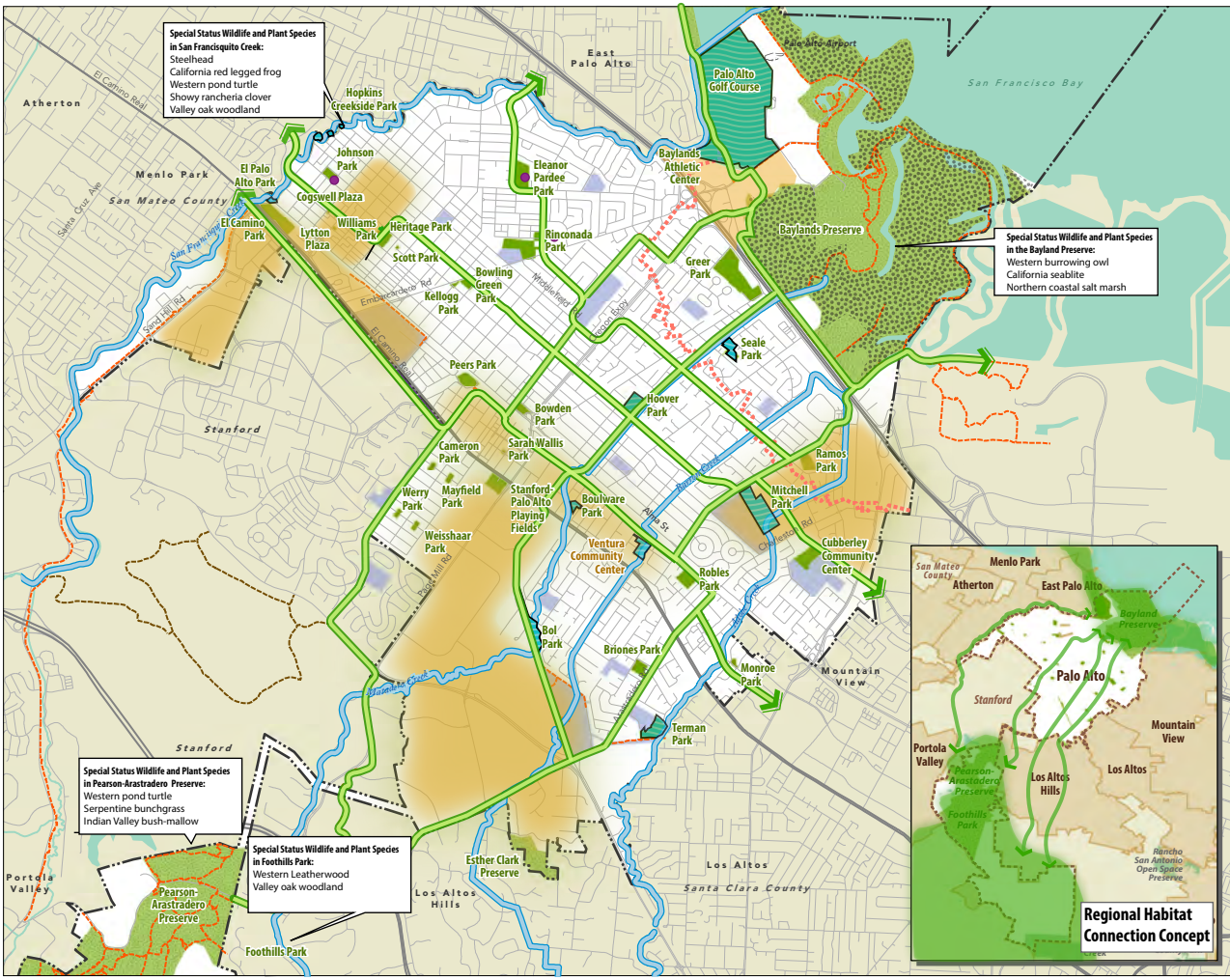
- Pollinator Pathways
- Creeks/ Riparian Enhancements
- Urban Canopy Target Areas
- Riparian Connected Parks
- Community Gardens
- Wetland Habitat
- Mean Projected High Water - 3 ft Sea Level Rise (NOAA)

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Spaces
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation



Natural Systems

Principles, Goals and Policies

Through the Master Plan process, the Palo Alto community defined a future for parks, trails, natural open spaces and recreation. Distilled community input and themes from the analysis process led to the principles, goals and system-wide concepts that describe the community’s long-term vision for the future system.

Principles

The eight principles represent the collective direction provided by hundreds of participants from across the city as well as many local stakeholder groups. Building on our assets, our vision for the continuing evolution of the park system is encapsulated in the following eight principles:

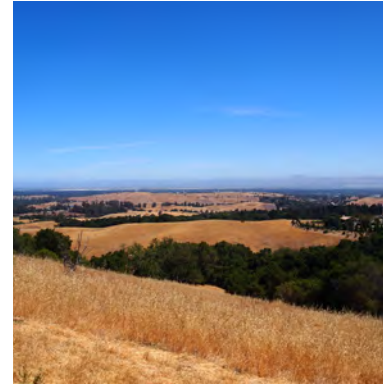
- PLAYFUL
- HEALTHY
- SUSTAINABLE
- INCLUSIVE
- ACCESSIBLE
- FLEXIBLE
- BALANCED
- NATURE

- **Playful:** Inspires imagination and joy.
- **Healthy:** Supports the physical and mental health and well-being of individuals as well as the connectedness and cohesion of the community.
- **Sustainable:** Stewards natural, economic and social resources for a system that endures for the long term.
- **Inclusive:** Responsive to the entire Palo Alto community: all ages, abilities, languages, cultures and levels of income.
- **Accessible:** Easy for people of all abilities to use year-round and access by all modes of travel.
- **Flexible:** Supports multiple uses across time with adaptable spaces that can accommodate traditional, emerging and future uses.
- **Balanced:** Is not dominated by any one type of experience or place and includes both historic elements and cutting-edge features, highly manicured and more organic spaces, and self-directed and programmed activities.
- **Nature:** Incorporates native species and habitat corridors, and creates opportunities to learn about and interact with nature.

Goals

Six goals state the community's desired outcomes and provide an organizational structure for the policies, programs and projects that form the recommendations of the Master Plan.

- Provide high-quality facilities and services that are accessible, inclusive and distributed equitably across Palo Alto.
- Enhance the capacity, quality and variety of uses of the existing system of parks, recreation and open space facilities and services.
- Create environments that encourage regular active and passive activities to support health, wellness and social connections.
- Preserve and integrate nature, natural systems and ecological principles throughout Palo Alto.
- Develop innovative programs, services and strategies for expanding the system.
- Manage Palo Alto's land and services effectively, efficiently and sustainably utilizing quantitative and qualitative measures.



Policies

The principles and goals will be realized through the policies described in Chapter 4 of the Master Plan. These policies and programs are organized within the framework of the six goals, with implementing policies and programs following each goal.

Implementation

Over the next twenty years, the implementation of the projects and programs recommended in the Master Plan will include an annual process initiated by City staff with guidance and leadership from the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council. Palo Alto's dedicated community advocates and partner organizations will also play an important role in ensuring the proposed programs and projects align with the needs of the community.

Projects and programs were prioritized and will continue to be evaluated by five criteria:

- Fill existing gaps: Bring recreation opportunities (parkland, facilities, programs) to areas of the City and to users where gaps were identified.

The goals reflect the community's desired outcomes, examples of these outcomes are shown above.



Examples of the types of programs and projects that can be implemented by the dedicated community of Palo Alto.

- Respond to growth: Add features or programs and/or modify or expand components of the system to prepare for and address increasing demand.
- Address community preferences: Target the highest priority types of projects and programs identified through citywide outreach.
- Maximize public resources: Create the most benefit for each dollar of capital and operating expenditure possible.
- Realize multiple benefits: Advance the principles of this Master Plan as well as the goals, projects and directions of other adopted City efforts.

High-Priority Projects and Programs

There are thirty-four projects and programs that we know today are high priorities, based on feedback from the Parks and Recreation Commission, City Council, stakeholders, the broader community and City staff. These priorities are organized by projects and programs in order of urgency. Urgency was determined by the availability compared to the need, the time sensitivity or potential for missed opportunities and is discussed in detail in Chapter 5 of this plan.

Major projects needing further study and strategic funding

- Enhance existing sports fields
- Plan, design and construct 10.5-acre site in Baylands for park uses
- Plan, design and redevelop Cubberley Community Center
- Plan, design and construct a new public gymnasium
- Improve the Rinconada Pool Facility
- Incorporate 7.7-acre site into Foothills Park
- Acquire new parkland in high-need areas
- Improve golf course facility

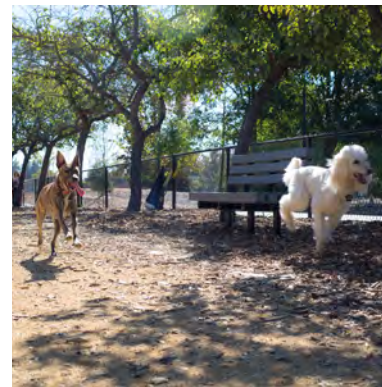
Projects ready in the short term

- Develop conservation plans for open space preserves
- Develop new dog parks in underrepresented areas
- Construct new restrooms in parks
- Incorporate sustainable practices in the maintenance and management of parks, open space and recreation facilities
- Exceed Americans with Disabilities Act requirements in parks
- Improve trail connections and access
- Develop adult fitness areas in parks
- Integrate nature into urban parks
- Develop new community gardens in underserved areas
- Enhance seating areas in parks
- Create wayfinding signage of safe routes to parks



Programs

- Establish and grow partnerships and identify and cultivate potential park and recreation donors
- Collaborate with school district to increase access to playgrounds, gyms and other school facilities
- Expand recruitment and training of coaches and instructors
- Expand aquatics programs
- Expand programs for seniors
- Expand non-academic programs for teens



Some projects need further study and funding, whereas others are ready in the short-term based on feedback from the community.



Examples of desired programs based on feedback from the community.

- Provide intramural sports program for middle and high school students
- Invest in staff training to enhance therapeutic and inclusive program development
- Increase the variety of activities available in parks
- Encourage unstructured play at parks and community centers
- Connect youth, teens and families with nature
- Expand programs related to health and wellness
- Pilot temporary/pop-up programming in parks
- Expand community-focused special events
- Offer cultural enrichment programs

Master Plan Progress Tracking

Existing measures, from the Citizen Centric Report and the annual citizen satisfaction survey, provide a large selection of indicators for any part of the parks, trails, natural open space and recreation system. Additional recommended indicators include new measures of satisfaction, performance and funding.

Further progress tracking will include reports on specific actions or projects that have been initiated or completed that contribute to the achievement of the programs, policies and goals. This annual progress report will also update funding status.

CHAPTER



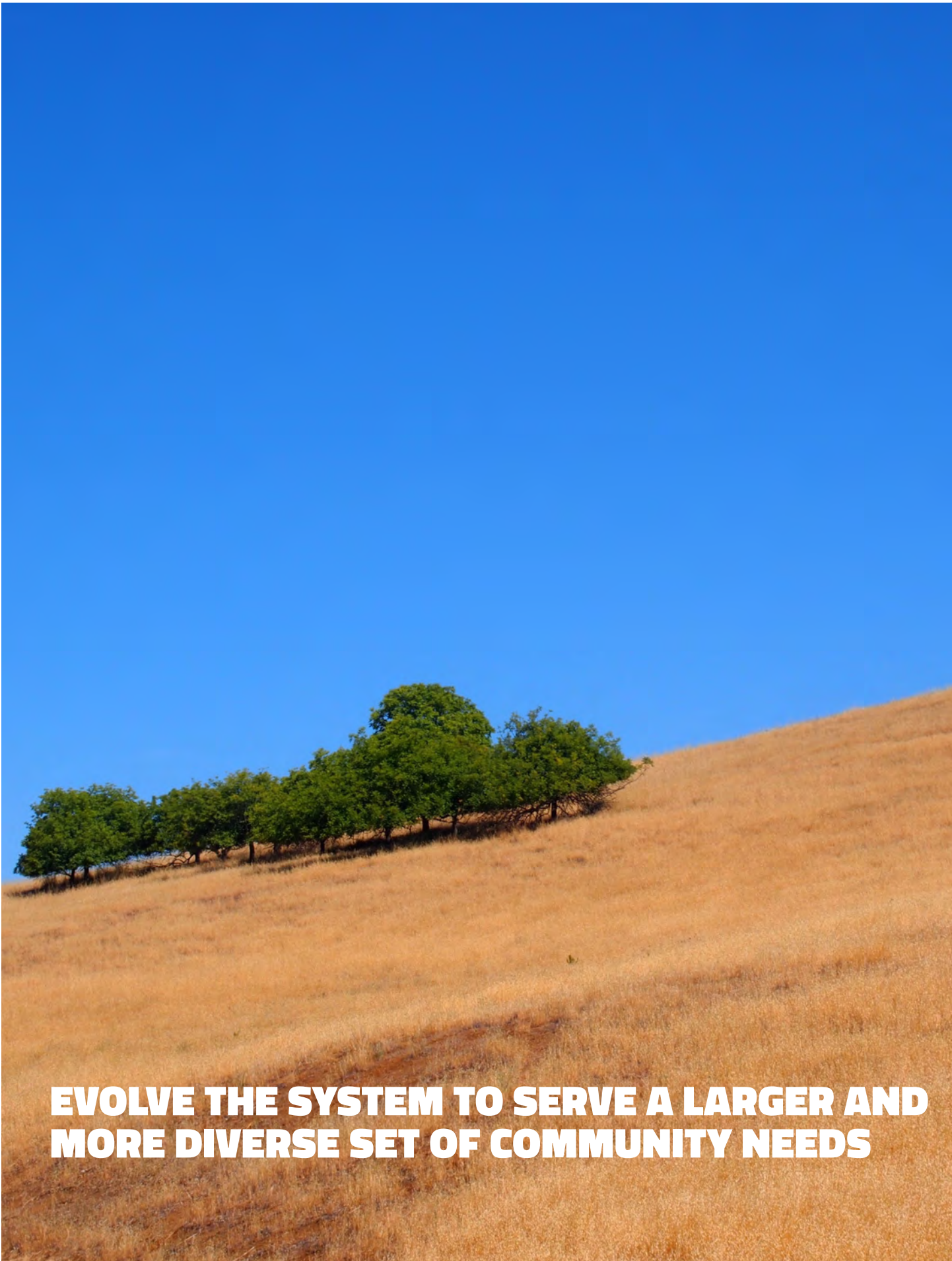
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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND INTENT

It has been fifty years since Palo Alto has taken a comprehensive look at the community's needs for parklands, natural open space, trails and recreation. Past planning shaped our community's present day parks and recreation offerings and led to the creation of the Baylands Athletic Center, expansion of athletic fields throughout the City and an expansion of Greer Park. Our predecessors established standards for parks within one-half mile of every residential development, and for neighborhood and district park acreage to be added as the community grew.

Today Palo Alto residents, employees and visitors value and enjoy the City's high-quality system of parks, recreation programs, trails and natural open



EVOLVE THE SYSTEM TO SERVE A LARGER AND MORE DIVERSE SET OF COMMUNITY NEEDS

space. To build on and continue the legacy of a strong parks system, the City developed this Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan (Master Plan) to guide ongoing investment in one of the community's most treasured assets.

Over the last five decades, the City has completed a series of planning efforts that affect parks and recreation; implemented capital improvement projects to maintain and renovate City facilities; and applied development impact fees for parks, community centers and libraries. In recent years, several major projects have been completed, including the all-new Mitchell Park Library and Community Center and the Magical Bridge Playground, both of which opened in 2015 to community acclaim. Today, Palo Alto has the opportunity to evolve the system to serve a larger and more diverse set of community needs and tackle challenges to maintain the high standard of living enjoyed by residents. A particular focus will be finding and creating additional spaces for parks and recreation to achieve the goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan and bring parks and recreation activities within walking distance of all residents.

The park system of the 21st century calls for holistic guidance for managing, improving and expanding park and recreation facilities to keep programs, services and facilities relevant to present and future populations; appropriately balance recreation and natural open space conservation; and identify funding to meet these challenges. For this reason, Palo Alto prioritized the development of this Master Plan.

The Master Plan presents the vision for the future of Palo Alto's parks, trails, natural open space and recreation system, based on guiding principles, goals and concepts developed through a rigorous analysis of the existing system and a robust community engagement process. It builds on this foundation with a set of policies, projects and programs. It also includes guidance on how to prioritize future recreation, programming, environmental and maintenance investment to meet our community's changing needs and evolving demands for the next 20 years.

Planning Process Overview

The planning process to develop the Master Plan consisted of three phases, as shown in Figure 1.

- *Phase I: Community Engagement, Specific Site Analysis and Program Analysis:* This phase included two parallel tracks that informed one another: the Community Engagement and Stakeholder Engagement track and the Technical Assessment and Analysis track. While community engagement continued through all three phases, the bulk of the proactive engagement process occurred in this phase, drawing input from the public and a broad range of stakeholders to identify community needs, interests and preferences for system enhancements. The Technical Assessment and Analysis track included a comprehensive inventory and analysis of all Palo Alto parks, trails, natural open space and recreational facilities and programs; an analysis of current and forecasted demographic and recreation trends; and an analysis of community recreation needs.
- *Phase II: Developing and Prioritizing Project and Program Opportunities:* The two tracks of Phase 1 merged in Phase 2 with the preparation of principles, goals and areas of focus, and the evaluation of project and program opportunities with prioritization into implementation timelines of short (5-year), medium (10-year) and long-term (20-year) ranges.

FIGURE 1: PLANNING PROCESS



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS

- Increase community awareness of the project
- Inform the community about the challenges and opportunities of the project
- Provide easy access to project information and opportunities for participation
- Offer a range of communication and engagement tools to match interests and preferences
- Ensure the final Master Plan reflects community priorities, preferences and values
- Get community buy-in to support plan adoption and its short-, mid- and long-term implementation

- *Phase III: Master Plan Drafting, Review and Adoption:* The Master Plan document was designed and prepared for review by the public, the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) and City Council. A concurrent environmental review led to adoption of the plan.

The process was led by the project team, consisting of City and consultant staff. The PRC was involved throughout the process, serving as strategic advisors and participating in-depth in reviewing the assessment and analysis tasks.

Community Engagement

The Master Plan was designed to be community and data driven, to ensure that Palo Alto's parks and recreation system reflects the vision and supports the needs of our residents and visitors over the next twenty years. A robust, layered outreach strategy was implemented through each step of the planning process. Engagement methods included a wide variety of tools and activities, offered within a range of formats, time frames and levels of interaction, to engage with Palo Alto's diverse community members in ways that were comfortable and convenient for them.

Master Plan community engagement methods, described in Chapter 3 and Appendix C, included:

- A project webpage
- Public information updates through a variety of online and print communication channels
- A community stakeholder advisory group
- A series of face-to-face "intercept surveys" at popular locations and community events
- A variety of interactive community workshops
- A series of online surveys
- Interviews with City staff and community experts to better inform topics that emerged from community engagement
- Consultations with the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) and other appointed commissions
- City Council updates and study sessions

The process and findings for each of the community engagement activities are detailed in summary reports on the City website. The summary of the key findings from the community engagement are included in Chapter 3 and Appendix C of this plan.

Specific Site and Program Analysis

The project team completed a detailed analysis of all aspects of the system to inform the Master Plan. The multi-layered approach to analysis, the interconnection between the community engagement and the analysis tasks (each feeding into the other) and the coordination with related concurrent planning efforts ensured that this Master Plan is based on sound information and the best available data.

LAYERS OF ANALYSIS

The layers of assessment and analysis included:

- Physical inventory of parks, preserves and facilities
- Recreation program inventory and analysis
- Geographic analysis
- Demographics and recreation trends analysis
- Planning environment summary
- Sustainability review

TECHNICAL SUPPLEMENT

To assist in referencing and using the large amount of data developed during the process, tabbed binders were created for each member of the PRC and project team with all of the completed documents, numbered for quick reference. An outline of the deliverables for the Master Plan process became the table of contents for the binder. To facilitate broader distribution of the data binders (and reduce paper use), the project team developed a "digital binder," available on the City website, which consists of a table of contents with hotlinks to each section. This working reference is the Technical Supplement, carrying forward the detail of these working documents.



Developing and Prioritizing Project and Program Opportunities

As major elements of the the Community and Stakeholder Engagement processes and the Technical Assessment and Analysis were completed, the PRC and the project team began a detailed review of the accumulated data as it related to each element of the Master Plan, tying these two tracks of the Master Plan process together in preparation for the critical step of developing and prioritizing projects. The process for review, designed by the project team with the input of the PRC, resulted in a detailed reference matrix (with supporting documentation) identifying needs and opportunities. This matrix served as the basis for developing, evaluating and refining the projects and programs contained in this Master Plan.

The matrix process allowed the PRC to review the large number of possibilities against the extensive data available in a streamlined, more accessible way. The matrix served as a key reference point to assess and validate elements of the Master Plan as they were developed. The complete matrix can be downloaded from the City website, <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/parksmasterplan>.

Through this process, the principles and goals were derived.

Master Plan Drafting, Review and Adoption

The final phase in the Master Plan process involved the drafting of this plan document and formal review by the staff, PRC, stakeholders, the public and City Council. The project team worked to draft the policy and program and project recommendations. These were refined with the input of the staff who manage construction, operations and maintenance of the system, as well as the input of the PRC and Council. This work formed the basis for the final chapters of this plan and set a recommended path forward. The draft plan was presented for review at the PRC as well as a community workshop with an online comment tool to collect specific feedback. To pave the way for implementation, the project team initiated an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) process to advance the necessary California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation. Following the public comment period, the plan was presented for adoption by Palo Alto's City Council.

CHAPTER

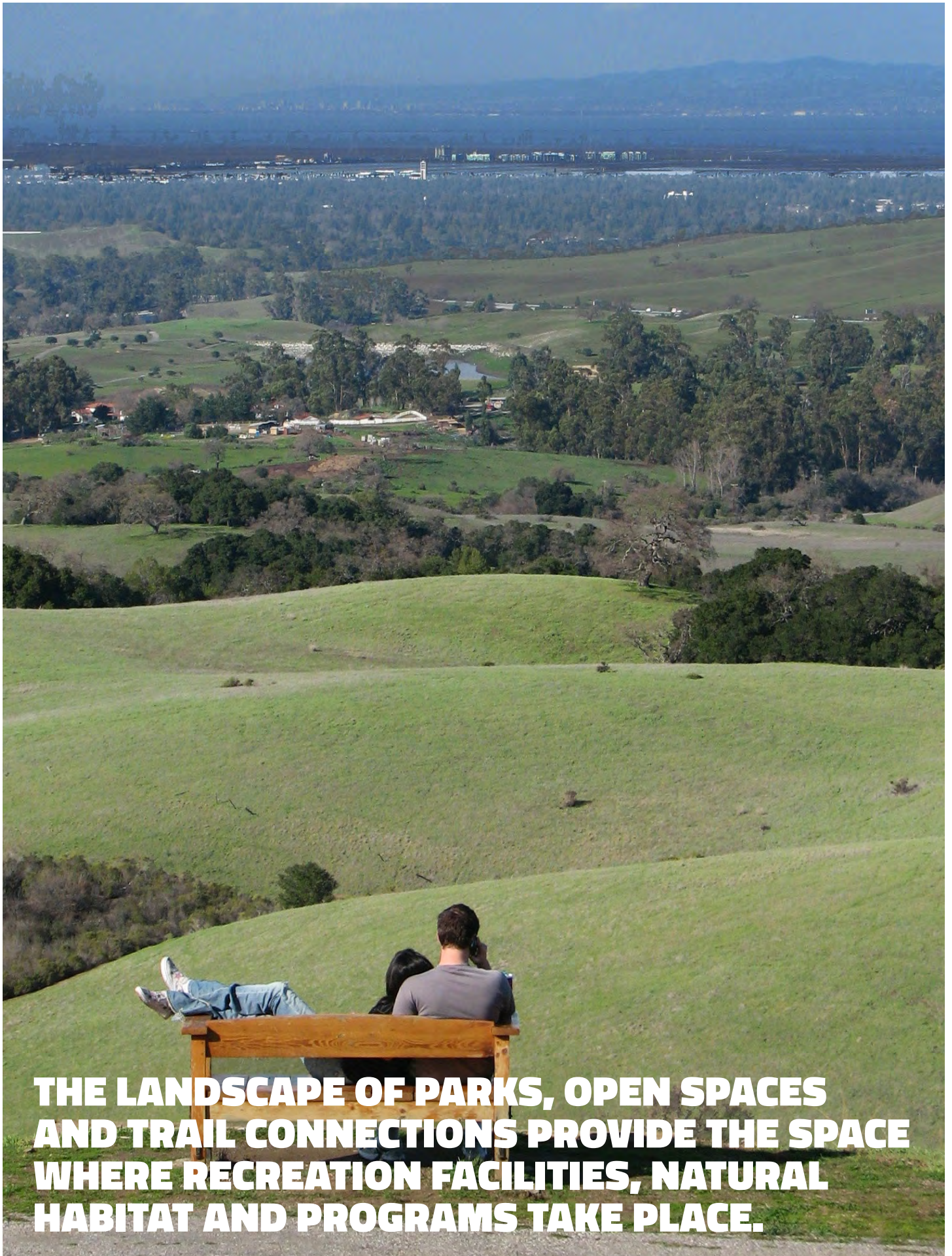
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ELEMENTS OF PALO ALTO'S PARKS, TRAILS, NATURAL OPEN SPACE & RECREATION SYSTEM

FROM ITS EARLIEST YEARS, THE COMMUNITY OF PALO ALTO HAS INVESTED IN THE SYSTEM OF PARKS, TRAILS, NATURAL OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION, LEAVING A LEGACY OF UNIQUE AND HIGHLY VALUED LANDS AND FACILITIES. Philanthropic donations, unique partnerships and forward-thinking acquisitions have positioned the system at the forefront of community identity. The level of investment has created a complex system that provides many different recreation opportunities, as well as important natural functions and habitat for wildlife.

To facilitate the analysis and understanding of Palo Alto's resources, the project team defined three elements that make up the citywide system of parks, natural open space, trails and recreation facilities and programs.



THE LANDSCAPE OF PARKS, OPEN SPACES AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS PROVIDE THE SPACE WHERE RECREATION FACILITIES, NATURAL HABITAT AND PROGRAMS TAKE PLACE.



ELEMENTS OF THE PALO ALTO SYSTEM

- Parks, Trails and Open Space
- Recreation Facilities
- Recreation Programs

Article VIII of the Municipal Charter is the authoritative definition of “parks” in Palo Alto including the allowed uses of dedicated park land.

These three elements were broken down further into constituent “components” to provide a reference framework for system analysis, community engagement and development of Master Plan recommendations. Each of the elements is described below, providing a view of the system today and highlighting key features.

Parks, Trails and Natural Open Space

The landscape of parks, open spaces and trail connections provides the space where recreation facilities, natural habitat and programs take place. Most of Palo Alto’s park sites are set in an urban context, within neighborhoods connected by city streets. However, the largest portion of the land in the system is held in natural open space preserves. An expanding network of trails and bikeways supplements the sidewalks and streets that connect these assets. The analysis related to this element includes the proximity of parklands and recreation activities; opportunities to experience and protect natural habitats; trail connections; and the comfort and accessibility of the sites.

The System Today

Palo Alto maintains 174 acres of urban distributed throughout the city as well as over 4,000 acres in natural open space preserves. Table 1 lists the Palo Alto parks and natural open spaces. The majority of the parks in Palo Alto are neighborhood parks, primarily designed to support the everyday activities of local residents. Several parks also feature unique facilities such as community gardens and dog parks. There are several parks that draw visitors from across the city and from neighboring communities. These parks typically have a higher concentration of facilities, including high-quality sports fields. Some of these parks are designed for a specific use and do not serve immediate neighbors (e.g., Baylands Athletic Center, El Camino Park and Stanford/Palo Alto Playing Fields), while others, like Greer, Mitchell and Rinconada Parks, also function as neighborhood parks. City parks are diverse in size and amenities, but many are older and/or have aging facilities. Palo Alto parks are highly developed with maintained landscapes across their entire acreage. Native species and less manicured landscapes are

generally not present. Due to the era when they were built, many parks are not flexible enough to allow different uses to be layered in. Rather, they provide a collection of spaces designed for a single activity. With design interventions, many existing parks have the potential to support more use and activity.

There are four natural open space preserves: Baylands Nature Preserve (which includes Byxbee Park), Esther Clark Preserve, Foothills Park and Pearson-Arastradero Preserve. These sites are large, are rich in native species of plants and animal habitat and have extensive internal trail systems. With the exception of Esther Clark Preserve, the preserves also have recreational and interpretive facilities.

Palo Alto Open Space has 43.2 miles of trail. The Baylands Nature Preserve trail system is approximately 15 miles long and Pearson-Arastradero Preserve trail system is approximately 10.3 miles long. The existing trail system is largely within parklands, but several segments of designated or off-street trails connect parks and other community destinations. Most significant among these are the Bay to Ridge and San Francisco Bay regional trails. The public trail system is further enhanced by privately owned trails with public access, such as the recently completed Stanford Perimeter Trail.

Palo Alto's parks, trails and natural open spaces are also home to much of the urban forest. The lands and connections that make up this element of the system are important to the goals of the City's Urban Forest Master Plan.

The Existing Public Parks and Natural Open Space map (Figure 2) depicts all City-owned (or controlled) park sites and natural open space. Palo Alto Unified School District sites are also acknowledged on this map due to the longstanding partnership and their importance as park-like places. A complete set of park site maps can be found in the Technical Supplement at <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/parksmasterplan>. A detailed inventory of these sites can be found in Appendix A, which also includes other recreation facilities that allow public access. While not an exhaustive list, this inventory includes some of the significant facilities (such as community centers, the golf course, Gamble Garden and the Winter Lodge) that are not necessarily on dedicated park land, but add to recreation opportunities in Palo Alto.

PALO ALTO PARK ACREAGE

Urban Parks: 174

Natural Open Space Preserves: 4,030

NATURAL OPEN SPACE PRESERVES

Baylands Nature Preserve (including Byxbee Park)

Esther Clark Preserve

Foothills Park

Pearson-Arastradero Preserve

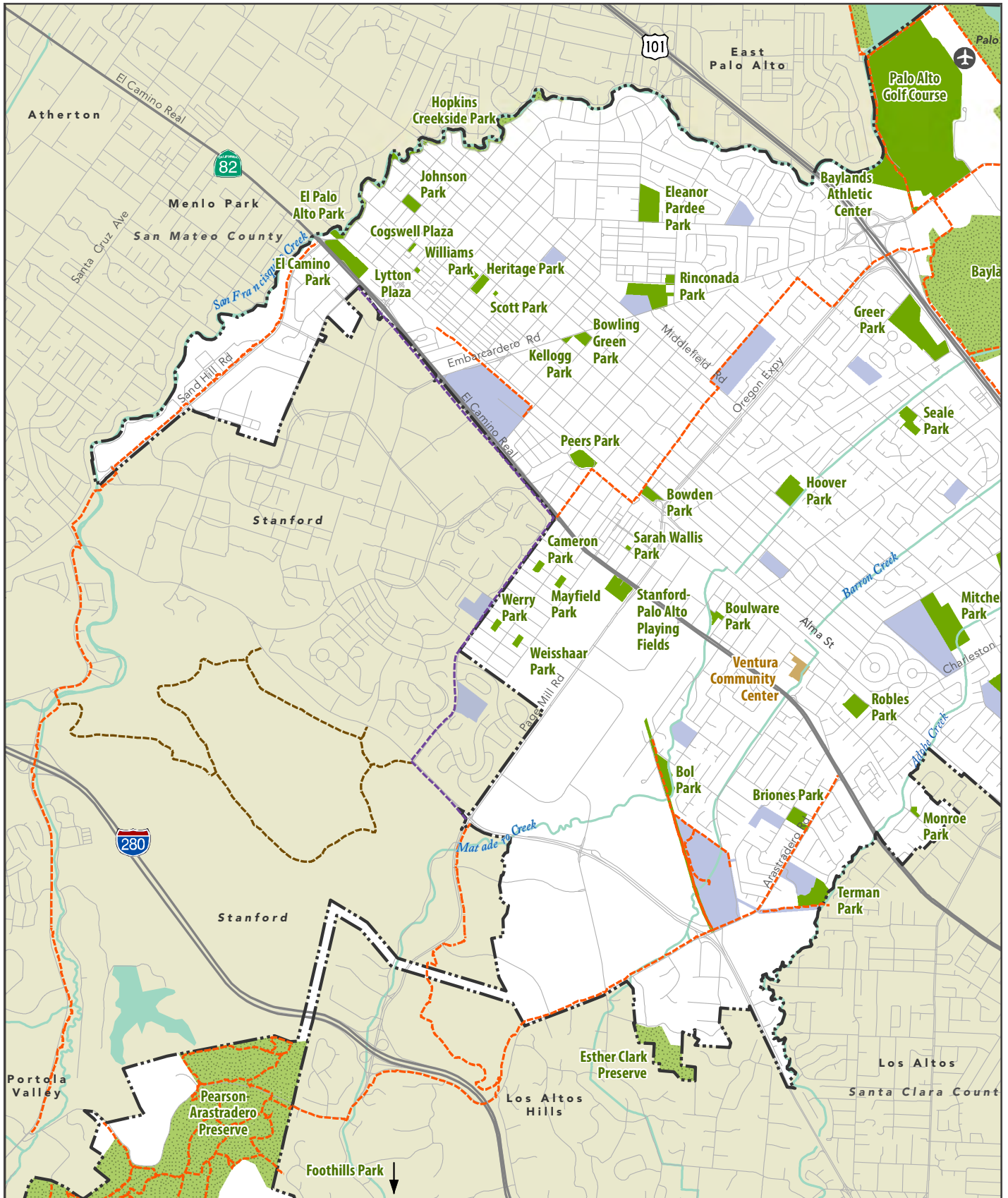


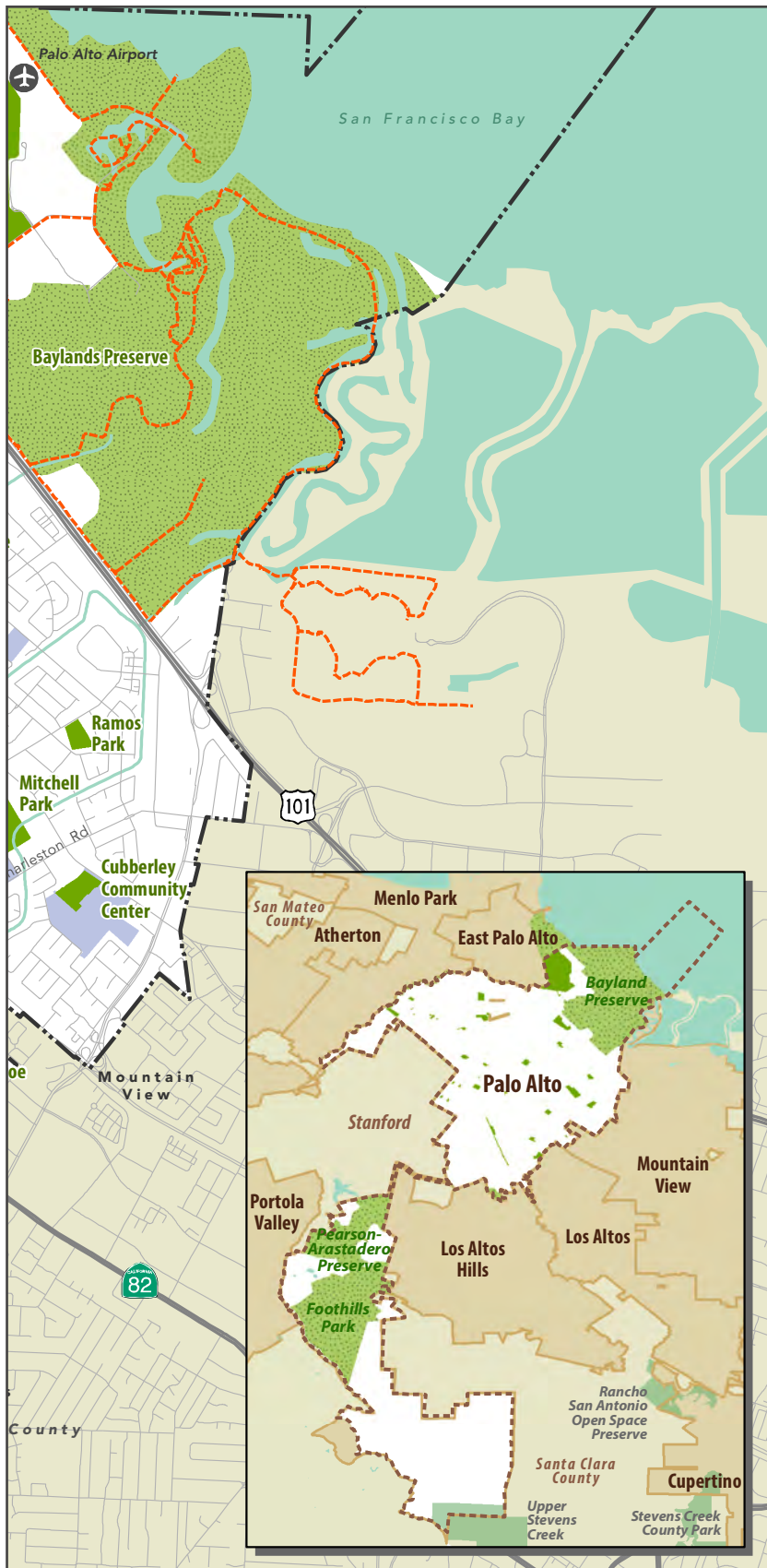
TABLE 1: PALO ALTO PARKS AND NATURAL OPEN SPACES INVENTORY

Park or Natural Open Space	Ownership	Acres
Baylands Athletic Center	City of Palo Alto	6
Bol Park	City of Palo Alto	13.8
Boulevard Park	City of Palo Alto	1.5
Bowden Park	City of Palo Alto	2
Bowling Green Park	City of Palo Alto	1.9
(Juana) Briones Park	City of Palo Alto	4.1
Cameron Park	City of Palo Alto	1.1
Cogswell Plaza	City of Palo Alto	0.5
El Camino Park	Stanford*	12.2
Eleanor Pardee Park	City of Palo Alto	9.6
El Palo Alto Park	City of Palo Alto	0.5
Greer Park	City of Palo Alto	22
Heritage Park	City of Palo Alto	2.0
Hoover Park	City of Palo Alto	4.2
Hopkins Creekside	City of Palo Alto	12.4
Johnson Park	City of Palo Alto	2.5
Kellogg Park	City of Palo Alto	0.2
Lytton Plaza	City of Palo Alto	0.2
Mayfield Park	City of Palo Alto	1.1
Mitchell Park	City of Palo Alto	21.4
Monroe Park	City of Palo Alto	0.6
Peers Park	City of Palo Alto	4.7
Ramos Park	City of Palo Alto	4.4
Rinconada Park	City of Palo Alto	19
Robles Park	City of Palo Alto	4.7
Scott Park	City of Palo Alto	0.4
Seale Park	City of Palo Alto	4.3
Stanford/Palo Alto Playing Fields	Stanford*	5.9
Terman Park	City of Palo Alto/ PAUSD	7.7
Wallis Park	City of Palo Alto	0.3
Weisshaar Park	City of Palo Alto	1.1
Werry Park	City of Palo Alto	1.1
Williams Park (Museum of American Heritage)	City of Palo Alto	0.7
SUBTOTAL CITY PARKS		174
Baylands Nature Preserve (including Byxbee)	City of Palo Alto	1,986
Esther Clark Preserve	City of Palo Alto	22
Foothills Park	City of Palo Alto	1,400
Pearson-Arastradero Preserve	City of Palo Alto	622
SUBTOTAL NATURAL OPEN SPACES		4,030

* The two parks owned by Stanford are leased by the City. The El Camino lease expires in 2042 and the Stanford /Palo Alto Playing Fields lease expires in 2056.

FIGURE 2: EXISTING PUBLIC PARKS AND NATURAL OPEN SPACES MAP





City of Palo Alto Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Space
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation Route

Base Map Features

- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools



Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and
Santa Clara County GIS

Recreation Facilities

From community centers to sports fields to community gardens, Palo Alto’s recreation facilities add variety to the experiences possible at each of Palo Alto’s parks and natural open spaces. Twelve types of recreation facilities are found throughout the system. In addition, other specialized recreation facilities such as the skate park at Greer Park, the lawn bowling green at Bowling Green Park, and El Camino Park serve specific recreation needs.

The number and type of facilities at each park and preserve are summarized as part of the detailed inventory of the system found in Appendix A.

Play Areas

The most common, and expected, feature in a Palo Alto park is a play area. Typically play areas include a manufactured playground structure and may or may not include swings or other features. Mitchell Park has particularly unique play experiences that include both a historic Royston-designed “gopher holes” play area and the Magical Bridge Playground, a destination play area designed to be universally accessible for children of all abilities.

Basketball and Tennis Courts

Courts, primarily for basketball and tennis, are incorporated into many of Palo Alto’s parks. Most of the courts are provided singly or in pairs, with the exception of Mitchell and Rinconada Park, with 7 and 9 tennis courts, respectively. These concentrations of tennis courts provide a higher capacity for play and the potential to host tournaments.

Rectangular and Diamond Sports Fields

The City owns, manages and maintains dozens of rectangular and diamond sports fields located throughout the City. Rectangular fields accommodate a variety of sports, including soccer and football. Diamond fields are designed for particular levels of baseball or softball play. Most of the higher-level sports fields are concentrated adjacent to Cubberley Community Center or in field complexes such as the Stanford/Palo Alto Playing Fields and the El Camino Park sports fields. The City also maintains sports fields

PALO ALTO RECREATION FACILITIES

- Play Areas
- Basketball Courts
- Tennis Courts
- Rectangular Sports Fields
- Diamond Sports Fields
- Picnic Areas
- Off-Leash Dog Areas
- Community Gardens
- Swimming Pools
- Community Centers
- Special Purpose Buildings in Parks
- Other Indoor Facilities
- Golf Course

TABLE 2: PALO ALTO FACILITY INVENTORY

Number of Facilities in Palo Alto	
Play Areas	29
Basketball Courts	14
Tennis Courts	28
Rectangular Sports Fields	22
Diamond Sports Fields	10
Picnic Areas	39
Pools*	2
Dog Parks	3
Community Centers	3
Community Gardens	4
Interpretive Centers	3

*Two pools at the Rinconada Aquatic Center

on several School District sites. Some of the sports fields have lighting that allows for extended play in the evening, a feature that increases the playable time on a field but is not appropriate for all locations. In addition to the formally developed sports fields, many parks feature a large multi-purpose turf area that functions as a sports field for league and casual sports activities. Reserved use of fields and tennis courts is governed by the City's Field Use Policy, which specifies the preference for local youth play and limits private use.

Picnic Areas

Most of Palo Alto's parks also include at least one picnic area. Most of these are small clusters of tables intended for first-come-first-served use. Foothills Park, Rinconada Park and Mitchell Park have designated picnic areas that are available for reservation to accommodate larger gatherings.



Off-Leash Dog Areas

Three off-leash areas are provided for park users to exercise and socialize dogs. All three sites, Mitchell Park, Hoover Park and Greer Park, are separated and fenced (per City policy) to keep off-leash dogs away from other users and areas of the parks.

Community Gardens

The City also provides four community gardens, two in parks (at Johnson Park and Eleanor Pardee Park), one adjacent to the Rinconada Library, and one adjacent to the Ventura Community Center. These facilities are separated into plots and assigned (based on an application and permitting process) to individuals for gardening edible and decorative plants.



Swimming Pool

The Rinconada Pool, located in the park of the same name, is the City's only public pool facility. This outdoor facility includes a wading pool with spray and waterfall features, a small slide and a zero-depth "beach" area. A second pool features fourteen lanes and two diving boards. These facilities offer recreational swimming, lessons and private pool parties through the spring, summer and late summer and lap swimming year-round.

Community Centers, Special Purpose Buildings and Other Indoor Facilities

Palo Alto maintains both general and specialized indoor recreation facilities. The two largest facilities are the Cubberley Community Center and the Lucie Stern Community Center, which offer a wide variety of programs. However, neither was designed or built primarily as a recreation facility or to provide the mix of programs they currently offer. The majority of the Cubberley site is owned by the Palo Alto Unified School District, with the balance owned by the City. This site is home to a wide range of programs, largely run by partner organizations. This facility is also home to the only gymnasiums scheduled by the City. The future of this site and a future redevelopment of the facilities there for school and community use, is the subject of ongoing collaboration between the City and the School District.

The Lucie Stern Community Center is a historic building, which opened in 1934 and shares a campus with the Junior Museum and Zoo, as well as the Children's Theatre and is adjacent to Rinconada Park. The formal ballroom and community rooms are ideal for events and meetings of varying sizes and are used for a wide range of indoor recreation activities, such as regularly scheduled fitness and wellness classes. This building is also home to the administration of Community Services and the Recreation Services division.

The brand new Mitchell Park Community Center, adjacent to the new Mitchell Park Library, is designed for flexibility with some specialized spaces. The building includes a teen center that faces the park (and the middle school beyond it) and has several large spaces that can be configured into multiple class or meeting rooms. An outdoor courtyard and the large El Palo Alto room host numerous personal, business and community events.

Other buildings and major facilities are more specialized, focusing on a narrower range of functions and representing a significant community investment in one area. This includes the Palo Alto Arts Center, which hosts the visual arts programming provided by the City, as well as visitor centers and other interpretive facilities at Palo Alto's natural open space preserves.



PALO ALTO RECREATION PROGRAM AREAS

- Adult Aquatics
- Adult Fitness
- Adult Special Interest Classes
- Adult Sports
- Day Camps
- Middle School Athletics
- Open Space/Outdoor Recreation
- Youth and Teen Aquatics
- Youth and Teen Sports
- Youth and Teen Special Interest Classes
- Youth and Teen Sports Camps
- Special Events
- Therapeutic Recreation
- Senior Programs

Recreation Programs

The programming of recreation activities, ranging from sports and fitness to specialized classes, is the most flexible and dynamic element of the system. Many programs can be held in the most basic of meeting rooms or outdoor spaces, making programming the best way to utilize and activate existing facilities and spaces.

Palo Alto benefits from a mix of public, non-profit and private recreation program providers, each working in specific segments of the recreation marketplace. In many cases, programming is provided by private providers (often small businesses) within a City of Palo Alto facility, or a City program may be held in a partner facility such as a School District gym. These partnerships create new opportunities to reach new participants and promote Palo Alto as a place to learn, exercise and have fun.



Recreation Services

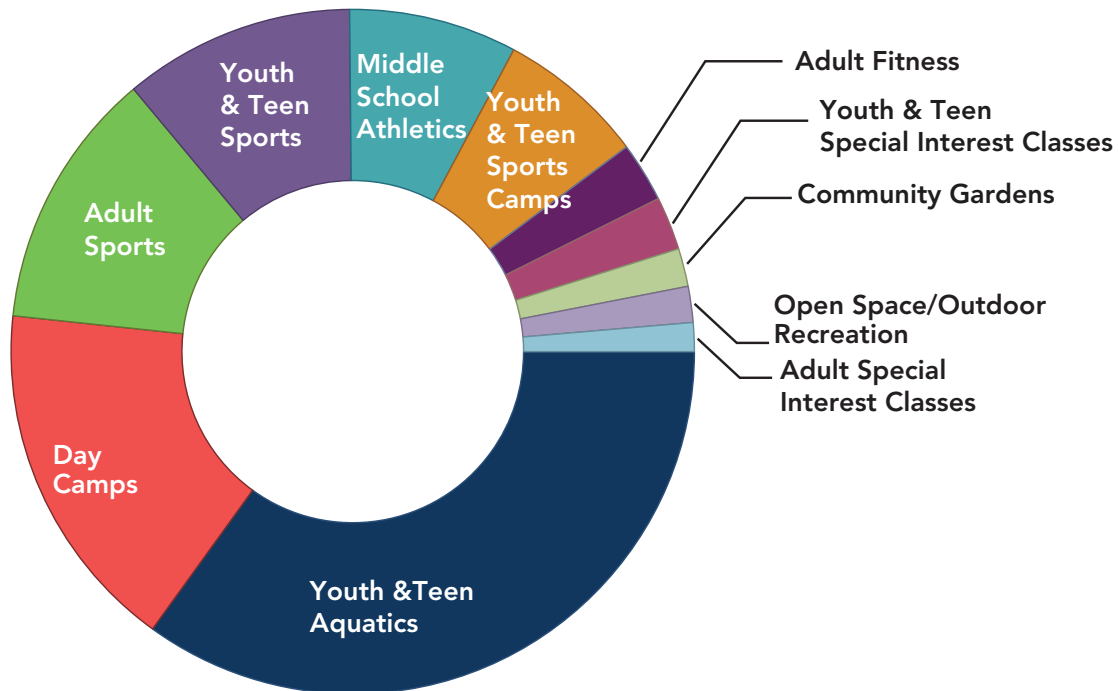
The Recreation Division of the Community Services Department offers more than 1,300 classes, teams or camps across the fourteen program areas. These programs served over 13,000 participants in 2014-15. Over half of this number were youth-and teen-focused swimming programs and day camps. The Recreation Division categorizes its recreation programs into fourteen areas, by age and topic.

Sports programs, particularly middle school athletics and adult sports, are operating over capacity, with full teams and waitlists for most offerings. These programs are not easily expanded, as they rely on limited gym and field space. Middle school athletics are further constrained by a lack of coaches.

Other Providers

The City of Palo Alto also offers programming through other divisions of Community Services, including the Art Center, Children’s Theatre and Junior Museum and Zoo, and separate entities, including the Palo Alto Library. Programs offered by these other divisions serve thousands of additional adults, youth and teens.

FIGURE 3: PROGRAM AREAS BY NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS





Many of these programs have waitlists, partly because of limited space in the specialized buildings associated with these divisions.

In addition to the City, the other major providers of recreation programming in Palo Alto include the Palo Alto Unified School District as well as many private businesses and non-profit organizations who operate in partnership with the City:

- Avenidas
- Abilities United
- Ballet and Dance Studios
- Golf Pro Shop
- Community Sports Organizations (Little League, Soccer Club, Lacrosse, Swim Club, etc.)
- Master Gardeners and Garden Shops
- Martial Arts Studios
- Oshman Family Jewish Community Center (JCC)
- Palo Alto Family YMCA
- Private Childcare Providers
- Private Gyms and Fitness Centers
- Stanford University
- University Club of Palo Alto
- Women's Club of Palo Alto

CHAPTER



3

ANALYSIS & ASSESSMENT

THE MASTER PLAN WAS DEVELOPED THROUGH A COMPREHENSIVE, DATA-DRIVEN AND COMMUNITY-FOCUSED PROCESS AND INCLUDES AN ARRAY OF ASSESSMENT, ANALYSIS AND OUTREACH STRATEGIES. The results of the process provide a detailed understanding of Palo Alto's current system of parks, trails, natural open space, recreation facilities and recreation programs and services. In addition, the process identifies current and future needs of the community it serves and opportunities for system enhancement.



RESIDENTS WANT A HIGH-QUALITY, RESILIENT PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM THAT EMBRACES AND PROTECTS THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, ADAPTS TO CHANGING NEEDS AND SERVES A GROWING VARIETY OF INTERESTS.

The identified needs and possible opportunities to enhance the parks and recreation system is based on three types of data and analyses:

- 1) Demographic and Recreation Trends - Quantitative forecasts of previously published data on growth trends in areas such as overall population and growth of key demographic segments.
- 2) System Analysis - Park, facility and program inventory data including the quantity and location of parks; field, pool and other facility usage program registration; and other similar inventory data.
- 3) Community Engagement Results - Qualitative data compiled from the input of citizens and stakeholders through a multitude of outreach tools.

Ultimately these data sources resulted in the “findings” summarized in this chapter. The findings address the most notable population-based shifts supported by population and demographic growth forecasts that the City will need to accommodate and respond to in the next ten to twenty years. Conclusions drawn from the system analysis identified needs currently not being met or that will not be met in future years and are considered gaps in the system, or “needs” for the City. Community preferences identified in the community engagement and outreach phase identified areas that the City can evaluate and implement to address citizens’ “votes” in various forums provided during this study. These are community “wants” versus demonstrated gaps or needs.

The following sections describe the analysis completed and key findings from the process. More detailed versions of the reports and work products summarized here can be found in the Technical Supplement on the City website.

Demographic and Recreation Trends

The project team evaluated the existing demographic profile of Palo Alto, including population, household characteristics and transportation behavior, to identify patterns and trends that influence recreation needs and preferences. In addition, this analysis evaluated regional and national trends in health, sports, socializing, recreation, family and urban form for their potential to affect the direction of the Master Plan.

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC DATA AND TRENDS

Population

Over the past five years, Palo Alto has grown faster than projected, with an average annual growth rate of 1.3%. The population of Palo Alto in 2015, as estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau, was 66,853. Additionally, the City’s Comprehensive Plan Update (Draft Environmental Impact Report, 2016) contemplates housing scenarios that would exceed current total population projections, indicating potential for an even greater rate of growth over the life of this Master Plan. Meeting the demands of Palo Alto’s growing population without compromising the level of service will require significant investment in park and recreation facilities, maintenance and programming.

Roughly 60,000 commuters come to Palo Alto to work, along with thousands of Stanford students, resulting in a daytime population well in excess of the City’s resident population. Efforts to better understand the park and recreation use patterns of this sizable group should inform strategic planning around facilities, maintenance and programming.

Housing and Income

Over half (57.5%) of Palo Alto residents live in single-family detached homes, while over one third (37.9%) live in multifamily units. As Palo Alto expands its housing stock, the City anticipates that the vast majority of new housing will be multi-family units (Comprehensive Plan Update Draft EIR, 2016). This shift to a housing type that lacks the private open space typical of a single family home will create an increasing need for publicly accessible outdoor space and recreation opportunities.

Median household income in Palo Alto grew by 73% between 1990 and 2012, to \$118,936 per household. However, housing costs have also increased dramatically. The median home sales price in Palo Alto in 2013 was more than two and a half times that of the county median price, and rental prices in 2014 were more than double county-wide fair market rental prices (Comprehensive Plan Update Draft EIR, 2016). Palo Alto’s high median income conceals the economic challenges faced by many residents spending an increasing amount on housing. Recreation is a crucial quality of life asset, and people with less disposable income rely more heavily on public recreation facilities. Planning for parks and recreation should reflect the unique local economic conditions in Palo Alto and not rely heavily on statewide or regional data to determine income-based trends or demand.

TABLE 3: CITY OF PALO ALTO PROJECTED POPULATION

	Low Projection (City of Palo Alto Scenario 1)	High Projection (Association of Bay Area Governments)
Population 2014	66,800	66,800
Population 2030	72,285	77,100
Percent Change	8%	15%

Source: City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Update Draft EIR

Transportation

The city has a significant share of commuters who travel by bike (11%) and has seen a sizable increase in student ridership, with approximately 40% of high school students and many elementary and middle school students bicycling to school. Palo Alto can support and expand this popular mode choice by providing safe routes to parks and recreation facilities. In addition to providing safe bike routes, users should be encouraged to use alternative modes of transportation, such as the Palo Alto free shuttle, to parks and recreation facilities.

Demographic Groups

National and regional recreation trends emphasize an outdoor lifestyle, physical and mental health, diverse options for older adults at multiple stages of life, universal design and access for people of all abilities and a movement to connect children with nature. These trends point to several specific segments within the population that require special consideration in this plan.

While the average age of residents is increasing, the city has a sizable population of children under 18 years of age. Seniors and children represent the largest growth segments in Palo Alto since 1980 and stand at 17% and 23%, respectively, of the City’s total population. These age groups are, anecdotally, high users of parks and recreation facilities and services in Palo Alto and are the most likely to access facilities by walking or biking.

Youth and Teens

Palo Alto’s under 18 population has grown steadily over the past 25 years, representing the City’s fastest growing age segment (totaling 15,019 in 2010). However, PAUSD projects a downward trend in school enrollment beginning in year 2020. Currently, PAUSD assumptions about future new housing types and volume differ from those used in the City’s Comprehensive Plan Update analysis, leading to inconsistent projections regarding the future size of Palo Alto’s school-aged population. Once the updated Comprehensive Plan is completed it will be important to coordinate assumptions about housing growth and student generation rates in order to plan appropriately to serve this large segment of the population.

Efforts have grown in recent years to build stronger community connections for area teens. Innovative programs such as Maker Space and Think Fund teen grants (previously Bryant Street Garage Fund) are gaining popularity. Additional programs such as The Drop

TABLE 4: CITY OF PALO ALTO KEY AGE GROUPS

Age	Percent
Persons under 5 years	5.1%
Persons under 18 years	23.3%
Persons 65 years and over	16.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

teen center and LEAP (Learning Enrichment After School Program) are also well attended. Additional teen programs are needed to better tailor offerings to attract broader teen participation consistent with the goals of Project Safety Net.

Seniors

The senior population is large and rapidly increasing. One-half of all Palo Alto residents are expected to be age 55 or above by 2030. In 2000, it was projected that the senior population for Palo Alto and surrounding cities will double between 2000 and 2020 and will continue to grow until 2040 (Source: Avenidas), as illustrated in Figure 4. As more seniors choose to “age in place,” programming and services must evolve to address new demands.

Special Needs

Though the majority of Palo Alto residents with disabilities are 65 or older (2,842 people), our community is also home to an unusually high number of special needs students (1,100 students in PAUSD as of September 2014). These two growing population segments call for expanded inclusion efforts related to facilities, services and programming.

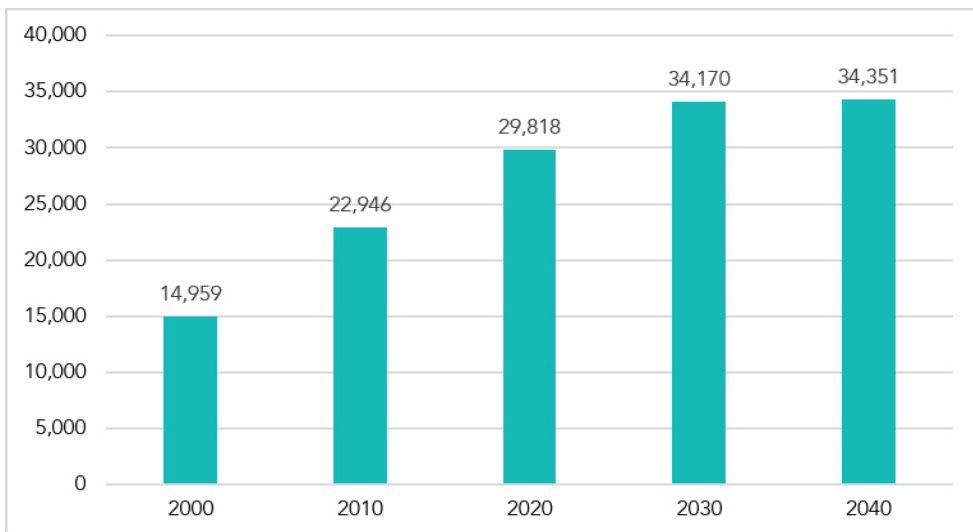
Ethnicity and Culture

Figure 5 illustrates U.S. Census data showing Palo Alto’s cultural and ethnic diversity is steadily expanding. In the past decade, the City’s Asian population alone grew by 10 percentage points. Of all

PROJECT SAFETY NET

“Project Safety Net is a collaborative community network held together by a common interest of fostering youth well-being in Palo Alto. Our mission is to develop and implement a community-based mental health plan that includes education, prevention and intervention strategies that together provide a “safety net” for youth in Palo Alto, and defines our community’s teen suicide prevention efforts.”

FIGURE 4: PROJECTED GROWTH IN PALO ALTO’S SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Avenidas

Palo Altans, 31% are foreign-born and 38% speak a language other than English at home. PAUSD data reveals that the City's minority population is young, with a higher rate of Hispanic/Latinos and Asians in the school system (11% Hispanic/Latino and 39% Asian) than in the general population of Palo Alto. Sensitivity and attention to the needs of this growing and significant segment of the population will require expanded outreach, partnership with PAUSD and targeted efforts at inclusion.

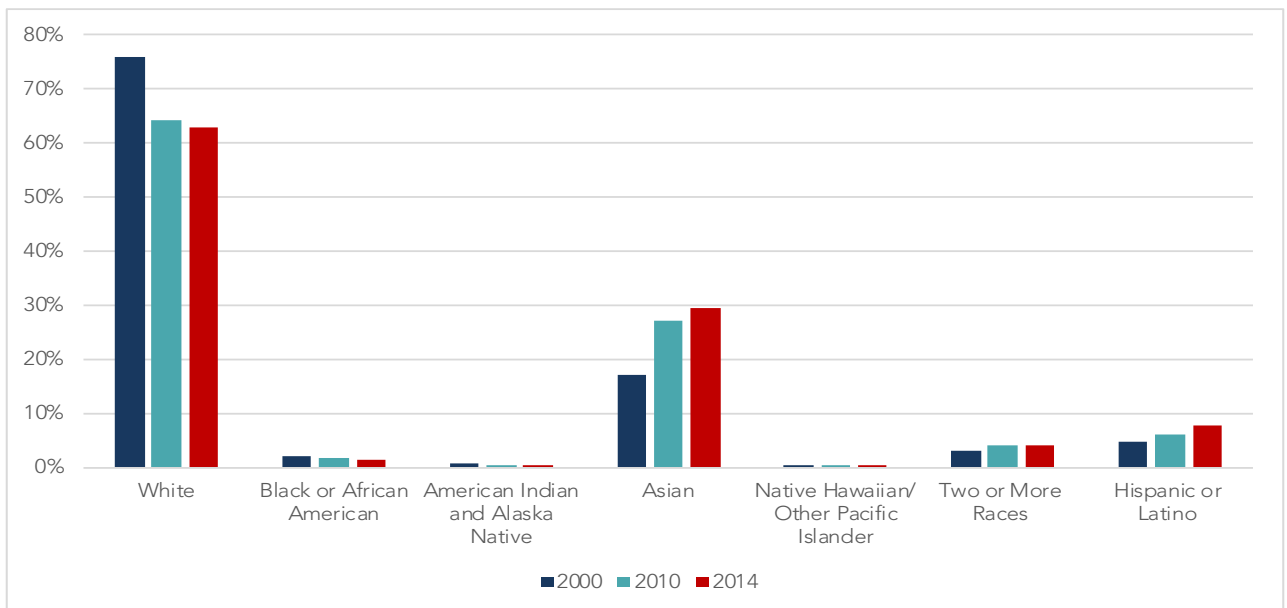
System Analysis

The analysis of the system began with a site visit to each park, facility and preserve to document and evaluate existing conditions to develop an accurate and in-depth foundation of baseline information. The observations recorded during these visits are compiled within a set of existing conditions maps. These maps include the history, a summary of features and a description of opportunities and constraints for each site. Each map also incorporates site-specific public input gathered through the community engagement process. For the full set of existing conditions maps, see the Technical Supplement on the City website.

Geographic Analysis

A geographic analysis of the parks, trails and natural open space system evaluated walkability and accessibility. A Geographic

FIGURE 5: PALO ALTO RACE AND ETHNICITY

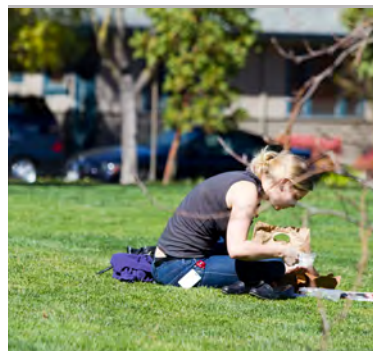


Information Systems (GIS) model of the surrounding streets, sidewalks, trails and pathways was constructed using ESRI Network Analyst software to identify “walksheds” or catchment areas for each park, reflecting the way people move through the city. The analysis used $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile travel distances, reflecting research on the distance a typical person can walk in five and ten minutes, respectively. This analysis refined the understanding of the $\frac{1}{2}$ mile distance often cited as walking distance and aligned with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. The project team also factored in physical barriers that impede access, incorporating feedback from the public engagement process about specific streets and intersections people report as being difficult to cross. Figure 6, on page 32, shows the $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile walksheds for all parks in Palo Alto.

Many communities also analyze park systems using a function-based parks classification scheme (neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks). However, the parks in Palo Alto serve multiple and often overlapping functions. Community feedback indicated that people in Palo Alto are looking for the park system to deliver five categories of activities on a widely accessible basis, regardless of how the park is classified functionally. The analysis assessed the community’s access to each of these activities by defining criteria for each category and applying the criteria to the geographic analysis model.

The five categories of activity and their analysis criteria are summarized below.

- **Relax and Enjoy Outdoors.** Palo Altans place a high value on parks that provide a quiet and calm place to relax and enjoy the outdoors. While most Palo Alto parks support this activity, some parks experience noise from highway/ road traffic or from heavy sports use. Comments made by the public on the online interactive map (and confirmed by site visits) also identified parks without quiet areas.
- **Play for Children.** Children and youth were regularly cited as one of the most important audiences for the park system. Parks containing a playground, play area or unique play feature (sculpture, nature play, etc.) best support this audience.
- **Throw a Ball.** This activity encompasses kicking, hitting and throwing balls and other objects such as Frisbees,





including both self-directed and league-based play. Parks containing open turf areas, sports fields, or courts best support this activity.

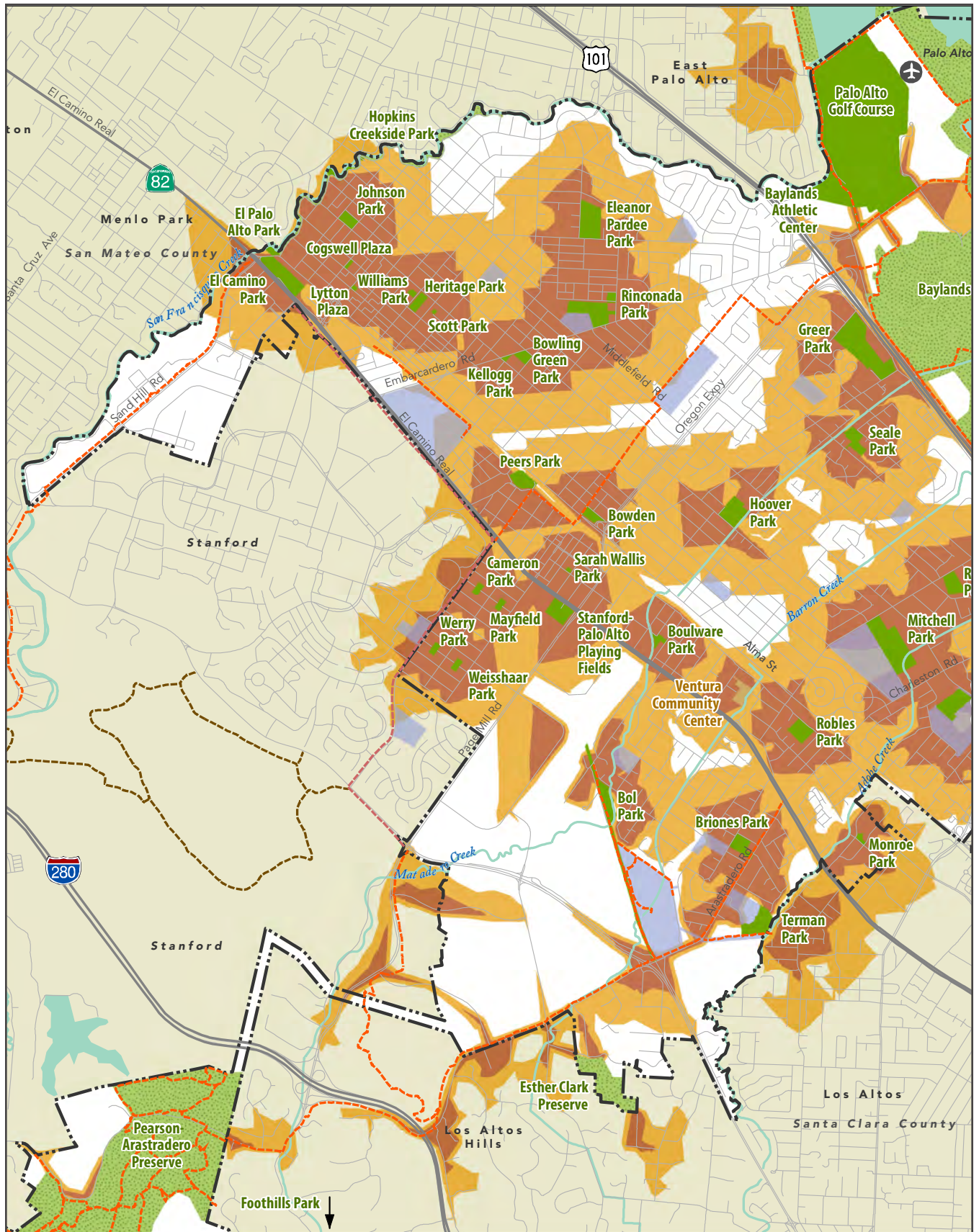
- **Exercise and Fitness.** Health and wellness have been shown to be important to Palo Alto residents in this and other planning processes. Parks with perimeter or looped paths support both walking and running, which are the top recreation activities both in Palo Alto and in the country. Palo Alto’s Rinconada Pool also provides an exercise option for swimmers.
- **Gathering.** The Palo Alto park system is an important provider of space for family, friends and the larger community to gather for picnics, social events and group activities. Formal picnic areas, shelters and features such as amphitheaters facilitate this activity.

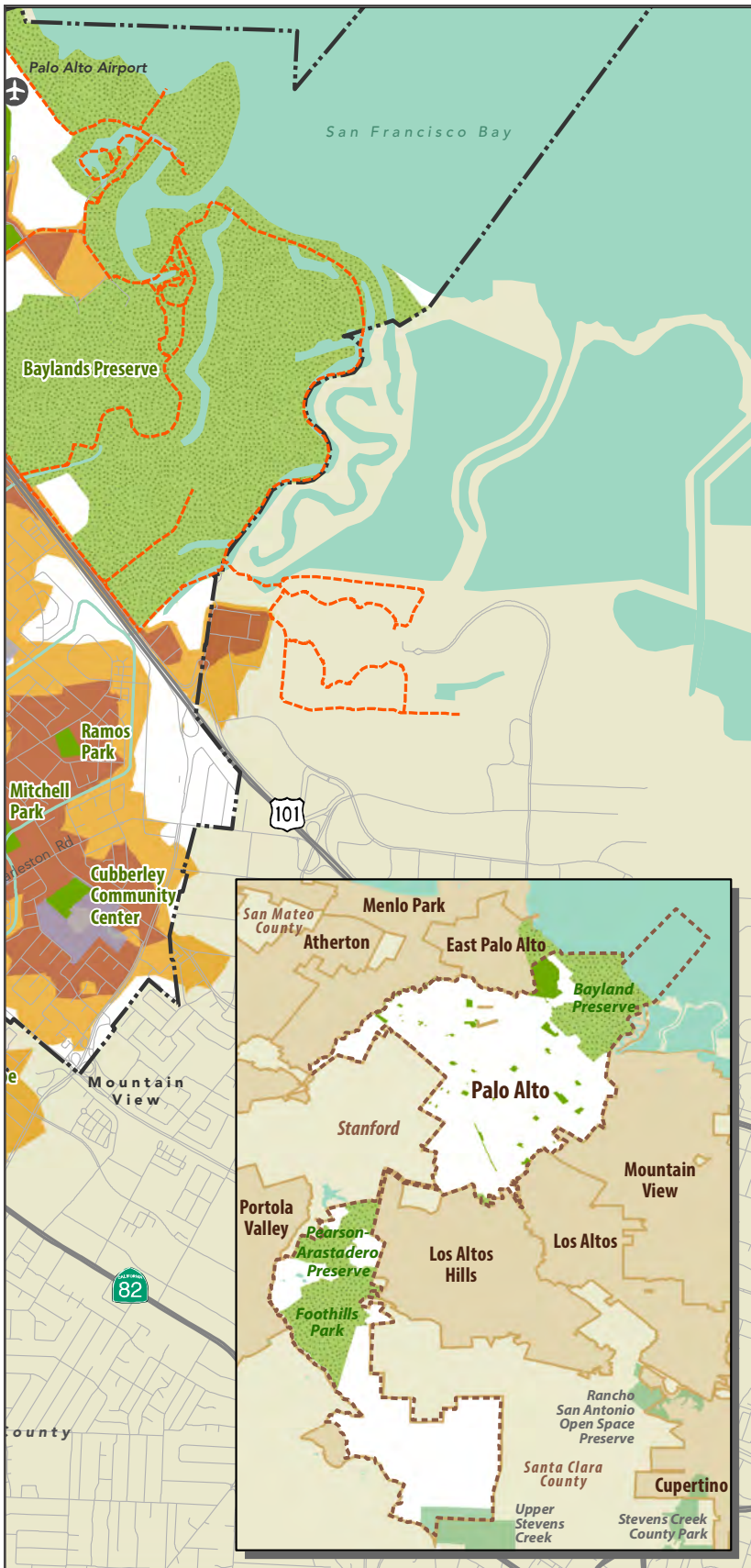
GEOGRAPHIC NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The spatial analysis revealed the following:

- Most Palo Alto residents have access to a city park within a ¼ to ½ mile. Gaps exist north of the Oregon Expressway near Highway 101 and along Sand Hill Road near commercial and institutional land uses. Adding additional parks or park-like lands can improve park accessibility for residents in these areas. Fewer neighborhoods have activity access to all five identified activities within a ½ mile.
- Parks that offer exercise and fitness opportunities are more common south of the Oregon Expressway. The addition of exercise opportunities to north Palo Alto parks should be considered.
- Dog parks are all located south of the Oregon Expressway. Since dog owners prefer to use dog parks near their residences, adding dog parks to north Palo Alto parks will improve residents’ dog exercise opportunities.
- Community gardens are currently located entirely north of Oregon Expressway. The addition of community gardens in south Palo Alto can improve garden access for those residents.

FIGURE 6: PARK WALKSHEDS MAP





City of Palo Alto Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan

Park Walksheds

- 1/4 Mile or Less Walking Distance
- 1/2 Mile or Less Walking Distance

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Space
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation Route

Base Map Features

- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools



Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and Santa Clara County GIS

- Palo Alto does not have a public gym, and the City’s only public pool is located north of Oregon Expressway. The addition of a public pool or improving access to other public or private pools should be explored to provide more access during peak times.

Additional geographic analysis evaluated access to experiences, natural open space and recreation facilities that were identified as highly desired by the community during the intercept surveys. These include:

- The experience and preservation of nature;
- Improved ease of access to natural open space preserves (e.g., bike routes and shuttles);
- Community gardening;
- Recreation with dogs; and
- Gymnasiums and swimming pools.

Recreation Program Analysis

To evaluate the capacity of Palo Alto’s facilities and programs to meet demand, the data on reservations, minimum participation, program registrations and waitlists was analyzed along with observations collected from staff and consultants. A crucial performance indicator in recreation programming is enrollment at or above minimum participation, which is the minimum number of participants needed to achieve the cost recovery goals of each class. These goals are set according to the City’s cost recovery policy and the individual class budget. This, along with classes indicated as full or with waitlists, provided insight into the capacity and demand for categories and specific types of programs.

RECREATION PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES

- The highest participation in City programs is in sports (adult and youth), aquatics (youth and teen) and day camps. Continued demand for these program areas is anticipated, and program offerings should respond to this demand.
- The current policy of “everyone plays” is widely supported for middle school athletics. Since limited gym and field space makes it difficult to expand these programs, the City and PAUSD should consider additional facilities or improved scheduling to maximize student involvement



in these popular programs. Furthermore, a shortage of instructors and coaches exacerbates the difficulty of expanding these programs. Recruitment, training and increased pay should be considered to improve the supply of qualified instructors and coaches.

- Demand for some classes and programs varies greatly by time of day. The program scheduling should attempt to provide additional classes during the most popular times.
- A limited number of gymnasiums available to the public and the lack of a City-owned gym complicate the expansion of most sports programs. Increasing sports facilities, sharing of facilities and adjusting facility scheduling should be investigated.
- Academic support programs offered to youth and teens are typically operating under capacity. Improved marketing and updated offerings should be considered to increase the popularity of these programs, or resources should be shifted to other types of teen programming.
- Programs offered by the Art Center, the Junior Museum and Zoo and the Children’s Theatre serve thousands of additional adults, youth and teens. Many of these programs have waitlists, partly because of limited space in the specialized buildings associated with these divisions. Adjusting the scheduling of current facilities and developing access to other facilities (such as PAUSD) may increase the number of people that can be served by these popular programs.



Community Engagement Results

A variety of community engagement efforts, conducted at several stages in the process, collected input from hundreds of residents and stakeholders. The input of community members and stakeholders guided decisions about where to focus assessment efforts. Resident and stakeholder input highlighted the need to look at walkability and park access, as well as access to highly desired experiences, such as play for children. In addition, the analysis examined equitable distribution and need for specific facilities, such as restrooms, dog parks and community gardens, as a result of the

community interest in these features.

Community feedback largely confirms conclusions drawn from the demographic trends analysis. The following section describes the key topics and themes that emerged from the Master Plan community engagement process.

KEY COMMUNITY TOPICS AND THEMES

The following topics and themes were referenced multiple times by the community, City staff, partners and decision makers. The key themes were critical in shaping the overall analysis of the system and provided direction for the development of the Master Plan principles, goals, policies and recommended actions.

- Respondents value, support and appreciate their park system. They recognize that it is a high-quality system.
- Respondents believe that strategic enhancements and improvements are needed to better meet evolving needs and trends, adapt to growth and changing demographics and continue to provide world-class experiences to residents.
- Limited land availability and high cost is seen as the major limiting factor to pursuing new park opportunities.
- Providing accessible and safe active transportation (walking, biking, etc.) routes to natural open space, community centers and parks is a high priority.
- Enhancing physical and mental well-being is a critical function of parks for Palo Altans. Loop trails, bicycle and pedestrian paths to parks and places to relax are top priorities, along with exercise equipment or additional classes.
- Protection of nature is very important to residents. There is widespread support for the continued protection, enhancement and restoration of open spaces and wildlife habitat.
- Residents want to feel connected to nature in their urban parks. There is interest in adding nature play elements and wildlife habitats to more traditional park settings.
- There is widespread interest in bringing community gardens, dog parks and aquatic facilities to new areas of the city to improve access to these amenities for all neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES

- Walkability and Access to Parks and Preserves
- Activity Access:
 - Play for Children
 - Exercise and Fitness
 - Throw a Ball
 - Gathering
 - Relax and Enjoy the Outdoors
- Experience Nature
- Preservation of Nature
- Trail Connections
- Availability of Restrooms
- Site Amenities and Experience
- Universal Accessibility

- Residents strongly support improved and additional restrooms in parks. In addition, there is a clear preference for features and amenities that support comfort, convenience and longer stays at parks, including water fountains and places to sit.
- The Palo Alto community strongly supports universal design and access, and there is interest in adding inclusive play elements to more parks.
- Current policies that prioritize the availability of facilities for Palo Alto residents are widely supported and stakeholders generally agree that providing services to local residents is a higher priority than providing regional attractions.
- Residents would like to see enhancements to parks throughout the City, including more types of play experiences and environments. There is also support for smaller, more locally focused events and programs (e.g., movies in the park) that are held in different parks throughout the City.
- The community strongly supports the kinds of local and regional partnerships (particularly with the School District) that expand recreation opportunities and services for youth, teens and residents of all ages and abilities.

Needs and Opportunities Summary

Review of the data from the Technical Assessment and Analysis and the Community and Stakeholder Engagement tied these two tracks of the Master Plan process together in preparation for Developing and Prioritizing Projects. As described in Chapter 1, this process produced a detailed reference matrix (with supporting documentation) identifying needs and opportunities across the system.

The Data and Opportunities Summary Matrix included in the technical supplement synthesizes findings from both the Technical Assessment and Analysis and the Community and Stakeholder Engagement tracks across nine topics:

- Current service/inventory
- Level of control

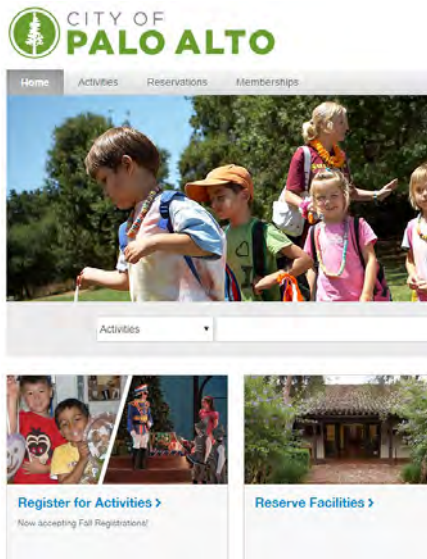
- Geographic analysis
- Capacity/bookings
- Perception of quality
- Expressed need
- Demographic trends
- Barriers to participation
- Projected demand

The final step of the process was to summarize opportunities to enhance Palo Alto's system through the addition, distribution or modification of a particular element and component. These actions were prioritized to develop the Master Plan's final recommendations, based on the constraints posed by limited land, staff, funding and other resources in the community.

Key Findings

The review of the matrix identified groupings of opportunities that had emerged from the many analysis and community input activities. The opportunities were crafted into a set of twelve Areas of Focus, which represent a major development step toward goals for the master plan. The Areas of Focus are:

- Distributing park and recreation activities and experiences across the city
- Improving the accessibility of the full range of park and recreation opportunities
- Exploring new types of programs, classes, events and activities for all ages and abilities
- Improving and enhancing community center and recreation spaces across the community
- Enhancing capacity and quality of sports fields
- Increasing the variety of things to do in existing parks
- Enhancing comfort and making parks more welcoming
- Increasing health and wellness opportunities in parks and programs



- Integrating nature into Palo Alto parks
- Improving spaces and increasing options for off-leash dogs
- Expanding the system
- Offering more of the existing programs, classes and events

The community prioritization challenge, a combination of online survey and in-person workshop, reviewed the community’s opinions of these areas. Participants were asked to allocate a \$10 budget across each of the areas of focus, with the amounts allocated indicating the priority they place on a particular area.

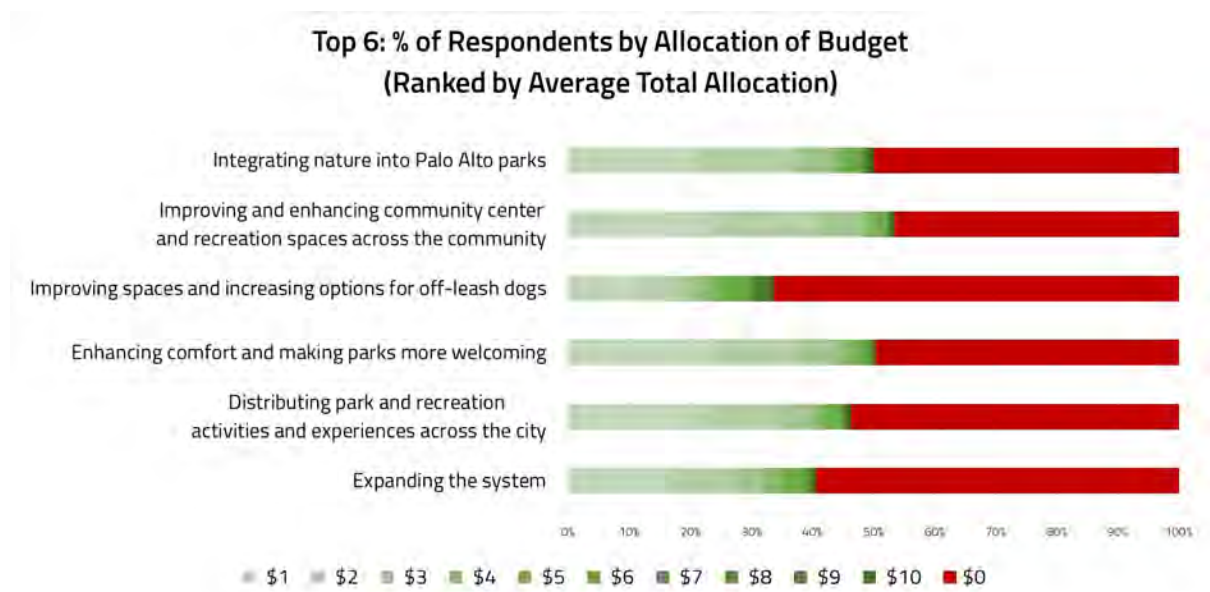
The analysis of the results reflects the strong interest heard throughout the process for community center space improvements, integrating nature more thoroughly in the park system and making parks more welcoming.

A relatively smaller number of participants placed a very high priority (and resulting larger budget allocation) on improving options for off-leash dogs.

These results of the community prioritization challenge provided additional insight into the community’s opinions about the future of Palo Alto’s parks and recreation. The full summary is available in the technical supplement.

Figure 7 shows a sample survey question result. Full results are available in the technical supplement.

FIGURE 7: PRIORITIZATION CHALLENGE RESULTS



Opportunities for the System

Three concept maps (Figures 8- 10) illustrate opportunities to further create a multi-layered system of parklands and connections that serves both people and natural systems. The maps can also serve as tools for supporting decisions on individual policies, programs and projects.

EXPAND THE SYSTEM

Figure 8 identifies areas of Palo Alto where residents lack access to parks and natural open spaces within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of their homes. These “park search areas,” labeled A through E for planning purposes, will help the City focus future park additions in neighborhoods with the greatest need: for example, those with the highest density and/or largest population. Meanwhile, public access to school grounds that fall within park search areas (noted in purple) should be maintained and expanded to better support neighborhood park uses and enhance their natural open space value. Other City-owned properties (noted in brown) may represent future park opportunities, but nearly all of these lands fall outside of the park search areas.

CONNECT THE SYSTEM

A selection of Palo Alto’s existing and planned bikeways and pedestrian routes can be leveraged to improve park and recreation access. Figure 9 illustrates this potential network of trails and enhanced roadways that connect neighborhoods to local and regional parks, recreation facilities and natural open spaces. These routes are part of the City’s adopted Bicycle Pedestrian Transportation Plan and the Santa Clara County Countywide Trails Master Plan Update. Recommended enhanced routes, labeled 1 through 3 for planning purposes, provide main north to south travel corridors between Palo Alto’s parks and into neighboring communities. Regional and countywide trails like the Adobe Creek Connector and San Francisco Bay trails provide similar travel corridors from Foothills Park and Pearson-Arastradero Preserve in the southwest to the Baylands Nature Preserve and other shoreline parks and natural open spaces to the northeast. Recommended park connectors complete the network by linking the remaining park sites.





CONNECT NATURAL SYSTEMS

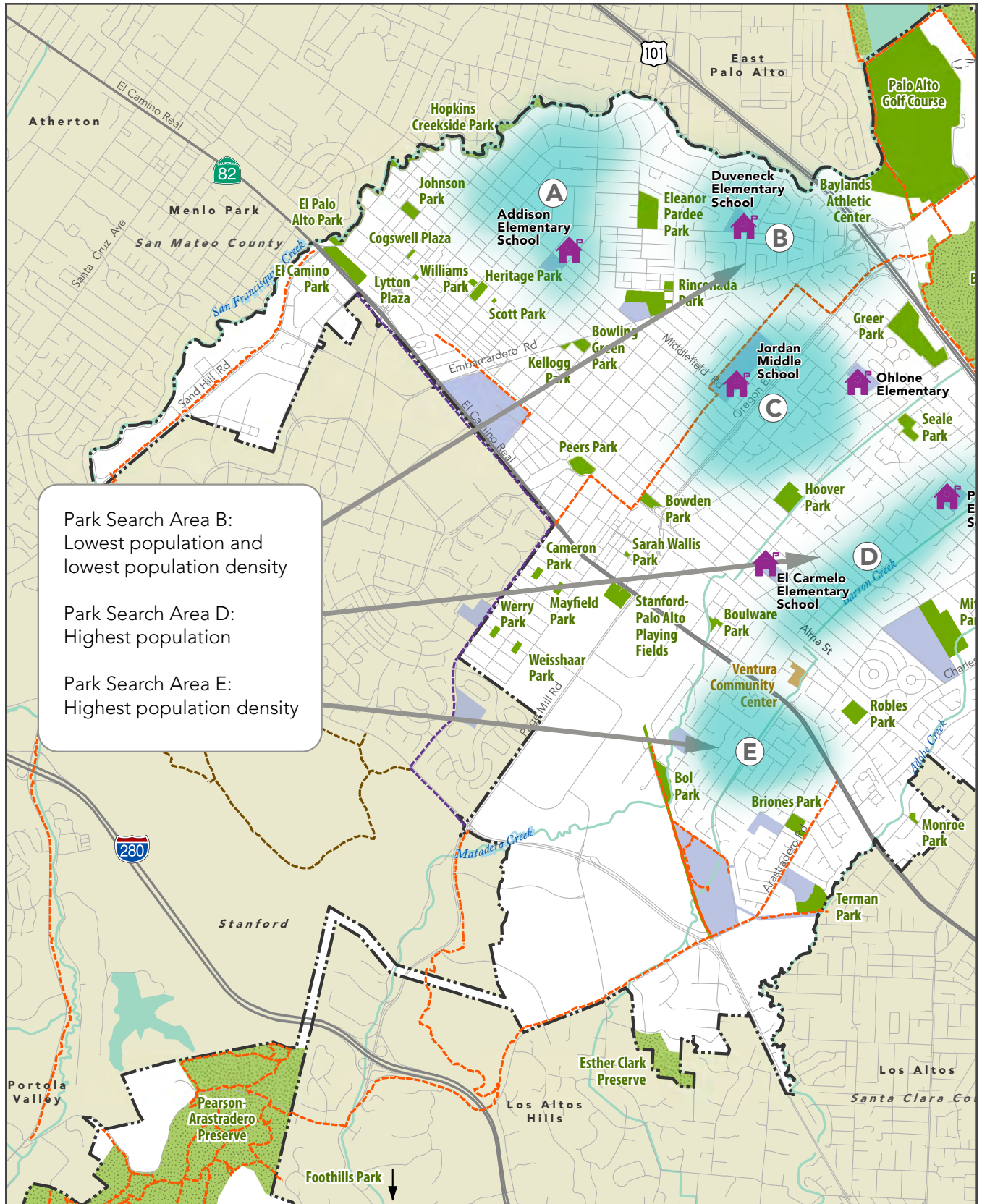
Figure 10 illustrates how the same corridors recommended for bike and pedestrian enhancements can also provide connectivity for natural systems. Landscape design features such as increased urban forest canopy, native species plantings and stormwater bioswales can create safe paths of travel and provide habitat value for local wildlife. Creek and riparian enhancements, supported by these “pollinator pathways,” would improve water quality and habitat connections between regionally significant habitats in the hills and in the bay. New street and park trees would benefit areas that currently have low tree canopy coverage, highlighted in tan.

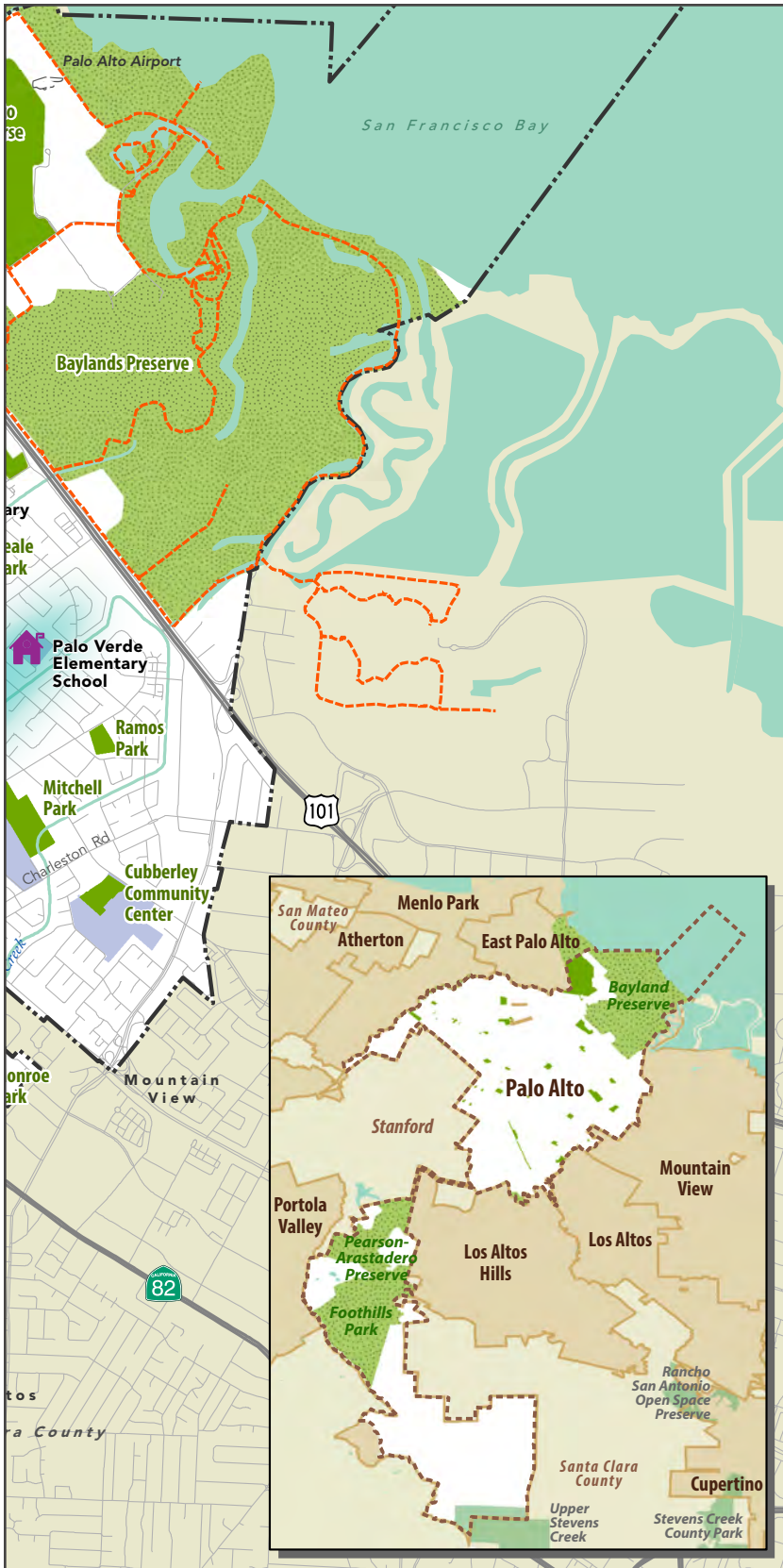
UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY SITES

In the overall context of limited land, three properties in Palo Alto represent unique opportunities, as they are already owned by the City and are not yet designated for a specific use. These three sites each have unique opportunities for park development, but also constraints. The status of each is summarized below:

- **Cubberley Community Center:** The City owns 8 of the 35 acres of this former high school campus and has managed leases within the buildings with a number of community organizations and businesses while also scheduling the gym and field space. The City and the Palo Alto Unified School District have agreed to jointly master plan the redevelopment of the site by 2020.
- **Foothills Park Expansion:** The City acquired 7.7 acres of land adjacent to Foothills Park and has dedicated it as an expansion of the park. The expansion is cut off from the developed portion of the park by the existing maintenance facility. Discussion of the future of this site is pending the results of the Buckeye Creek hydrology study, which will be completed in summer 2017.
- **Baylands Athletic Center Expansion:** As a result of the redesign of the Palo Alto Golf Course, 10.5 acres of land was added to the adjacent Baylands Athletic Center site for future recreation opportunities. Considerations for developing this site include its relative isolation from residences (and access through a complicated and heavily impacted roadway exchange), its proximity to adjacent park sites, site limitations due to wetlands and its location below the mean projected high water line after 3 feet of sea level rise, which could influence the type of recreation opportunities at the site.

FIGURE 8: PARK SEARCH AREAS MAP





City of Palo Alto Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Space
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation

Base Map Features

- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools

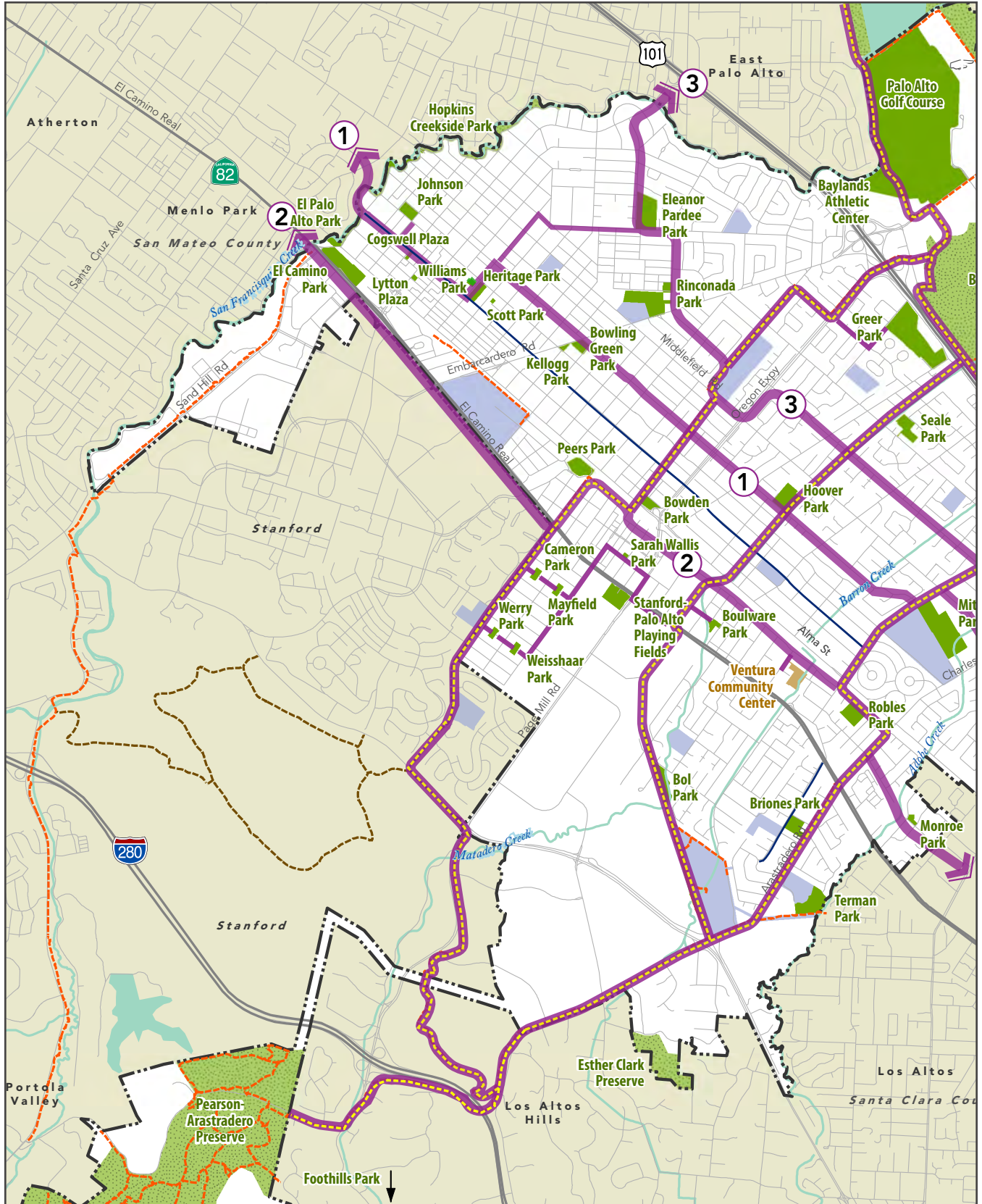
Park Search Map Features

- A Park Search Areas
- 🏠 Priority School Sites



Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and Santa Clara County GIS

FIGURE 9: BIKEWAYS AND PEDESTRIAN ROUTES MAP





City of Palo Alto Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Space
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation

Base Map Features

- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools

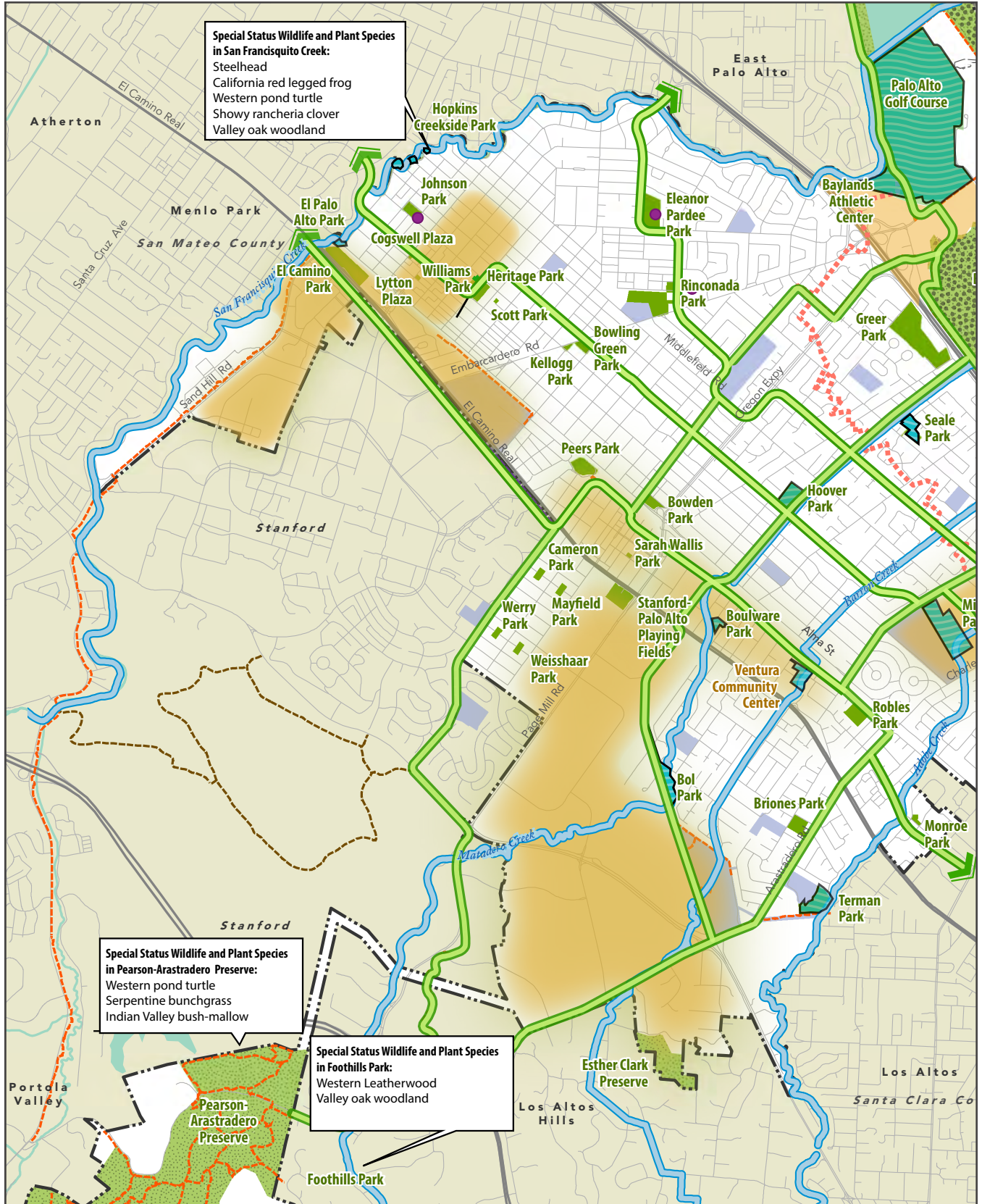
Enhanced Bikeway Features

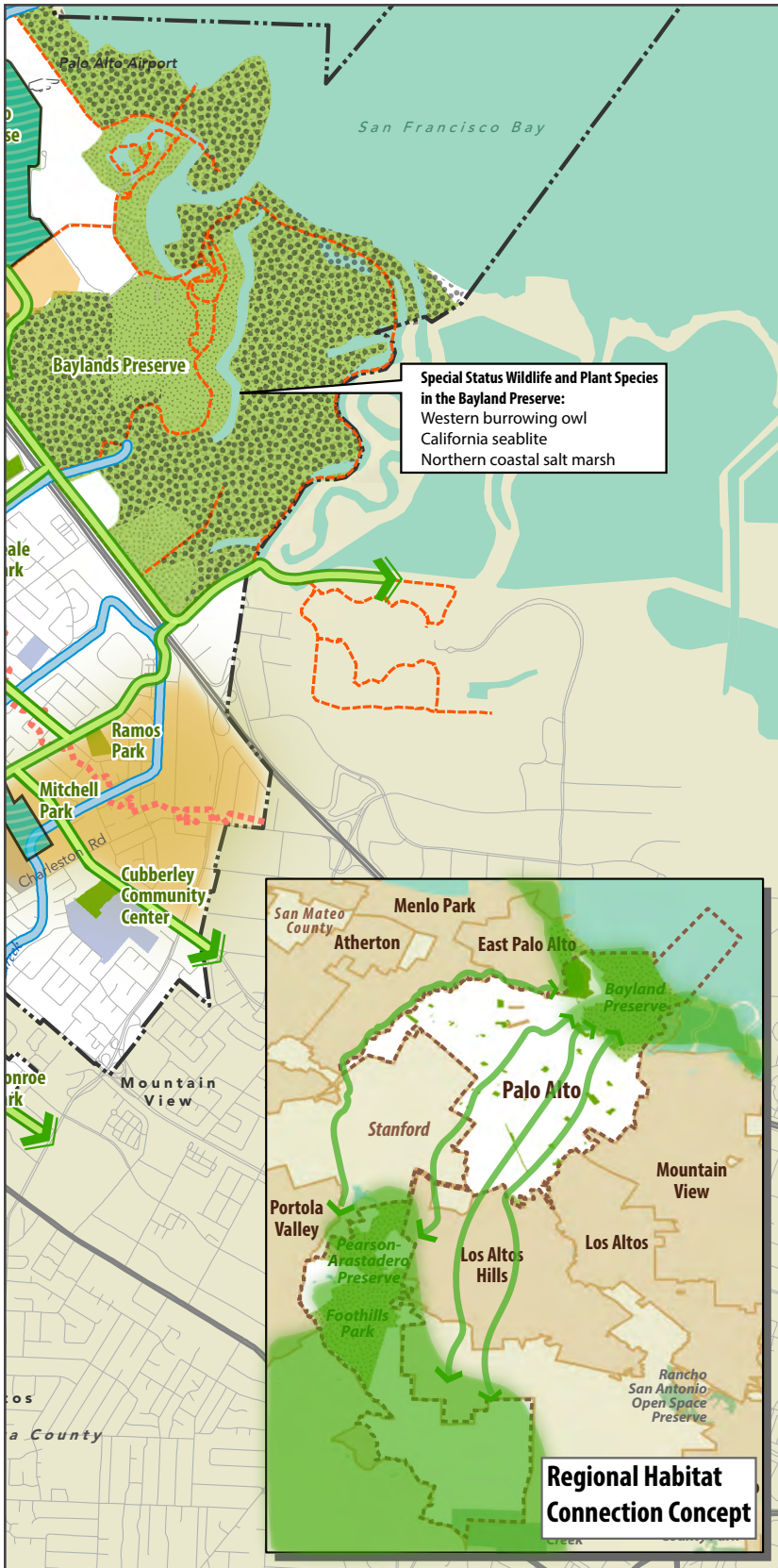
- 1 Recommended Enhanced Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes
- Recommended Park Connectors
- Regional and Countywide Trails (Adobe Creek Connector, San Francisco Bay Trail)



Date: July 2017
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and Santa Clara County GIS

FIGURE 10: NATURAL SYSTEMS MAP





City of Palo Alto
Parks, Trails,
Natural Open Space
and Recreation
Master Plan

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Spaces
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation

Base Map Features

- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools

Natural System Features

- Pollinator Pathways
- Creeks/ Riparian Enhancements
- Urban Canopy Target Areas
- Riparian Connected Parks
- Community Gardens
- Wetland Habitat
- Mean Projected High Water - 3 ft Sea Level Rise (NOAA)

Regional Habitat Connection Concept



Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and Santa Clara County GIS

CHAPTER



4

OUR FUTURE: PRINCIPLES, GOALS, POLICIES, PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

THROUGH THE MASTER PLAN PROCESS, THE PALO ALTO COMMUNITY HAS DEFINED A FUTURE FOR PARKS, TRAILS, NATURAL OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION. Distilled community input and themes from the analysis process result in principles, goals and system-wide concepts that describe the community's long-term vision for the future system.

The principles and goals will be realized through the recommended programs described in this chapter. The recommendations were developed through an assessment of community input and an analysis of needs and opportunities. These recommendations reflect both changing needs and evolving demands for parks, trails, natural open space and recreation. They are organized within the framework of the eight principles and six goals, with policies and programs following each goal.



A MULTI-LAYERED SYSTEM OF PARKLANDS AND CONNECTIONS THAT SERVE BOTH PEOPLE AND NATURAL SYSTEMS.

Principles

Building on our assets, our vision for the continuing evolution of the park system is encapsulated in the following eight principles:

- **Playful:** Inspires imagination and joy.
- **Healthy:** Supports the physical and mental health and well-being of individuals as well as the connectedness and cohesion of the community.
- **Sustainable:** Stewards natural, economic and social resources for a system that endures for the long term.
- **Inclusive:** Responsive to the entire Palo Alto community: all ages, abilities, languages, cultures and levels of income.
- **Accessible:** Easy for people of all abilities to use year-round and to get to by all modes of travel.
- **Flexible:** Supports multiple uses across time with adaptable spaces that can accommodate traditional, emerging and future uses.
- **Balanced:** Is not dominated by any one type of experience or place and includes both historic elements and cutting-edge features, highly manicured and more organic spaces and self-directed and programmed activities.
- **Nature:** Incorporates native species and habitat corridors, and creates opportunities to learn about and interact with nature.



Together, these principles provide the foundation for the Master Plan.

Master Plan Goals

The input from the community, including all twelve areas of focus, form the long-term direction for the City's park and recreation system. The following six goals state the outcomes and provide an organizational structure for the policies, programs and projects that form the recommendations of this plan:

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

2. Enhance the capacity, quality and variety of uses of the existing system of parks, recreation and open space facilities and services.
3. Create environments that encourage regular active and passive activities to support health, wellness and social connections.
4. Preserve and integrate nature, natural systems and ecological principles throughout Palo Alto.
5. Develop innovative programs, services and strategies for expanding the system.
6. Manage Palo Alto's land and services effectively, efficiently and sustainably utilizing quantitative and qualitative measures.

Recommended Programs

The goals, policies and programs are intended to be a guide for decision making. Choices will need to be made annually through the City budget process, recognizing that the City has limited resources, multiple priorities and competing resource needs. The goals, policies and programs that follow represent a path to a preferred future. It is aspirational, while also tangible, providing a specific menu of potential investment and resource allocation opportunities for the parks, trails, natural open space and recreation system. Chapter 5 provides tools and recommendations on how the community and City can effectively evaluate options and make sound and reliable choices to improve the parks, trails, natural open space and recreation system.

Each goal is numbered, and under each goal a list of related policies is provided. The policies are numbered according to goal and ordered by letter for easy reference (1.A, 1.B, 1.C, 2.A, 2.B, etc.). Most policies are followed by a list of programs, which have complementary numbering (1.A.1, 1.A.2, 2.A.1, etc.). The numbering is for reference only. Prioritization is covered in Chapter 5.

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

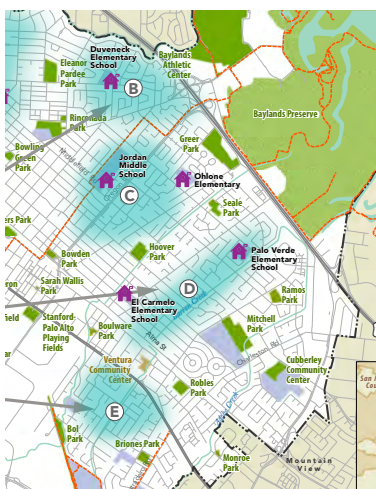
Policy

1.A Emphasize equity and affordability in the provision of programs and services and the facilitation of partnerships, to create recreation opportunities that:

- Advance skills, build community and improve the quality of life among participants, especially Palo Alto youth, teens and seniors; and
- Are available at a wide range of facilities, at an increased number of locations that are well distributed throughout the City.

PROGRAMS

- 1.A.1 Periodically evaluate the use and effectiveness of the Fee Reduction Program for low-income and disabled residents.
- 1.A.2 Develop free or low-cost teen programs that develop life skills and developmental assets, such as leadership, community service and health.
- 1.A.3 Develop a teen advisory committee to provide feedback on newly proposed parks, recreation and open space projects and programs.
- 1.A.4 Partner with local recreation providers to relocate existing programs or offer new programs in Palo Alto parks.
- 1.A.5 Recruit or develop programs for additional and alternative sports that can take place in existing parks and make use of existing outdoor recreation facilities. Examples include cross country running, track and field, rugby and pickleball.
- 1.A.6 Expand offerings of preserves' interpretive facilities to area schools through curriculum packages (backpacks, crates, etc.) that can be brought into the field or the classroom.
- 1.A.7 Evaluate the geographic distribution of program offerings and make adjustments to equally offer programs throughout the City.



Map showing geographic distribution of program offerings

Policy

- 1.B Expand parkland inventory using the National Recreation and Park Association standard as a guide (see sidebar) for park development in Palo Alto’s Urban Service Area. New parkland should be added to meet and maintain the standard of 4 acres/1,000 residents. Parkland should expand with population, be well distributed across the community and be of sufficient size to meet the varied needs of neighborhoods and the broader community. Maximum service area should be 1/2 mile.**

PROGRAMS

- 1.B.1 Develop design standards for privately owned public open spaces that clearly set the expectation for public access, recreation activities and natural elements. .
- 1.B.2 Establish a system in the City’s real estate office that identifies land being sold and reviews it for park potential, prioritizing review of land within park search areas. (See Figure 8: Park Search Areas Map).
- 1.B.3 Review all City-owned land and easements (starting in park search areas) for potential parkland development or connection locations. (See Figure 8: Park Search Areas Map and Figure 9: Bikeways and Pedestrian Routes Map).
- 1.B.4 Examine City-owned rights-of-way (for example, streets, which make up the biggest portion of publicly owned land) to identify temporary or permanent areas for improvements that connect or add recreation activity space. (Examples: California Ave., Indianapolis Cultural Trail, parklets).
- 1.B.5 Identify and approach community organizations and institutions that own land in park search areas to create long-term agreements and improvements for public park space. (Examples: Friendship Sportsplex in Charlotte, N.C., New Riverside Park in Boston.)
- 1.B.6 Create usable park space, or other recreational opportunities, on top of utilities, parking or other infrastructure uses. (Examples: Anaheim Utility Park, UC Berkeley Underhill Parking Structure, Portland’s Director Park, Stanford University Wilbur Field Garage.)

PARKLAND STANDARDS

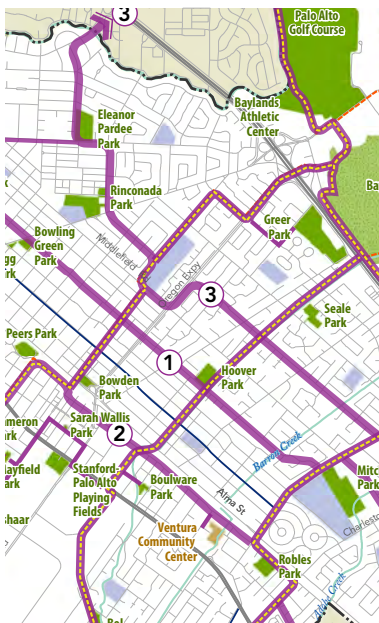
The Palo Alto Comprehensive plan references (Policy C-28) National Recreation and Park Association standards:

- Two acres of neighborhood parkland should be provided for each 1,000 people; and
- Two acres of district parkland should be provided for each 1,000 people.



Privately-Owned Public Open Spaces are built and managed by private entities and are required to allow public access.

- 1.B.7 Monitor properties adjacent to parks that are smaller than the minimum recommended size for potential acquisition to expand existing parks.
- 1.B.8 Increase collections through revised or alternative park impact fee structures that are sufficient to expand inventory. Develop a system to reserve funds for parkland acquisition and proactively pursue strategic opportunities for expansion.
- 1.B.9 Acquire and develop a new neighborhood park in each park search area, starting with the most underserved areas and targeting a central and well-connected location to maximize access.
- 1.B.10 Develop a creek walk along Matadero Creek that links parks and creates open space and a habitat corridor.
- 1.B.11 Incorporate other underutilized City-owned outdoor spaces for park and recreational programming.
- 1.B.12 Identify and dedicate (as parkland) City-controlled spaces serving, or capable of serving, park-like or recreational uses, where appropriate (e.g., Winter Lodge, Gamble Gardens, Rinconada Community Gardens, GreenWaste Facility at the former PASCO site, former Los Altos Sewage Treatment Plan, Kingsley Island).



Inventory of well-distributed parkland

Policy

- 1.C Ensure the maximum distance between residents' homes and the nearest public park or preserve is 1/2 mile, 1/4 mile preferred, that is evaluated using a walkshed methodology based on how people travel.

PROGRAMS

- 1.C.1 Maintain the City's digital map developed during this Master Plan process, updating for new activities and access points.
- 1.C.2 Establish a review step in the Planning and Community Environment Department for any major redevelopment or the purchase/sale of any City land in the park search areas.

Policy

- 1.D Adopt standard wayfinding signage for Palo Alto parks and provide standardized directory signs for all large parks, preserves and athletic field complexes.**

PROGRAMS

- 1.D.1 Create and implement a signage and wayfinding program that conveys the park system identity, incorporates art, connects bike paths to parks and enhances the experience of park visitors.
- 1.D.2 Install directional signs at parks that include the walking time to the next nearest park or parks.

Policy

- 1.E Apply universal design principles as the preferred guidance for design solutions in parks, striving to exceed Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.**

PROGRAMS

- 1.E.1 Create a process to address adaptive program requests for individuals with cognitive, sensory and physical disabilities (to be coordinated with upcoming ADA Transition Plan).
- 1.E.2 Adopt a standard of universal park design for accessibility and/or upgrade play areas and picnic facilities to meet or exceed the standard.
- 1.E.3 Upgrade open space trails to be more universally accessible where environmentally appropriate.



Magical Bridge Playground: Universally accessible children's park facilities

Policy

- 1.F Maintain a Field and Tennis Court Brokering and Use Policy as well as the Gymnasium Use Policy (as well as any subsequent updates) to guide the allocation of these recreation facilities with a preference for youth and Palo Alto residents.**

PROGRAMS

- 1.F.1 Periodically review the existing Field and Tennis Court Brokering and Use Policy and Gymnasium Policy and update as needed.
- 1.F.2 Develop an annual field usage statistics report, including

the number of prime timeslots that were unused due to field condition/resting and the number of requests for field space that were unfilled due to lack of capacity.

Policy

1.G Encourage walking and biking as a way of getting to and from parks, supporting implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan.

PROGRAMS

- 1.G.1 Select parks as destinations along routes for “Ciclovía” or “Sunday Streets” type events where streets are closed to traffic and opened up for citizens of all ages to interact with each other through exercise, entertainment and fun.
- 1.G.2 Provide bike parking for cyclists as a standard feature at parks, open spaces, preserves and community centers.
- 1.G.3 Provide, identify and mark “Safe Routes to Parks” from locations such as schools, shopping centers, libraries, after-school programs, community centers and residential neighborhoods.
- 1.G.4 Educate residents about the city’s Bike Boulevards – streets prioritized for bicycles – to promote greater use, and plan new Bike Boulevard projects that connect parks, open spaces and recreation facilities.
- 1.G.5 Identify gaps in the walking and cycling network to improve access to parks, open spaces, preserves and community centers, including sidewalk repairs, easements, trail improvements/repair and improved pedestrian visibility.
- 1.G.6 Collaborate with school communities to enhance routes to schools, especially where they pass through parks.
- 1.G.7 Develop a regular bicycle and walking tour of Palo Alto parks and preserves as a new recreation program. Develop online materials for self-guided tours.
- 1.G.8 Improve trail connections to neighboring communities (Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Stanford University, Portola Valley, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, East Palo Alto, etc.)

Policy

- 1.H Incorporate cultural diversity in projects and programs to encourage and enhance citizen participation.**

PROGRAMS

- 1.H.1 Conduct a survey at least every two years of cultural groups to identify gaps, barriers to access, preferred design and awareness in recreation programming.
- 1.H.2 Provide multi-cultural and multi-lingual recreation programs, signage and educational information.
- 1.H.3 Encourage and provide opportunities for civic engagement by directly connecting with cultural groups.

Policy

- 1.I Increase stewardship and volunteerism by creating and promoting opportunities for youth and adults to participate in parks, recreation, open space events, projects and programs.**

PROGRAMS

- 1.I.1 Create a robust volunteer recruitment and management program.
- 1.I.2 Continue to offer volunteer habitat and landscape improvement projects and support partnership organizations that offer volunteer programs in Parks and Open Space areas.



Volunteers assisting with maintenance of a natural area

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

Policy

2.A Sustain the community’s investment in parks and recreation facilities.

PROGRAMS

- 2.A.1 Collaborate with Palo Alto Unified School District to develop and implement a vision and master plan for the future of the Cubberley Community Center.
- 2.A.2 Continue to program and prioritize projects for existing facilities as identified in the Infrastructure Blue Ribbon Commission report, and plan the upkeep of new facilities as they come on line, recognizing their expected lifespan and revising based on real-world experience.
- 2.A.3 Research best practices to design park and recreational facilities that can be maintained with existing or lower budgets.
- 2.A.4 Encourage residents to organize and participate in park maintenance and cleanup events to foster a sense of ownership, establish social connections and reduce maintenance costs.
- 2.A.5 Develop a proactive Asset Management Program to maintain existing park and recreation infrastructure.
- 2.A.6 Provide additional lighting to enhance park safety and expand park use to dusk while minimizing impacts to wildlife.
- 2.A.7 Find ways to mitigate conflicts between different trail user groups, particularly in the Pearson-Arastradero Preserve and Bol Park where multiple types of users share pathways.



Policy

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

PROGRAMS

- 2.B.1 Incorporate artists and art into youth recreation programming, particularly day camps, utilizing the expertise of the Arts and Sciences Division.
- 2.B.2 Create outdoor studios and program spaces for creating art in parks (coordinated with the Public Art Master Plan).
- 2.B.3 Encourage the community to participate in more expressive projects led by the department, such as community mural projects in facilities, pop-up open mics or chalk art programs in parks.
- 2.B.4 Continue to provide “maker” space to Palo Alto teens to encourage creative thinking and expression.

Policy

2.C Design and maintain high-quality natural and synthetic turf fields to support maximum use in parks by multiple local organized sports and casual users with areas large enough for practice or play.

PROGRAMS

- 2.C.1 Conduct an athletic field condition and maintenance assessment of the City’s natural turf fields, and upgrade fields at select parks to high-quality natural turf standards including irrigation system upgrades, drainage improvements, etc. The field assessment report should include analysis and recommendations regarding the soil profile, agronomy, irrigation systems, field slope, drainage, field-use demand and maintenance.
- 2.C.2 Actively monitor and track industry developments and the latest reputable scientific studies regarding synthetic turf to understand the environmental and human safety impacts of our existing synthetic turf fields.
- 2.C.3 Assess the type of turf (new synthetic turf product or natural turf) that should be used when replacing an existing synthetic turf field that is due for replacement.



Natural and sythetic turf fields

- 2.C.4 Stripe synthetic turf fields for multiple sports to maximize use. Whenever possible, synthetic turf playing fields should have lights in order to maximize use of the field.
- 2.C.5 Collaborate with Palo Alto Unified School District to develop and implement a design and maintenance plan for high-quality natural and synthetic turf fields.

Policy

2.D Actively pursue adding dedicated, fenced dog parks in multiple neighborhoods, equitably distributed between north and south Palo Alto. The size of the dog parks will vary but should strive to be at least 1/4 acres. Dog parks should not be placed in open space preserves.

PROGRAMS

2.D.1 The City will evaluate and select at least six* dedicated, fenced dog parks, equitably distributed across north and south Palo Alto, from the following list of potential locations:

- Eleanor Pardee Park (North, .41 Acres)
- Bowden Park (North, .37 Acres)
- Greer Park (Improve existing) (South, .87 Acres)
- Peers Park (North, .73 Acres)
- Hoover Park (Improve existing) (South, 1 Acre)
- Robles Park (South, .47 Acres)
- Mitchell Park (Expand existing) (South, 1.2 Acres)
- Kingsley Island Park (North, .27 Acres)
- Werry Park (North, .31 Acres)
- Juana Briones Park (South, .47 Acres)
- Heritage Park (North, .27 Acres)

2.D.2 Develop rules and regulations specific to dog parks focusing on safety and limits of use.



Dedicated dog park spaces

*It is acknowledged that Hoover and Greer's current dog parks are inadequate in terms of size, and they should not be counted in their current configuration toward the minimum of six dog parks recommended in this program.

Policy

2.E The City will actively pursue adding park restrooms in parks that are approximately 2 acres or larger, have amenities that encourage visitors to stay in the park, have a high level of use and have no nearby restrooms.

PROGRAMS

- 2.E.1 Develop a restroom standard, in collaboration with the Architectural Review Board, for neighborhood parks.
- 2.E.2 The City will actively pursue adding park restrooms at the following potential locations:
 - Bol Park
 - Bowden Park
 - Eleanor Pardee Park
 - Johnson Park
 - Ramos Park
 - Robles Park
 - Terman Park

Policy

2.F Develop additional community gardens focusing on underrepresented areas of the City and provide community engagement opportunities around gardens.

Policy

2.G At least every five years, quantitatively evaluate demand and capacity of major recreation facilities including pools, gyms, tennis courts and teen centers with appropriate attention to geographical distribution in the city. Adjust plans as appropriate to accommodate significant demographic or demand changes.



Community gardens

**HEALTHY CITY /
HEALTHY COMMUNITY**

In 2015, the City Council adopted a resolution recognizing its role and responsibility to promote and support a Healthy City/Healthy Community. Four areas of action are identified in this resolution:

- Healthy Culture
- Healthy Environment
- Healthy Food Access
- Healthy Workplace



Bicycling and walking path promoting outdoor fitness

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

Policy

3.A Implement the Healthy City/Healthy Community resolution with the community's involvement.

PROGRAMS

- 3.A.1 Convene and lead a Healthy City/Healthy Community stakeholder work group consisting of other agencies, nonprofit organizations and citizens that supports building a healthy community.
- 3.A.2 Develop an annual plan that supports implementation of the resolution.
- 3.A.3 Achieve designation as an Age-Friendly Community.
- 3.A.4 Add drop-in programs (free or BOOST!) focused on physical and mental health in settings that are near home/work and maximize the health benefits of being outside and surrounded by nature.
- 3.A.5 Connect walking paths within and between parks to create loop options of varying length that encourage walking and jogging.
- 3.A.6 Enhance seating areas to take advantage of quiet spaces or to create opportunities for social interaction.
- 3.A.7 Promote and enforce the ban on smoking in Palo Alto's parks through a marketing campaign and signage program.
- 3.A.8 Upgrade or add drinking fountains with water bottle filling and water for dogs.
- 3.A.9 Develop adult fitness areas in parks including exercise areas for the exclusive use of older adults (seniors).

Policy

3.B Incorporate art into park design and recreation programming (consistent with the Public Art Master Plan).

PROGRAMS

- 3.B.1 Promote temporary public art installations in local parks.
- 3.B.2 Promote interactive public art features that also serve as play features (i.e. climbable sculptural elements integrated into the natural environment that invite touch and exploration).
- 3.B.3 Update park design policies to incorporate artistic elements consistent with the Public Art Master Plan.
- 3.B.4 Commission artwork that interprets local history, events and significant individuals or represents City core values of sustainability, youth well-being, health and innovation.
- 3.B.5 Bring in performance-based work, social practice, temporary art and community art.
- 3.B.6 Explore suitable art for preserves and natural areas.
- 3.B.7 Incorporate public art in the earliest stages of the design of parks and facilities that may utilize wind direction, sunlight and ambient sound (coordinated with the Public Art Master Plan).
- 3.B.8 Install permanent and temporary installations and exhibits in well-trafficked parks and plazas, following the guidance of the Public Art Master Plan.
- 3.B.9 Integrate functional public art into play areas, seatwalls and other built features in parks across the system.
- 3.B.10 Integrate art and nature into bike lanes, routes and paths as appropriate.



Public art in Palo Alto

Policy

- 3.C Require that proposed privately owned public spaces that are provided through the Parkland Dedication Ordinance meet Palo Alto design guidelines and standards for publicly owned parks, allow public access, and be designed to support recreation, incorporate natural ecosystem elements and comply with the policies of the Urban Forest Master Plan.**

PROGRAMS

- 3.C.1 Develop and apply clear expectations and definitions of public access (hours, rules) for privately owned public spaces.



Natural open space

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

Policy

- 4.A In natural open space, ensure activities, projects and programs are compatible with the protection of nature.**

PROGRAMS

- 4.A.1 Develop comprehensive conservation plans for Baylands Preserve, Foothills Park, Esther Clark Park and Pearson-Arastradero Preserve to identify strategies to balance ecosystem preservation, passive recreation and environmental education. The protection of biological resources from visitor use impacts shall be the priority in the Open Space Preserves.
- 4.A.2 Continue to work with partner organizations to remove invasive weeds and plant native plants and trees in riparian and natural open space areas.
- 4.A.3 Update the Arastradero Preserve Trail Management Plan (March 2001) and the Foothills Park Trail Maintenance Plan (January 2002), and incorporate into in the Foothills Park, Pearson-Arastradero Preserve and Esther Clark Park Comprehensive Conservation Plan Project.

Policy

- 4.B Connect people to nature and the outdoors through education and recreation programming.**

PROGRAMS

- 4.B.1 Expand access to nature through elements and interpretive features that explore ecological processes, historical context, adjacent waterways and specific plant/animal species that can be encountered onsite and have elements tailored to be of interest to youth as well as multiple ages, cultures and abilities.
- 4.B.2 Update or rebuild interpretive centers with modern interactive exhibits.

- 4.B.3 Improve and increase access to creeks for learning and stewardship experiences by designing access points that minimize impact on the waterway.
- 4.B.4 Expand programs such as Foothills camps to connect youth with parks year-round.
- 4.B.5 Partner with boys/girls scouting organizations for outdoor education programs and/or the Junior Rangers program.
- 4.B.6 Expand and increase events that educate and promote native plants, species and wildlife.
- 4.B.7 Provide shade for play areas, using shade trees as the preferred solution.
- 4.B.8 Update and improve the Toyon Trail Interpretive Guide to make it more engaging and educational.
- 4.B.9 Develop a Trail Interpretive Guide for Pearson-Arastradero Preserve and the Baylands Nature Preserve.



Nature education programming

Policy

- 4.C Connect natural areas, open space, creeks and vegetated areas in parks and on public land to create wildlife, bird, pollinator and habitat corridors by planting with native oaks and other species that support pollinators or provide high habitat values.**

PROGRAMS

- 4.C.1 Develop a map that identifies locations for habitat corridors, including the appropriate plant palette for each corridor.
- 4.C.2 Work with local environmental groups to grow native plant species and utilize their network of volunteers to install and maintain planted areas.
- 4.C.3 Establish low-impact buffer zones with native plant species along creeks to enhance habitat value.

Policy

4.D Promote, expand and protect habitat and natural areas in parks and open space.

PROGRAMS

- 4.D.1 Identify and pursue strategies and opportunities to expand native trees and planting areas in urban parks.
- 4.D.2 Integrate and implement the Urban Forest Master Plan Policies and Programs as applicable to parkland in Palo Alto.
- 4.D.3 Update the preferred plant palette and approved tree species list.
- 4.D.4 Collaborate with habitat restoration organizations such as Save the Bay, Canopy and Grassroots Ecology (Acterra).
- 4.D.5 Replace low-use turf areas with native shrubs and grasses, incorporating educational elements about native habitats.
- 4.D.6 Support regional efforts that focus on enhancing and protecting significant natural resources.
- 4.D.7 Utilizing volunteers, expand programs to remove invasive species and to plant native vegetation in open space, parks and creek corridors.
- 4.D.8 Collaborate with regional partners to control the spread of invasive species and plant pathogens.
- 4.D.9 Contact partner entity (such as Stanford University) conservation program manager before planning projects that disturb the ground on properties they own (including the Stanford/Palo Alto Playing Fields and El Camino Park) to allow review of their habitat conservation requirements.

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

Policy

5.A Identify and pursue strategies to activate underused parks and recreation facilities

PROGRAMS

- 5.A.1 Implement short-term placemaking improvements (flexible, small scale interventions such as seating, art, programming or planters that have minimal capital cost) to attract users and experiment with potential longer-term options.
- 5.A.2 Emphasize flexibility and layering uses (allowing for different uses at different times of day, week, etc.) in parks over installing fixed-use equipment and single-use facilities.
- 5.A.3 Expand day camp program opportunities, utilizing all preserves and more local park sites and additional topic areas, to meet excess demand.
- 5.A.4 Leverage social media and develop marketing materials to encourage “pop-up” recreational activities in rotating parks.
- 5.A.5 Create small (10-12 people) and medium-sized (20-25 people) group picnic areas that can be used for both picnics and programming.
- 5.A.6 Assess high-demand park features and identify those that can be added or relocated to low-use parks.



Examples of placemaking improvements

Policy

5.B Support innovation in recreation programming and park features and amenities.

PROGRAMS

- 5.B.1 Review program data based on clearly communicated objectives for reach, impact, attendance and financial performance.
- 5.B.2 Retire, end or refresh programs that require staff, facility and financial resources but do not achieve program objectives, thereby freeing up resources for new programs.

- 5.B.3 Actively develop a small number of pilot programs each year to test new ideas, locations and target audiences.
- 5.B.4 Build on partnership with Avenidas to expand intergenerational programming as well as additional older adult programming.
- 5.B.5 Expand BOOST!, the pay-per-use exercise class system to cover fees for any drop-in classes or facility use (lap swim, drop-in gym time, new programs in parks).
- 5.B.6 Set a goal of 10% new program offerings each season; new programs should be offered based on needs assessment, industry trends and/or class evaluation data.
- 5.B.7 Create a robust marketing and outreach program to highlight new and innovative programs to community.
- 5.B.8 Develop short-term recreation access strategies (such as temporary use agreements for vacant or park-like property) and seek long-term or permanent park and recreation space in each park search area. Actively recruit property and facility owners to participate in the development of the short- and long-term strategies.
- 5.B.9 Explore addition of intramural sports for middle and high school students through a partnership with Palo Alto Unified School District.
- 5.B.10 Provide opportunities for “pickup” or non-league sports activities at City parks and recreation facilities.



Underhill Parking Garage at UC Berkeley includes a full size soccer field built over a 1,000 space, four-level parking facility

Policy

- 5.C Expand the overall parks and recreation system through repurposing public land, partnering with other organizations for shared land, incorporating public park spaces on parking decks and rooftops, if appropriate and using other creative means to help address shortages of available land.**

PROGRAMS

- 5.C.1 Explore a process to utilize and reserve select public and private lands for “park-like” functions that allows for more flexibility than formal park dedication.

Policy

5.D Explore alternative uses for newly acquired parkland to optimize for long-term community benefit.

PROGRAMS

- 5.D.1 Determine optimal usage for Foothill Park's 7.7 acres of parkland.
- 5.D.2 Evaluate optimal usage, including open space, for 10.5-acre land bank created by golf course reconstruction in the Baylands.
- 5.D.3 Evaluate feasible uses for the south end of El Camino Park.

Policy

5.E Explore and experiment with parklets and other temporary park spaces for both long- and short-term uses.

Policy

5.F Enhance partnerships and collaborations with Palo Alto Unified School District and Stanford University to support access and joint use of facilities, where appropriate, for effective delivery of services and programs.

PROGRAMS

- 5.F.1 Partner with PAUSD to open middle and high school recreation facilities for community use (basketball, badminton, indoor soccer, swimming pools, tennis courts) during the evening, weekend and summer hours.
- 5.F.2 Develop a steering committee that consists of key officials from the City, PAUSD and Stanford to explore partnership agreements and connect facility managers and programmers.
- 5.F.3 Increase access to PAUSD public schools (outside of school hours) to increase the availability of recreation activity spaces. Target school sites that are within or adjacent to "park search areas."

PARKLET:

An inexpensive infrastructure investment that creates a public gathering space or small park from on-street parking spaces.



Parklet on Noriega Street in San Francisco

- 5.F.4 Explore partnerships with Stanford to create or increase access to athletic facilities and other recreational facilities for Palo Alto residents.
- 5.F.5 Develop a common reservation system for community access to shared facilities.

Policy

5.G Pursue other/private funding sources for recreation programming, capital improvement projects and facility maintenance.

PROGRAMS

- 5.G.1 Encourage foundations to assist with soliciting sponsorships and grants.
- 5.G.2 Create a more formalized annual or one-time sponsorship program that provides the donor with marketing and promotional opportunities.
- 5.G.3 Contract or add job responsibilities for managing fundraising and developing donors for the park system to pursue funding opportunities and sponsorships.
- 5.G.4 Engage non-profit friends groups to seek donor funding, including foundation grants, corporate giving and small and major philanthropic gifts by individuals, for priority projects and programs.

Policy

5.H Partner with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and other land conservation groups to expand access to open space through new acquisitions and improved connections.



Fitness program

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

Policy

- 6.A At least every five years actively review demographic trends and interests of the City population by segment for critical drivers of facility usage including schoolchildren, teens, seniors and ethnic groups, and adjust programs and plans accordingly.**

PROGRAMS

- 6.A.1 Create pilot recreation programs to test the public’s interest in new types of classes, events and activities utilizing an evaluation process.
- 6.A.2 Initiate a community-wide focus group on an annual basis to provide feedback on programs, facilities and long-term roadmaps.
- 6.A.3 Create a streamlined and effective quarterly survey system that solicits feedback from customers, including program participants, facility renters and the general community.

Policy

- 6.B Continue to implement the Cost Recovery Policy for recreation programs, refining the cost and fees using the most current information available.**

PROGRAMS

- 6.B.1 Periodically benchmark the City’s Cost Recovery Policy against other cities’ cost recovery models.
- 6.B.2 Invest in and market city facilities to increase revenue for cost recovery.

Policy

- 6.C Limit the exclusive use of Palo Alto parks (booking a park site or recreation facility or significant portion thereof) for events by private organizations that are closed to the general public.**

PROGRAMS

- 6.C.1 Exclusive use of parks or athletic fields by a private party

or corporation for events that are closed to the general public will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and will be assessed using the following criteria:

- No exclusive use by private parties is permitted on peak days (e.g., weekends, holidays) or peak times (e.g., evening hours on weekdays, 10 am – 6 pm on weekends) as defined by Community Services staff unless approved in advance by the Director of Community Services;
- Private uses will be limited to a maximum of five consecutive days, including event set-up and break-down;
- For any multi-day private event including set up and break-down, notice of the private event will be made to the neighboring community and facility users, a minimum of 14 days in advance allowing for public input prior to the permit being issued;
- Cost recovery, including wear and tear on facility should be 100%.
- Explore establishing incremental deposits and fees for such use.

- 6.C.2 Exclusive use of parks or athletic fields for locally focused events that allow registration by the general public (e.g., races, obstacle course events, triathlons, etc.) may be considered by staff if consistent with this Master Plan.
- 6.C.3 Exclusive use of certain sites and facilities within parks, such as reservable picnic areas, is permitted in accordance with the City’s Park and Open Space Regulations.
- 6.C.4 Events that allow public access are permitted in accordance with Special Event Permit procedures.



Solar installation

Policy

6.D Periodically review and update existing guidance for development, operations and maintenance of Palo Alto’s parks, trails, natural open space and recreation system based on the best practices in the industry and this Master Plan, including:

- Park Rules and Regulations;
- Open Space Policy & Procedure Handbook;
- City of Palo Alto Landscape Standards;
- City of Palo Alto design guidelines and standards; and
- Tree Technical Manual.

Policy

6.E Incorporate sustainable best practices in the maintenance, management and development of open space, parks and recreation facilities where consistent with ecological best practices.

PROGRAMS

- 6.E.1 Increase energy efficiency in Palo Alto parks, including allocating funding to retrofit facilities for energy efficiency with increased insulation, green or reflective roofs and low-emissive window glass where applicable.
- 6.E.2 Conduct energy audits for all facilities, establish an energy baseline for operations, benchmark energy performance against comparable facilities and implement energy tracking and management systems for all park facilities and operations.
- 6.E.3 Select Energy Star and equivalent energy-efficient products for park equipment purchases.
- 6.E.4 Expand the collection and use of solar power (parking lots, roofs) and other renewable energy sources at parks and facilities (e.g. pools).
- 6.E.5 Provide convenient and well-marked compost and recycling receptacles throughout the park system, in recreation facilities and at special events.
- 6.E.6 Ensure that trash, recycling and compost receptacles have covers to prevent wildlife access to human food sources.
- 6.E.7 Review purchasing policies and improve employee education to reduce overall consumption of materials throughout the system.
- 6.E.8 Procure environmentally preferable products (as required by the City's Environmentally Preferred Purchasing policy) as the "default" purchasing option.
- 6.E.9 Initiate composting of green waste within the park system.
- 6.E.10 Work with Public Works to replace the vehicle fleet with electric vehicles whenever practical.
- 6.E.11 Install electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at park facilities with parking lots.
- 6.E.12 Enforce a "No Idle" program with vehicles and other gas-powered equipment.



Palo Alto park maintenance



Example of urban greening/green infrastructure

- 6.E.13 Conduct water audits for all parks and recreation facilities and park operations.
- 6.E.14 Install high-efficiency urinals, toilets, sinks and showers in all facilities.
- 6.E.15 Extend recycled water use to more park sites.
- 6.E.16 Explore stormwater runoff capture opportunities in parks for recycling in irrigation.
- 6.E.17 Ensure irrigation systems on public landscapes (including those expanding the use of recycled water) are run by a smart controller and/or sensors and that staff are trained in programming them.
- 6.E.18 Link all park facilities to a centralized irrigation management system to maximize water use efficiency.
- 6.E.19 Promote urban greening by integrating storm water design into planting beds, reducing irrigation and providing interpretive information about park contributions to city water quality.
- 6.E.20 Train City maintenance staff and include specific standards and expectations in maintenance contracts for the care of low-water, naturalized landscapes, natural play environments and other new types of features in the system.
- 6.E.21 Ensure project designs for new facilities and retrofits will be consistent with sustainable design principles and practices. This includes evaluating all projects for opportunities to implement green stormwater infrastructure such as bioswales, stormwater planters, rain gardens, permeable pavers and porous concrete and asphalt.
- 6.E.22 Identify locations and develop swales, detention basins and rain gardens to retain and treat storm water.

Policy

6.F Strengthen the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy as written. While some parks may be managed as “pesticide free” on a demonstration basis, IPM should continue to be Palo Alto’s approach, grounded in the best available science on pest prevention and management.

PROGRAMS

6.F.1 Periodically review and update the IPM policy based on best available data and technology.

Policy

6.G Strategically reduce maintenance requirements at parks, open spaces, natural preserves and community centers while maintaining Palo Alto’s high quality standards.

PROGRAMS

6.G.1 Locate garbage and recycling receptacles in a single location that is easily accessible by maintenance staff and vehicles.

6.G.2 Explore high capacity, compacting and smart garbage and recycling receptacles that can reduce the frequency of regular collection.

6.G.3 Select standardized furnishing palettes for durability, vandal-resistance and ease of repair.

Policy

6.H Coordinate with and/or use other relevant City plans to ensure consistency, including:

- Baylands Master Plan;
- Urban Forest Master Plan;
- Urban Water Master Plan;
- Long-term electric acquisition plan (LEAP);
- Water Reclamation Master Plan;
- Recycled Water Project;



Accessible garbage and recycling receptacles

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan;
- Comprehensive Plan;
- Public Art Master Plan; and
- Others adopted in the future.

Policy

6.I Continue to engage other relevant City departments and divisions in planning, design and programming, drawing on the unique and specialized skills and perspectives of:

- City Manager’s Office;
- The Palo Alto Art Center;
- Library, including Children’s Library;
- Junior Museum and Zoo;
- Children’s Theatre;
- Public Art;
- Transportation;
- Urban Forestry;
- Planning;
- Public Works; and
- Palo Alto Youth and Teen Leadership.

Policy

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

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

CHAPTER

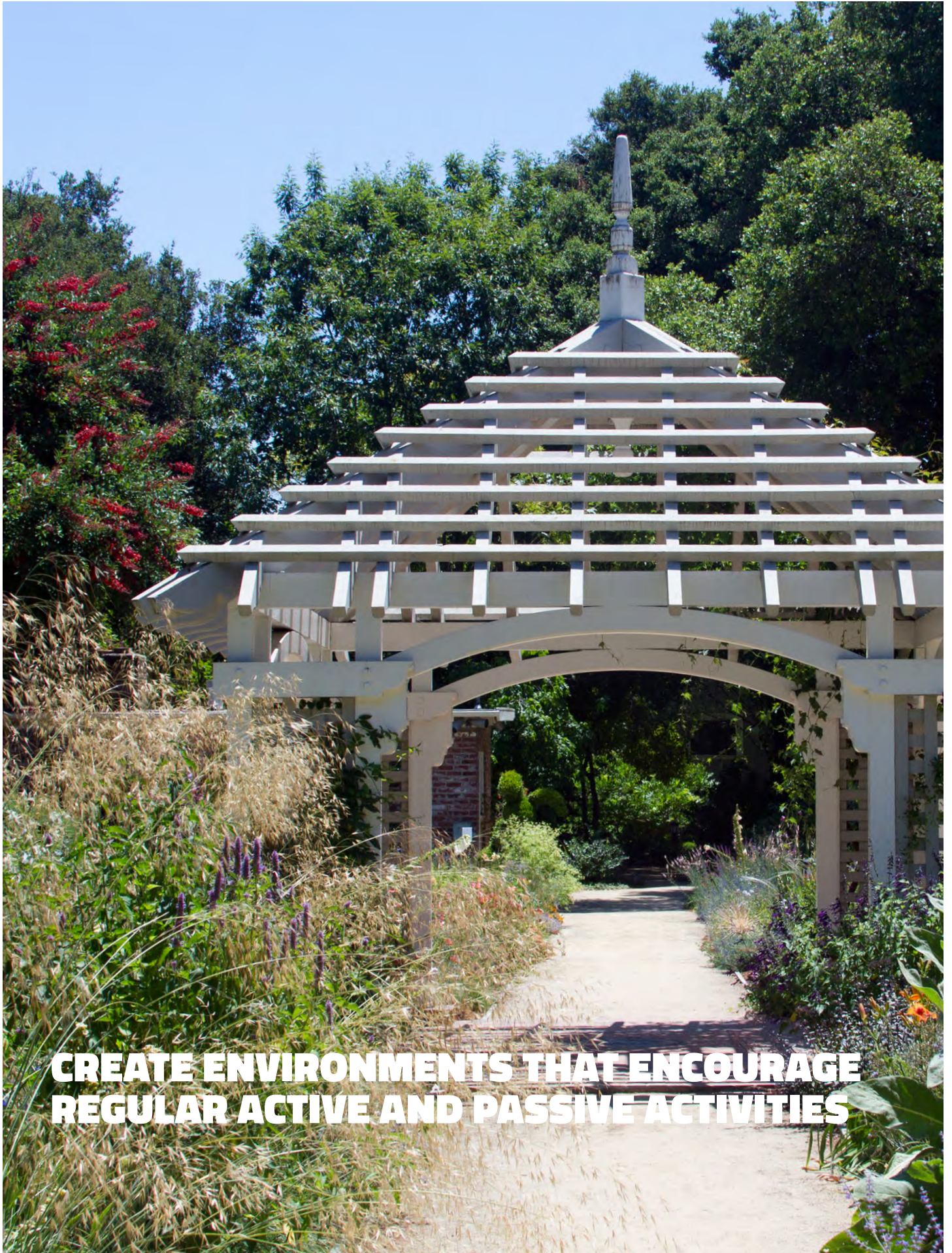
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IMPLEMENTATION

OVER THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS MASTER PLAN WILL INCLUDE AN ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS INITIATED BY CITY STAFF WITH GUIDANCE AND LEADERSHIP FROM THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (PRC) AND CITY COUNCIL. Palo Alto's dedicated community advocates and partner organizations will also play an important role in ensuring the proposed programs and projects align with the needs of the community. Many projects, such as large capital projects, will require long-term strategic thinking and development of funding strategies. Strategic planning for these long-term, high-capital projects will occur concurrently with the annual review process.

The annual review process described in this chapter involves implementing projects and programs described in Chapter 4 through an annual cycle of reviewing, planning, implementing and reporting. These programs have undergone review by the public, staff, PRC and City Council during the development of this Master Plan. Although the tools in this chapter are designed to work with Palo Alto's existing budget and capital improvement plan processes, there may be instances where a strategic action or proposal does not fit into the normal budget process. In these cases, it will be necessary for a separate PRC and City Council review and approval process.



**CREATE ENVIRONMENTS THAT ENCOURAGE
REGULAR ACTIVE AND PASSIVE ACTIVITIES**

The focus of discussion in this chapter includes:

- A prioritization process to create and update the annual action plan;
- An evaluation process to consider new projects or programs proposed in the future; and
- A methodology for measuring the effective and efficient implementation of the Master Plan.

Prioritization

This plan is intentionally ambitious, to reflect the high standards of the Palo Alto community. Not all of these projects will move forward immediately, and the City needs to have a method of prioritization. This process of prioritization is designed to inform the projects that move forward first and to help guide implementation throughout the life of the Master Plan.

Prioritization Process

The prioritization process applies a set of criteria drawn from the extensive community input during the master planning process. These criteria are applicable to the entire range of projects and programs and reflect both the Master Plan principles and goals.

When considering the priority of projects and programs and the order in which they are implemented, the following set of criteria will be used as a guide to identify the benefit to the community and parks system in relation to other projects and programs. Proposed projects and programs will be ranked using a range of low, medium and high on how well the programs meet the criteria. These criteria will not provide a numerical score but will inform staff, the PRC and the Council how a particular program could serve community needs. Projects and programs will be evaluated against criteria to identify the benefit to the overall system in relation to other programs. Staff, PRC, and ultimately the City Council will determine the final order of implementation as part of the established Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and operating budget process. The criteria are defined below:

- Fill existing gaps: Bring recreation opportunities (parkland, facilities, programs) to areas of the City and to users where gaps were identified.
- Respond to growth: Add features or programs and/or modify or expand components of the system to prepare

for and address increasing demand.

- Address community preferences: Target the highest priority types of projects and programs identified through citywide outreach.
- Maximize public resources: Create the most benefit for each dollar of capital and operating expenditure possible.
- Realize multiple benefits: Advance the principles of this Master Plan as well as the goals, projects and directions of other adopted City efforts.

HIGH-PRIORITY PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

There are some programs and projects that we know today are high-priority needs and/or opportunities. The list below reflects those priorities as identified in the Master Planning process.

The priorities were developed with feedback from the Parks and Recreation Commission, community, stakeholders and City staff and priorities include a summary of planning effort, capital cost (funding), annual operating cost, time frame and urgency for each. The programs and projects have been arranged from high to low urgency with the projects divided into two groups: 1) large-scale projects that will require more study and a long-term planning and funding strategy and 2) those projects that can be initiated immediately, usually of smaller scale and lower funding requirements. While all the projects and programs that appear on this list are considered a priority, completion of large-scale capital projects will require efforts over the life of the plan, with several steps beginning in the near term and continuing through planning, design and ultimately construction.

Projects (High to Low Urgency per group)

Major projects needing further study and strategic funding

- Enhance existing sports fields
- Plan, design and construct 10.5-acre site in Baylands for park uses
- Plan, design and redevelop Cubberley Community Center
- Plan, design and construct a new public gymnasium
- Improve the Rinconada Pool Facility
- Incorporate 7.7-acre site into Foothills Park
- Acquire new parkland in high-need areas
- Improve golf course facility

Projects ready in the short term

- Develop conservation plans for open space preserves
- Develop new dog parks in underrepresented areas
- Construct new restrooms in parks
- Incorporate sustainable practices in the maintenance and management of parks, open space and recreation facilities
- Exceed Americans with Disabilities Act requirements in parks
- Improve trail connections and access
- Develop adult fitness areas in parks
- Integrate nature into urban parks
- Develop new community gardens in underserved areas
- Enhance seating areas in parks
- Create wayfinding signage of safe routes to parks

Programs

- Establish and grow partnerships and identify and cultivate potential park and recreation donors
- Collaborate with School District to increase access to playgrounds, gyms and other school facilities
- Expand recruitment and training of coaches and instructors
- Expand aquatics programs
- Expand programs for seniors
- Expand non-academic programs for teens
- Provide intramural sports program for middle and high school students
- Invest in staff training to enhance therapeutic and inclusive program development
- Increase the variety of activities available in parks
- Encourage unstructured play at parks and community centers
- Connect youth, teens and families with nature
- Expand programs related to health and wellness
- Pilot temporary/pop-up programming in parks

- Expand community-focused special events
- Offer cultural enrichment programs

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Each priority program or project is described and evaluated based on the following five factors:

1. PLANNING EFFORT represents the amount of time, effort and cost associated with planning the project and could include community outreach, budget and resource allocation, environmental review and PRC and Council approval.
2. CAPITAL COST provides an indication of the magnitude of capital cost to implement the project, shown by dollar signs as follows:
 - \$ (<\$250,000)
 - \$\$ (\$250,000 to \$1,000,000)
 - \$\$\$ (\$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000)
 - \$\$\$\$ (>\$5,000,000)
3. ANNUAL OPERATING COST estimates the added annual operating cost once the project is in place, also indicated by dollar signs as follows:
 - \$ (<\$5,000)
 - \$\$ (\$5,000 to \$25,000)
 - \$\$\$ (\$25,000 to \$75,000)
 - \$\$\$\$ (>\$75,000)
4. TIME FRAME indicates whether project activity will occur in the near, mid, or long term. All the following projects identified as priorities will require attention in the near term, although some are major projects and will not be completed for years. Some projects can be both planned and constructed in the same year, while others will take years longer to complete. Additionally, some projects will require different actions throughout the life of the project.

This Master Plan looks at three time frames for implementation. All of the high-priority projects identified will require attention in the near term. Some projects can be initiated and completed within a single time frame. However,

many will be ongoing or will require different actions across multiple time frames. Actions related to identified priorities will be integrated into City planning within the structure of each time frame described below.

- **Near-Term (0-5 years):** The City’s CIP includes capital projects planned for a five-year period. As each year’s projects are completed, the annual budgeting process includes the addition of another year on the rolling five-year CIP. New projects identified in the Master Plan will be proposed through the annual CIP process. Programs can be implemented sooner, as funding is available.
- **Mid-Term (6- 10 years):** In the mid-term, more of the new ideas generated in this plan will be cycled into the CIP process, and preliminary work will advance the larger capital projects. New programs will be established enough to evaluate, and new ideas can continue to be added.
- **Long-Term (11-20 years):** The long-term timeline includes projects that require significant up-front work and planning, represent long-term, ongoing investments or demand extraordinary funding strategies. Several projects may not be completed until this time frame; however, all will have been initiated and incorporated into the planning structure in a previous time frame.

5. **URGENCY** indicates the level of need. All projects within this Master Plan have a demonstrated need, but the level of urgency varies based on the availability of a particular amenity or program as compared to the demand. Urgency can also be a consideration of time sensitivity. For example, if a project will influence or guide future operations, such as development of open space conservation plans, that project would have a high level of urgency. A project could also be considered high urgency if failure to act results in a missed opportunity, such as purchase of an available open parcel that could be dedicated as parkland.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low to High

CAPITAL COST

\$ to \$\$\$\$

OPERATING COST

\$ to \$\$\$\$

TIME FRAME

Near, Mid, or Long

URGENCY

Low, Medium, or High

PROJECT AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

The following pages provide information about proposed programs and projects and assign the appropriate criteria for prioritization to each of the programs and projects. The graphic on the left indicates the ranges of each factor that will be seen in this section.

Major projects that need further study and strategic funding

(Arranged from High to Low Urgency)

Enhance existing sport fields

With current high demand, heavy wear and potential future growth, improving and maintaining the City’s large open play fields with limited resources (water & maintenance budget) requires a clear plan to maintain quality and longevity. The following steps are recommended for Enhancing Existing Sport Fields:

- Hire a sport field turf consultant, review and analyze the existing City sport fields and make recommendations on how to improve and maintain them to increase quality and use. (Near Term)
- Develop an ongoing capital fund project that focuses on enhancing the fields consistent with the field analysis study. (Near to Long Term)

FUNDING OPTIONS

- Capital improvement funds
- Outreach to sport field users and interested parties for private donations

PLANNING EFFORT

High

CAPITAL COST

\$\$\$

OPERATING COST

\$\$\$

TIME FRAME

Near (Study and Planning)

Near to Long (Construction)

URGENCY

High

PLANNING EFFORT
High

CAPITAL COST
\$\$\$\$

OPERATING COST
\$\$

TIME FRAME
Near (Planning and Design)
Near to Mid (Construction)

URGENCY
High

Plan, design and construct 10.5-acre site in Baylands for park uses

The development of the 10.5-acre Baylands site will require a long-term planning and funding effort. Because Palo Alto is a built-out city with limited areas to expand the park system, the planning of the project should take into account the location of the site in the Baylands and should start in the near term to establish the site design and cost to complete this large project. The planning effort will focus on the design of the site with direct community input. Staff will strategize options for phasing and funding the project in the near term and establishing a schedule for implementation. Some of the possible concepts for the use of this site that came from the public outreach include athletic fields and native habitat.

The following steps are recommended for the development of the 10.5-acre site:

- Hire a consultant to study the location and provide a recommendation how to use the site for both athletic use and native habitat use. (Near Term)
- Establish a phasing plan for the project for implementation.
- Implement the recommendations of the study.

FUNDING OPTIONS

- Capital improvement funds
- Outreach to sport field users and interested parties for private donations
- Native habitat and restoration grants

Plan, design and redevelop Cubberley Community Center

Cubberley Community Center currently sits on a 35-acre site, of which 8 acres are owned by the City and the remaining 27 acres are owned by the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD). The City leases the PAUSD's 27 acres and operates the community center on the combined 35-acre site. The City and PAUSD have committed to jointly develop a plan for the future of the entire Cubberley Community Center site that represents the administrative, educational and community needs of the School District and the City. Planning and design of the site will require an assessment of the current and projected future needs of the community with respect to education and recreation. Information and data gathered as part of this Master Planning effort and the Citizens Advisory Committee process will help to inform the needs assessment for Cubberley. Future renovations will provide increased and enhanced services to the community.

The following steps are recommended to support the future implementation of this project:

- Formalize an agreement between the City and School District will for future development and renovation of the site. (Near Term)
- Prepare a comprehensive master planning study for the site, including a needs assessment. (Near Term)
- Develop a funding strategy for implementation of the Master Plan. (Near Term)
- Develop a long-range implementation plan. (Near to Mid Term)
- Implement the master plan. (Mid to Long Term)

FUNDING OPTIONS

- Capital improvement funds
- Outreach to the general community for private donations
- Consider the passing of a bond
- Grants

PLANNING EFFORT

High

CAPITAL COST

\$\$ to \$\$\$\$

OPERATING COST

\$\$ to \$\$\$\$

TIME FRAME

Near (Planning and Design)

Mid to Long (Construction)

URGENCY

High (Planning and Design)

Medium to High (Developing)

PLANNING EFFORT

High

CAPITAL COST

\$\$\$\$

OPERATING COST

\$\$\$\$

TIME FRAME

Mid (Planning and Design)

Long (Construction)

URGENCY

Medium (Planning and Design)

Medium (Developing)

Plan, design and construct a new gymnasium

Currently the City of Palo Alto has no gymnasiums of its own. A gymnasium at the Cubberley Community Center is the main gym utilized by the City, but is owned by Palo Alto Unified School District and operated by the City through a lease agreement. The middle school gyms are used for middle school athletic programs, while the Lucie Stern Community Center and Mitchell Park Community Center are utilized for a variety of physical and social activities. As of means of responding to growth and to maintain, expand and provide future programming, at least one multi-purpose gymnasium is recognized as a community need.

The following steps are recommended in the future renovation and development of this site:

- Consider a gymnasium as part of the planning effort for the Cubberley Community Center and determine if it is compatible with the development direction of the site or if another separate location should be considered. (Near Term)
- Develop a funding strategy for implementation of a new gymnasium, or multiple gyms in one building if funding allows. (Near Term)
- Plan and design. (Near to Mid Term)
- Construct gymnasium project. (Mid to Long Term)

FUNDING OPTIONS

- Capital improvement funds
- Park impact fees
- Outreach to the general community for private donations
- Consider the passing of a bond
- Grants

Improve the Rinconada Park pool facility

The pool facility at Rinconada Park is the only City-owned pool facility. During its operational season the pool is in high demand from the community and local swim groups. To meet growing demand, a programming policy to open the pool for a longer season and extended times is being explored. Along with increased demand comes the needs for pool facility improvements. The existing lap pool is undersized to meet demand in both overall size and swimming length, falling a few feet short of a regulation pool length. The existing locker room and restroom facilities are small and lack separate areas for children, families and adults. Appropriate pool facility improvements were identified in the Rinconada Master Plan. They include:

- Expanding and reconfiguring the existing lap pool,
- Fully remodeling the existing locker room and restroom building,
- Adding a much-needed community room for meetings and training, and
- Expanding the deck area around the pool for seating.

The following steps are recommended in the future renovation and development of this site:

- Develop a funding strategy for implementation of a full pool remodel. (Near Term)
- Plan and design. (Near to Mid Term)
- Remodel Rinconada Pool. (Mid to Long Term)

FUNDING OPTIONS

- Capital improvement funds
- Park impact fees
- Outreach to the general community for private donations

PLANNING EFFORT

High

CAPITAL COST

\$\$\$\$

OPERATING COST

\$\$\$\$

TIME FRAME

Mid (Planning and Design)

Long (Construction)

URGENCY

Medium (Planning and Design)

Medium (Developing)

PLANNING EFFORT

Medium to High

CAPITAL COST

\$\$\$ to \$\$\$\$

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near (Planning and Design)

Near to Mid (Construction)

URGENCY

High (Opening Area to Public)

Low (Developing)

Incorporate the 7.7-acre site into Foothills Park

The development of the 7.7-acre site at Foothills Park will require a long-range planning and funding effort. The planning of the project should start in the near term to develop the site design and identify funding to complete this large project. The planning effort will focus on the design of the site with direct community input. As a precursor to the project, a hydrological study of Buckeye Creek will be completed (September 2017) to understand how the solutions to the Creek’s erosion problem frame the possible uses for the 7.7-acres. Staff will research options for funding the project in the near term and establish a schedule for implementation. Public recommendations for possible uses of the site ranged from restoring the site to developing it for some form of recreation.

The following steps are recommended for the future renovation and development of this site:

- Hire a consultant to recommend options and pricing for restoring the 7.7-acre site. (Near Term)
- Establish a phasing plan for the project for implementation. (Near Term)
- Develop a funding strategy. (Near Term)
- Implement the recommendations of the study. (Near to Long Term)

FUNDING OPTIONS

- Capital improvement funds
- Park impact fees
- Outreach to the general community for private donations
- Grants

Acquire new parkland in high-need areas

Expand parkland inventory in Palo Alto’s Urban Service Area where gaps exist geographically as illustrated in the Park Search Areas System Concept Map (Figure 8).

While this is a long-term effort, there are short-term strategies and actions needed to achieve results. Based on the goal, policy and program described in Chapter Four 1.B.1-12, some near-term actions include review of all City-owned land and easements (starting in park search areas) for potential parkland development or connection locations, and evaluation of City-owned or controlled spaces serving, or capable of serving, park-like or recreational uses for potential dedication as parkland.

The following additional steps are recommended for acquiring new parkland:

- Develop and implement a strategy to build up funding sufficient for future parkland acquisitions.
- Review all City-owned property in the high-needs areas for parkland potential.
- Develop a process to review and pursue potential properties available for acquisition or long-term lease for park purposes.
- Review options to increase development fees to facilitate future acquisitions.
- Identify undeveloped properties in high-needs areas and pursue purchasing or long-term lease agreements with the owner.
- Develop a process to accept private donations and bequests of money for parkland.

The following steps are recommended to gain community access to additional parkland through partnerships:

- Collaborate with the School District to make school grounds open space available for use by the surrounding communities during non-school hours.
- Contribute to planning, funding and maintaining the construction of park elements on school grounds in collaboration with the School District to ensure community access and provide needed park amenities to high-needs areas.

PLANNING EFFORT

High

CAPITAL COST

\$\$\$\$

OPERATING COST

\$\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Long

URGENCY

High (Funding Strategy)
Medium (Implementation)



FUNDING OPTIONS

- Capital improvement funds
- Park impact fees
- Outreach to the general community for private donations
- Consider the passing of a bond
- Grants

PLANNING EFFORT
High

CAPITAL COST
\$\$\$

OPERATING COST
\$\$\$

TIME FRAME
Mid (Planning and Design)
Long (Construction)

URGENCY
Medium (Planning and Design)
Medium (Developing)

Golf course facility improvements

The pro shop, clubhouse and parking lot facilities were not included in the scope of work of the newly renovated golf course. Each of these facilities needs improvements to maintain the viability of the overall golf course facility. Improvements would include a full remodel of the existing clubhouse and pro shop building with an expansion of a larger multi-purpose room that could be used for community and private events. Reconfiguration of the large asphalt parking lot to create a better entry statement when arriving to the golf course facility is also necessary.

The following steps are recommended for improvement of the golf course facility:

- Hire a golf course consultant to review and analyze the existing facilities and make recommendations on how to improve quality and overall use, along with an operating cost study that reviews potential improvement options for generating revenue. (Near Term)
- Establish a phasing plan for the project for implementation.
- Implement the recommendations of the analysis and study.

FUNDING OPTIONS

- Capital improvement funds
- Outreach to the general community for private donations

Projects ready in the short term

(Arranged from High to Low Urgency)

Develop conservation plans for open space preserves

Comprehensive conservation plans are necessary to develop guiding principles and best management practices for holistic management of Palo Alto’s open space preserves and to balance ecosystem protection, environmental education and passive recreational uses. Conservation plans will be completed for the Baylands, Foothills Park, Pearson-Arastradero, and Esther Clark Preserves and will provide City staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council with clear direction on how to manage Palo Alto’s open space preserves using an ecosystem-based model that considers both conservation and recreation goals of this master plan.

PLANNING EFFORT

Medium

CAPITAL COST

\$\$

OPERATING COST

\$ to \$\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Mid

URGENCY

High

Develop new dog parks in underrepresented areas

There are currently three dog parks in Palo Alto, all of which are located south of Oregon Expressway. The lack of dog parks on the north side of the City, together with the prevalence of people allowing dogs to run off-leash outside of designated dog parks in parks and on school property, underscores the need for more off-leash dog parks in the near term. Locations for dog parks have been strategically selected at certain parks and planning efforts are underway. Existing park features such as native trees, public art and playground equipment as well as community feedback all will be considered when planning for the construction of a dog park. The addition of dog parks will be phased and is proposed to occur in the near- and mid-term.

PLANNING EFFORT

Medium

CAPITAL COST

\$

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Mid

URGENCY

High

Construct new restrooms in parks

Through this planning process, the community generally came to a consensus that restrooms make sense in parks with amenities that draw people, especially children and seniors, and encourage them stay at the park for a span of time. Though there have been varying opinions regarding specific sites, additional review will be conducted to site restrooms and identify security measures such as automatic locking mechanisms and lighting, addressing some of the concerns related to restrooms.

PLANNING EFFORT

Medium

CAPITAL COST

\$\$

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Mid

URGENCY

High

PLANNING EFFORT

Low

CAPITAL COST

\$ to \$\$

OPERATING COST

0 to \$

TIME FRAME

Near (Strategic Plan)

Ongoing (Implementation)

URGENCY

High

Incorporate sustainable practices in the maintenance and management of parks, open space and recreation facilities

Staff responsible for the care of Palo Alto’s parks and open space will commit to staying current with sustainable practices. As part of this effort, staff will develop a strategic plan for incorporating sustainable practices for maintenance and management of parks, open space and facilities, including updating current practices. Maintenance staff will consult with the City’s Sustainability Department to discuss how they can help meet the sustainable goals of the Sustainability Master Plan (under development as of the adoption of this Master Plan), and to develop measures for tracking the adoption of sustainable maintenance practices.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low

CAPITAL COST

\$ to \$\$\$

OPERATING COST

\$ to \$\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Long

URGENCY

Medium to High

Exceed Americans with Disabilities Act requirements in parks

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides regulations that inform and guide the amenities and design of parks and requires an ADA Transition Plan to remove barriers that may prevent people with disabilities from fully enjoying the City’s parks and recreation services. The ADA requirements represent the legal minimum that is required. Feedback from the community during the Master Plan process was supportive that Palo Alto seek, when possible, to exceed ADA minimums and strive for universal accessibility, where people of all abilities can utilize and enjoy parks. During all parks-related capital improvement projects, staff will not only update amenities and design to current ADA standards, but will also seek opportunities to achieve universal access. This will occur in the near term and will be ongoing.

Improve trail connections and access

Improving trail connections and access to parks and open space areas was identified as an important priority by the community. Linkages to parks also promote the “Green Necklace” vision for the City and allow regional connections to adjacent cities and open natural areas. Staff will utilize existing capital improvement projects as a platform on which to improve trail connections into parks, access and connections between parks and between multi-modal trails. They will also seek to provide linkages to regional trails and neighboring agency sites. In addition, staff will identify trail connections and improvements that will require new individual capital projects, up to and including purchasing land, and will propose those through the City’s CIP process.

PLANNING EFFORT

Medium

CAPITAL COST

\$ to \$\$\$\$

OPERATING COST

\$ to \$\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Long

URGENCY

Medium

Develop adult fitness areas in parks

Health and fitness is a priority for the Palo Alto community and an important reason for park use. Palo Alto can help support health and wellness for adults and older adults, a population segment that is growing, by providing outdoor fitness options, especially in close proximity to playgrounds, creating a multi-generational playground. These adult fitness areas can take on a variety of forms: from outdoor workout equipment areas (free weight and cardio machines) to simple open rubber surface areas for open activity (e.g., yoga, meditation, weight and cardiovascular training). These spaces will be designed for both individual use and group gathering and as a means of activating a park, and will be a high-value, simple addition during park renovation projects.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low

CAPITAL COST

\$

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Long

URGENCY

Medium to Low

Integrate nature into urban parks

This project includes converting areas in parks, usually turfgrass that is not used for recreation, into native plantings (e.g. riparian, grassland or oak woodland) or a specific habitat planting (e.g., pollinator, hummingbird or butterfly). This type of project may also include bioswales designed to maintain on-site drainage and create habitat, and may even include aspects of a natural play area.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low to Medium

CAPITAL COST

\$

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Long

URGENCY

Low to High (Depends on drought status)

PLANNING EFFORT

Low

CAPITAL COST

\$

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Long

URGENCY

Low

Develop new community gardens in underserved areas

Community gardens provide a place for healthy outdoor activity, social gathering and community connections. Ultimately, community gardens should be evenly distributed throughout the park system. Staff will look for opportunities to add community gardens when parks are renovated, looking for underutilized turfgrass or planting areas as potential locations for community gardens. In addition, staff will seek to expand the variety of community gardening opportunities, by considering children’s or inclusive garden plots or even entire community gardens.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low

CAPITAL COST

\$

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Long

URGENCY

Low

Enhance seating areas in parks

Seating is an important part of creating a welcoming park environment and was identified as a priority by community members during the outreach process. When park renovations occur, staff will identify opportunities to enhance seating areas (making them more comfortable and functional) or provide additional seating. Enhancements may include providing more seating, providing additional seating options (e.g., movable seating, artist-designed or embellished benches), and creating enclosures to define the seating area as a low-activity area used for urban retreat.

Create wayfinding signage showing safe routes to parks

Wayfinding signage is a means of connecting and expanding the park system. Wayfinding signage designed to direct the community to designated safe routes between parks will help provide linkages between all of Palo Alto's open spaces, which will in turn expand the system. The Community Services, Public Works and Transportation departments will work together to establish these safe routes and engage the community for wayfinding and route options. Future infrastructure development of these safe routes may also include the addition of park-like features along the length of the route to further expand the park system.

The following steps are recommended for wayfinding signage showing safe routes to parks:

- Hire a consultant to put together a proposed signage design, layout and phasing for the project. (Near Term)
- Work with City, the community and stakeholders to develop the overall safe routes to parks plan. (Near Term)
- Develop a funding strategy for implementation. (Near Term)
- Implement the design. (Near to Long Term)

FUNDING OPTIONS

- Capital improvement funds
- Park impact fees
- Outreach to the general community for private donations
- Grants

PLANNING EFFORT

Medium to High

CAPITAL COST

\$

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Long

URGENCY

Low

Programs

PLANNING EFFORT

Medium

CAPITAL COST

N/A

OPERATING COST

\$\$

TIME FRAME

Near

URGENCY

High

Establish and grow partnerships and identify and cultivate potential park and recreation donors

In collaboration with the Friends of Palo Alto Parks and the Palo Alto Recreation Foundation among other partners, Palo Alto will develop a marketing campaign to engage members of the public to volunteer and contribute financially to the improvement and expansion of Palo Alto’s parks, open space and recreation programs and facilities.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low to Medium

CAPITAL COST

\$

OPERATING COST

\$\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Mid

URGENCY

High

Expand recruitment and training of coaches and instructors

Palo Alto staff will develop a system and strategies to broaden the recruitment and training of coaches and instructors, including exploring public/private partnerships, to meet the programming demands of the City and to ensure staffing of high-quality, qualified coaches and instructors.

PLANNING EFFORT

Medium

CAPITAL COST

N/A

OPERATING COST

\$\$

TIME FRAME

Near

URGENCY

High

Expand aquatics programs

Community feedback has consistently shown that residents want more pool access during the day and into the spring and fall seasons. Both recreational swimming and swim lessons are in high demand, and added pool hours would allow more aquatics programs to occur. City staff will provide expanded programs and explore new aquatic programs, such as water polo and water fitness classes, that would add to the diversity of programming.

Collaborate with School District to increase access to playgrounds, gyms and other school facilities

City staff will work with PAUSD to increase access to playgrounds, gyms and other school facilities. Staff will concentrate on specific locations in the city with limited park space with the intent of ensuring access to school open areas and playgrounds during non-school hours, and establishing a gym use agreement for additional City programs and activities in school gyms during non-school hours.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low

CAPITAL COST

\$

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near

URGENCY

Medium

Expand programs for seniors

With the population of older adults and seniors in Palo Alto projected to be on the rise, Palo Alto will need to adjust program offerings to meet demand, especially programs tailored to the needs of active seniors. This may include both indoor and outdoor activities. Staff will also coordinate with Avenidas as an important part of the planning effort to ensure that redundancy is minimized and enhancements are based on needs and gaps in the current level of service.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low

CAPITAL COST

N/A

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near

URGENCY

Medium

Expand non-academic programs for teens

Palo Alto will implement recreation programs and services to provide additional opportunities for teens to explore a wide variety of non-academic interests in an accessible, relaxed and fun environment. Examples of current programs include the MakeX maker space, Think Fund Grant program and the counselor-in-training program. Enhancing and expanding these types of programs is important to provide balance in the busy and demanding lives of teens.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low

CAPITAL COST

N/A

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near

URGENCY

Medium to High

PLANNING EFFORT
 Medium
CAPITAL COST
 N/A
OPERATING COST
 \$\$
TIME FRAME
 Near to Mid
URGENCY
 Medium

Provide intramural sports program for middle and high school students

Intramural sports provide the opportunity for children to learn a new sport, develop social skills, practice teamwork and build friendships. They also promote an active and healthy lifestyle. Palo Alto will explore creating an intramural sports program for middle and high school students. Implementation of intramurals will require coordination with PAUSD and would require additional field and gym space.

PLANNING EFFORT
 Low
CAPITAL COST
 \$
OPERATING COST
 \$
TIME FRAME
 Near to Mid
URGENCY
 Medium

Invest in staff training to enhance therapeutic and inclusive program development

The Palo Alto community highly values accessibility and inclusion. Community Services will expand therapeutic and inclusive programming, including increasing funding for staff training in this area.

PLANNING EFFORT
 Low to High
CAPITAL COST
 \$ to \$\$
OPERATING COST
 \$
TIME FRAME
 Near to Long
URGENCY
 Low

Increase the variety of activities available in parks

When renovating parks, Palo Alto staff will explore adding both active and passive spaces and elements to increase the variety of activities that can be experienced in a particular park. Recommended additions to a park should consider the user groups of the parks as well as different age groups. Further engagement of the community should be considered. Examples of potential elements include: outdoor gathering areas, small-scale active spaces (bocce, pickleball courts), and quiet retreat spaces.

Encourage unstructured play at parks and community centers

Providing spaces and programs, both indoors and outdoors, where children can play in a less structured format, away from electronic devices, encourages creativity and problem solving and fosters social connections with other youth. Palo Alto will support unstructured play, such as providing space for “pick-up” games, providing sports equipment in parks and gyms, and offering programs with minimal direction and oversight.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low to Medium

CAPITAL COST

N/A to \$

OPERATING COST

\$ to \$\$

TIME FRAME

Near to Mid

URGENCY

Low

Connect youth, teens and families with nature

Parks and open space preserves provide a direct connection to nature. Connecting people to nature provides benefits to physical, emotional and mental health and encourages preservation and environmental education. Palo Alto will provide more programs that focus on nature or take place in natural settings, and that are geared toward specific age groups and families, enhancing the community’s connection to nature.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low

CAPITAL COST

N/A

OPERATING COST

\$

TIME FRAME

Near

URGENCY

Low

Expand programs related to health and wellness

In recent years, Council has identified healthy city and healthy community as a Council priority. Efforts underway include the Healthy City Healthy Community Initiative, an annual health fair, fitness classes and programs specific to teens. Palo Alto will develop additional programming to encourage a healthy city and community on an annual basis based on community need.

PLANNING EFFORT

Low to Medium

CAPITAL COST

N/A

OPERATING COST

\$ to \$\$

TIME FRAME

Near

URGENCY

Low

PLANNING EFFORT
 Low to Medium
CAPITAL COST
 \$
OPERATING COST
 \$
TIME FRAME
 Near to Mid
URGENCY
 Low

Pilot temporary/pop-up programming in parks

Palo Alto staff will develop a program series that would bring activities to parks. Further review to identify locations for potential pop-up programming sites will be carried out by Community Services staff, who will also schedule and promote pop-up programs. Examples of pop-up programs include: play activities; fitness activities such as yoga or tai chi; nature-oriented programs such as bird watching and park tree walks, or arts-related activities such as painting or music.

PLANNING EFFORT
 Medium
CAPITAL COST
 \$
OPERATING COST
 \$
TIME FRAME
 Near to Long
URGENCY
 Low

Expand community-focused special events

Palo Alto will develop a yearly community survey to determine the popularity of current special events and explore possible new events. Staff will use survey results to pilot new events and determine the feasibility of continuing these in the future.

PLANNING EFFORT
 Medium
CAPITAL COST
 \$
OPERATING COST
 \$
TIME FRAME
 Near to Long
URGENCY
 Low

Offer cultural enrichment programs

Community Services will develop cultural enrichment programs that celebrate the diversity of Palo Alto’s community. This will create opportunities for the community to come together and share their distinct cultural backgrounds.

Action Plan

The complete set of projects and programs identified during the Master Plan process are summarized in a working document called the Action Plan. The Action Plan is maintained separately from this Master Plan document and is designed to adapt and change with the completion of projects, passage of time and shifting funding opportunities. Each project and program is described in terms of location, the relevant element of the system and the plan framework reference (which policy the project or program originates from). The action plan also indicates the anticipated year(s) of implementation and the total estimated costs (capital and operational). Capital costs are broken down between planning/design and the implementation of the project. Operation costs are further clarified by the staff time required per year of project implementation.

The action plan allows a comprehensive look at the projects and programs resulting from this Master Plan. Each year, as the next year is added to the CIP, the Action Plan will feed a new set of projects based on the timelines as they have evolved. Further, new projects will continue to be added to the Action Plan, using the prioritization process described earlier in this chapter.

Shown below are examples of action plans (top: program) (below: projects)

Plan Framework Reference	Location	Element of the System	Projects/Program Description	Implementation Year(s)														Estimated Capital Cost Planning/Design (length of project)	Estimated Capital Cost Implementation (length of project)	Yearly Estimated Operating Cost (Per Staff/Program)	Staff Time (per project/year)																			
				2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030					2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037												
Policy 4																																								
Policy 4A																																								
4A.1	System Wide	Program	Prioritize development of comprehensive conservation plans for Baylands Preserve, Foothills Park, Esther Clark Park, and Pearson-Arastradero Preserve		X	X	X	X	X																															
			Continue to work with partnership organizations to remove invasive weeds and plant native plants and trees																																					
4A.2	System Wide	Program		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																		
Total:														\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0	0																							

Plan Framework Reference	Location	Element of the System	Projects/Program Description	Implementation Year(s)														Estimated Capital Cost Planning/Design (length of project)	Estimated Capital Cost Implementation (length of project)	Yearly Estimated Operating Cost (Per Staff/Program)	Staff Time (per project/year)																			
				2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030					2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037												
Policy 2E																																								
Policy 2E																																								
2.E.1	System Wide	Parks	Develop a restroom roadmap in collaboration with the Architectural Review Board, for neighborhood parks		X	X	X																																	
2.E.1	Bel Park	Recreation Facilities	The City will actively pursue adding park restrooms				X																																	
2.E.2	Blowden Park	Recreation Facilities	The City will actively pursue adding park restrooms							X																														
2.E.2	Eleanor Park	Recreation Facilities	The City will actively pursue adding park restrooms		X	X																																		
2.E.3	Johnson Park	Recreation Facilities	The City will actively pursue adding park restrooms							X																														
2.E.2	Ramos Park	Recreation Facilities	The City will actively pursue adding park restrooms																																					
2.E.2	Ramos Park	Recreation Facilities	The City will actively pursue adding park restrooms								X																													
Total:														\$275,000.00	\$1,800,000.00	\$10,500	1.4																							

Funding Today and Tomorrow

The City of Palo Alto uses a minimum of seven funding sources for the majority of its capital, operational and recreation program funding:

- General Fund
- Consumer and Participant Fees (which go to the General Fund)
- Parkland Dedication Fees
- Development Impact Fees
- Public Private Partnerships
- Grants
- Donations

These funding sources are defined and described in Appendix D: Existing Funding Sources.

There are limitations (both statutory and in practice) on the use of many of the existing funding sources. Table 5 summarizes

TABLE 5: FUNDING APPLICABILITY

EXISTING FUNDING SOURCE	CAPITAL	OPERATIONAL/ PROGRAMMING
GENERAL FUND		
PARKLAND DEDICATION FEES		
DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEES		
PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS		
GRANTS		
DONATIONS		

KEY

ELIGIBLE	
LIMITED	
NOT ELIGIBLE	

the existing funding sources by their applicability to capital and operational projects and programs.

In addition, Palo Alto's Infrastructure Blue Ribbon Commission (IBRC) process established a schedule to "Keep-Up" with the current maintenance needs of City-owned parks, facilities and open space. The Commission also identified maintenance needs that had not been planned and the cost and schedule to "Catch Up." City Staff has utilized the IBRC process over the past five years to schedule needed maintenance and have greatly reduced the "Catch Up" items.

Potential Funding Options

Although there are multiple funding sources for capital and operating projects and programs, there remains a gap in funding. While the total capital funding needed for new projects is substantial, the limited options currently available for maintenance, operations and programming funding is a bigger constraint on achieving the Master Plan goals. The potential for a funding method to expand funding for maintenance, operations and programming should be carefully considered as the City explores options to fill the funding gap.

EXPAND EXISTING FUNDING OPTIONS

One important option is increasing the amount of funding from existing sources. The General Fund could be expanded by increasing revenue generation.

- Parkland dedication fees could be reevaluated to ensure the rates are keeping up with land costs.
- Development impact fees could be increased through action by the City Council.
- Donations and grants could also be expanded with effort by the City.
- Public-private partnerships could include allocating staff time, creating a new position focused on expanding these sources, or hiring a consultant experienced with grant writing.
- Participation and membership fees could be evaluated to increase cost recovery and to help pay for new and enhanced programs and services.

EXAMPLES OF PAST SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Heritage Park

In 2007, the Friends of Heritage Park gave the City a donation of \$197,572 to contribute toward a capital project to build the Heritage Park Playground. The City contributed \$75,000 toward the project. Council approved a limited-term agreement with the Friends of Heritage Park to design, construct and install the playground facilities and other improvements at Heritage Park.

Magical Bridge Playground

The City partnered with the Friends of the Magical Bridge to design and build Palo Alto's first "inclusive" playground at Mitchell Park. The City contributed the land and \$300,000 to the project for planning and design purposes, while the Friends contributed approximately \$3.5 million for construction. A grant was also secured for \$80,000 for improvements to the pathways that lead to the playground. The playground opened to the public in April 2015 and is a regional draw, winning several design awards and high praise from the community.

Lytton Plaza Renovation

The City formed a public-private partnership with the Friends of Lytton Plaza to renovate Lytton Plaza. The Friends donated \$750,000 for the renovation of the plaza. The project was completed in December 2009.

Acquisition of new park land at the Pearson-Arastradero Preserve

The City contributed \$1,110,305 along with \$2,592,210 in grant money for the acquisition of 13-acre open space Bressler Property from the Peninsula Open Space Trust. In October 2002, the Peninsula Open Space Trust purchased a 13-acre property from the Estate of Jacqueline Bressler with the intent of holding the parcel for open space purposes until the City of Palo Alto could purchase the property. The City acquired the Property and added it to the Pearson-Arastradero Preserve in 2005.

Save the Bay Partnership:

The City partnered with Save the Bay in 2001 in order to accomplish the shared goal of restoring sensitive wetland habitat at the Baylands Nature Preserve. Annually, Save the Bay contributes hundreds of hours of staff time to organize and lead

volunteer restoration programs (thirty-five per year on average) in the preserve. Save the Bay has also fully funded the cost to construct a native plant nursery at the Baylands to propagate native plants that volunteers use to restore Baylands habitat. The partnership continues to provide benefit to the sensitive habitat at the Baylands Nature Preserve and to the Palo Alto community members that participate in the volunteer programs.

ISSUE BONDS

There are two types of bonds relevant to the Master Plan. While the City Council would need to initiate either type of bond, only one method would require a public vote.

General obligation bonds are voter-approved bonds with the assessment placed on real property. The money can only be used for capital improvements, not for maintenance or operations. This property tax is levied for a specified period of time (usually 15-20 years). Passage requires a two-thirds majority approval by the voters.

Revenue bonds are sold to finance revenue-generating facilities, such as community centers, performing arts centers and in some cases sports complexes. The interest and capital are paid from the revenue produced from the operation of such a facility. The City has to guarantee repayment, meaning that if revenue from the facility does not cover the necessary bond payments, the City will be required to pay from another source.

CREATE A SPECIAL DISTRICT

There are several types of special districts allowable by California law for recreation purposes.

The Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982 allows any county, city, special district, school district or joint powers authority to establish a Mello-Roos Community Facilities District (a "CFD") to finance public improvements and services. The services and improvements that Mello-Roos CFDs can finance include streets, sewer systems and other basic infrastructure, police protection, fire protection, ambulance services, schools, parks, libraries, museums and other cultural facilities.

Formation of a CFD requires a two-thirds vote of residents living within the proposed boundaries. If there are fewer than twelve residents, then the vote is instead conducted of current

landowners. The assessment cannot be based on property value; instead it is based on the size of the property or square footage of structures. By law, the CFD is also entitled to recover expenses needed to form the CFD and administer the annual special taxes and bonded debt. The special assessment continues until bonds are paid off and then is typically reduced to a level to maintain the investments.

The Landscaping and Lighting Act permits a public agency to assess housing units or land parcels for a variety of city services, including parks. The assessment revenues can be used for parkland acquisition, development and/or maintenance. The agency can choose to use the revenue generated on a pay-as-you-go basis or can sell bonds in order to receive a lump sum amount which is then paid back from the annual revenue generated from the assessment. The pay-as-you-go method provides steady ongoing revenue to fund services. Bonding against revenue provides a larger sum to undertake a bigger project. Establishment of a new assessment district or revision to an existing one requires a simple majority vote of property owners.

EXCHANGE OR SELL PROPERTY

If the City has an excess piece of property, the City could sell or trade the property to obtain a site more suitable for park use.

COMBINING MASTER PLAN PROJECT WITH OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

As the primary part of Palo Alto's green infrastructure, the parks, natural open space and trails system connects to many other city services. Some projects can be vital parts of other infrastructure projects or be applicable for funding from sources for transportation, stormwater, flood protection and other engineered infrastructure projects. Combining or coupling Master Plan projects with other infrastructure projects can reduce the costs all around, open up new funding streams, provide mitigation and achieve multiple objectives.

ESTABLISH AN ENDOWMENT FUND FOR MAINTENANCE

Recognizing that operations and maintenance funding is not likely to get any easier to obtain, Palo Alto could fund, or could seek

philanthropic donations to fund, a endowment for the long-term maintenance of parks, natural open space or recreation facilities. This effort could be started with a smaller, targeted effort to endow the maintenance of a specific type of facility and then grown over time to eventually cover a significant portion of the system maintenance.

Evaluating Future Projects

As time passes, new ideas will emerge about how to optimize an individual site, add to the system or change the mix of recreation opportunities. The combination of the goals (detailed in Chapter 4) and the prioritization criteria create a framework that can be used to evaluate future proposals for changes to the parks, trails, natural open space and recreation system.

Review Process

Following a similar process to developing the Master Plan projects and programs, the review process for new ideas includes both staff and PRC review. The review process will follow the steps below.

Step 1: Staff, individual or community group proposes a project or program.

Step 2: Staff reviews the proposal to determine if the project aligns with the community's vision as expressed in the Master Plan principles and goals. If a compelling case cannot be made, the process stops here.

Step 3: Staff analyzes need using the same categories as in the Needs and Opportunities (see Master Plan Chapter 3):

- Current Service/Inventory
- Level of Control
- Geographic Analysis
- Capacity/Bookings
- Perception of Quality
- Expressed Need
- Demographic Trends
- Barriers to Access/Participation
- Projected Demand

In some cases, information may not be readily available for staff to make an adequate evaluation. In these cases, staff may obtain additional data by meeting with the proposer or with local experts, conducting regional or national research or seeking community input. Staff may also recommend conducting a specific technical study. Once adequate information is gathered, staff will complete the analysis of need and document it in a brief report. If PRC review is needed, staff will proceed to Step 4.

- Staff makes a recommendation to the PRC. Using the results of the analysis of need (Step 3), staff evaluates the proposal using the prioritization criteria and prepares a staff report to the PRC with a recommendation. Staff may recommend that the PRC add the proposed project or program for further development and eventual addition to the Action Plan. Staff may also recommend against the proposal if the prioritization scoring is low. Low scoring is an indicator that the proposal is not a priority, compared to all opportunities.
- The PRC considers the staff's recommendation at a meeting. The proposer is encouraged to attend and to present the proposal. After consideration at the meeting, the PRC makes a determination and directs staff how to proceed.

For proposals recommended for further action, staff can explore the financial and practical considerations and incorporate the proposal into Action Plan and/or the CIP process as applicable.

Progress Reporting

Palo Alto annually collects data, both internally and from the community, to measure and track performance, budget and expenditures. These existing measures provide a large selection of data points to draw from when looking at any part of the parks, trails, natural open space and recreation system, including annual trends. Many of the existing indicators are directly related to Master Plan goals, while others indirectly provide valuable insight into the progress of the Master Plan.

Palo Alto has a standing practice of reporting on the annual National Citizen Survey¹, a citizen satisfaction survey, as well as a performance-based Citizen Centric Report², both of which provide data on parks and recreation programs and services. A City-wide Performance Report that provides information to City Council, management and the public contains information on spending, staffing, workload and performance results. In addition, there is internal reporting at the department level that informs program and service delivery decisions, budget proposals and policy and procedure changes. Below are the indicators and measures that Palo Alto currently collects, along with additional recommended indicators to effectively monitor and report on Master Plan progress.

¹The National Citizen Survey™ is a collaborative effort between the National Research Center, Inc., (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association. The NRC uses a statistically valid survey methodology to gather resident opinions across a range of community issues, including the quality of the community and services provided by the local government.

²The Citizen Centric Report is a summary document highlighting performance, financial data and an overview of the City's economic outlook.

TABLE 6: EXISTING INDICATORS

Indicator	Rating	Source	Goals					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Palo Alto as a whole:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of paths and walking trails • Public places where people want to spend time • Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.) • Recreational opportunities 	<p>1=Excellent 2=Good 3=Fair 4=Poor 5=Don't Know</p>	National Citizen Survey	X	X	X		X	
<p>In the last 12 months, about how many times, if at all, have you or other household members done each of the following in Palo Alto?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used Palo Alto recreation centers or their services • Visited a neighborhood park or City park 	<p>1=2 times a week or more 2=2-4 times a month 3= Once a month or less 4=Not at all</p>	National Citizen Survey	X	X	X		X	
<p>Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Palo Alto:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City parks • Recreation programs or classes • Recreation centers or facilities • Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts • Palo Alto open space • Your neighborhood park 	<p>1=Excellent 2=Good 3=Fair 4=Poor 5=Don't Know</p>	National Citizen Survey	X	X	X	X	X	X
<p>Please rate the quality of Palo Alto's trees and landscaping for Parks</p>	<p>1=Excellent 2=Good 3=Fair 4=Poor 5=Don't Know</p>	National Citizen Survey				X		X
<p>Suggested improvements to Parks or Recreation Activities and Programs (open-ended question, which may change annually)</p>	N/A	National Citizen Survey	X	X	X	X	X	X
<p>Parks/Land Maintained by Community Services</p>	# of acres	City of Palo Alto Performance Report						X
<p>Participants in community garden program</p>	# of participants	City of Palo Alto Performance Report		X				

TABLE 6: EXISTING INDICATORS (CONTINUED)

Indicator	Rating	Source	Goals					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
Visitors at Foothills Park	# of visitors	City of Palo Alto Performance Report	X			X	X	X
Community Services volunteer hours in restorative/resource management programs and neighborhood parks	# of hours	City of Palo Alto Performance Report	X			X		
Enrollment in recreation classes and camps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer camps and aquatics • Kids (excluding camps) • Adults • Preschool 	# of enrolled participants	City of Palo Alto Performance Report	X	X	X	X	X	X
Participants in teen programs	# of participants	City of Palo Alto Performance Report	X				X	
Amount of General Fund expenditures spent on Community Services	Percent of total expenditures	Citizen Centric Report	X	X	X	X	X	X

To track progress on Master Plan implementation, additional specific measurable indicators that relate directly to the goals, policies and programs were identified. These will be applied and reported annually to the PRC, City Council and the community. Additional indicators may be added if a need is identified by staff, the PRC or City Council. Table 7 lists the recommended additional indicators.

TABLE 7: RECOMMENDED INDICATORS

Recommended Indicator	Goals					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number of park visitors	X	X	X			
Number of visits to community centers, pools and recreation sites	X					
Diversity of participation and visitors age/culture/ abilities	X					
Senior participation numbers in recreation programs and services	X				X	
Percent of residents satisfied or very satisfied with the affordability of recreation programs	X					
Percent of residents satisfied or very satisfied with the inclusivity of recreation programs	X					
Percent of residents satisfied or very satisfied with the accessibility of recreation programs	X					
Percent of residents who rate the number and variety of recreation programs as good or very good	X				X	
Number of participants in outdoor education programs	X	X		X		
Number of new recreation programs, events and locations piloted	X				X	
Percentage of residents who live within a ½ mile distance of a City park	X					
Number of acres dedicated as parkland	X					
Number of projects that improved accessibility by meeting or exceeding American Disability Act requirements	X					
Number of dog park users by site	X	X				
Number of timeslots used on sports fields	X	X				X
Percent of sports fields in the community available for use	X	X			X	X
Acres of new native landscape and new habitat		X		X		
Number of public restrooms in parks		X				
Percent of potable water use reduced (based on 2013 base year)						X
Amount of funding obtained from grants, sponsorships and other private funding sources					X	
Recreation Division budget that is derived from recreation fees						X

A Message from the Parks and Recreation Commission

After almost two years of effort, outreach and collaboration we are pleased to share the City of Palo Alto's Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan (Parks Master Plan) that will guide the future of these treasured assets for the next 20 years.

Through multiple research techniques and at multiple points in this process we confirmed that Palo Alto residents cherish their parks and recreation programs. Their feedback - corroborated by national studies - confirms that parks are highly valued not just for their beauty or enjoyable experiences, but for a connection that is much deeper. They are valued because they contribute directly to one's fundamental mental and physical health, even for those who are only rare or occasional users. Palo Alto's parks, open space and recreation programs and facilities enhance our connections with people and nature, our sense of community and our very quality of life.

The Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan was undertaken to ensure the City provides for the ongoing health and well-being of all our citizens as we move into the future - and to provide the City the strategic direction for doing so. Forecasted changes that demand proactive planning and funding strategies include an increase in Palo Alto's population, substantial changes in the demographic makeup of our citizens, and further competition for available land from expected office and housing growth.

The plan identifies and addresses the current gaps in services and real needs for change such as adapting parks and programs to a growing senior citizen population, improving access and programming to embrace all members of our diverse community, and creating more parkland over time to handle the forecasted population increase. It also addresses preferred amenities and enhancements to parks expressed by citizens and highlights gaps in resources available for maintenance and operations.

This process established that not only must we preserve and maintain our valued existing parks and programs, but we also must invest in critical new projects to meet verified needs and increasing demand. This plan outlines the road map and process to do both. Implementing the master plan will require a focused and dedicated commitment from both the City and the public, in partnership, to fund and enhance this vital civic infrastructure.

Thank you to all who have participated - citizens, Commissioners, staff members, stakeholders, and City Council -and to those who have invested countless hours to bring this effort to reality. The Parks and Recreation Commission calls on all Palo Altans to help us realize the vision embodied in the Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan, for this vision can only be realized with the community's enthusiasm and commitment.

City of Palo Alto

Parks and Recreation Commission

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Capital Project: Any physical improvement with a minimal cost of \$50,000, a useful life of at least 5-7 years, or that extends the life of an existing asset by at least 5 years. Planning and design are considered a part of a capital project.

Creek/Riparian Enhancement: Conceptual enhancement opportunity for all of the creeks passing through Palo Alto.

Element: One of three divisions of the plan for analysis purposes: parks, trails and natural open space; recreation facilities; and recreation programs.

Enhanced Bicycle and Pedestrian Route: A concept to improve routes identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to create a network of high-quality on- and off-street connections that link parks. These routes are envisioned to have enhanced crossings, street treatments and other improvements beyond the bicycle infrastructure outlined in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Streetscape and plantings are also linked to the idea of Pollinator Pathways.

Facility: A built feature in a park or preserve that adds, supports or enhances a recreation activity.

Goals: A broad statement of direction describing the desired end state. Goals are qualitative in nature and collectively should achieve the system envisioned by the principles.

Mean Projected High Water 3-Foot Sea Level Rise: The line at which water meets the land surface at the mean high water point projected in NOAA models for 3 feet of sea level rise.

Natural Open Space Preserve: A category of parkland that is designated to protect and provide access to nature. The four natural open space preserves are: Baylands Preserve (which includes Byxbee Park), Esther Clark Preserve, Foothills Park and Pearson-Arastradero Preserve.

Park Connector: A conceptual second tier of enhanced bicycle and pedestrian routes that link the major routes to a few isolated sites.

Park Search Area: The inverse of the park service areas, highlighting the areas outside of a ½-mile walk from any parkland. These areas are the targets for strategies to add to the park system.

Policy: A values-based framework that provides clear direction and guides an action toward achieving the goal. Policies state what will be done, but not how.

Pollinator Pathway: A concept for pathways, utilizing the Enhanced Bicycle and Pedestrian Route network, that feature plantings and tree canopy along the streetscape to enhance habitat connections for birds and insects with multiple benefits, including enhancing pollination.

Principles: A fundamental basis that describes a desired state or preferred direction. Collectively, the principles articulate the Palo Alto community's vision for the future parks, trails, natural open space and recreation system.

Recreation Program: A class, league, camp, tour or event that facilitates participating in an activity.

Riparian Connected Parks: Sites with a creek (natural or channelized) passing through or adjacent.

Universal Design: "The concept of designing all products and the built environment to be aesthetic and usable to the greatest extent possible by everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or status in life." - Ronald L. Mace of North Carolina State University, College of Design

Urban Canopy Target Area: The lowest canopy coverage neighborhoods in the Urban Forestry Master Plan (0-30% coverage).

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BOTTOM: AA DroughtQ&A2, Andy Alfaro, <http://www.modbee.com/news/article22403646.html>

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TOP: McAllisterdogpark, San Antonio Parks & Rec, <http://www.sanantonio.gov/ParksAndRec/ParksFacilities/AllParksFacilities/ParksFacilitiesDetails/TabId/3354/ArtMID/14820/ArticleID/2578/McAllister-Park.aspx?Park=141&Facility=>

BOTTOM: dog_parkrk, Username: Fidelity <http://www.doggoes.com/parks/california/san-mateo-county/foster-city-dog-park-boat-park>

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TOP: Community-Garden, MIG, Inc.

BOTTOM: 6-East-Palo-Alto-United-States1, 350.org, <http://lifeasahuman.com/2010/current-affairs/social-issues/10-ways-to-celebrate-10-10-10/>

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PA7.jpg, Upper Playground. <http://www.upperplayground.com/blogs/news-upperplayground/15493048-brilliance-new-interactive-illuminated-sculpture-garden-in-palo-alto>

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TOP: Earth Day 045, Dr. Laura Russomano, <http://character.org/schools-of-character/promising-practices-overview/promising-practices-award-winners/winners-list/promising-practices-2012/theunis-dey/>

BOTTOM: Julio great horned owl2, MIG, Inc.

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TOP: INSTALLATIONS_c984b34b42fe0469a8f60619532cfd0, JUSTIN SAGLIO, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/arts/theater-art/2014/09/11/interactive-art-piece-swing-time-lights-lawn/4UQQCGiRZOIPDysO4lYxNK/story.html>

BOTTOM: The porch, MIG, Inc.

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3876 Noriega Street SF Devils-teeth-baking-company, MIG, Inc.

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BOTTOM: Parachute solar flowers, Garfield Clean Energy, <http://www.postindependent.com/news/in-solar-energy-rifle-shines-most-brightly/>

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Title Page, Appendix B

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APPENDIX A

PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES INVENTORY

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES CONTAIN AN INVENTORY OF PARKS AND
RECREATION FACILITIES IN PALO ALTO.**

PALO ALTO PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES INVENTORY

	Ownership	Address/Location	Land (acres)	Baseball Field	Softball Fields	Soccer Fields
City Park						
Baylands Athletic Center	City of Palo Alto	Geng Road, off Embarcadero	6	1	1	
Bol Park	City of Palo Alto	Laguna between Barron and Matadero	13.8			
Boulware Park	City of Palo Alto	39 Fernando Avenue	1.5			
Bowden Park	City of Palo Alto	Alma Street at California Avenue	2			
Bowling Green Park	City of Palo Alto	474 Embarcadero Road	1.9			
(Juana) Briones Park	City of Palo Alto	Arastradero at Clemo Street	4.1			
Cameron Park	City of Palo Alto	211 Wellesley Street	1.1			
Cogswell Plaza	City of Palo Alto	Lytton Avenue at Bryant Street	0.5			
El Camino Park	Stanford University*	1 El Camino Real	12.19		1	1
Eleanor Pardee Park	City of Palo Alto	851 Center Drive	9.6			
El Palo Alto Park	City of Palo Alto	El Camino Real at Alma Street	0.5			
Greer Park	City of Palo Alto	198 Amarillo Street	22	1	3	5
Heritage Park	City of Palo Alto	Homer at Waverley	2.01			
Hoover Park	City of Palo Alto	291 Cowper Street	4.2	1		
Hopkins Creekside	City of Palo Alto	Palo Alto Avenue from Emerson to Marlowe	12.4			
Johnson Park	City of Palo Alto	Everett and Waverley	2.5			
Kellogg Park	City of Palo Alto	Waverly at Embarcadero Road	0.245			
Lytton Plaza	City of Palo Alto	202 University Avenue	0.2			
Mayfield Park	City of Palo Alto	23 Wellesley Street	1.1			
Mitchell Park	City of Palo Alto	6 East Meadow Avenue	21.4			
Monroe Park	City of Palo Alto	Monroe and Miller Avenue	0.55			
Peers Park	City of Palo Alto	1899 Park Boulevard	4.7			
Ramos Park	City of Palo Alto	8 East Meadow Avenue	4.4			
Rinconada Park	City of Palo Alto	777 Embarcadero Road	19			
Robles Park	City of Palo Alto	4116 Park Boulevard	4.7	1		1
Scott Park	City of Palo Alto	Scott Street at Channing Avenue	0.4			
Seale Park	City of Palo Alto	31 Stockton	4.3			
Stanford/Palo Alto Playing Fields	Stanford University*	El Camino at Page Mill Road	5.9			2
Terman Park	City of Palo Alto (joint shared use with PAUSD)"	655 Arastradero Road	7.7		1	2
Wallis Park	City of Palo Alto	Grant Avenue at Ash Street	0.3			
Weisshaar Park	City of Palo Alto	2298 Dartmouth Street	1.1			
Williams Park (Museum of American Heritage)	City of Palo Alto	351 Homer Ave	0.7			
Werry Park	City of Palo Alto	23 Dartmouth Street	1.1			
Subtotal			174.08	4	6	11

* Leased by the City of Palo Alto. The El Camino lease expires in 2042 and the Stanford/Palo Alto Playing Fields lease expires in 2056.

Youth Soccer Fields	Football Field	Lights (fields)	Quality Rating (fields)	Tennis Courts	Basketball Courts	Gym Space	Pool	Play Area	Public Art/Memorial	Building	Trail	Picnic Area	Restrooms	Other Facilities	Other Facility Description
		yes	A							2			1	2	Concessions stand/maintenance equipment storage; restrooms equipment storage
1			E					1			perimeter trail	2		1	Un-channeled creek
					1			2			perimeter trail	2			
								1	yes		perimeter trail				
										1				1	Bowling green
1			E		1			2			footpath	1	1		
			E					1				1			
												1		1	Wireless internet access
		yes									perimeter trail	1	1		
1			C					2	yes			1		3	Community gardens, multi-purpose concrete bowl
											connections				
			B		2			1	yes			3	1	2	Skateboard park (outdated); dog "exercise area"
								1				1			
1			B	2	1			2	yes		perimeter trail	1	1	3	Fenced dog run, handball court, multi-purpose bowl
1			E		1			1			perimeter trail	5		3	Community garden, sand volley ball court, open turf
									yes					1	Fountain
										1			1		Library
1				7				4	yes	2	0.25 miles	6	3	1	Magical Bridge accessible play area, fenced dog run, water feature, handball courts, horseshoe pits, shuffleboard, petanque, multipurpose bowl, fieldhouse, concession stand/kitchen area
								1			walking path	1			
1			D	2	1			2		1		2	1	1	Field house with restroom
1			E					1				1			T-ball field
1			D	9			2	2				2	1		
			E		1			2			footpath	2		2	Multi-purpose bowl
					1			1				1			
1			C		1			1			pathway	3	1		
		yes	A						yes	1		1	1	1	Snack shack
			C	2	4						perimeter trail				
									yes						
			E	2											
															Museum of American Heritage
1			E					1				1			
11	0	3		24	14	0	1	29	8	8		39	13	22	

PALO ALTO PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES INVENTORY

	Ownership	Address/Location	Land (acres)	Baseball Field	Softball Fields	Soccer Fields
City Open Space/Conservation Lands						
Baylands Preserve (including Byxbee)	City of Palo Alto	2775 Embarcadero Road	1,986			
Esther Clark Preserve	City of Palo Alto	Old Trace Road	22			
Foothills Park	City of Palo Alto	33 Page Mill Road	1,400			
Pearson-Arastradero Preserve	City of Palo Alto	Arastradero Road at Page Mill Road	622			
<i>Subtotal</i>			4,030	0	0	0
Other Recreation Facilities in Palo Alto						
Cubberly Community Center and Fields	City of Palo Alto/PAUSD	4 Middlefield Road, T-2			4	3
Gamble Garden	City of Palo Alto	1431 Waverley Street				
King Plaza at City Hall	City of Palo Alto	250 Hamilton Avenue				
Lucie Stern Community Center	City of Palo Alto	13 5 Middlefield Road				
Middlefield Ballpark	Palo Alto Little League	3672 Middlefield Road				
Mitchell Park Community Center	City of Palo Alto	3800 Middlefield Road				
Junior Museum and Zoo	City of Palo Alto	1451 Middlefield Road				
Municipal Golf Course	City of Palo Alto	1875 Embarcadero Road	181			
Ventura Community Center	City of Palo Alto	3990 Ventura Court				
Winter Lodge	City of Palo Alto	3009 Middlefield Road				
<i>Subtotal</i>			181	0	4	3
Palo Alto Unified School District Facilities						
Barron Park Elementary School	PAUSD	8 Barron Avenue				
Duveneck Elementary School	PAUSD	75 Alester Avenue				
El Carmelo Elementary School	PAUSD	Loma Verde Avenue				
Escondido Elementary School	PAUSD	89 Escondido Road				
Fairmeadow Elementary School	PAUSD	5 East Meadow Drive				
Greendell Early Childhood Education Center	PAUSD	412 Middlefield Road				
Gunn High School	PAUSD	78 Arastradero Road		1*	1*	2*
Hoover Elementary School	PAUSD	445 E. Charleston Road				
JLS Middle School	PAUSD	48 E. Meadow Drive				3
Jordan Middle School	PAUSD	75 N. California Avenue			1	3
Juana Briones Elementary School	PAUSD	41 Orme Street				
Lucille Nixon Elementary School	PAUSD	Stanford Avenue				
Ohlone Elementary School	PAUSD	95 Amarillo Avenue				
Palo Verde Elementary School	PAUSD	345 Louis Road				
Palo Alto High School (Paly)	PAUSD	5 Embarcadero Road		1*	1*	2*
Terman Middle School	PAUSD (joint shared use with City)	655 Arastradero Road				2
Ventura Community Center (building only)	PAUSD	3990 Ventura Court				
Walter Hays Elementary School	PAUSD	1525 Middlefield Road				
<i>Subtotal</i>			0	0	1	8
Palo Alto Total			4384.7	4	11	22

*Use of HS fields is coordinated by PAUSD

Youth Soccer Fields	Football Field	Lights (fields)	Quality Rating (fields)	Tennis Courts	Basketball Courts	Gym Space	Pool	Play Area	Public Art/Memorial	Building	Trail	Picnic Area	Restrooms	Other Facilities	Other Facility Description
									yes	1	15 miles	1	1	2	Nature interpretive center
									yes	1	15 miles	1	1	3	Campground; large turf area; Boranda Lake dock; nature interpretive center
									yes	1	10.3 miles		1		Nature interpretive center
0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	3	3		2	3	5	
			B	6		yes							1	2	Theater
														1	Historic home and garden
													1	2	Community Theatre and Children's Theatre
														2	Snack shack and scoreboard
					1					1					
													1		
1			E		1			1							
														1	Ice skating rink
1	0	0		6	2	1	0	1	0	1		0	4	8	
1			E		3										
1			E		2										
1			E												
1			E		2										
1			E												
	1*	yes	C	7	3		1								
1			C		3										
1			C	6	6										
			C	6	7										
1			E		4										
1			E		3										
1			E		2										
1			E		4										
	1*	yes		7	4										
			C		5										
					3					1					
1			E		3										
13	0	2		26	56	0	1	0	0	1		0	0	0	
25	0	5		56	15	1	2	30	11	13	0	41	20	33	

Quality Rating Key

"A" Facility High-quality turf, possibly with lights and few time restrictions
 "B" Facility High-quality turf, no nights and few time restrictions
 "C" Facility Good quality turf, no lights

"D" Facility Fair turf quality, no lights, restrictions on use time and close proximity to neighbors

"E" Facility Low turf quality, no lights, no bathroom access and time restrictions

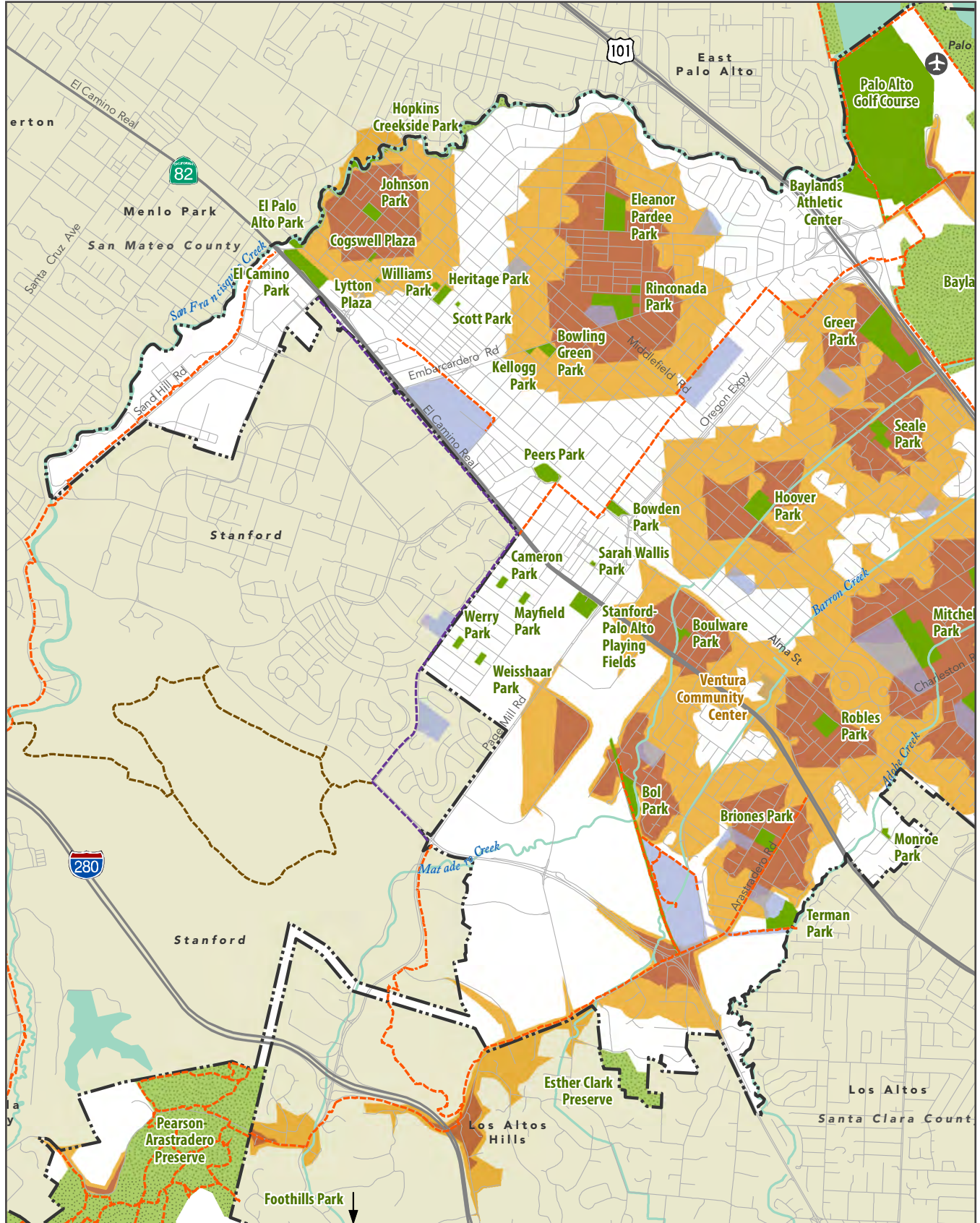


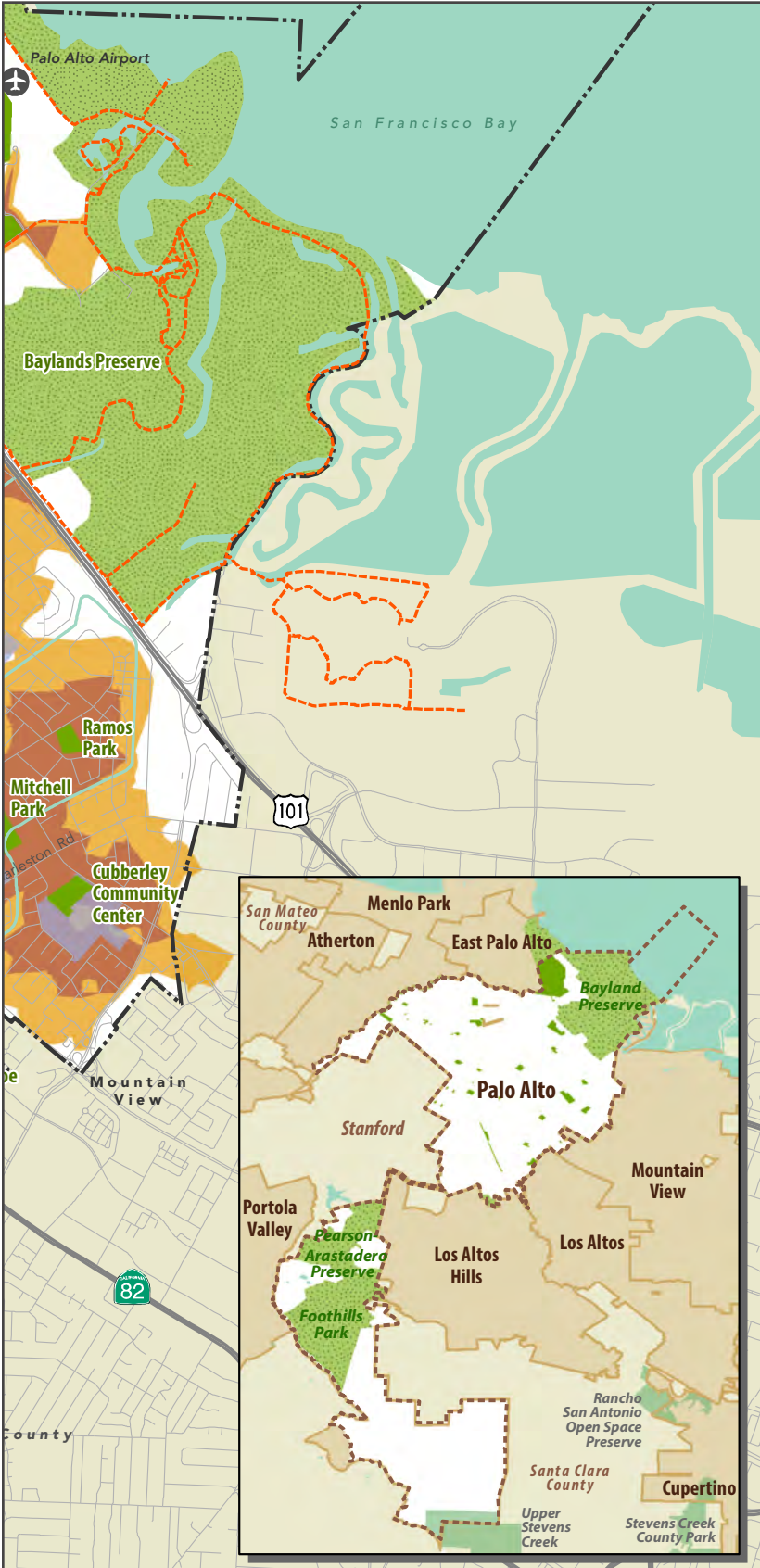
APPENDIX B

GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

THE MAPPING AND ANALYSIS OF PALO ALTO'S SYSTEM USED GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) DATA ON

the parks, streets, trails and recreation facilities to evaluate the system from the perspective of a pedestrian or cyclist. The core of the analysis is described and illustrated in Chapter 3. This appendix includes additional mapping that was completed to illustrate the distribution of components and activities that emerged as important in the planning process. These include: exercise and fitness; gathering; play for children; relax and enjoy the outdoors; throw a ball; recreation with dogs; indoor recreation, and sports courts. Additionally, community input through the Mapita interactive map reported a park quality rating that is visualized in a final map.





City of Palo Alto
Parks, Trails,
Natural Open Space
and Recreation
Master Plan

Park Experience Service Areas

- 1/4 Mile or Less Walking Distance
- 1/2 Mile or Less Walking Distance

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Space
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation Route

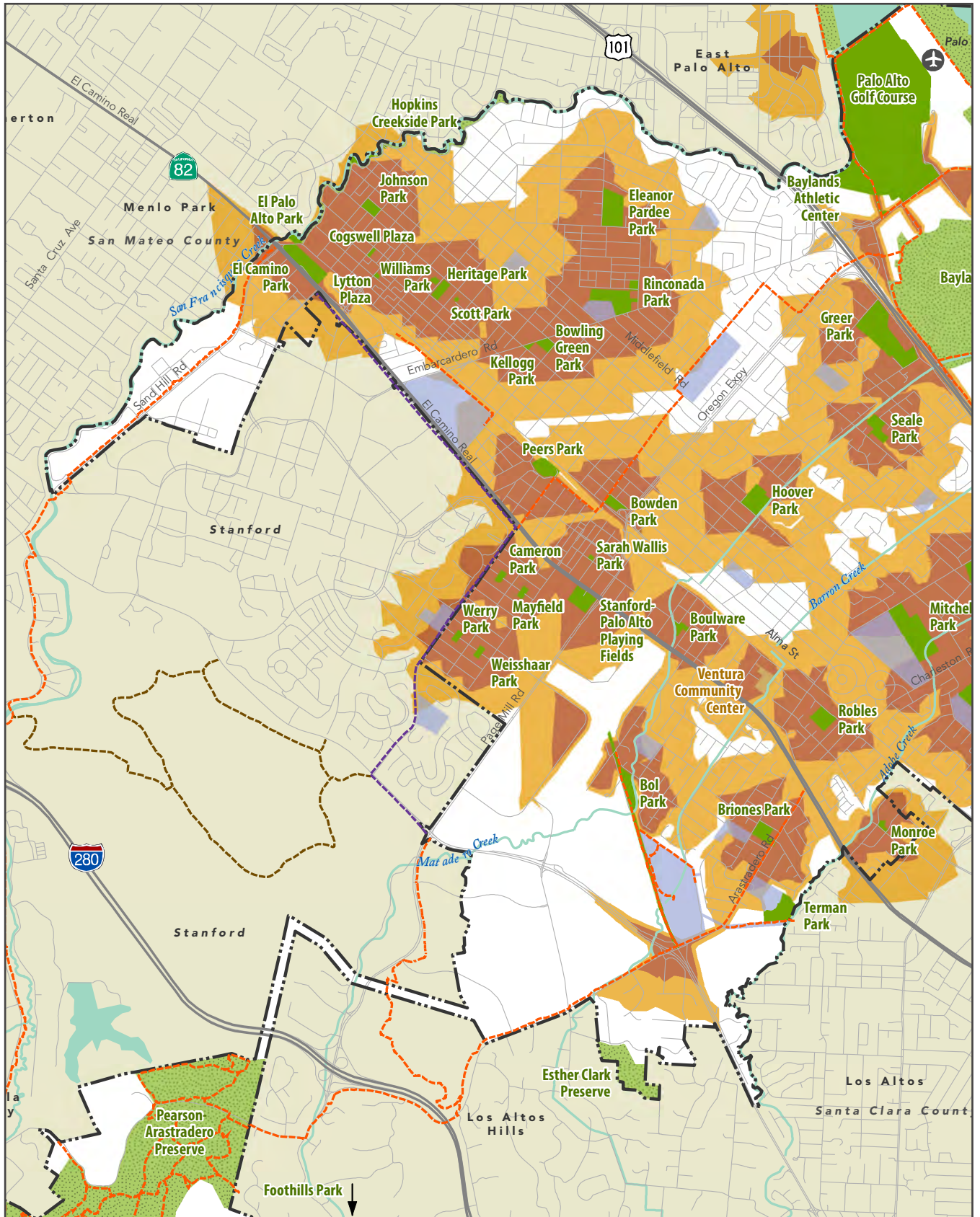
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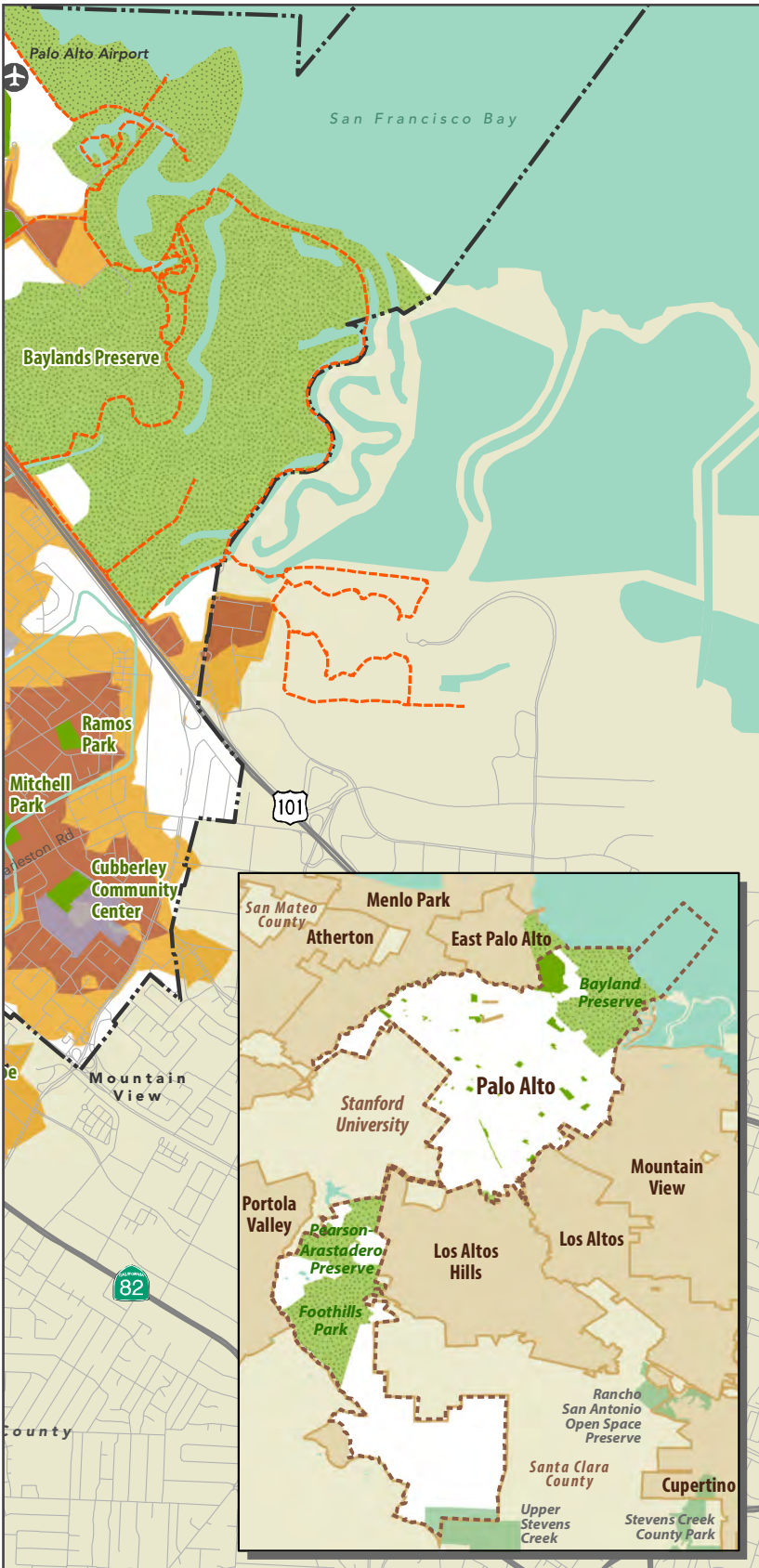
- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools

**Parks with
Exercise and Fitness**



Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and
Santa Clara County GIS





City of Palo Alto Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan

Park Experience Service Areas

- 1/4 Mile or Less Walking Distance
- 1/2 Mile or Less Walking Distance

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Space
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation Route

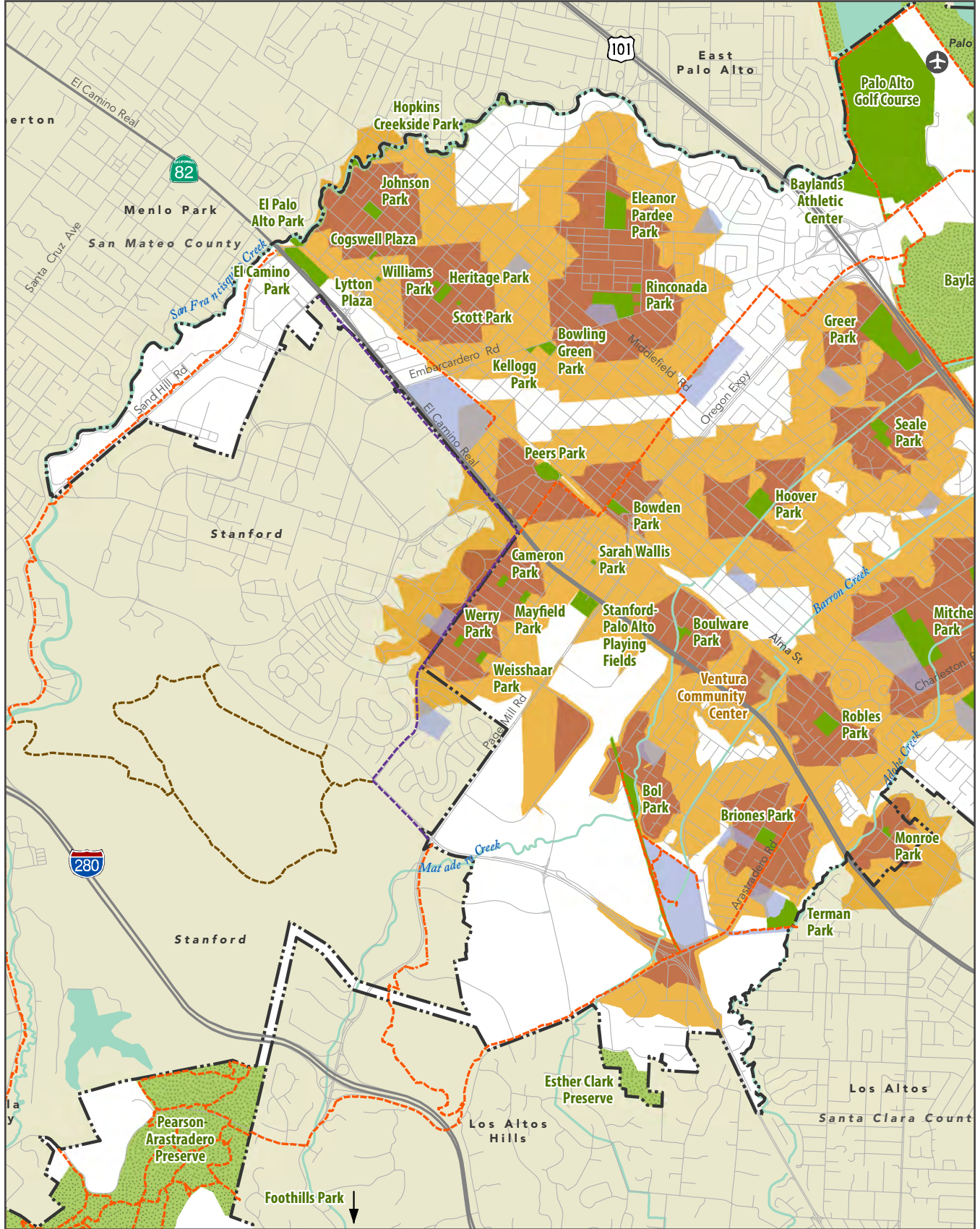
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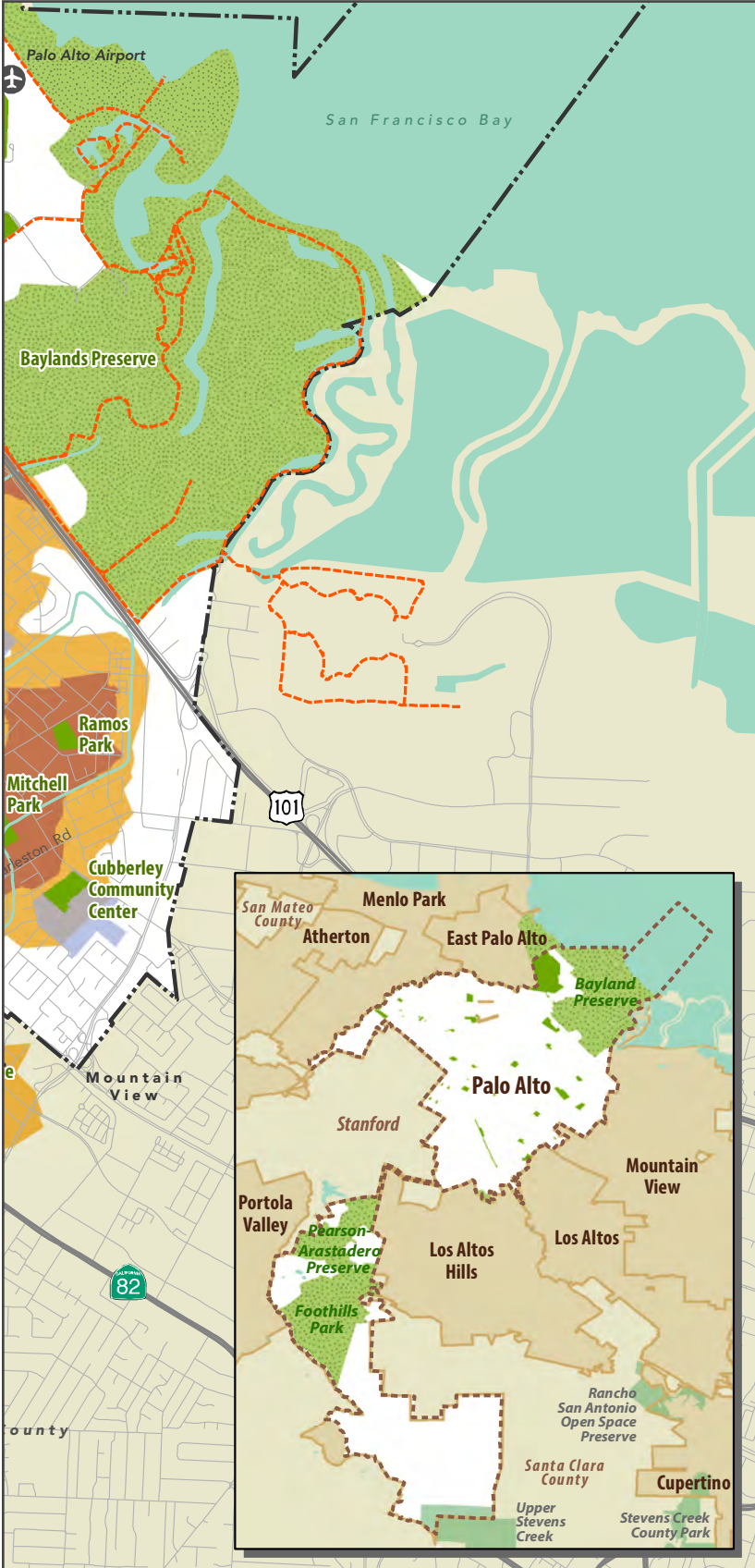
- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools

Parks with Gathering Spaces



Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and
Santa Clara County GIS





City of Palo Alto
Parks, Trails,
Natural Open Space
and Recreation
Master Plan

Park Experience Service Areas

- 1/4 Mile or Less Walking Distance
- 1/2 Mile or Less Walking Distance

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Space
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation Route

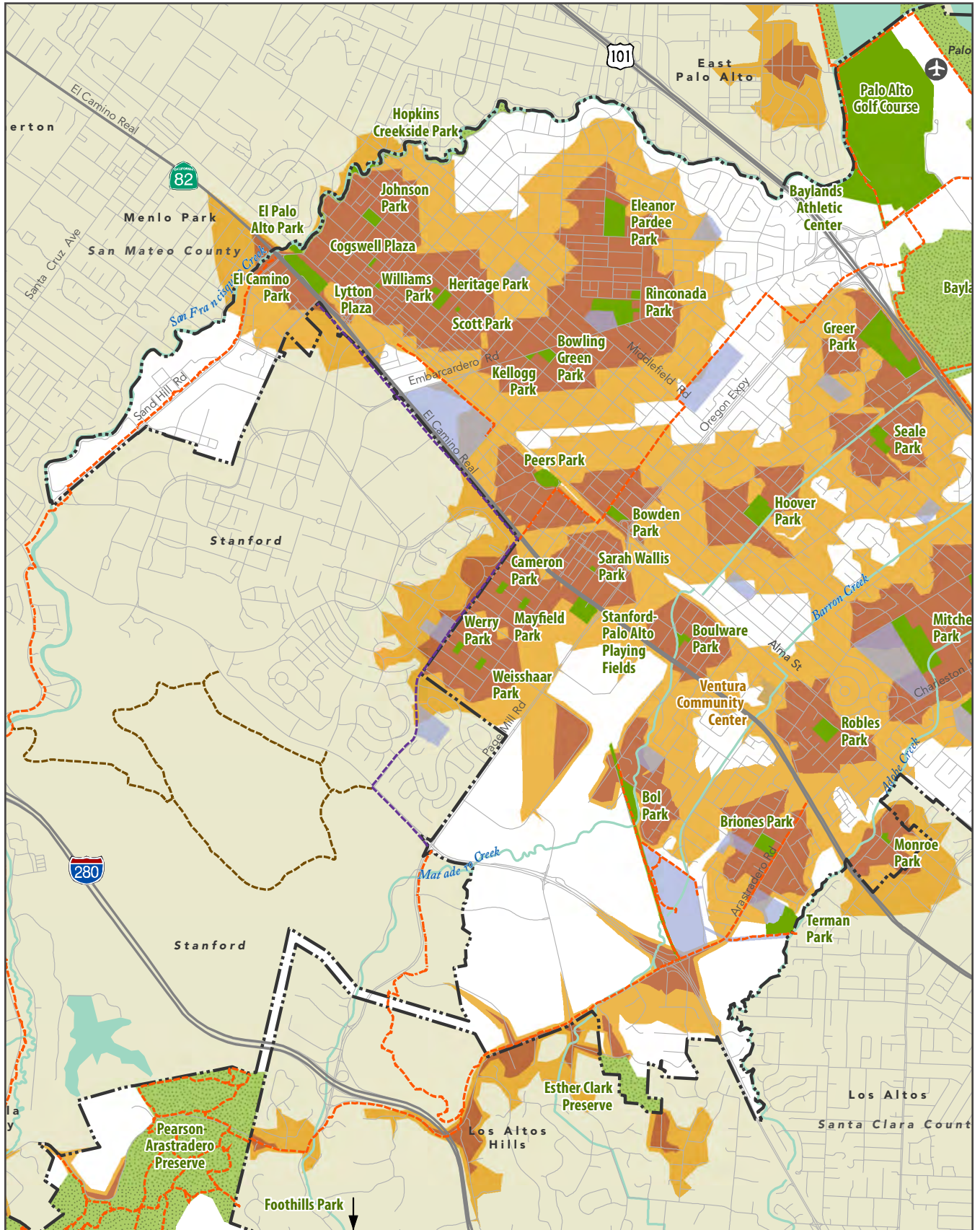
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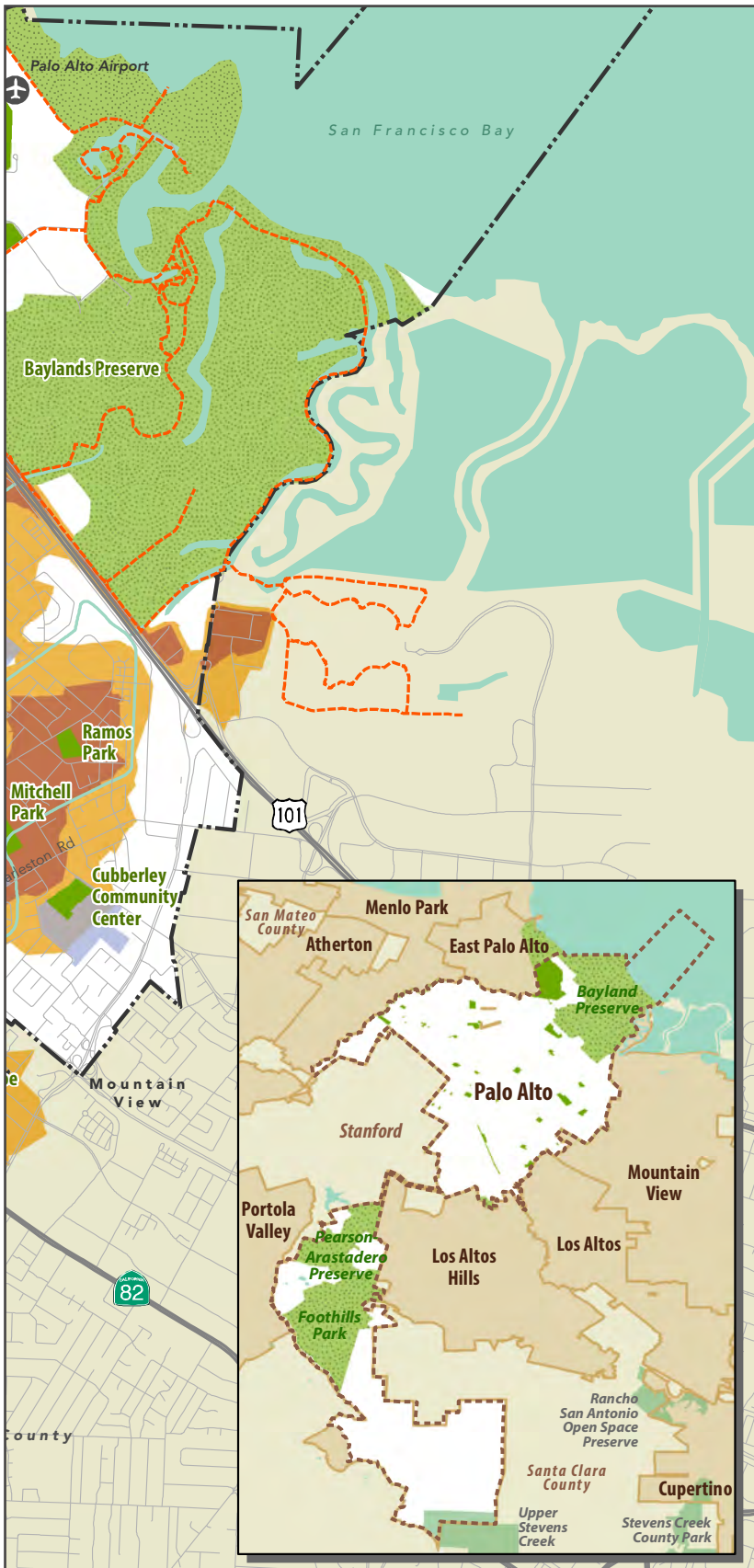
- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools

**Parks with
Play for Children**



Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and
Santa Clara County GIS





City of Palo Alto
Parks, Trails,
Natural Open Space
and Recreation
Master Plan

Park Experience Service Areas

- 1/4 Mile or Less Walking Distance
- 1/2 Mile or Less Walking Distance

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Space
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation Route

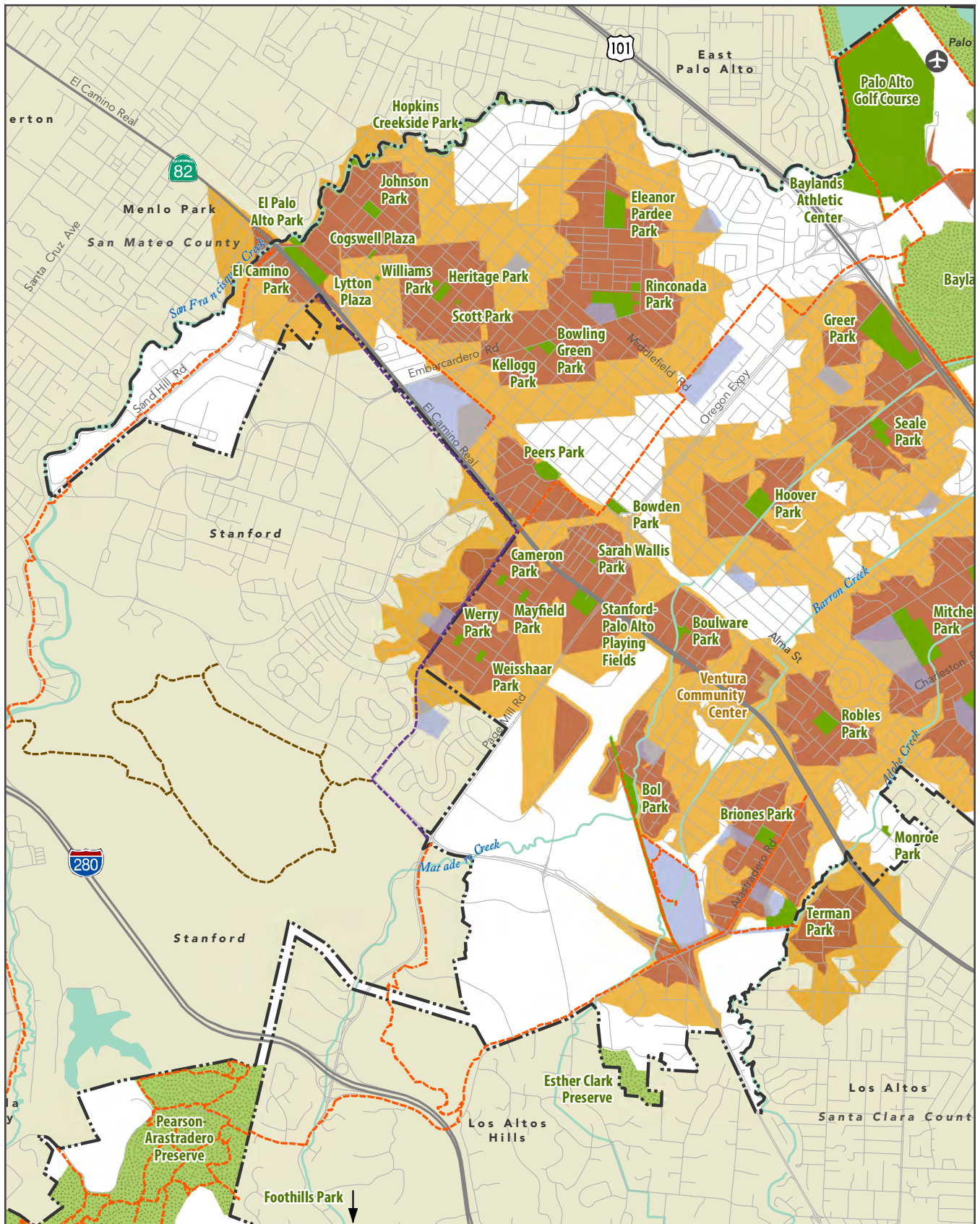
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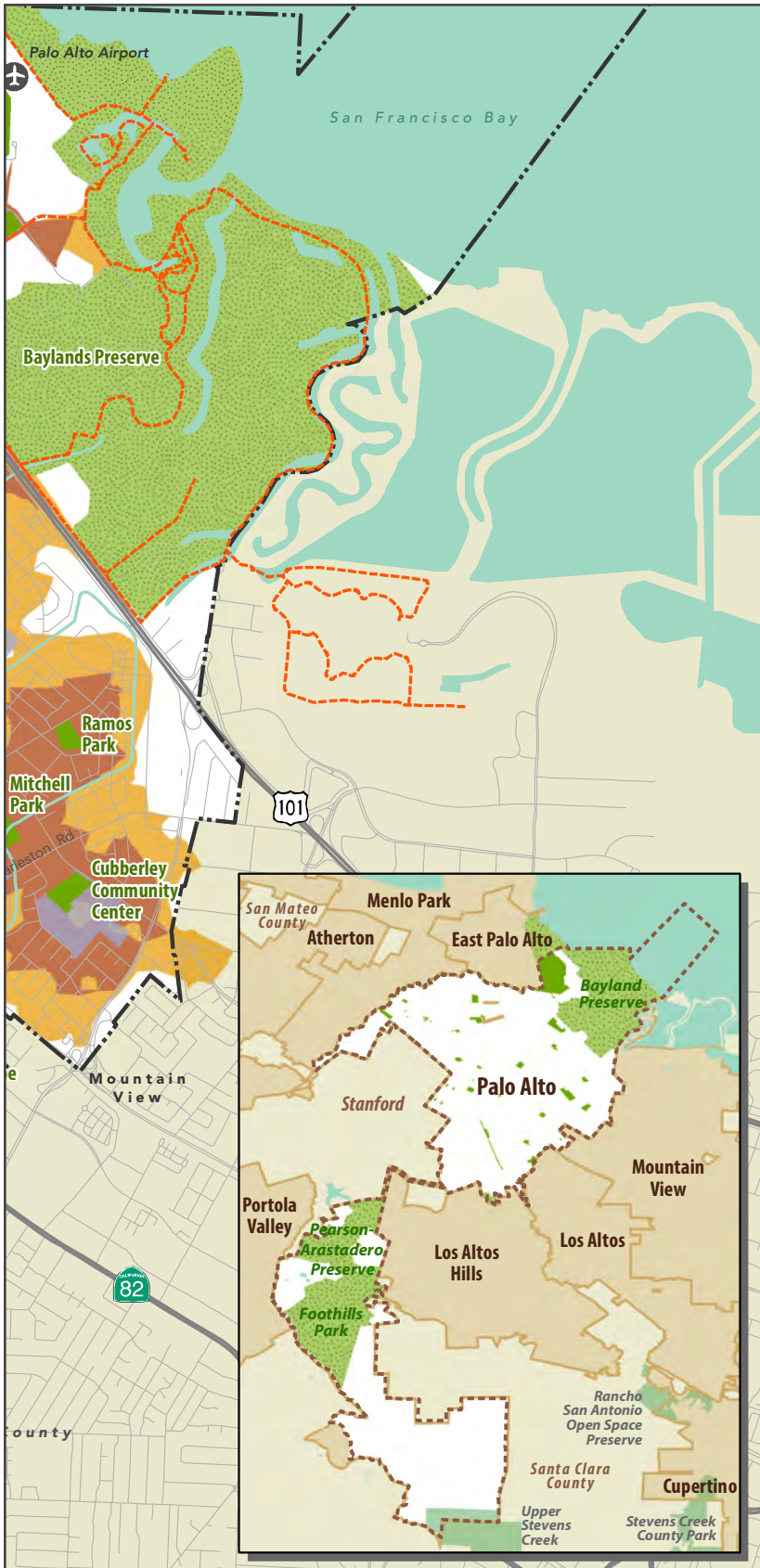
- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools

**Parks with Space to
Relax and Enjoy the
Outdoors**



Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and
Santa Clara County GIS





City of Palo Alto Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan

Park Experience Service Areas

- 1/4 Mile or Less Walking Distance
- 1/2 Mile or Less Walking Distance

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Space
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation Route

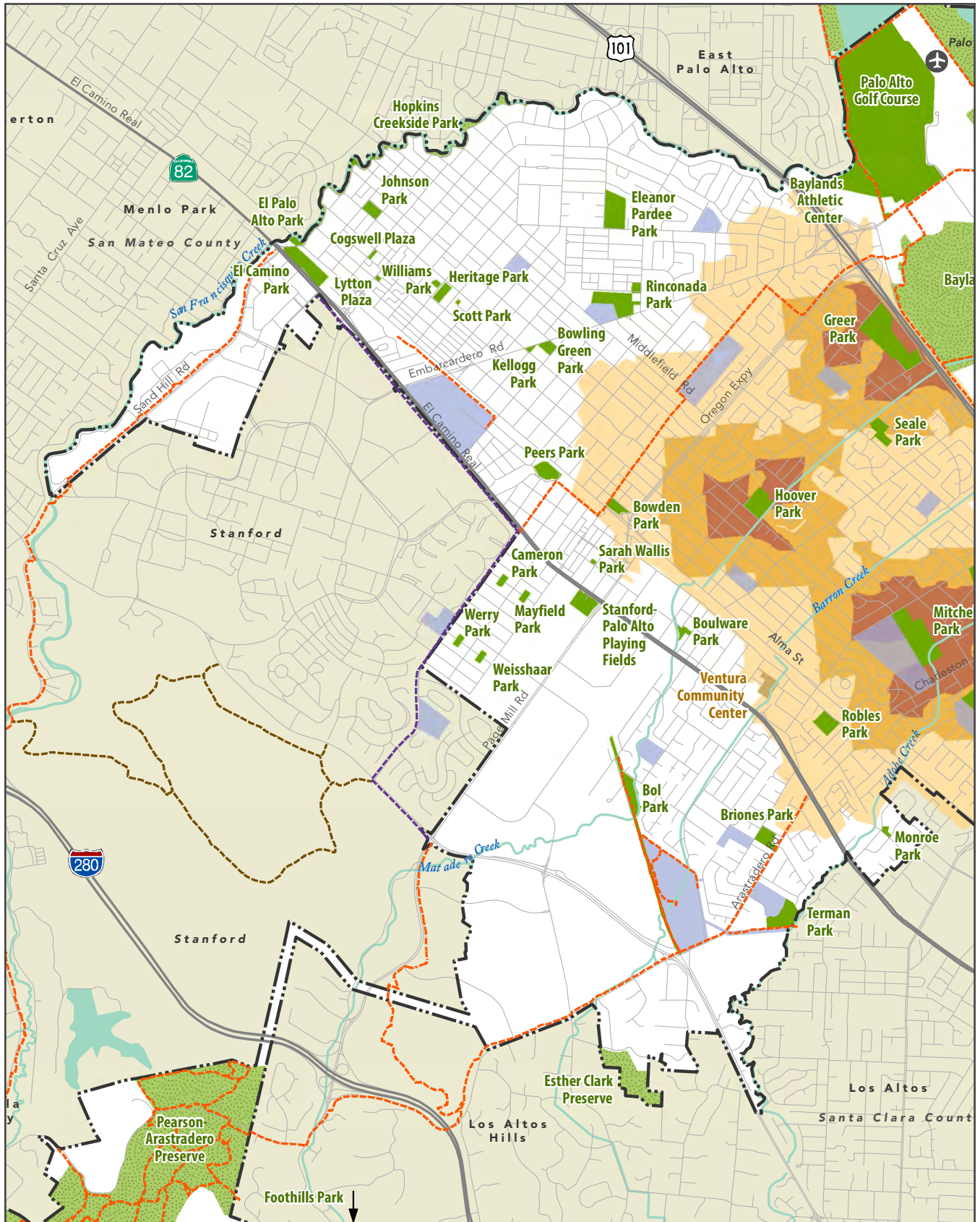
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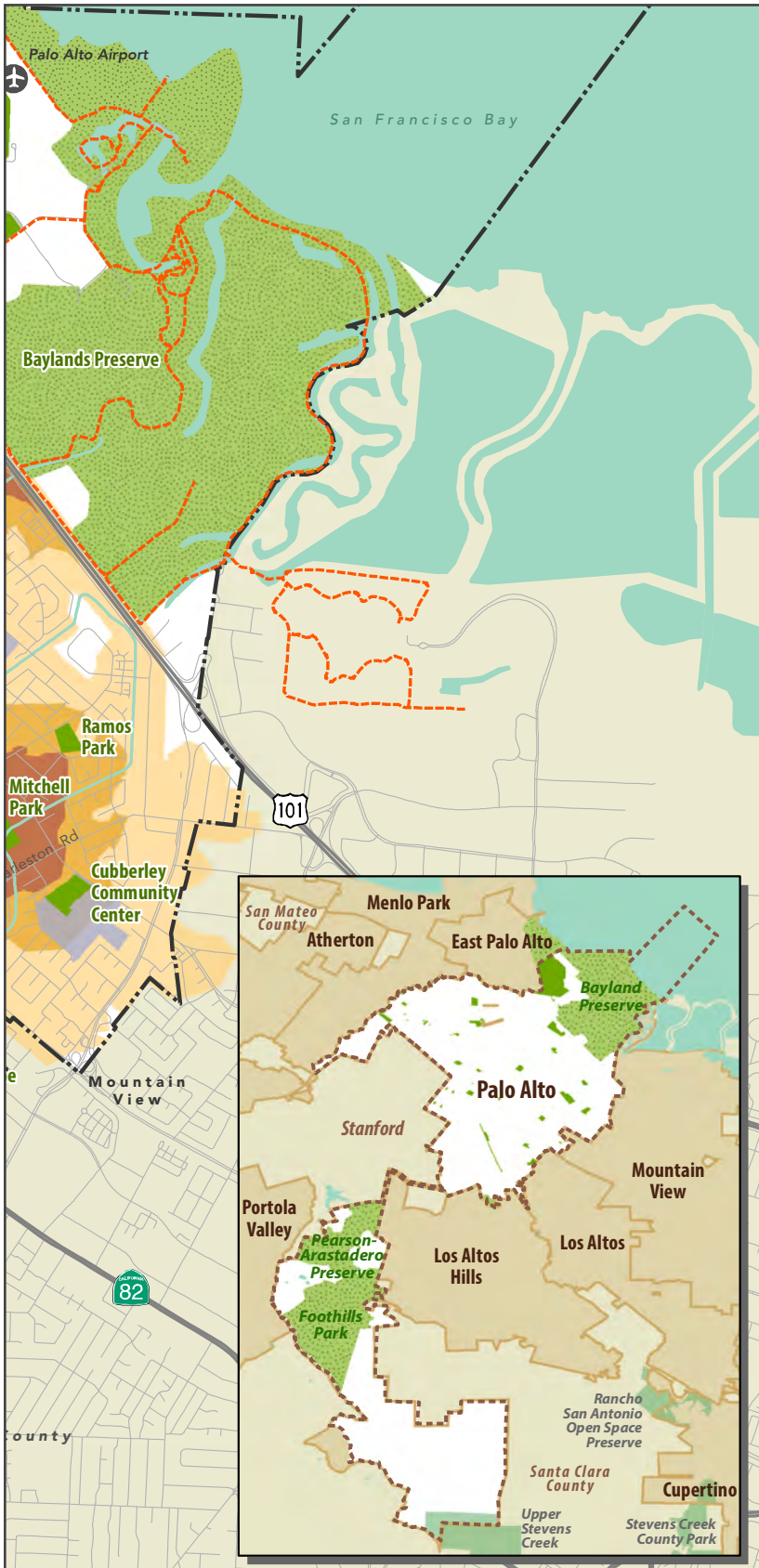
- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools

Parks with Space to Throw, Catch, Shoot or Kick a Ball



Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and
Santa Clara County GIS





City of Palo Alto
Parks, Trails,
Natural Open Space
and Recreation
Master Plan

Dog Recreation Service Areas

- 1/4 Mile or Less Walking Distance
- 1/2 Mile or Less Walking Distance
- 1 Mile or Less Walking Distance

Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

- City Park
- City Natural Open Space
- Other City Property

Trails

- Trails
- Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
- Private Recreation Route

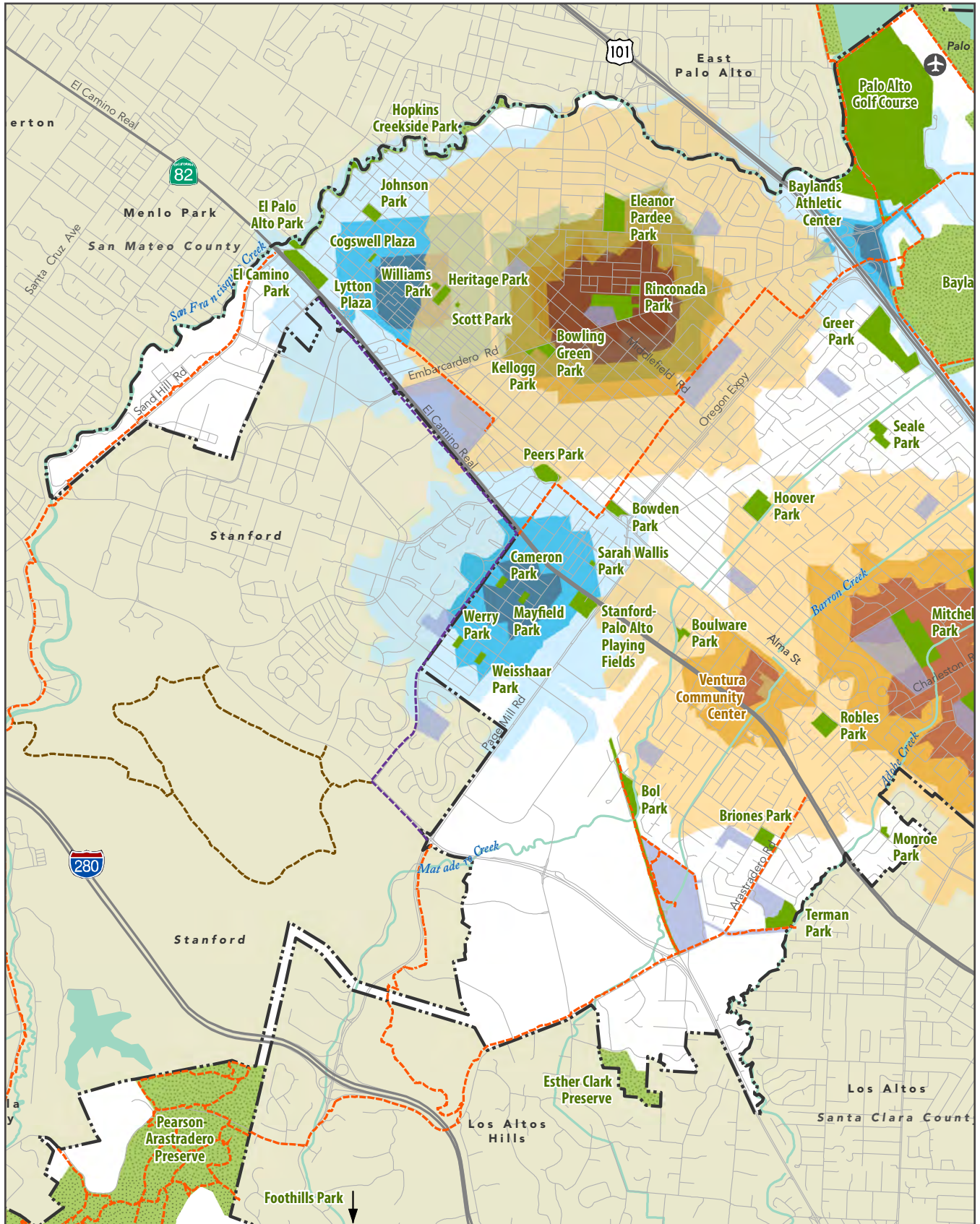
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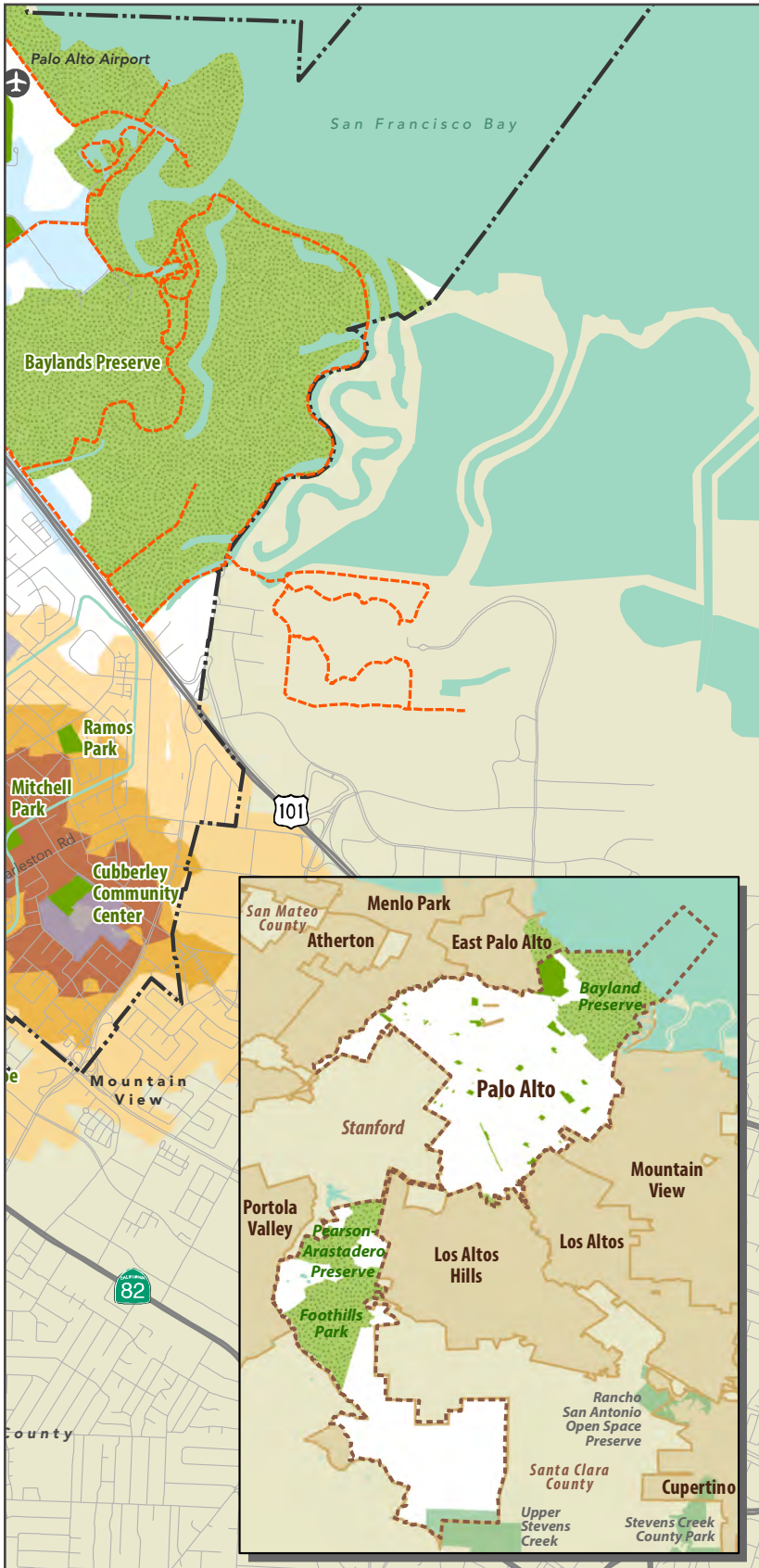
- City of Palo Alto
- Major Highways and Freeways
- Streets
- Creeks and Channels
- Water Bodies
- Schools

**Parks with Recreation
Areas for Dogs**






Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and
Santa Clara County GIS





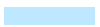


City of Palo Alto Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan



Community Recreation Centers Service Areas

-  1/4 Mile or Less Walking Distance
-  1/2 Mile or Less Walking Distance
-  1 Mile or Less Walking Distance



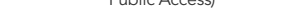
Other Community Services Buildings Service Areas

-  1/4 Mile or Less Walking Distance
-  1/2 Mile or Less Walking Distance
-  1 Mile or Less Walking Distance







Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

-  City Park
-  City Natural Open Space
-  Other City Property

Trails

-  Trails
-  Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
-  Private Recreation Route

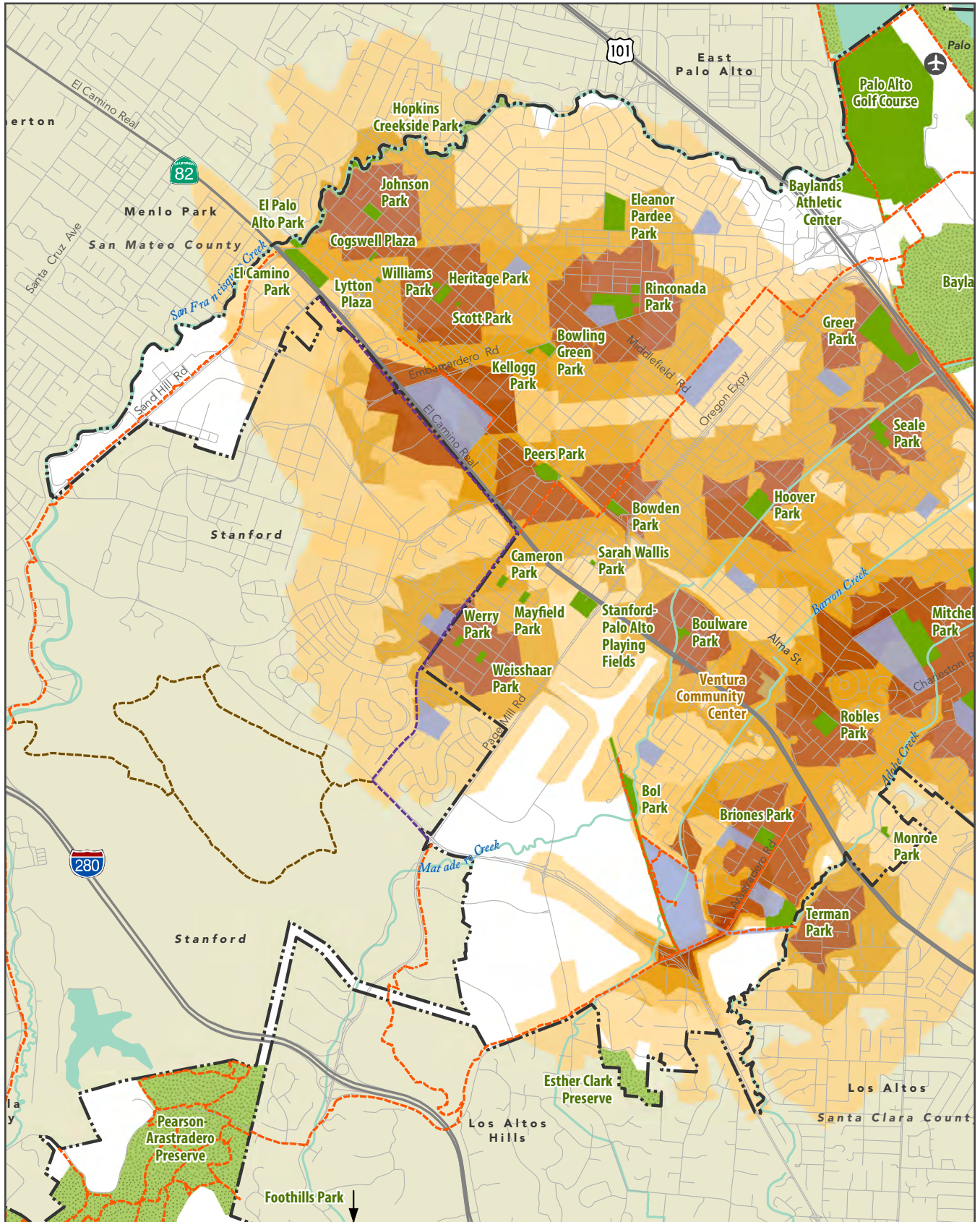
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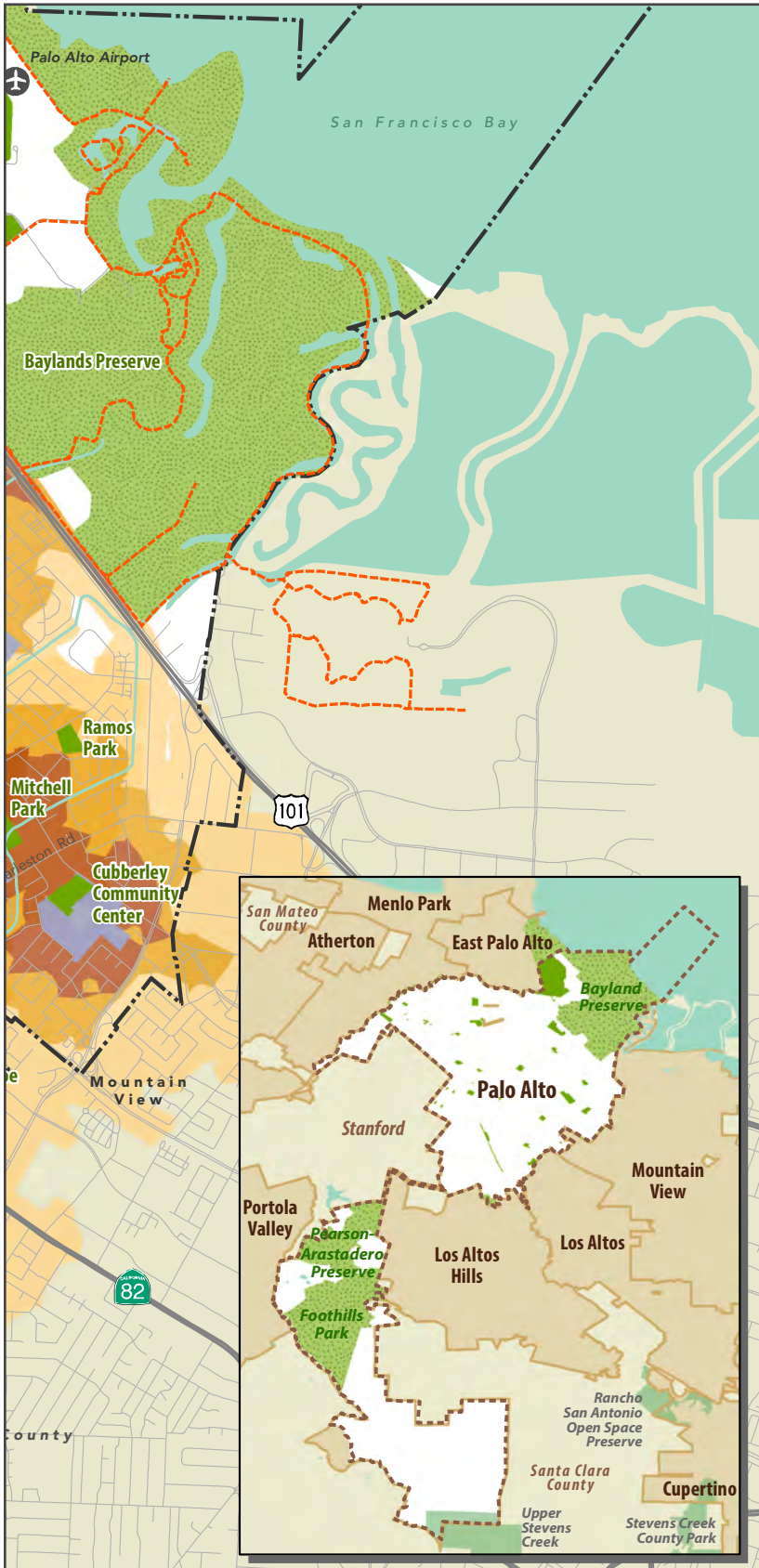
-  City of Palo Alto
-  Major Highways and Freeways
-  Streets
-  Creeks and Channels
-  Water Bodies
-  Schools

Parks with Indoor Recreation Facilities






Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and
Santa Clara County GIS








City of Palo Alto
Parks, Trails,
Natural Open Space
and Recreation
Master Plan



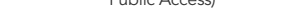
Park Experience Service Areas

-  1/4 Mile or Less Walking Distance
-  1/2 Mile or Less Walking Distance
-  1 Mile or Less Walking Distance







Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)

-  City Park
-  City Natural Open Space
-  Other City Property

Trails

-  Trails
-  Stanford Perimeter Trail (Private Trail with Public Access)
-  Private Recreation Route

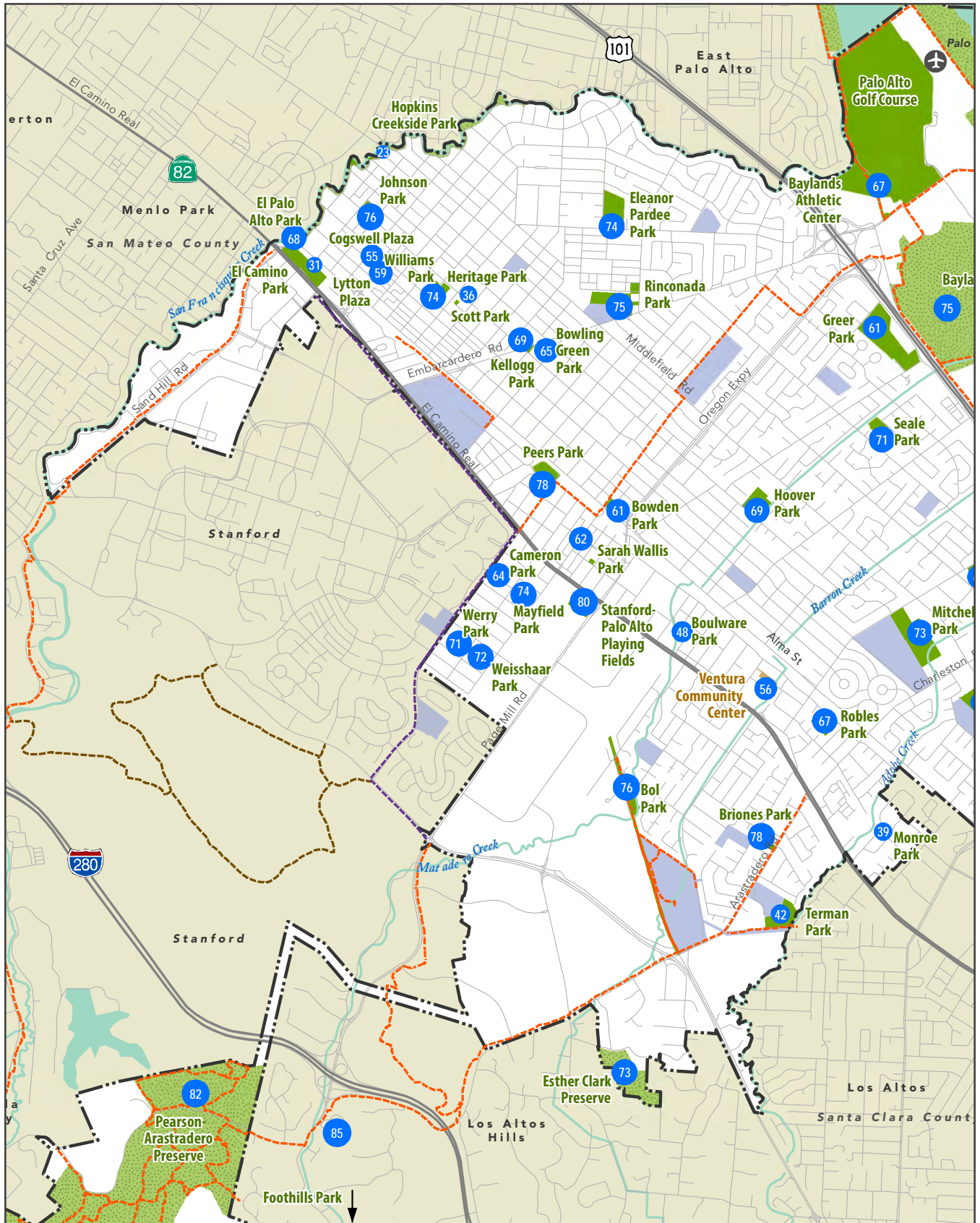
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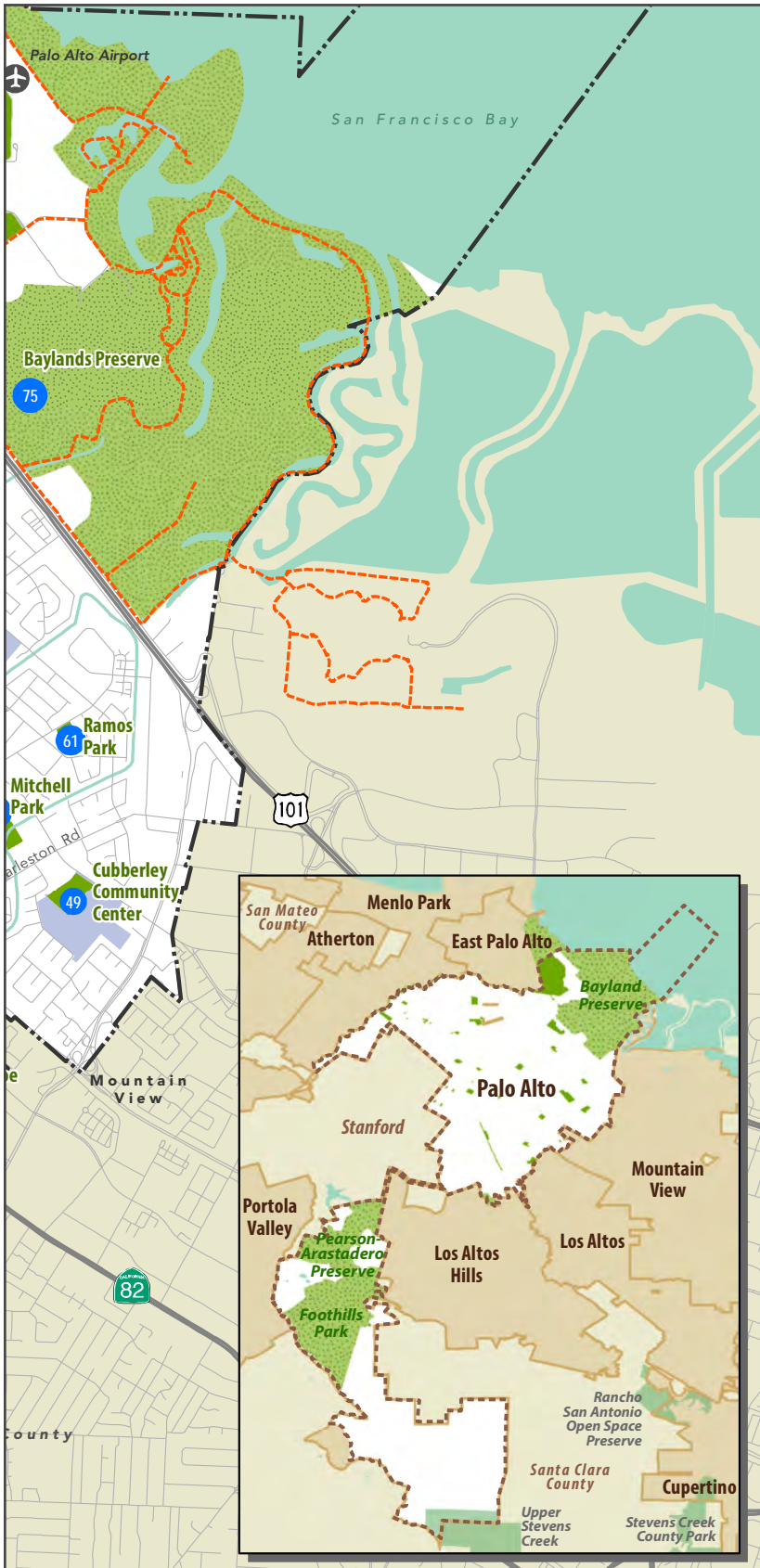
-  City of Palo Alto
-  Major Highways and Freeways
-  Streets
-  Creeks and Channels
-  Water Bodies
-  Schools

Parks with Sports Courts



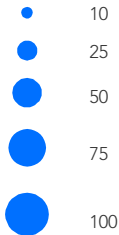
Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and
Santa Clara County GIS



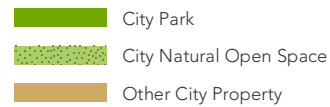


City of Palo Alto Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan

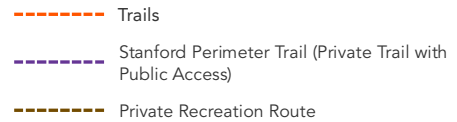
Park Quality



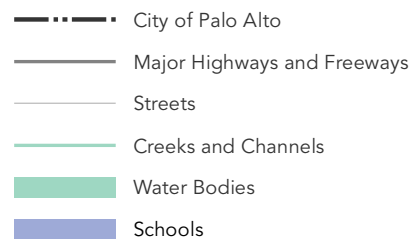
Palo Alto Existing Parks and Open Space (2016)



Trails



Base Map Features



Overall Park Quality



Date: October 2016
Sources: Palo Alto OpenGIS and
Santa Clara County GIS



APPENDIX

C

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**THE CITY OF PALO ALTO IS COMMITTED TO
CREATING A PLAN THAT ALIGNS WITH LOCAL
NEEDS, PREFERENCES AND PRIORITIES.**

Community input was integral to each phase of the Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan development. The engagement plan was designed to: increase community awareness of the project; inform the community about the challenges and opportunities of the project; provide easy access to project information and opportunities for participation; offer a range of communication and engagement tools to match interests and preferences; ensure the final Master Plan reflects community priorities, preferences and values; and get community buy-in to support plan adoption and its short-, mid- and long-term implementation.

Community Engagement Activities

To achieve these goals, the Public Engagement Plan laid out a robust, layered outreach strategy that included a variety of engagement tools and activities so Palo Alto residents and other interested community members could participate in a manner convenient and comfortable for them. There were numerous opportunities for participation, with a variety of formats, times and levels of interaction offered as well as both online and face-to-face methods.

PROJECT WEBPAGE

A Master Plan project webpage, hosted on the City’s website with a project-specific web address (paloaltoparksplan.org), served as the information portal and document library for the planning effort.



Project webpage

PUBLIC INFORMATION UPDATES

The project team disseminated public information updates through the City’s established mailing lists, newsletters and social media accounts. These updates informed the community about upcoming meetings, online participation opportunities and project status.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT A GLANCE

- 200+ Intercept Survey Participants
- 487 Online Map-Based Survey Participants
- 65 Community Input Workshop Participants
- 1,100+ Online Community Survey Participants
- 16 Follow-up Stakeholder Interviews
- 736 Community Prioritization Challenge and Workshop Participants
- 200+ Site Concept Review Comments



STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP

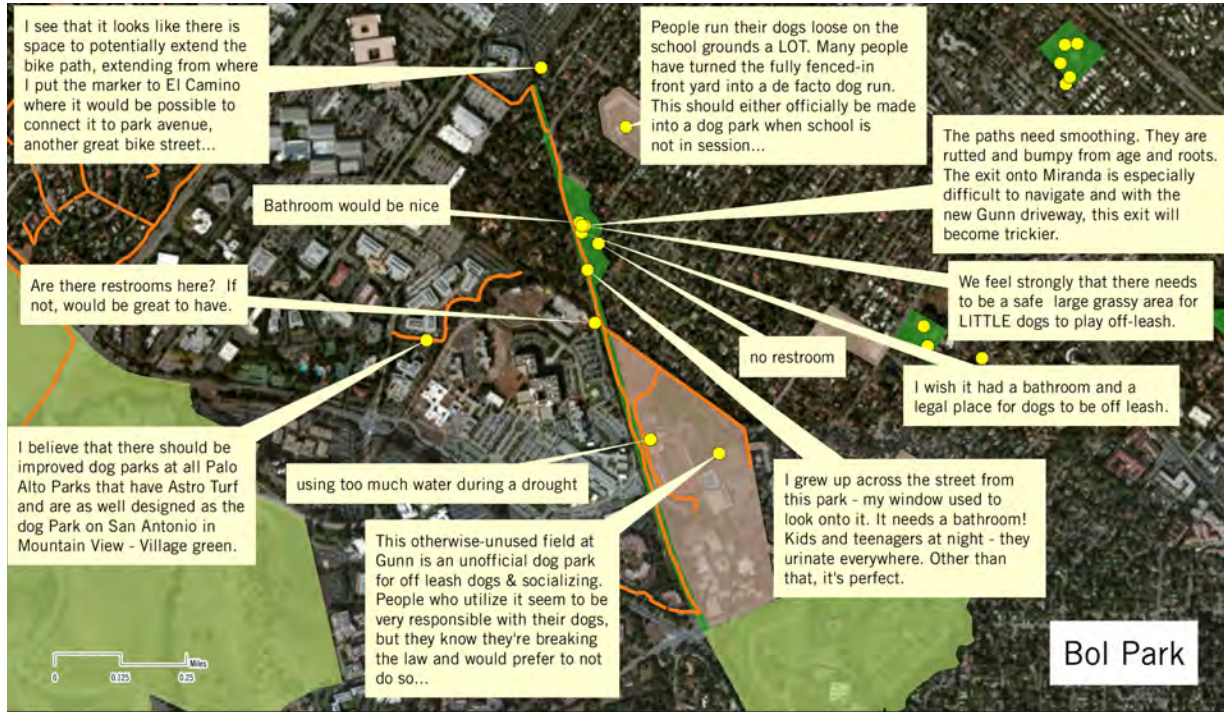
The Stakeholder Advisory Group provided an informed sounding board for ideas and provided updated information about related efforts and organizations. This group was also asked to help boost participation in other engagement activities by passing along information to existing networks and constituent groups about the Master Plan process. This group consisted of representatives from local advocacy groups, recreation organizations, local employers and landowners, community service providers and others. To respect the time of the members of the Stakeholder Advisory Group, the project team designed the process to solicit this group's input at strategic times during the project.

INTERCEPT EVENTS

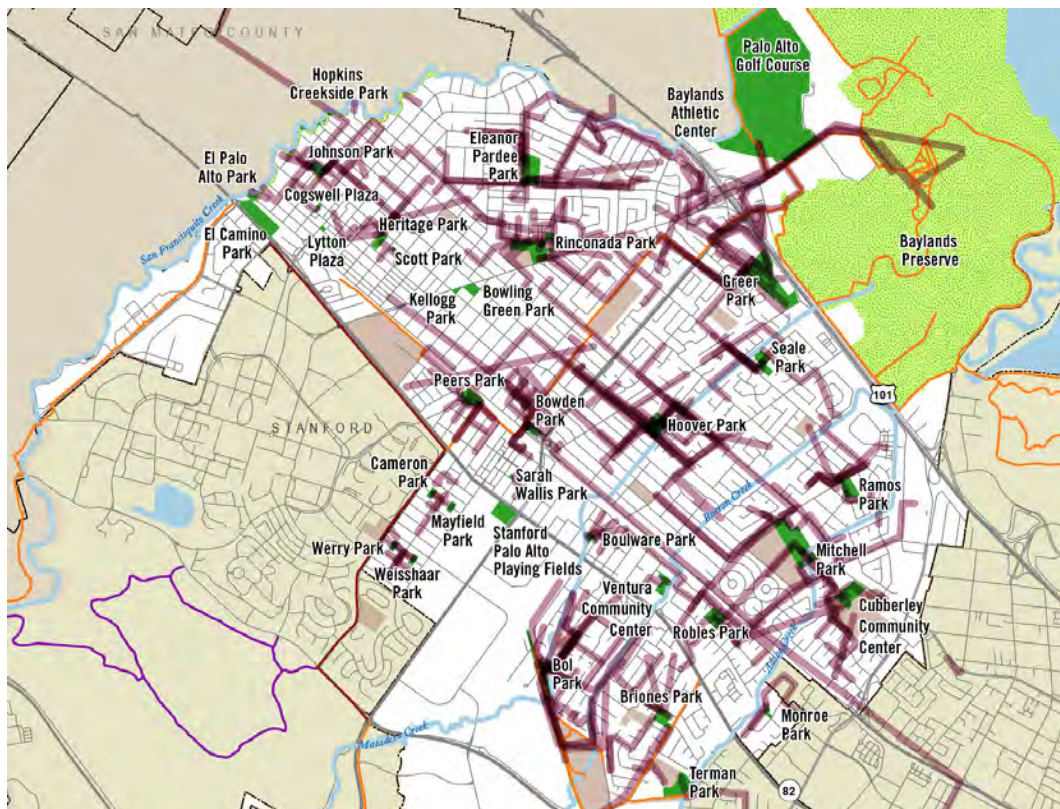
During the summer of 2014, the project team and Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) members conducted six "intercept surveys" to collect input from visitors outdoors at parks, farmers markets and community events. This approach is effective at engaging all age groups, especially families with children, and allows for informal and educational discussions with the public. It also facilitates interaction with people who do not typically attend public meetings, due to schedule conflicts or a lack of awareness. The project team selected intercept times and locations to reach a cross-section of Palo Altans. More than 200 people learned about the park system and the Master Plan effort and informed the planning team about their values and motivations as related to parks, natural open space and recreation.

ONLINE MAP-BASED SURVEY

During the summer of 2014, the project team hosted an online, interactive, map-based survey using the Mapita application. This tool allows community members to respond to a series of questions and provide geographically tagged comments on specific parks, facilities and transportation routes throughout the City. A total of 487 respondents provided comments on park quality, barriers to access, needs and opportunities. This effort generated a rich data set about how people use the park system, how they travel to the places they go, and what their experience is like, including site-specific data. The images on the next page are example graphics from the map-based survey.



Site-specific comments on Bol Park from the online map-based survey



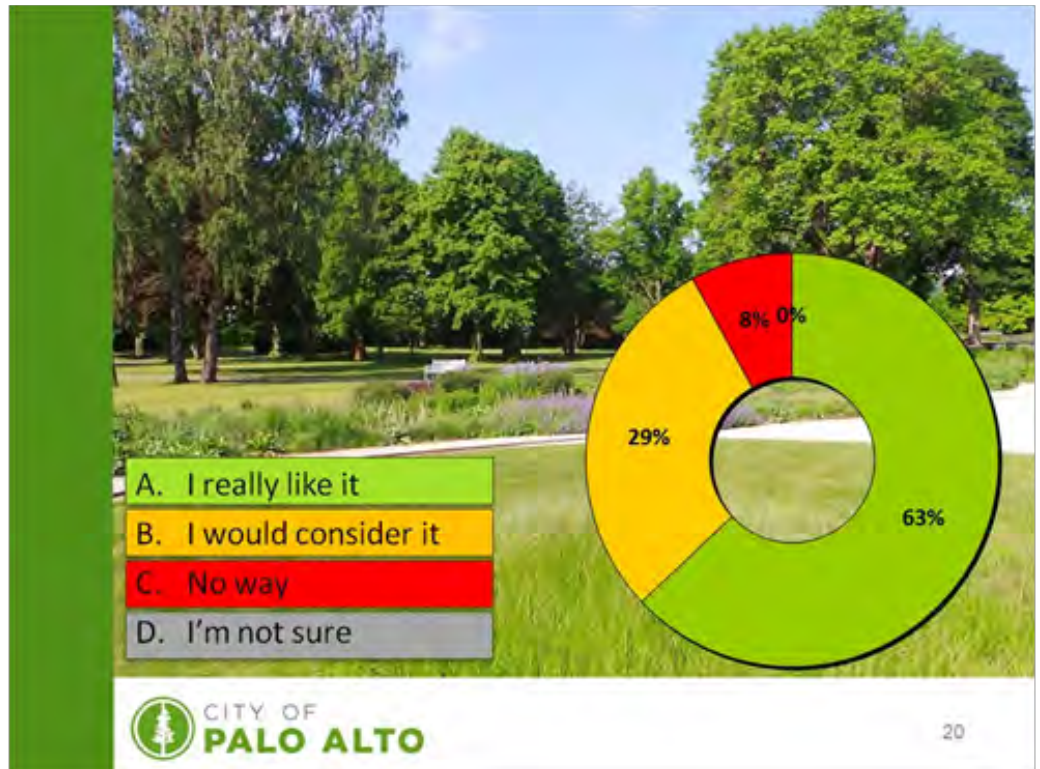
Routes to respondents' closest park (darker lines indicate more intensively-used routes)

COMMUNITY INPUT WORKSHOPS

In fall and winter 2014, the project team conducted three interactive public workshops in different areas of Palo Alto, attended by about 65 community members. Participants took part in a visual preference survey about the character and design of parks using real-time keypad polling. This activity, facilitated in small groups, provided opportunities for in-depth discussion of what features participants would like to protect, preserve, improve or add to Palo Alto. The project team collected polling data, recorded group discussion and collected additional input on comment cards. For example, the image below shows the level of participant support (combined from all three workshops) for a landscape with integrated natural plantings.

ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

Over 1,100 people completed an online survey developed by the project team in close consultation with the PRC. This tool collected data on community priorities and preferences to inform the development of recommendations and actions. The survey was available online and in hard copy, in both English and Spanish, from mid-November to mid-December 2015.



Visual preference survey result from a community input workshop

FOLLOW-UP STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

As the planning process unfolded, the project team identified issues for which additional knowledge from staff and community experts would be beneficial to understanding needs and identifying potential recommendations. Between October 2014 and March 2015, sixteen follow-up stakeholder interviews were conducted to gather additional data and explore issues in depth. The interviewees included City and partner staff, volunteers and community members across a variety of topics:

- Community gardening
- Aquatics
- Cubberley Community Center tenants
- Junior Museum and Zoo
- Palo Alto Art Center
- Children’s Library
- Palo Alto Children’s Theatre
- Middle school athletics
- Palo Alto dog owners
- Avenidas
- Palo Alto Youth Council
- Boost drop-in programming

COMMUNITY PRIORITIZATION CHALLENGE AND WORKSHOP

To obtain community input on how to prioritize enhancements within areas of focus, the project team implemented an online interactive exercise called the Community Prioritization Challenge from August 28, 2015, to February 15, 2016. A total of 731 respondents provided feedback through this activity.

The online exercise was supplemented by an in-person workshop held on February 11, 2016, which was lightly attended (five participants representing different recreation interest groups) but included a rich conversation about priorities. The online exercise was mirrored by a printed display board that listed the twelve areas of focus, on which each participant was asked to place five sticky dots to indicate preferred investments.



For this list, you have \$10 to allocate. The dollars and cents you allocate represent the portion of the available resources you would like directed to a particular area.

You can distribute this money in any way you like, but the sum of your responses cannot exceed the available budget (\$10)

Distributing park activities and experiences across the city	\$	<input type="text" value=".5"/>
Improving and enhancing community center and recreation spaces across the community	\$	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Enhancing comfort and making parks more welcoming	\$	<input type="text" value=".25"/>
Enhancing capacity and quality of sports fields	\$	<input type="text" value=".5"/>
Increasing the variety of things to do in existing parks	\$	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Increasing health and wellness opportunities in parks	\$	<input type="text" value="2"/>
Improving spaces and increased options for off-leash dogs	\$	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Integrating nature into Palo Alto parks	\$	<input type="text" value="2"/>
Improving the accessibility of the full range of park and recreation opportunities	\$	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Offering more of existing programs, classes, events	\$	<input type="text" value=".25"/>
Explore new types of programs, classes, events and activities for all ages and abilities	\$	<input type="text" value=".5"/>
Expanding the system	\$	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Total:		\$ 10

[< PREVIOUS](#)

[NEXT >](#)

Community Prioritization Challenge

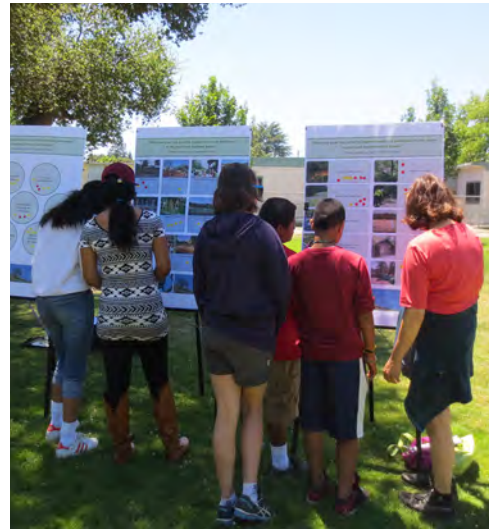
SITE CONCEPTS REVIEW

The project team reached out to the community at the May Fête on May 7, 2016, to review preliminary site concepts, which are illustrations of how the recommendations of this plan could play out across each park and preserve. The site concepts were presented as bubble diagrams, indicating areas within the site and the general type of improvements recommended. Shortly after this initial event, on May 25, a workshop was held to provide another opportunity to comment on the concepts. Approximately thirty people reviewed the concepts at the workshop. Further comments were received from other City of Palo Alto department staff (including Public Safety and Planning) as well as the Parks and Recreation Commission. To expand the opportunity to comment, the project team created and advertised an online comment form that provided the opportunity to provide site-specific feedback on the concepts. Over 200 comments were received through this form. These concepts have been refined and are presented in Chapter 5 of this plan.



PUBLIC COMMENT ON PLAN

The project team created an online feedback form to collect comments from the public on the draft Master Plan. As comments were made, they were logged to track the source of the comment, specific feedback or recommended changes for consideration, and aggregated feedback to identify patterns. Comments were discussed with staff and the PRC to determine appropriate action.



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (PRC)

The planning team engaged the PRC throughout the Master Plan effort, from the initial scope development and consultant selection through every step of the process. This commission's involvement was critical to understanding the full range of issues in the community and in shaping further community engagement.

CITY COUNCIL

An important part of the Master Plan process was City Council involvement. Council members represent Palo Alto residents and are the policy and decision-making body of the City. As an initial step, the project team made a presentation to the City Council and the Park and Recreation Commission in a joint study session. This presentation introduced the goals and objectives of the planning process as well as preliminary plans for community engagement and system analysis. As the planning process progressed, City

Council was provided updates through periodic reports and two study sessions.

Community Engagement Results and Plan Development

The planning team identified patterns and trends that cut across all the engagement activities and results, and crafted the Master Plan Principles described in Chapter 4 to articulate a vision for the future. These principles served as the foundation for the Master Plan. The planning team then developed six Master Plan Goals stating desired outcomes and accompanying policies and programs to serve as a guide for City decision making to improve the parks, trails, natural open space and recreation system.

For more detailed descriptions of each outreach activity and key findings, please see the Technical Supplement on the City website.



APPENDIX D

EXISTING CAPITAL AND OPERATIONS FUNDING SOURCES

THE CITY OF PALO ALTO USES A VARIETY OF FUNDING SOURCES TO SUPPORT PARK, TRAIL, NATURAL OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES. The following pages summarize these existing sources.

General Fund

The General Fund is the pool of unrestricted tax dollars and other revenues that a city uses to pay for most of the services it provides. General Funds are allocated out in the budgeting process, and dollars for park operations must compete with other city needs for limited resources. Palo Alto uses the General Fund as the primary source for operations and programming and also makes a substantial transfer to the Capital Improvement Program each year. Recreation programs generate revenue from user fees, which flow directly into the General Fund, not into the budget for recreation services.

Parkland Dedication Fees

A separate fee is charged at the time land is subdivided for additional development. The parkland dedication fee is authorized under the Quimby Act (California Government Code §66477) allowing cities to require developers set aside land, donate conservation easements or pay fees for park improvements. This fee is calculated based on the maximum land requirement allowed under the act, (5 acres per 1,000 persons), the number of dwelling units and the current value of land. This funding source will be relatively insignificant in the future due to the limited opportunity to subdivide land within Palo Alto. In 2016, the parkland dedication fee fund balance is \$3,214,370.

Development Impact Fees

The City of Palo Alto collects impact fees authorized by the Mitigation Fee Act for both new park system expansion and community centers. These fees are collected at the time building permits are issued for new construction and are based on a measurable impact of additional people to the system. The fees are adjusted annually to account for inflation. The current impact fee amounts are listed in Table D-1.

The amount of the impact fee is based on two variables: the projected growth of the user population resulting from the development and the cost of planned improvements in response to that growth. In 2014, the City revisited the nexus study and projects that form the basis of all of the development impact fees

Table D-1: Current Impact Fees

FEEs: RESIDENTIAL	SINGLE FAMILY	SINGLE FAMILY OVER 3,000 SQUARE FEET	MULTI-FAMILY	MULTI-FAMILY UNDER 900 SQUARE FEET
PARKS	\$11,864	\$17,716	\$7,766	\$3,926
COMMUNITY CENTERS	\$3,075	\$4,605	\$2,024	\$1,021
TOTAL RELEVANT* IMPACT FEES PER HOME	\$14,939	\$22,321	\$9,790	\$4,947

FEEs: NON-RESIDENTIAL	COMMERCIAL	HOTEL/MOTEL	INSTITUTIONAL	INDUSTRIAL
PARKS	\$5.038	\$2.278	\$5.038	\$5.038
COMMUNITY CENTERS	\$0.284	\$0.128	\$0.284	\$0.284
TOTAL RELEVANT* IMPACT FEES PER SQUARE FOOT OF NON-RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION	\$5.32	\$2.41	\$5.32	\$5.32

*The City also collects development impact fees for Public Safety Facilities, General Government Facilities, Housing, Traffic and Public Art.

charged. This study determined that the fees were adequate for current needs but should be revisited following the completion of this Master Plan. In addition to the ongoing collection of impact fees as development continues, Palo Alto currently has a balance in the impact fee funds. In 2016, the park development impact fee fund balance is \$3,946,291 and the community center impact fee fund balance is \$5,727,035, although this balance is mostly committed to improvements that are already in the CIP.

Grants

Both private and public agencies offer a variety of grant programs. Most park and recreation grant funds originate with either the Federal or State government and are limited to funding the acquisition, design and construction of parks, facilities and trails. The active list of grant programs regularly changes, as Federal and State budgets expand and contract, and the application schedule and process must be learned and monitored. Further, most grants require that the local agency match a percentage of the funding with local dollars.

In addition, private and corporate foundations are granting funding for the construction of facilities and the acquisition of lands that further their missions. Some private grant agencies in the health sector are currently funding pilot programs in some areas of the country to improve health outcomes, but for the most part grants are not a sustainable ongoing source of funding for recreation programming. Palo Alto has had some success with utilizing grant funding to expand successful programs, including those at the Junior Museum and Zoo and the Palo Alto Art Center, beyond the borders of the City. This allows these unique programs to reach a larger audience without costing the taxpayers of Palo Alto additional funds.

Public-Private Partnerships

The idea of working in close collaboration with a private entity to enhance park and recreation opportunities is gaining in popularity across the country. The basic approach is for a public agency to enter into a working agreement with a private corporation or non-profit entity to help fund, build and/or operate a public facility. Generally, the three primary incentives that a public agency can offer are free land to place a facility (usually a park or other piece of public land), certain tax advantages and access to public facilities. While the public agency may have to give up certain responsibilities or control, it is one way of developing public facilities at a lower cost.

Palo Alto has had several high-profile successes, most recently with the Magical Bridge Playground, with a fairly unique model of public-private partnership. In this model, the City allows a partner organization to take on the design and construction

process, carving out the project site and leasing the property to the partner for the duration of the project. The City remains involved in oversight and technical assistance and takes possession of the project at completion. Putting the partner organization at the front of the effort has resulted in very successful fundraising and a high-quality and relatively lower-cost process.

Donations

The donations of labor, land or cash by service agencies, private groups or individuals are a popular way to raise money for specific projects. The most effective agencies actively solicit donations both from the general public and through developed relationships with local companies and philanthropists. Friends of the Palo Alto Parks is an established channel for tax-deductible donations that can be directed to specific projects or to park improvements in general. The current level of donations has averaged approximately \$15,000 per year. Labor hours contributed by volunteers are another type of donation that benefits the City's parks and open space preserves. In Palo Alto's history, there have been significant donations, such as Lucie Stern Center.

Funding Gap

Palo Alto currently has more options for funding capital projects than it does for funding that can fund the operation, maintenance and programming of the system. The City should sustain a sufficient investment to maintain its existing facilities, amenities and programs. Future funding options should address this gap.