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**MINUTES  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
February 23, 2016  
CITY HALL  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, California**

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

15 **Commissioners Absent:** Jim Cowie, Anne Cribbs

16 **Others Present:** Eric Filseth

17 **Staff Present:** Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus, Peter Jensen, Kristen  
18 O'Kane

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

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21 **II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

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23 Chair Lauing: Are there any agenda changes, requests, deletions, batting orders, anything  
24 like that?

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26 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

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28 Chair Lauing: Oral communications, where the public can address this body on any issue  
29 not necessarily related to the agenda. So far I have one speaker card. David Carnahan.

30  
31 David Carnahan: Thank you, Chair Lauing and Commissioners. As you know, when  
32 you see me here, it means the City is conducting a recruitment for Boards and  
33 Commissions. This spring, we're looking to fill Commission roles on three different  
34 Commissions. These are great opportunities for members of the community to give back  
35 and give their expertise, to share and make Palo Alto an even better place than it already  
36 is. Right now, we're looking to fill two positions on the Human Relations Commission,  
37 two positions on the Library Advisory Commission, and three on the Utilities Advisory  
38 Commission. All of these are three-year terms that will end on May 31, 2019.



1 Applications are due March 18th at 5:00 p.m. to the City Clerk's office, or they can be  
2 emailed to me. We have flyers and applications in the Chambers. There's a couple of  
3 specific membership requirements on the different Commissions. For the Human  
4 Relations Commission, you just need to be a Palo Alto resident; Library Advisory  
5 Commission, a Palo Alto resident and you must show a demonstrated interest in public  
6 library matters. Don't really know what that means, but I would anticipate that applying  
7 to serve on the Commission almost would fill that role. The Utilities Advisory  
8 Commissioners, six of them must be Palo Alto residents, and all of them must be either  
9 Utilities customers or authorized representatives of a Utilities customer. The reason I  
10 come and speak at Board and Commission meetings is because Commissioners and  
11 members of the public that attend, you all are so much more deeply connected to the  
12 community than the Clerk's office. We really hope that you can spread the word through  
13 the community to people you know that would be good for these roles. Again, it's two  
14 terms on the Human Relations Commission, two on the Library Advisory Commission,  
15 and three on the Utilities Advisory Commission. Thank you very much.

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17 Chair Lauing: Thank you, David.

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19 **IV. BUSINESS:**

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21 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the January 26, 2016 Parks and Recreation**  
22 **Commission meeting.**

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24 The draft January 26, 2016 Minutes as amended were approved unanimously.

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26 **2. Approval of Draft Minutes from the February 5, 2016 Special Retreat**  
27 **Meeting.**

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29 After discussion, this item was continued to the March 2016 meeting.

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31 **3. Introduction of new Executive Director of Project Safety Net, Mary Gloner**

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33 Chair Lauing: The next item on the meeting, Kristen is going to introduce the new  
34 Executive Director of Project Safety Net.

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36 Kristen O'Kane: Actually, it's Rob that's going to introduce Ms. Gloner.

37  
38 Chair Lauing: Rob, congratulations.

39  
40 Rob de Geus: Yeah. You're going to sit right here, Mary, so come on up. It's my  
41 pleasure to introduce Mary Gloner, right here, as the new PSN, Project Safety Net,  
42 Executive Director. She's been here a month. Is that right? About a month. We did an

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1 extensive search, and we had interviews with many community members, with Dr. Max  
2 McGee, City Manager Jim Keene, alumni students and current students. We really put  
3 her through quite the process, and she emerged as the candidate. I have to say, I'm just  
4 thrilled. It's such an important topic and collaborative. We need someone of Mary's  
5 caliber. We're thrilled to have her. She has a Master's Degree in health education, and  
6 she has an MBA as well. She's super organized, and she has a great sense of humor, but  
7 she's also tenacious and wants to really make a difference in the world. Just thrilled to  
8 have her here. She's going to do a short little presentation and give you a sense of what's  
9 going to happen with Project Safety Net this year.

10  
11 Mary Gloner: Thank you, Rob. Thank you, Chairman and Commissioners, for having  
12 me here. Hopefully you're quite familiar with Project Safety Net already, and this will be  
13 your opportunity to see if I learned really well this past month. Just to get us all on the  
14 same page, it's always a good reminder to know what our mission is. As you all know,  
15 this was first launched in response to the first clusters of youth suicides back in 2009. If  
16 you want to learn more of what has happened since then, there's our website. I know  
17 Kristen will be able to share these slides with the Commission. It's to develop and  
18 implement an effective, comprehensive, community-based mental health plan for overall  
19 youth well-being in Palo Alto. Frankly, that's been happening. It's just the people who  
20 have been—what I've learned and I've seen as I was preparing to embark in this position  
21 and what I've discovered in the past month, it's happening on the ground. It's just where  
22 we are is wanting to do a better role in coordinating that and so forth. I'll share a little bit.  
23 As I have shared with the members, people I've talked to, the youth and so forth, even  
24 though youth suicide is not one of the number one health issues in our community,  
25 because it's so emotionally charged, just one death is just too much. What I hope to do in  
26 my time with you, I don't think it'll take the full 30 minutes. Probably most of it will be  
27 your questions or any comments. It's just a month in review, kind of remind all of us  
28 what our focus—I say ours, the collaborative's focus for the first year. Do a Collective  
29 Impact 101, because the work that we need to do has to be within a framework and focus  
30 to really help us kind of reach our mission. Then just some closing. A lot of my past  
31 month has been, like all of us who transition to new roles, is about learning, networking  
32 and acting. In the learning role, I'm getting in part of that new employment orientation  
33 that Palo Alto has launched. I think it's a nice model that other government organizations  
34 would hopefully implement. Most importantly, orientation from Rob and Minka van der  
35 Zwaag who were really key to keeping the momentum of the collaborative during the  
36 transition of executive directors. Also, doing some training. I had my first formal  
37 training actually just an hour ago with the QPR, question, persuading, and refer. I found  
38 it a nice, accessible training for the community at large. It doesn't matter your expertise  
39 and mental health, just to get really comfort with the topic and just being able to access  
40 the language. Then Project Safety Net leadership team, even though there have been  
41 team members, leadership has been a transition out. I will continue to network, and that's  
42 the second part. What they've been primarily sharing with me is a lot of the institutional



1 knowledge, sort of their hopes and aspirations from their specific expertise, and really  
2 sharing not only the rewards but the challenges, which is being part of a small, tight-knit  
3 community like Palo Alto. I kind of use the analogy of a family. There's no room for  
4 hiding which is important for this issue. As I've shared with Rob, I said if there's silence  
5 or complacency, that's where I would worry. Discourse I always feel is very important in  
6 this type of work, especially working with youth. Networking. This is part of this also. I  
7 pretty much have been meeting, like I said, community members who have been part of  
8 youth suicide prevention as well as youth well-being and just also starting to explore with  
9 the other City departments. We're fortunate that we're all kind of like in the same  
10 department, Community Services, so it makes collaboration easier about how do we  
11 engage youth and services so that the youth feel that there's not redundancy, but they're  
12 actually being heard. Finally, what you probably saw a lot in the media is acting. One  
13 big thing is the Epi-Aid investigation and really partnering closely with the Santa Clara  
14 County Public Health Department. Really it's with the School District. It's with the City  
15 of Palo Alto. It's with leadership who also include some of the community members and  
16 making sure that this Epi-Aid investigation is our investigation. It's really helping us to  
17 really understand better why is youth suicide, the cluster issue happening here. Really it's  
18 about strengthening our programs and really focusing on how I see it as being a leader for  
19 other cities and communities that may not have the capacity or resources or just such  
20 engagement.

21  
22 Commissioner Reckdahl: What is Epi –Aid?

23  
24 Ms. Gloner: Epi-Aid. Thank you, that's good. The Centers for Disease Control and  
25 Prevention have come to our community through our invitation. After the second cluster  
26 of youth suicides occurred in 2014-15 and when the School District and City of Palo Alto  
27 Project Safety Net leaders had a discussion and discovered when the CDC went to  
28 Fairfax County, Virginia, to do a study there to understand their youth suicides, they  
29 thought it would be a wonderful opportunity to do it here as well. That call went out in  
30 March, and then around winter, around the same time I was being interviewed, it was part  
31 of the conversation. The planning had started. In January, we were all working on  
32 coordinating. The CDC along with the Substance Abuse Mental Health Service  
33 Administration—it's another arm in our Federal government that focuses on that issue.  
34 There's five members who are here reviewing data that's collected through the County as  
35 well as through the School District. In the evening as well as the weekends, they are  
36 having community meetings with various key individuals and organizations that  
37 intimately work with youth suicide prevention or youth well-being or know it firsthand.  
38 These community meetings have been organized with City of Palo Alto, with the School  
39 District, the Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Department as well as Project Safety  
40 Net. There's been a lot of press on that. That was one way to just throw me in.

41  
42 Mr. de Geus: We sure did.

1  
2 Ms. Gloner: I feel like, again, the work that I've done in other communities and so forth  
3 really I felt prepared me for this, like I keep saying. It just might seem like cheesy  
4 (inaudible), but I do feel at home. I'm blessed and honored that I was selected. I just  
5 want to continue to do that work for the community. Second is administration, working  
6 with personnel, budget, all that. We're also going to have a new center, so dealing—it's  
7 about maybe this size. It will be our actual physical home. As a side commentary,  
8 having been in nonprofit for like 20 years, I feel such a luxury and blessed with all these  
9 resources that really help us do our important mission work. As you know, if you serve  
10 also on nonprofit boards, sometimes resources get in the way of getting into doing that.  
11 More importantly is the year one work plan development. I'll go into that. Any questions  
12 about the month in review?

13  
14 Mr. de Geus: I'll just add, Mary, the Epi-Aid epidemiology study the CDC is doing with  
15 the County is really important. It's really important work that's happening. What we  
16 hope we'll get from that is a report with recommendations that will affirm, support or  
17 give us sharper focus on the prevention or intervention that we're doing as a community,  
18 as a City and as a school and as parents. They're fairly in-depth studies and have  
19 significant outcomes that we hope will help with our work. There will be an initial report  
20 that we'll get a couple of months after they leave and then a more extensive report  
21 approximately a year later or within a year.

22  
23 Vice Chair Knopper: How long are they here?

24  
25 Mr. de Geus: They're here for two weeks, and this is the second week. They have, as  
26 Mary said, eight different—I think it's eight—community meetings with people that are  
27 working in the field. They have a meeting with mental health professionals, meeting with  
28 School District staff, City representatives and a variety of others.

29  
30 Ms. Gloner: Any more questions? There will still be a lot more time if you want to  
31 backtrack. Here's five primary focus for this next year. There's already a leadership, but  
32 it's really to establish it more formally. That's all part of looking at really the  
33 infrastructure and strengthening it. As I had shared when I was being interviewed and in  
34 conversations, the Project Safety Net came in response and in reaction, but then they  
35 realized that youth well-being is a lifelong process and that this is something maybe we  
36 need to continue as a collaborative. In light of how there continues to be—as the work  
37 continued, there was the clear understanding that this is something that needs to be sort of  
38 having, like I said, bricks and mortar, meaning really having it more established and  
39 structured. That was something that the collaborative as a whole all agreed upon. I'm  
40 really coming in and helping facilitate and forward a vision that the various leaders and  
41 community members had demanded as well as advised on. The third one, this is a primer  
42 for us in community health education. We always say start with the community. It's not



1 the community geographically. In this case, the community would be the youth. Yes,  
2 many of the leaders and organizations are wonderful proxies; their heart is in a good  
3 place. It can never take the place of really understanding and listening and engaging the  
4 youth to be part of the solution. They've been actively involved, but I think this is also an  
5 opportunity when you go through a change in management to really practice what you  
6 preach. As I mentioned, a fourth component is really after a year developing some  
7 recommendations, really evaluating Project Safety Net, what does it take to be its own  
8 standalone nonprofit or is it going to be best suited for the community to be nested in  
9 another organization. How to do that is really through this Collective Impact model  
10 which I will share a little bit more. It's really developing that roadmap. Whether you call  
11 it a roadmap, strategic plan, or logic model, it's really helping guide us. As I had shared  
12 with Rob and others, it's like all the planning activities that's been done, it's there and  
13 maybe it just required having a fresh set of eyes to help move it forward. I was really  
14 impressed of all the sort of visionary and what kind of structure and how to mobilize all  
15 the different work. Yes, there's still gaps, but by using the Collective Impact model, it  
16 can sort of end hopefully with the CDC Epi-Aid report, can really give us some tools to  
17 make it really clear what are we doing and what needs to be available for the community  
18 at the individual level, at the group level which is whether it's the family or one's peer, at  
19 the community level or even at policy. That's really what I also said I hoped to bring in is  
20 bring in that public health perspective. Even though it's like looking at mental health, any  
21 critical health issue, in order to be sustainable, successful and really to address it for the  
22 long term, you need to look at multiple levels with multiple partners and disciplines. Any  
23 questions about the focus?  
24

25 Chair Lauing: Yeah, I've got a question.

26  
27 Ms. Gloner: Yes, sir.

28  
29 Chair Lauing: On the first on there, in terms of establishing the executive board, what  
30 work is there to be done at this point? Additions or deletions or ...  
31

32 Mr. de Geus: I'm going to add a little bit here. Mary's still really new, so we're still  
33 working on some stuff. The Council's heard about this, because we've talked about this at  
34 Council meetings and Policy and Services. The idea is to have a higher-level executive  
35 board of some of the really senior staff, even CEO-level staff, from Lucile Packard  
36 Children's Hospital, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, the School District, the City, maybe  
37 even Sutter Health and a couple of others, to support the Project Safety Net work and be  
38 sort of a guiding voice. Not that they would meet monthly, but they would meet a couple  
39 of times a year and give direction on sort of the high-level vision and initiatives that we're  
40 pursuing. In addition to that, the hope is that they would also contribute to supporting the  
41 collaborative. Up until now, the City of Palo Alto has been really the backbone agency  
42 that's provided the financial support to have someone like Mary to work with the

1 collaborative partners to keep them together and collaborating, which is a lot of work.  
2 That doesn't happen on its own. We think and we hope those bigger institutions will  
3 believe in what we're doing and will want to contribute and support it. It's another level  
4 of leadership in addition to the leadership team that's sort of more on the ground  
5 supporting the work.  
6

7 Ms. Gloner: The analogy would be like a typical nonprofit. You have your board of  
8 directors who deal with governance and pretty much are the fundraisers for that  
9 organization. Then you have your secondary which can sometimes be advisory and so  
10 forth. The name or the title can be switched, but it's really moving towards a structure  
11 that kind of models a typical nonprofit of how they run and effectually sustain. I think  
12 the way that the Collective Impact, I believe, will actually make it more participatory  
13 especially in a small community like Palo Alto an opportunity for anyone to engage at  
14 different levels.  
15

16 Commissioner Reckdahl: I have a question about the youth voice. How active are the  
17 youth in Project Safety Net? Quite often peers have more influence on teenagers than  
18 adults do.  
19

20 Ms. Gloner: Rob can share a little bit more history, but in the last month, I mean the  
21 whole process, they were engaged in actually recruiting. They were part of the interview  
22 panel. They were actually at the end, which is nice because it's sort of like—the way I  
23 saw it and the way that you guys presented it, they are the final endorsement. That's a lot  
24 of symbolism there.  
25

26 Commissioner Reckdahl: They're helping drive what the Project Safety Net does?  
27

28 Ms. Gloner: At this time, I'm still researching it to see how much engagement and  
29 involvement. I do know in my experience so far, they were at the collaborative meetings.  
30 In regards to the CDC Epi-Aid, we're all working to try to engage youth and making sure  
31 their input is given, but not in a way that's redundant, where they could say, "We've  
32 shared that." We're going to be working with them as well. I do know they work very  
33 closely more in the frontline in really addressing and raising awareness about mental  
34 health issues, how to promote peer. That gets filtered up. If you're asking if like shaping  
35 strategic direction and vision, that's something I still need to research on. How many of  
36 you have heard about the Collective Impact 101 outside of the City of Palo Alto or  
37 Project Safety Net or have you? Just a little bit of history. It was first reported by a  
38 couple of individuals from FSG. That group is a consulting group based in Boston,  
39 Massachusetts. It stands for Foundation Strategy Group. Actually one of the individuals  
40 was a leader in philanthropy. The other one was a leader in management consulting,  
41 being at Harvard. These two authors were the leaders within FSG, because FSG was  
42 founded like in 2000, so that's almost 16 years ago. Now, they're in international

1 consulting, but really looking at social capacity building, really how to—I think they  
2 support a lot of early days like philanthropy and driving foundation initiatives. In 2011,  
3 Kania and Kramer identified what makes a collaborative or a partnership successful.  
4 Since then this model, Collective Impact, has been used rallying around issues such as  
5 poverty, homelessness, but also like diabetes and obesity and so forth. There are five  
6 core areas. It does seem very intuitive. One is having a common agenda. As you know,  
7 every individual organization have different agendas or backgrounds. It's important to  
8 have a shared understanding. Everything is about shared. Not only understanding  
9 agenda, but how to solve the issues that are identified and coming to an agreement. It  
10 takes time especially when issues are so emotionally charged like suicide. It's not  
11 patience. If people put their eye out on the long term, then this is really valuable in  
12 capacity building. Sometimes what I've seen in the nonprofit world, if you've also served  
13 on boards or volunteered, it's like we get so caught up in the reactionary and then the  
14 same issues keep happening and challenges. I think that's one core component. The  
15 second one is about shared measurements. It's not just simply we should all just put our  
16 data together in some repository. It's really agreeing on what kind of data do we need to  
17 collect and who's collecting in a way that's helping define what kind of alignment is with  
18 the mission, but also that it keeps people accountable to one another. I always looked and  
19 I learned that data is empowering rather than punitive. I think it's just messaging  
20 especially when it's participatory. It doesn't seem there's like an upper echelon that only  
21 if you have a PhD or you're a biostatistician. In the work I've done, it's like taking that  
22 information to the community so that they feel powered and be able to articulate and use  
23 it. Next one is about mutually reinforcing activities, kind of similar. It's like how do we  
24 (inaudible) individual level, interventions that might focus on the youth or maybe the  
25 parent or how about interventions that look at the family or peer groups or at the  
26 community with looking at schools or outside of school services and even looking at the  
27 policies that maybe the School Board or the City of Palo Alto or the funders. This one  
28 also is challenging too because it's like there's so many activities that can be done. I think  
29 the key with the Collective Impact is not about having a whole inventory, but being very  
30 strategic in identifying those core buckets. Continuous communication, another word  
31 would be like transparency, especially in a sensitive issue. Make sure that it doesn't seem  
32 that one group or organization or individual has more information than the other. It's  
33 really the other part of continuous communication is having that power that can be frank  
34 and have candor and have space to voice. I think this is where raising youth voice will be  
35 critical. Finally, thanks to City of Palo Alto, because they believed that this issue was so  
36 important that they said they're going to invest. As you know, this is a multi-sector issue,  
37 and there really needs to be investment in all parts. It's kind of like if you took a training  
38 class, even though it's free, but if you give \$1, you sort of feel committed to take that  
39 class because you invested in it and you don't take it for granted. The backbone support  
40 is really making sure you have staff and specific skills so that the work that the  
41 collaborative is doing is supportive towards that vision. As you know being on a  
42 Commission, you guys are all volunteer. Without the administrative staff, can you



1 imagine you all have to take the minutes and try to coordinate everyone. Sometimes we  
2 take that for granted, but that helps you to effectively use your time to make that high-  
3 powered decisions. Any questions about Collective Impact 101?  
4

5 Commissioner Reckdahl: One of the things that strikes me about this is there's a lot of  
6 agreement. Almost every bullet has something about collaboration or agreement. I can  
7 see that this is very good in that if you can't agree on the basics, you're not going to agree  
8 on the actions. The first thing you have to do before you can talk about actions is get the  
9 ground rules set. This looks good.  
10

11 Ms. Cloner: I've always learned that it's important to have that framework. I like to learn  
12 too. I will be frank. I had not heard about Collective Impact, but again I was more on the  
13 frontline. I realized whether you call it Collective Impact, community organizing, health  
14 belief model, they all have similar components, and it's all about achieving towards that  
15 vision. What's nice about this one, because it's really about focusing. It's about inter-  
16 relations and achieving your mission and goal. Any other comments? For closing, thank  
17 you for planning a place for us. The public health person in me too says that if there isn't  
18 a place that people can feel safe to walk and exercise, then that's also a challenge and an  
19 impact to health. If you ever want to kind of broaden horizons and want to learn more  
20 about Project Safety Net, we do have monthly collaborative meetings. Our next one is  
21 actually tomorrow, right before the State of the City. If you plan to be there, if you want  
22 to come a little bit early, you can jump in, be a little bit intimate. That's your opportunity  
23 to kind of see some of the—what we want to do is highlight some of the youth programs,  
24 highlight some of the partners who are doing this work, get a little bit of update of what  
25 we're doing collaboratively. There will be the CDC Epi-Aid. There will be someone  
26 from Santa Clara County Public Health Department, and just networking. If you ever  
27 have the opportunity, it's in Mitchell Park which is one of the—I believe you guys  
28 approved that. Thank you for that. I remember when I was a little kid, when we'd go to  
29 Mitchell Park, I was like, "Wow, this place is so beautiful" (inaudible) understanding  
30 Commissions myself, your real focus is on policies and setting and advising the City  
31 Council. One of my asks and hope is that when you are looking at your Master Plans or  
32 when any other policy issue comes, if you could think about how this will benefit the  
33 youth in addressing their youth well-being. You may not realize it directly, like how is  
34 this suicide prevention. The focus is happy youth, happy family, happy adult. It just  
35 can't help but have a positive outcome. That was a sign that says your time is over. I do  
36 want to acknowledge, which is important, Rob and Brenda. Just so you can understand a  
37 little bit about the Project Safety Net, certainly there's the leadership. Rob representing  
38 the City of Palo Alto because they're a key partner, and then Brenda Carrillo who's with  
39 the Palo Alto Unified School District are Co-Chairs. Also, there's Tanya Schornack  
40 who's our specialist and myself. You can see how small, but that's because most of the  
41 work is with the community. Minka, even though she's transitioning out so she can  
42 address other important issues like homelessness and child daycare and so forth, she's my



1 informal advisor. She's helped me with the transition because she knows this intimately.  
2 Then of course Kristen helped me get all organized with office space and time to educate  
3 you on Project Safety Net and to learn a little bit about me. That's it.  
4

5 Mr. de Geus: Very good. Thank you, Mary.  
6

7 Chair Lauing: Thank you, Mary.  
8

9 Ms. Gloner: That's my contact information too, but you'll get that later on.  
10

11 Mr. de Geus: Questions?  
12

13 Commissioner Moss: I see then that we're going to be able to help you most in some of  
14 the mutual reinforced activities and also some of the backbone support. As far as  
15 engaging youth in healthy ways, in the parks you have the sports and you have the  
16 afterschool programs and you have the summer camps, and you're having the  
17 community/family events. I'd love to see more of those. You have open space and  
18 nature which kids should be using more. If there's any way that we can help to expand  
19 those programs or at least don't let them deteriorate, because there are more kids and  
20 more people than ever before in the City. We have to make sure that what we have will  
21 not deteriorate. Is there anything else that you want us to focus on?  
22

23 Ms. Gloner: I think just knowing and having that awareness. Really your role is to  
24 advise the City Council. You're appointed by the Council to represent the constituents of  
25 your respective districts in addressing this stuff. I see it's a partnership that through your  
26 leadership to make—not to forget the other populations, but of course I'm here on behalf  
27 of Project Safety Net. If you're mindful about how this will impact the youth and their  
28 well-being in whatever decisions you make, and also sometimes if you're proactively  
29 thinking about developing a new policy or if the community presents a policy, just having  
30 youth well-being in your back, I feel that's an accomplishment in itself.  
31

32 Chair Lauing: Thank you very much. You're going to be very.  
33

34 Commissioner Reckdahl: I have one last question. I'm not sure if this is for Rob or for  
35 you. The Teen Center and Project Safety Net, is there any interaction between those  
36 two?  
37

38 Mr. de Geus: Yeah. We often meet at Mitchell Park is one thing. We have a teen  
39 advisory group that meets there and the Palo Alto Youth Council. They're involved in  
40 Project Safety Net and help advise some of the direction of Project Safety Net. The Teen  
41 Center is interesting because in the past it's always been occupied mostly by middle  
42 school students. Now, we have a little additional funding, and we're doing more late

1 evening activities just for high school students. We have Friday nights at the Drop, it's  
2 called, and there's some Saturday time and Sunday time too. It's starting to get fomented,  
3 so we get more and more teens participating which is really great. Lacey Kortsen runs  
4 that community center. Amal Aziz is the Teen Coordinator. Mary is getting to know  
5 those staff and the students that are there. We're building that program. We're a year in  
6 right now.

7  
8 Ms. Gloner: One of the priorities is to meet with Lacey and Amal to find out how we can  
9 have more synergy. Because you already have a captured audience of engaged youth, my  
10 understanding is like when the youth of this community says, "I want to go and  
11 congregate somewhere," right away it's Mitchell Park Community Center. I believe it's  
12 not only youth who go to the schools here, it's the youth who live here. They go to  
13 schools other places as well. That's one I'm like really itching to do. I want to sit down  
14 and see how we can support, because they're working already with that youth and just  
15 finding a way to say that there's another opportunity for them.

16  
17 Commissioner Hetterly: I had a quick comment about the youth voice. I think also that's  
18 hugely important. I'm curious how the Project Safety Net manages the separation  
19 between the youth leaders, the Teen Advisory Committee, the Youth Council, who are  
20 really engaged and active, who maybe don't have relationships with the rest of the kids.  
21 How can you help them bridge that gap in representing the voices of the whole student  
22 community? I think that's something that's important to figure out. Maybe you've  
23 already figured it out and you're doing it.

24  
25 Ms. Gloner: You raising that point is very important. You're not the only one who has  
26 identified that. I did see a model—I see hope; I always look at hope and possibilities. I  
27 asked how they recruited for the student panel. They were actually alum as well, some of  
28 the youth who were here during the clusters and who are still engaged. There were some  
29 student leaders. I asked, "What brought you here at the table?" There were some who  
30 said, "I heard there's going to be interviews, and I was just curious to find out who this  
31 person was going to be." That shows me hope that there's people who want—they felt  
32 safe or that they were like, "It's okay for me to show up." I think that was the individual  
33 who got interviewed for that ... (inaudible) challenge with it. The article that just got  
34 released. I don't know. Do you want to share a little bit more about how they were  
35 recruited?

36  
37 Mr. de Geus: Generally, just trying to hear youth voice. There's 4,000 high school  
38 students or something, and that doesn't include the private schools. As we've talked  
39 about it, is try and create as many opportunities in as many different ways for teens to be  
40 able to speak their voice whether it's through the arts or through some of these teen  
41 leadership groups or other club programs. Some of the programs at the school are really  
42 interesting. One was called Sources of Strength which looks at teen leaders in different

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1 parts of the community on school campus, either the sports people, the dance people, all  
2 the different. They have formed with the support of Dr. Joshi and others with Project  
3 Safety Net a club called Sources of Strength, these bridge teens that then connect with  
4 other teens. It's all about hope and resiliency and these types of things. The main answer  
5 to that is, I think, we—we definitely do this at the Teen Center—is just create lots of  
6 opportunity to bring teens in under different circumstances, under different interests and  
7 create authentic relationships with those clubs.  
8

9 Ms. Gloner: It's a challenge, but then I also say it's less of challenge if this was a bigger  
10 geographic region. Like I said, it's like just finding a different avenue. You're right.  
11 Most of the people who actively engage have no problem. It's the ones who don't have  
12 socialized groups. It's also talking to them and not making suppositions. That's one of  
13 the questions I want to learn more about how can we engage more directly from them, the  
14 youth.  
15

16 Mr. de Geus: One thing we've definitely learned is you can't try and create a group that's  
17 representative of all the different interests. The kids don't want to go. The Teen Arts  
18 Council, they want to be Teen Arts Council; they want to be at the theatre. We have to  
19 go them, and we have to go to that place and talk to those kids. Whether (inaudible) kids  
20 or the Palo Alto Youth Council, a whole different set of kids. We've tried that before, to  
21 have a really diverse group of teens. It just doesn't work that. Realizing that is an  
22 important thing. We've got to get out, and we do get out in many different ways.  
23

24 Ms. Gloner: Through the collaborative, those organizations and individuals by proxy,  
25 they're that connection to the youth too. It's not going to take the same as if we heard  
26 from them directly.  
27

28 Mr. de Geus: I think that's an important point, though, Mary. When we do meet, they are  
29 adults, but they're adults that are working directly with youth. We have the leaders of  
30 Adolescent Counseling Services that are on campus, that are talking to teens all the time.  
31 They're informing the rest of us on what they're hearing. That helps us do better at the  
32 Teen Center or it helps the Y do better. The Y has this mentoring program for at-risk  
33 youth. That individual is part of the Project Safety Net work, and he comes with the  
34 perspective that he's directly from the youth. I don't think we can just rely on that and not  
35 also just have the teens there. That is an important part of understanding what's  
36 happening with teens. Mary, one of the first things she sort of instituted was—what was  
37 it called or what did we call it? Youth in Action. It's not adults sharing what teens are  
38 doing, but it's teens actually up there presenting. What was the one they did last month?  
39 It was decrease the stigma around ...  
40

41 Ms. Gloner: It was something like—I can't remember. It was like just being more  
42 comfortable talking about mental health.



1  
2 Mr. de Geus: Be the change. They did a really good job. We can send you some links to  
3 the Epi-Aid study, because we have a page on the Project Safety Net website, so you can  
4 read about that and Collective Impact if you're interested in more about that particular  
5 model.

6  
7 Ms. Gloner: Go to that website. If you can't find it, then you'll have my contact  
8 information.

9  
10 Chair Lauing: Thank you.

11  
12 Ms. Gloner: Thank you so much.

13  
14 **4. Update on the Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Facilities Master**  
15 **Plan**

16  
17 Chair Lauing: The next item on our agenda is an update on Parks, Trails, Open Space  
18 and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. I think Peter is going to lead that with a lot of  
19 collaboration from others.

20  
21 Rob de Geus: That's a huge collaborative effort. We had a fantastic PowerPoint  
22 prepared for you all, and then all of a sudden it stopped working. We might have to look  
23 at the paperwork. Just a thank you to the staff, Kristen, Peter, and Daren, continuing to  
24 move us along. Kristen is going to lead the presentation today. I know we had a couple  
25 of community meetings, the community stakeholder meeting.

26  
27 Chair Lauing: I was going to ask for a commentary on that. Can that come in first?

28  
29 Kristen O'Kane: Sure. We had two meetings this month. One was a community meeting  
30 on February 11th. The purpose of that meeting was to go through a process. [The  
31 Commission took a break.] I'm going to give just a brief summary of the two meetings  
32 we had. The first was February 11th. That was a community meeting, and the purpose of  
33 that was to go through the same process that the prioritization challenge went through  
34 online, the challenge survey. I have to admit that we did not have a large turnout. We  
35 had five people from the community attend. We think that's probably a result of the  
36 people that were going to do the survey already did it. We did get over 700 respondents  
37 to the survey, people who filled out the survey in its entirety. We still went through and,  
38 I think, had a really good discussion and went through a ranking process. We did have a  
39 second meeting on last Thursday, February 18th, and that's a stakeholder meeting. We  
40 had a really good turnout for the stakeholder meeting, a really good discussion. They  
41 received a presentation similar to the one you're receiving tonight. We received some

1 really good feedback. I also want to thank Commissioners Moss and Reckdahl for  
2 attending that meeting as well.

3  
4 Chair Lauing: About how many people were at that one?

5  
6 Ms. O'Kane: Would you say 16?

7  
8 Peter Jensen: I think sixteen came.

9  
10 Ms. O'Kane: Sixteen.

11  
12 Mr. Jensen: The stakeholder group is 22 people. I emailed about 40 people. It's usually  
13 two or three people that represent each group. Most of the groups were represented at the  
14 meeting which, for our stakeholder group, has been the norm for the two meetings before.  
15 They're definitely really engaged in the process and do provide a lot of good feedback in  
16 that respect. I would say too that the community meeting was interesting. Even though  
17 there was five people there, it was a microcosm of our conversations for the Parks Master  
18 Plan. There was a sports field representative there, a dog park representative there. We  
19 discussed restrooms. We discussed community gardens. We hit all the key topics that  
20 we've discussed pretty much every time with this. It was an interesting conversation.  
21 Because the reps of those were there, they got to hear each other's pros and cons against  
22 the other ones, which I thought was good for the fields and the dog use, to have the  
23 conversation and hear what the other ones had to say. Even though it was a low turnout, I  
24 think it was a constructive conversation. I do wish there was more there. We did send it  
25 out. I would say a minimum of 15,000 people got the notice of the meeting. I know  
26 when it goes out to our CSD list that it's a list of 12,000. I also sent it to every  
27 neighborhood association rep to send out as well as the stakeholders to send out. I can't  
28 judge on how many they send out, but I'm sure it was another few thousand people  
29 probably. We did get 730 responses which was very good. The interesting part about the  
30 responses in that respect is that it appears that when someone started to do the survey that  
31 they actually went from the beginning to the end. There was very few that they just  
32 started and did like the first section and then stopped. Most of the 731 responses were all  
33 full responses, and then there were 100 or so that had started and didn't get to the end.  
34 Everyone pretty much that did start to do it did the whole thing. That was promising.  
35 We do have a lot to discuss tonight, so we will get into that. Because of the conversation,  
36 there are a few things to discuss. Going through our normal slides, we always look at this  
37 one just for the Plan purpose. That's to guide decision making for future development of  
38 the parks, trails, natural open spaces, and recreation system. That's why we're trying to  
39 put the Master Plan together. We're going to first look at defining the project terminology  
40 and look at definitions, coming to that hierarchy of the Master Plan itself, and have a  
41 discussion about that. We're going to review the proposed draft goals. There's been  
42 some revisions to that. We're going to have a discussion and talk about some key policy

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1 questions that are still unresolved and go through those. We can also talk about other  
2 policies as we go through that. The list of policies though is fairly long. In terms of  
3 timing, we want to focus on the ones that we have, and then we can have a further  
4 discussion on that. I would say that for the policies and the goals that we do want to  
5 continue the discussion. We're not here to decide on what they are tonight. We're here to  
6 continue the discussion of what those are and continue to build and revise as necessary.  
7 If we have some time permitting, we will look at some concept maps which I did pass out  
8 earlier, that we started to pass out. The survey, preliminary results of the actual online  
9 survey which are really preliminary because it just closed a few days ago. These are just  
10 the raw data numbers of how many people and then starting to rank which ones came out  
11 higher and which ones lower. Hopefully we'll get to that point. To start our conversation  
12 off tonight, you do have a printout of this. If it's hard to see up there, hopefully it's a little  
13 bit easier to see on the paper that was handed out. It is the definitions of the principles,  
14 goals, policies, projects and programs. I think there was a request by the ad hoc and  
15 members of the Commission to better define these terms so we all have a better  
16 understanding and grasp of what they mean. The project team has started to put some of  
17 those together. I believe the policy definition was in your package as far as the  
18 Attachment B goes. I went through the policies, but the principles, goals, project or  
19 programs are new. We're kind of revealing these definitions tonight and hopefully taking  
20 some comment and questions about them. Of course, when we start with the framework  
21 itself, we start with the principles. The definition attached to that is the fundamental  
22 basis that describes a desire to state a preferred direction. Collectively the principles  
23 articulate Palo Alto community's vision for future parks, trails, natural open space and  
24 recreation system. The second one of the goals is a broad statement of direction  
25 describing the desire in state. Those are qualitative in nature and collectively should  
26 achieve the system envisioned by the principles. That leads us then to the policies which  
27 we're working on, which is a course of action that provides clear guidance regarding  
28 recreation program provisions, park maintenance and operations or future renovations  
29 and capital improvement needs for parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities. The  
30 definition for projects is the capital improvement or study related to future capital  
31 improvements and the programs and action or initiative related to service provision. We  
32 set that up tonight to have the conversation about that, so we're all on the same page of  
33 what these areas mean, so we have a clear understanding as we go forward and build the  
34 framework of this Master Plan. We can open that up to discussion. I don't know, Rob, if  
35 you have any (inaudible).

36  
37 Mr. de Geus: I think it's important. I think it probably still could be tweaked a little  
38 further. I'm curious and interested to hear the Commission's feedback. I think it goes  
39 from sort of the highest level to more and more specific, is the basic concept. Let's just  
40 pause here (inaudible).  
41



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1 Chair Lauing: I just want to make kind of an overall sort of direction with what I think  
2 the ad hoc has commented on, that's three of the five here tonight, bring on the other two  
3 and sort of what we would like to get out of it with respect to the policy discussion. First,  
4 as was stated by Rob at the beginning of the retreat and Mary about four times tonight, so  
5 she's well trained, Our job here is to advise Council on policy. You said that at the  
6 retreat. It's all about policy. That's the crucial thing. Therefore, I think we want to leave  
7 here with a pretty clear understanding as you're starting here with what's a policy. What  
8 is that? As we're doing any kind of work, we know what's kind of in-bounds and out-of-  
9 bounds. Secondly, keep in mind the reason that we requested this, I guess, to be a little  
10 bit accelerated from when you were going to work on it was because we felt pretty  
11 strongly that that's essential to being able to do prioritization, scoring, whatever you want  
12 to call it, of all the projects, because the policies are going to drive that pretty materially.  
13 At some point we have to get at least two lists; one of existing policies, if that can be  
14 pulled together, so we know what's already here. As we think about going forward from  
15 your perspective and have a debate on those new policies, maybe there's even a third list  
16 of things that you want to look at to become policies but need more work. I don't know.  
17 Just some way to come away with a concrete definition that ultimately goes to Council  
18 with our recommendations and yours and says, "Here are the new policies that we think  
19 you should put on top of the old policies to really get the right direction on the Master  
20 Plan." I'm stating this on behalf of the Commission but also for debate. At some point, I  
21 think you guys have all said not necessarily tonight but at some point, we should just take  
22 each of these potential policy statements one-by-one and have a good debate about them,  
23 whether that's restrooms in all parks or dogs are off-leash or whatever. We should just  
24 get all those issues on the table and maybe come up collectively with what we think  
25 should be recommended. That may not be tonight, but if we can get to any of that, we  
26 can do that tonight. Structurally, other Commissioners, does that seem to be on-target?  
27

28 Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah.

29  
30 Chair Lauing: In terms of commenting on this first slide here, people just want to jump  
31 in on the definitions that are up there? Again, I would really like to focus on the policy  
32 definition rather the other ones right now, if that makes sense.  
33

34 Commissioner Reckdahl: To me, that's the most uncertainty, so we should chew on that,  
35 I think.  
36

37 Female: (inaudible).  
38

39 Chair Lauing: She's going to do that afterwards. I asked the speaker, and she's going to  
40 speak afterwards. I won't go first on that. Did you want to ...  
41

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: In the ad hoc, we had discussed about the importance of  
2 policies just because the policies drive a lot of the projects and shapes the projects. For  
3 example, if you limit parking in the parks, that will have one issue as opposed to if you  
4 have huge parking lots, that will change some of the actions that we take. We just want  
5 to make sure that the big policies that are going to shape the actions we have are decided  
6 upfront so we don't have to iterate.

7  
8 Mr. de Geus: Do you think the definition is the policy? I think this is the standard  
9 definition of a policy. Is it acceptable?

10  
11 Vice Chair Knopper: The one thing that I find missing is acquisition. I know that's  
12 something, future acquisition of parkland. Is that a goal of our policy?

13  
14 Chair Lauing: That could be one of the policies.

15  
16 Vice Chair Knopper: Because we have the laundry list in the definition of program  
17 provision, park maintenance, operations, future renovations, capital improvement.

18  
19 Mr. de Geus: I think that makes sense.

20  
21 Vice Chair Knopper: Would acquisition be? I don't know. That's a question.

22  
23 Commissioner Hetterly: I think that would be an appropriate type of policy.

24  
25 Commissioner Reckdahl: Right now we say guidance. To me, I think guidance is more  
26 nebulous. I think policies is more ...

27  
28 Vice Chair Knopper: Directed.

29  
30 Commissioner Reckdahl: ... this is the letter of the law. This is our direction as opposed  
31 to guidance.

32  
33 Vice Chair Knopper: Funny you said that. I wrote a clearer directive.

34  
35 Commissioner Moss: I would think one of the programs would be acquire new parkland.  
36 I wouldn't put it into policy necessarily.

37  
38 Vice Chair Knopper: You would not?

39  
40 Chair Lauing: I think right now we're just trying to decide if that's the right definition of  
41 policy. Is that what we're on?

1 Ms. O'Kane: Right.

2  
3 Commissioner Moss: To spell out that we should be acquiring new land?

4  
5 Chair Lauing: No. We're just focusing on what are the words—we're kind of  
6 wordsmithing the definition.

7  
8 Commissioner Moss: I think the words in the policy is fine.

9  
10 Commissioner Hetterly: I think the real challenge with policies is figuring out what is the  
11 right level of specificity. You want to keep policies at a fairly high level because you  
12 want them to be able to support a variety of programs and projects that change over time.  
13 You don't want it, I don't think, to be very specific and tightly directive. You want it to  
14 be somewhat general. I think it's tricky. Looking through this list of policies here, there  
15 were several that I thought maybe were more program, less policy, but I think it's a very  
16 gray area. It's difficult to provide a definition and have everyone understand it the same  
17 way or have it apply the same way to every item you want to consider. For me, I think  
18 the key point for the policy is do your best to keep it at a high level. For example, if the  
19 thing you're recommending is that the City do this specific thing to some specific other  
20 thing, that would be a program. If you want them to consider doing those kinds of things  
21 or a variety of those kinds of things to meet that end, that would be a policy.

22  
23 Chair Lauing: It clearly has to be differentiated from the other words that are up there,  
24 goals and principles and stuff. I just did a little wordsmithing on my own, and I used  
25 words like standard and direction and value-based framework just to get some thoughts in  
26 there. I have a value-based framework providing a clear standard and direction on an  
27 issue by which actions can be measured. Maybe measured is going too far; I don't know.

28  
29 Commissioner Reckdahl: Also, policies are more strategic. For example, if the Council  
30 comes and says, "We don't want to maintain the X number of square feet per person for  
31 park space," that changes what our tactical actions are going to be to maintain the park  
32 quality. Then, we have to make do with what we have. If the Council comes and says,  
33 "No, we want to enforce this. Every time we gain 1,000 more people we should be  
34 gaining more parkland to compensate for that," then that changes how we'll use parkland  
35 because we will have an expanding park system as the City expands. It's kind of ground  
36 rules. I view the policies as ground rules that we follow when we manage the parks.

37  
38 Mr. de Geus: I agree

39  
40 Council Member Filseth: I agree with Chair Lauing. I think this group certainly is the  
41 advisory group to the Council ...

1 Chair Lauing: Rob.  
2

3 Mr. de Geus: Maybe this is sort of supportive of Commissioner Hetterly's comments.  
4 Not all policies are the same. Some do lend themselves to be more specific and more  
5 directive and can be measured. Others, it doesn't make sense to do that because there's a  
6 changing dynamic or something. I do worry if we try and define what a policy is too  
7 specifically, then we create the potential of conflict between policies, which we don't  
8 want. I would support sort of a little more broader language. I like some of the  
9 comments that Chair Lauing had about standards and strategy and including that in there  
10 somewhere. That makes some sense.

11  
12 Chair Lauing: Do you think measured goes too far?

13  
14 Mr. de Geus: Maybe, yeah.

15  
16 Chair Lauing: Some of those can be very clear, like the quantitative ones that you just  
17 mentioned. For example, our number of parks per people, it's pretty easy to measure  
18 against that policy to see if it's working.

19  
20 Mr. de Geus: I think it really works for some. I'm just not sure it works for all policies.

21  
22 Chair Lauing: Standards and directions by which you get your guidance and your action  
23 probably does work. That's why I threw in the word framework. Ground rules is another  
24 one. I didn't want to put just rules or laws. I was just trying to fiddle with the words  
25 apart from putting in the specifics about parks, like just what would a City policy be.  
26 Then it has to be applied to all these things and more that are in the document that you  
27 folks prepared.

28  
29 Commissioner Reckdahl: It's hard, because if the policy is too nebulous, then it's just  
30 going to apple pie and motherhood.

31  
32 Chair Lauing: Correct, totally agree.

33  
34 Commissioner Reckdahl: That's where having something that's quantitative, that you can  
35 actually evaluate. Take maintain the quality of the parks, yes, we want to do that and that  
36 is a policy, but for purposes here I don't think that's useful because there's no way to  
37 measure that or it's difficult to measure.

38  
39 Chair Lauing: Are we saying that we're kind of coalescing around a decent definition  
40 with some of these words? Not that we've written it out exactly.  
41

1 Commissioner Moss: I like his definition maybe with the word, something by which  
2 projects and programs can be measured or a course of action by which projects and  
3 programs can be measured that provides clear guidance regarding recreation programs,  
4 etc.

5  
6 Chair Lauing: I'm a little worried about the word guidance, because that just sounds like  
7 a suggestion.

8  
9 Vice Chair Knopper: I don't like that word (crosstalk).

10  
11 Chair Lauing: Whereas, standards ...

12  
13 Vice Chair Knopper: Directives, standard, whatever words.

14  
15 Chair Lauing: ... I think works better. I just worked a little bit to try to get kind of  
16 community values into it to show that it was infused by that, not just legislation. I think  
17 all these suggestions and the definition breaks it out from the other top two, the principles  
18 and goals. There was some debate in the ad hoc about do we need five different  
19 categories, but that's another discussion.

20  
21 Commissioner Hetterly: The way I think about it is principles are sort of concepts we  
22 like. Health, fun, playful.

23  
24 Commissioner Reckdahl: Playfulness.

25  
26 Commissioner Hetterly: That whole list of principles. The goals are what we want our  
27 park system to look like. We want it to be integrated, innovative, evolving, our parks and  
28 rec system. The principles are what are the priorities we should consider in trying to  
29 make it be a great park system. That's X, Y and Z.

30  
31 Commissioner Reckdahl: Policies.

32  
33 Commissioner Hetterly: That's the policies. The programs and projects are the nitty-  
34 gritty how do we get there.

35  
36 Chair Lauing: Could you repeat your policy one again? I thought it was a little bit  
37 different than what I heard last time.

38  
39 Commissioner Hetterly: What are the priorities we should consider in trying to achieve  
40 the goals?

41  
42 Chair Lauing: I don't think that's right.

1  
2 Commissioner Hetterly: Why?

3  
4 Chair Lauing: Because the priorities are the next step after we have the policies in place  
5 that are going to help direct that, maybe even put some boundaries around that. It's the  
6 prioritization process that takes place after we have the policies and all that other stuff  
7 above it.

8  
9 Commissioner Hetterly: I think the policies are the priorities, and the programs are the  
10 implementation of the priorities.

11  
12 Chair Lauing: A policy to have bathrooms everywhere. I'm not sure how that—there  
13 aren't any priorities there because it's everywhere.

14  
15 Mr. de Geus: I think it's both. I think it's both policies and projects that implement the  
16 goal. We've talked about some of the policies reading sort of a little bit more like best  
17 practices or something, but that still can be considered a policy. Are we going to follow  
18 this standard to achieve this goal? I don't think they have to all sort of exactly (crosstalk).  
19 I think you use both to effectively implement the goal.

20  
21 Council Member Filseth: It's like if you have a policy to have bathrooms in parks. A  
22 program would be we've got this much money; we're going to build one in this park, this  
23 park, this park (inaudible). That's a program. A policy is we should have them. What  
24 does that mean? That means we don't have a policy to not have them. There's people  
25 that think you shouldn't have bathrooms in parks because of (inaudible). A policy says  
26 we should have them. I do think it sort of seems like a higher level (inaudible).

27  
28 Chair Lauing; I agree with that. I think that's well articulated. Take dogs. If we make a  
29 policy that we want off-leash dogs, that's the policy.

30  
31 Council Member Filseth: That's a policy, right.

32  
33 Chair Lauing: How it's implemented, if we prioritized the north versus the south versus  
34 shared-use versus non-shared-use, that starts to get into the prioritization of a policy. I  
35 think that's the hierarchy.

36  
37 Council Member Filseth: What it means (inaudible) course of action, it sort of depends  
38 on what you mean by that course of action. It's almost like a guidance for how courses of  
39 action should ...

40  
41 Chair Lauing: That's right. I also thought that was a little bit too specific because it was  
42 going to the action already as opposed to the policy around the standards.



1  
2 Council Member Filseth: (crosstalk) course of action. Yes, (crosstalk).  
3

4 Commissioner Reckdahl: They way I think about it is the goals are the strategic goals  
5 that we want, The policies are the ground rules that we have to fit our actions into. The  
6 projects and the programs are the tactical actions that we take to fulfill the goals, to fulfill  
7 those strategic goals.  
8

9 Council Member Filseth: It seems like a test of the policy should be is there a logical  
10 anti-policy (inaudible) can't find an anti-policy if the policy doesn't make sense. Do we  
11 have dogs off-leash or do we have dogs on-leash? We have dogs off-leash in parks or we  
12 don't have dogs off-leash in parks. (crosstalk) anti-action (inaudible).  
13

14 Chair Lauing: Maybe with this sort of tweaked or evolved definition of policies, we  
15 should just take on a couple here as test cases just to see what works. If you just went to  
16 one on draft policies ...  
17

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: We have some in the back, when we get to later in the  
19 package.  
20

21 Chair Lauing: I was just going to use this as an example, and then they can take back  
22 over here. "1.B" is just exactly what you said, it's so specific. Retain a 5-acre standard  
23 parkland per 1,000 residents. If that becomes the policy, that's very clear. It's a  
24 statement; there's ways to implement that. We could still prioritize north versus south or  
25 small parks versus large parks. Less clear to me about "1.A."  
26

27 Mr. de Geus: The next part of the presentation is we've called out a few policies we think  
28 require more discussion. It's not really clear given all the public feedback what the policy  
29 direction should be. We have a few of those in (crosstalk).  
30

31 Chair Lauing: That's what Keith was saying. I just wanted to kind of point back to the  
32 other issue before we got to those, which I think are good. As I went through here a few  
33 times, some of these things obviously by the definition of policy here and as we've  
34 tweaked it, to me, fit. Others are sort of too fuzzy or a little bit too apple pie and not  
35 standards of performance kind of thing.  
36

37 Commissioner Reckdahl: "1.A" I think is ...  
38

39 Chair Lauing: "1.A" is emphasize equity and affordability in providing programs and  
40 services.  
41

1 Mr. de Geus: I think it would be helpful to get all of the Commissioners' feedback on the  
2 46. There's 46, right? There's a lot. We'd take a lot of time if we took them one at a  
3 time. We take the big ones where we know there's a lot of discussion to have and there's  
4 significant policy choices one way or the other. We take the time to do that this evening,  
5 and then ...  
6

7 Chair Lauing: Right. What I'm still doing is I'm still on the earlier issue of defining what  
8 a policy should look like when it's written up. The question I'm putting is now that we  
9 have a better definition and a working, more accepted definition of policy—I just picked  
10 "1" because it's "1." The second thing to me is a very clear definition of a policy, I'm not  
11 sure that the first one fits as a definition of a policy.  
12

13 Mr. de Geus: I think there's a few in there like that, maybe more than a few. We will  
14 need to go back and rewrite. I think the discussion about policy definition is a really  
15 good one, and it needs to start with something like it is a standard value-based framework  
16 that guides a course of action, that kind of thing. It started to make a little more sense to  
17 me as I was just listening to you all. We'll rework that and also go through the policies  
18 again with another cut and see if some of them really are more programs or is it really  
19 written as a best practice or a policy, and then come back with a version next month. I'm  
20 sort of curious about some of these difficult policy decisions. We've picked three or four,  
21 and there may be a couple of others that you've identified as also needing some  
22 substantive discussion as a Commission.  
23

24 Chair Lauing: I think that's going to be very good. I just wanted to make the point that  
25 I'm not sure, now that we've got a better definition of policies, that these are actually all  
26 policies. Instead of going through all 46 collectively, maybe you guys do another draft. I  
27 would totally agree. Other Commissioners?  
28

29 Commissioner Hetterly: I suspect if we went through the whole list, we would not agree  
30 on which of these were policies and which weren't among (inaudible). It does make  
31 sense that (inaudible).  
32

33 Mr. de Geus: To that point, Commissioner Hetterly, if we could get—I don't know what  
34 the right date would be—enough time that we could then collectively look at all of your  
35 feedback and look where there's sort of alignment and where this is difference, then we  
36 can hone in on those for next month's discussion. I mean, there may be a number of  
37 places where you're pretty aligned. We want to get that information. You've already  
38 gone through this, I think, in a pretty detailed way. Maybe you could go even more, but  
39 looked like you went through each one and gave a comment that I have an issue.  
40

41 Commissioner Hetterly: Not whether it's a program or policy so much.  
42

1 Mr. de Geus: Maybe go back and do that as well. Take the next two weeks or something  
2 to do that exercise. That'll really help staff to bring back a more meaningful document as  
3 well.  
4

5 Chair Lauing: Would you give us the new draft first, that take out things that looked  
6 more like programs and non-policies?  
7

8 Mr. de Geus: Yeah.  
9

10 Chair Lauing: That would be more efficient for the Commissioners, I think.  
11

12 Mr. de Geus: Let me think about it. I want to be careful about that because you may not  
13 agree. I think we're better off leaving it in there. If there's consensus—I mean you could  
14 just say not a policy or whatever, keep it simple. If we see that is an inconsistent opinion,  
15 maybe it's already our opinion too, but at least we affirm it (inaudible) from you all. I  
16 know it's a little more work to do it that way, but otherwise I fear we will remove  
17 something that you may not want removed or one of you or a couple of you.  
18

19 Chair Lauing: It raises the spectrum of the last 546 projects that we had to comment on  
20 in the last document.  
21

22 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, don't do that again.  
23

24 Chair Lauing: The specter, excuse me.  
25

26 Commissioner Hetterly: Much smaller (inaudible).  
27

28 Commissioner Reckdahl: Some of these could be policies. They're kind of on the fringe  
29 of being a policy, like "I.H," encourage walking and biking as a preferred method to  
30 getting to and from parks. If you're saying we just want that, then I don't think that's  
31 really a policy. If you say limit the number of parking spaces to half of what it is right  
32 now, then that becomes a policy. Does that make sense? Just saying we want people to  
33 bike and walk to parks, I don't think that's a policy by itself. Now if we're saying  
34 concrete steps we're going to do, then it becomes a policy.  
35

36 Commissioner Hetterly: I'd say limiting the parking spots would be the program that  
37 falls under that policy.  
38

39 Council Member Filseth: I would have said the opposite too. Policy is walking and  
40 biking are the preferred methods for getting to and from parks, and we're going to  
41 discourage the use of cars. (crosstalk)  
42

1 Commissioner Hetterly: The programs are how.

2  
3 Council Member Filseth: (crosstalk) programs are what he just said.

4  
5 Commissioner Reckdahl: For me, one of the things, like when we were at the  
6 Sustainability Summit or, I guess, the out brief of that at the Council, I think if we tried to  
7 limit parking spaces at parks or reduce the number of parking spaces, there will be some  
8 feedback. I think that's kind of a big step to take. I would want clear direction from the  
9 Council on that big step. That's why I think it isn't so much that—agree, it is a tactical  
10 step, but it's a controversial tactical step.

11  
12 Commissioner Hetterly: That's why you don't stop at the policy level; you continue on to  
13 the programs and (crosstalk).

14  
15 Council Member Filseth: (crosstalk) there are policy implications there. Reduce parking,  
16 we're going to avoid having (inaudible) we're going to limit parking spaces. We're going  
17 to get rid of the parking spaces generally. That is sort of policy. I mean, there's policies  
18 (inaudible).

19  
20 Mr. de Geus: It is a program, and it's site specific. It may make sense for some to limit  
21 parking, but it's very conditional based on where the location is, what parking is adjacent,  
22 what other facilities. That's again why the policies, to me, would be better written sort of  
23 at a more higher level than like this.

24  
25 Chair Lauing: If there's no other comments on that, then we'll go with that game plan,  
26 and then we can carry on with your slide show here.

27  
28 Ms. O'Kane: I'm going to talk about the draft goals. I know we're here to talk mostly  
29 about policies, but we did want to present our proposed goals. We have five goals that  
30 were developed from consolidating the areas of focus and sort of grouping the areas of  
31 focus into like goals. These are the same areas of focus that were used to guide the  
32 community prioritization challenge. Then we added a sixth goal which focuses more on  
33 how we're managing the system as a whole efficiently and effectively and sustainably.  
34 Goal 1 is provide high quality facilities and services that are accessible, inclusive and  
35 distributed equitably across Palo Alto. This is a consolidation of three areas of focus. It's  
36 really focused on the accessibility, inclusiveness and also equal distribution of the  
37 facilities across the City. I did want to mention that there is one area of focus in here that  
38 I know the ad hoc committee had proposed combining with another area of focus. That  
39 other area of focus is under a different goal, so that's why we did not combine those. I  
40 can talk about that more when we get to that second goal; it's on the next slide. When we  
41 do go to Goal 2, which is enhance the capacity, quality and variety of uses of the existing  
42 system of parks, recreation and open space facilities and services, this is where we had



1 the areas of focus related to sports fields and off-leash dogs. We did make a note in the  
2 presentation that the ad hoc committee has proposed consolidating the sports field and the  
3 off-leash dog areas of focus, and the proposed language is included there. We haven't  
4 necessarily committed to one or the other, but I wanted to represent them both here.  
5

6 Commissioner Hetterly: I just have a quick question. By presenting the areas of focus  
7 under here, they are for our purposes to understand where those goals came from. Are  
8 they then not going to be part of the organization of the Master Plan? The goals are  
9 going to replace them?  
10

11 Ms. O'Kane: Exactly. The areas of focus will still be in the Master Plan, because they  
12 were ...  
13

14 Commissioner Hetterly: As part of the process.  
15

16 Ms. O'Kane: Right, a part of the process. They're not going to be in the entire hierarchy  
17 of the Master Plan. It's going to go like the definitions were, and areas of focus will be  
18 taken out. It's just for demonstration purposes here. Goal 3 is create environments that  
19 encourage active and passive activities, support health, wellness and social connections.  
20 This includes two areas of focus and is not only the physical health and well-being  
21 associated with our parks, facilities and programs, but also some more of the sort of  
22 mental wellness, community social connections. Goal 4 is to integrate nature, natural  
23 systems and ecological principles throughout Palo Alto. Goal 5 is develop innovative  
24 programs, services and strategies for expanding the system. Goal 2 was focused more on  
25 enhancing what we have existing. Goal 5 is focused on expanding the system that we  
26 have. The two areas of focus that the ad hoc group had suggested consolidating fall  
27 under Goal 1 and Goal 5. We did feel that those were two sort of different areas. We did  
28 choose to keep those separate. We added a sixth goal which is manage Palo Alto's land  
29 and services effectively, efficiently and sustainably. This might be a goal where some of  
30 those best practices that we talk about—we're still trying to get our head around those  
31 best practices and how they'll fit into the Master Plan. It's possible that they might fall  
32 under this goal which is sort of how do we manage what we have effectively, efficiently  
33 and sustainably.  
34

35 Commissioner Reckdahl: That's interesting. You're saying that offering new recreation  
36 programs, we'll say, would be expanding the system. When I think of expanding the  
37 system, I think of buying new land. I guess if you're expanding the scope of recreation  
38 programs, that is kind of the same thing.  
39

40 Ms. O'Kane: Right. That's how we looked at it. It's the actual facilities and the land, and  
41 then there's the programs. That represents the program side of it.  
42

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: Quite often we just think about parks. Recreation is sometimes  
2 the stepchild.

3  
4 Chair Lauing: Not to Rob.

5  
6 Ms. O'Kane: We are asking for comments and feedback today and also discuss next  
7 steps for the goals. If we need to revise some goals, we can take those away and come  
8 back. If there's need for an ad hoc to resolve some of the goals, we can discuss that.  
9 Comments?

10  
11 Commissioner Hetterly: I think the goals are pretty good. I think Goal 2 also represents  
12 the nature area of focus. When you're talking about the capacity and quality of our parks  
13 and open space, the nature element has to come in there, I think. When I looked at the  
14 policies, not to jump ahead, but there was basically nothing in there about open space.  
15 We need to add more in that area. I think it could go in Goal 2 as well as Goal 4. Goal 4,  
16 I think, should be not just integrate nature and natural systems and ecological principles,  
17 but protect and integrate or preserve and integrate. I think we need more than just  
18 integrate in that goal. That was really the big gap that I felt in the goals there was nothing  
19 really recognizing the importance of our ecosystems.

20  
21 Ms. O'Kane: I have a question to clarify your first comment on Goal 2. Do you mean to  
22 add something that's related to the conservation of the open space?

23  
24 Commissioner Hetterly: I would add that to the nature element as well. I would put it in  
25 both places. Not just conservation, but when we're working on the Byxbee Park trails,  
26 one of the issues that kept coming up was how the loop trail impedes habitat corridors.  
27 Improving the quality and capacity of our open space, those loop trails expand the  
28 capacity for people, but they don't expand the capacity for animals in some ways. I think  
29 there's a place under that goal for that kind of consideration. It has to show up  
30 somewhere. I don't feel very strongly which goal it falls under, but I do think we need a  
31 lot more of that.

32  
33 Ms. O'Kane: I'm just thinking about the comprehensive conservation plans that we'll be  
34 doing in the future for all the open space areas, how that would tie in without being  
35 redundant into those plans as well.

36  
37 Commissioner Hetterly: I think we should incorporate that by reference in this Plan, for  
38 example. That's exactly the kind of thing that I'm trying to get at, that should show up in  
39 this Master Plan as a priority.  
40

1 Mr. de Geus: I think Goal 4, we could add some more language to that too. Rather than  
2 trying to have it in two goals, it would make more sense to try and get Goal 4 the way  
3 that it captures all those elements you mentioned, conservation, open space...  
4

5 Ms. O'Kane: Right. Otherwise it's going to be difficult to put policies under goals if it  
6 straddles two different goals.  
7

8 Commissioner Hetterly: It's the area of focus that straddles the goal, not necessarily the  
9 policy. I don't feel strongly about which goal it falls under. I just think it needs to be  
10 somewhere. I'm just trying to think if we're going—I'll leave it there. Thanks.  
11

12 Chair Lauing: Other comments on goals, Commissioner Hetterly?  
13

14 Commissioner Hetterly: No.  
15

16 Chair Lauing: Did you have anything, Abbie?  
17

18 Vice Chair Knopper: No.  
19

20 Chair Lauing: Good to go. I just thought that the last one seemed a little bit fuzzy. I'm  
21 kind of into measurement now. Effectively and efficiently and sustainably, on the one  
22 hand, I get where you're going there. You want to put a stake in the ground on that, but  
23 it's sort of like ...  
24

25 Ms. O'Kane: How do we know when we're there?  
26

27 Chair Lauing: ... is that really effective or sort of effective. I don't have any good  
28 suggestions for that. It seemed a little fuzzy to me.  
29

30 Commissioner Moss: You do have this sustainability goal. Just like the discussion we  
31 just had about nature, I think everything in Goal 2 is going to be affected by sustainability  
32 and by integrating nature. I just summarized Goal 6 as sustainability.  
33

34 Chair Lauing: They're trying to say more there than that, right?  
35

36 Ms. O'Kane: You mean regarding sustainability?  
37

38 Chair Lauing: More than sustainability.  
39

40 Ms. O'Kane: Right, yeah.  
41

1 Commissioner Moss: What you're saying is that everything we do has to be efficient and  
2 effective. That sort of seems like mom and apple pie. It seems like everything in  
3 government should be effective and efficient.  
4

5 Mr. de Geus: It should be. It isn't always. I actually think the point that you made there,  
6 Chair Lauing, is a good one about that one. Maybe there is something we can add in  
7 there that would improve it considerably, if we say something about data and  
8 measurement. Do you know what I mean?  
9

10 Chair Lauing: Yeah.

11  
12 Mr. de Geus: We're trying to manage these programs and services and land effectively,  
13 efficiently and sustainably in a way that uses data and measuring the work effectively.  
14

15 Commissioner Moss: If you have ...  
16

17 Mr. de Geus: I think that ...  
18

19 Commissioner Moss: If you have greenhouse gas emissions for the City, does every tree  
20 and every bush and every open space equal X amount of greenhouse gases absorbed that  
21 you could offset cars on the street? I never thought about that, but isn't that essentially  
22 what the sustainability goals are saying? We should count up all the trees ...  
23

24 Mr. de Geus: We have counted up all the trees.  
25

26 Chair Lauing: Yeah, we have.  
27

28 Commissioner Moss: You have. (crosstalk)  
29

30 Chair Lauing: You're saying that ...  
31

32 Commissioner Moss: Acres of open space equals X number of cars you can have on the  
33 street.  
34

35 Commissioner Reckdahl: That's assuming that the trees are growing in the open space,  
36 and they never die, in steady state.  
37

38 Mr. de Geus: They're always changing.  
39

40 Commissioner Reckdahl: They're always dying and decomposing.  
41

42 Commissioner Moss: Plant a new one.

1  
2 Chair Lauing: Rob's not talking here as the goal is not talking here just about  
3 sustainability. It's also about even measuring services being performed effectively.  
4 You're trying to put that all under that umbrella.

5  
6 Vice Chair Knopper: All initiatives that you're doing.

7  
8 Mr. de Geus: The goal specifically says we will use data and quantitative and qualitative  
9 measures.

10  
11 Chair Lauing: Measured against objectives and, where possible, outside data standards.

12  
13 Vice Chair Knopper: Maybe that's what you just need to add, utilize quantitative and  
14 qualitative ...

15  
16 Commissioner Moss: Everything you're doing about cutting down the amount of water  
17 you use, I mean that should be in there.

18  
19 Commissioner Reckdahl: That's a good point.

20  
21 Commissioner Hetterly: Wouldn't using qualitative and quantitative measures be a policy  
22 under this goal?

23  
24 Mr. de Geus: Yeah, could be. You could do it that way.

25  
26 Vice Chair Knopper: I actually thought this was more of a policy that we're thinking  
27 about. The policy is the top of the tree, and the goal is maybe a branch that comes down.

28  
29 Commissioner Hetterly: The goal is above the policy.

30  
31 Vice Chair Knopper: If your goal is to be sustainable and effective and efficient—right.  
32 Oh my gosh, sorry.

33  
34 Chair Lauing: Maybe you can just take a look at that and see if there's ways to talk in the  
35 right way about measurement, measured against best practices or something like that, so  
36 that there's not just we were efficient, we get an A.

37  
38 Ms. O'Kane: We'll work on that one as well.

39  
40 Commissioner Reckdahl: The one thing that did bother me also in Goal 2 is the calling  
41 out of the sports fields and the dog parks. There's a lot of things that Parks and Rec do,

1 and we're calling out two specific things. Do we want to go that detailed in the goal?  
2 They are big players.

3  
4 Chair Lauing: That's out now, right? That's not specifically mentioned.

5  
6 Ms. O'Kane: Right, that's not going to be in the goal. It just areas of focus.

7  
8 Vice Chair Knopper: Just something they've thought about.

9  
10 Commissioner Hetterly: Just for our purposes to understand where it came from  
11 (crosstalk).

12  
13 Mr. de Geus: Where the goal, how the goal was (crosstalk).

14  
15 Chair Lauing: The areas of focus aren't going to be tied to this when it's presented to  
16 Council. That's my understanding.

17  
18 Commissioner Moss: It's just today's hot button. Tomorrow it's (inaudible).

19  
20 Commissioner Reckdahl: That makes sense then. I thought you were getting rid of the  
21 name of the area of focus, but still we need to specify these goals. These sub-bullets  
22 would always go with them.

23  
24 Ms. O'Kane: No.

25  
26 Chair Lauing: Draft policies, page 7.

27  
28 Vice Chair Knopper: Which says draft polices.

29  
30 Mr. Jensen: This is a conversation we're going to have about the policies and how we're  
31 going to break this up. We have identified some of the policies that do merit some more  
32 or further discussion to pinpoint those and understand those more about what actually the  
33 policy is going to be. I started this by just putting up our definition that we talked about  
34 previously and stating that in the packet that you received a total of 46 proposed policies  
35 that support the six goals are there. What we really want to do is then focus tonight our  
36 discussion on the following which will be synthetic turf, off-leash dog parks, restrooms,  
37 service areas which we'll discuss. Of course, if there's other policies that any of the  
38 Commissioners feel really strongly about or want to discuss further, we can discuss those  
39 as well. Again, this goes back to the goals. What we're proposing is that the feedback we  
40 receive here tonight on these specific ones that we review, that we will then redraft the  
41 policy per our discussion and then bring that back next month for review again. Again,  
42 with your comments on all of them and the comments on this, if at next meeting we don't

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1 come to a consensus about what the policy is going to be for these, then we can discuss  
2 forming ad hoc committees for them to vet them out more and get our policies set  
3 correctly of how the Commission feels they should be drafted. That's kind of going to be  
4 our process, and you can discuss that a little bit too before we start this. It's basically us  
5 taking your feedback tonight on these specific things, redrafting them, bringing them  
6 back. If there's still conflict on them, if we want to proceed with forming an ad hoc to  
7 flesh out the ones that we don't agree on or are not meshing with the group, then we can  
8 do that.

9  
10 Chair Lauing: Depending on how long we want to go tonight, there will be more than  
11 those five bullet points. We can add some more tonight if we have time. If we don't, we  
12 just have to be reasonable about the clock. We may just have to pick them up fresh at the  
13 next meeting.

14  
15 Mr. de Geus: In addition, though, what we would like is to get your feedback between  
16 now and next meeting. If you have specific feedback around the policy, and you think it  
17 ought to be this way or this is how you have understood the information we've heard  
18 from the public that the policy should head in this direction, it would be good to get that  
19 from the Commission. Like I said earlier, there may be more consensus there than we  
20 know. If we (crosstalk).

21  
22 Chair Lauing: You might get some of that tonight too. I was just saying that we might  
23 not be able to debate fully every policy that we think needs to be debated just because of  
24 time constraints.

25  
26 Commissioner Hetterly: Can I make a suggestion?

27  
28 Chair Lauing: Mm-hmm.

29  
30 Commissioner Hetterly: I would suggest that we put all of the other policy questions or  
31 issues on the table so we know which ones we're looking at, what emerges from the  
32 policies that were suggested here. Rather than going one by one and debating each item  
33 on the list, we try to do some triage and figure out—synthetic turf, for example, I don't  
34 think most of us have a lot of expertise about the pros and cons on either side of adopting  
35 a policy that's pro turf or anti-turf or what sort of turf. That would be one maybe where I  
36 might ask for staff to come back with arguments for and against on this issue, rather than  
37 debating it now and not knowing really what the full scope of the debate is. There may  
38 be some that we can easily come to agreement on. There may be some that are really  
39 hard to come to agreement on. If we could just triage where we need more info before  
40 we can have a really useful discussion, that might be helpful.

1 Commissioner Moss: You got feedback on February 18th. You've thought about it.  
2 Evidently of the 46 these are the areas that you're having the most trouble with and need  
3 the most input on. That's why you had the meeting last week, and that's why you have  
4 this meeting. Are you asking us to specifically look at these because they're the ones that  
5 are giving you the most trouble and the rest of them we'll deal with as time permits?  
6

7 Mr. de Geus: Yes, essentially that's correct. These are the ones that have percolated to  
8 the top from staff's perspective, that really require more discussion and (crosstalk).  
9

10 Commissioner Moss: I don't want to waste time on all 46 if these are the five or six that  
11 are giving you the most trouble.  
12

13 Chair Lauing: It's not the 46. What Commissioner Hetterly is saying is that it's probably  
14 more than five or less than 46, so we should just put all those on the table so we know  
15 what the scope is. Correct?  
16

17 Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah. I'm saying if Commissioners, having read the list of  
18 policies, if there were some that they said, "Wait a minute. I don't want to do that."  
19

20 Commissioner Moss: Add them to the list.  
21

22 Commissioner Hetterly: That's something you want to add to the list, so that we can  
23 discuss it.  
24

25 Commissioner Moss: Do we want to do that quickly then?  
26

27 Chair Lauing: Yeah. My only other question on your suggestion is do you want to do  
28 that before these five are considered?  
29

30 Mr. de Geus: That's going to take another 45 minutes because there's a lot there. I would  
31 prefer to have you all think about those things, what are the most important policy  
32 concerns you have in the 46 and send that to staff. We'll look at all of them and see  
33 where there is consensus around an issue and bring them back next month. These ones  
34 here, that's a pretty big discussion right here, just to get through these four.  
35

36 Commissioner Hetterly: You're looking for resolution.  
37

38 Mr. de Geus: Not resolution but ...  
39

40 Commissioner Moss: More feedback.  
41

1 Mr. de Geus: Feedback. Maybe there is resolution. Some, maybe we need information,  
2 there's a gap. That's where I'm at. I don't ...  
3

4 Ms. O'Kane: I think the intent was to look at each of these that could go either way as far  
5 as a policy goes. Like it says, either hear feedback or there may be instances—for  
6 example, we already have an ad hoc for the dog parks. It may be to focus the discussion  
7 of the ad hoc on the questions we're presenting here. Similar to the turf, I think we agree  
8 and Daren agrees that we do need data and we do need to look at both sides. I don't know  
9 if an ad hoc is appropriate for that or if it's just having someone from the Commission  
10 participate with staff as we develop that. Our intent wasn't to resolve them all here or  
11 necessarily to get in a long heated debate about any of them, but just sort of present this is  
12 where we are and what should our next step be in resolving that.  
13

14 Commissioner Moss: All I know is that when I went to that meeting, there was a lot of  
15 good input. I had some feedback, but I didn't want to give it in that meeting. I'd like to  
16 give it sometime, if you want me to provide my comments.  
17

18 Chair Lauing: We'll do Plan A, what we originally talked about doing.  
19

20 Mr. de Geus: I think there's time and the Commission is interested in spending the time  
21 here at this meeting, after we try a couple and go through them, to then go around and ask  
22 for the highlights that you really want to discuss next month. If you want to do that, we  
23 can still do that.  
24

25 Commissioner Hetterly: Do you want to do public comment first or at the very end?  
26

27 Chair Lauing: I was going to do this at the very end so they would have the benefit of all  
28 this. Who's launching here?  
29

30 Ms. O'Kane: Peter.  
31

32 Mr. de Geus: We have this one on the turf first.  
33

34 Mr. Jensen: The first one is discussing the synthetic turf policy. The policy as laid out is  
35 up on the screen, which is to design and maintain high quality turf sports fields with  
36 adequate time for resting to support maximum use in parks by multiple organized sports  
37 (inaudible) with areas large enough for practice or play. The next part of that is invest in  
38 tournament-quality high-wear sports field turf which is talking about using synthetic turf  
39 as the designated sports field used for full-time sports where lighting is possible. This  
40 one talks, I guess, using either natural turf or using synthetic turf as what the policy is  
41 going to be going forward for our sports fields. The policy directions can have a variety  
42 of directions you could go there, choices. You could expand the use of synthetic turf in

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1 selected locations and grandfather in existing synthetic turf fields but not add any new  
2 synthetic turf fields, building all natural turf systems with enhanced drainage, irrigation  
3 and turf grass that can support intensive play by organized sports. The final one is  
4 consider on a case-by-case basis and not a solidified, specific stance now if we do want to  
5 add synthetic sports fields in the future or not, or just use natural grass. Those are the  
6 options of directions the policy can go in that we're looking for feedback on.

7  
8 Vice Chair Knopper: Can I concur with what Jennifer said? I don't know enough about  
9 turf, synthetic versus natural, why I should have an opinion one way or the other. Can  
10 you give a quick sort of lesson in ...

11  
12 Mr. de Geus: Daren's probably the best equipped to do that.

13  
14 Vice Chair Knopper: ... turf?

15  
16 Daren Anderson: I could, but it will not be comprehensive. Much like the dog  
17 discussion, I think it warrants more lengthy investigation, more lengthy research and  
18 more thoughtful debate once we've really delved into the pros and cons. The other one  
19 concerning synthetic versus natural is it's in flux. That industry of synthetic turf is not  
20 static. You started with an Astroturf that I think a lot of people think of in the earlier  
21 days of the NFL. That's still in people's minds, and that's not what we have today. It's  
22 continuing to evolve. It evolved over the last just couple of years, from what we've put in  
23 at Stanford-Palo Alto originally to what we put in at El Camino Park. It's different in  
24 terms of the infield, the blades, the structure, the heat it produces. It's dynamic and  
25 changing, and that factors into this discussion to some degree. I can give you a nutshell  
26 analysis between some of the pros and cons, but really I think it needs to be more robust.

27  
28 Chair Lauing: This is an example of one that I would agree with Commissioner Hetterly  
29 that it should be tabled until we have enough knowledge.

30  
31 Mr. de Geus: I'm concerned that we're not going to have all the knowledge we want to  
32 make some of these policy recommendations. I think this is a good example, because  
33 there's so much that we're still learning about this fairly new product. Given that  
34 information, what does that mean in terms of policy direction?

35  
36 Chair Lauing: I would say that there's no change in policy because ...

37  
38 Mr. de Geus: There is no policy.

39  
40 Vice Chair Knopper: When you're thinking about policy with regard to sustainability and  
41 protecting the environment, how does the turf—because that's a goal. How does

1 choosing one turf over the other impact that? That's what I'm thinking about with regard  
2 ...

3  
4 Chair Lauing: It's not a one-issue subject. That's the problem.

5  
6 Vice Chair Knopper: Right. That's where I ...

7  
8 Chair Lauing: We can't make a policy around one issue. Just sustainability, I mean.  
9 There's safety, there's cost, there's frequency of maintenance, all that stuff.

10  
11 Commissioner Reckdahl: Users' preferences.

12  
13 Chair Lauing: It seems to me that, because there are a few in there in my judgment that  
14 are like that, we don't have enough data to make a new policy. We can't and, therefore, it  
15 has to wait three months, six months, a year until we can make a policy. We can't just  
16 invent something. That's okay because new policies in the future can affect new  
17 decisions as parks are put together. Did you have a comment?

18  
19 Council Member Filseth: I was going to say what your choices might be. We don't have  
20 a policy on this at this time.

21  
22 Commissioner Moss: In the meeting, we brought up that there are some ...

23  
24 Chair Lauing: I'm sorry. What meeting is this?

25  
26 Commissioner Moss: The one that the stakeholders gave. I was just like Abbie; I didn't  
27 know much. A lot of things came out in that meeting, and mainly it was health concerns  
28 and also environmental concerns. The little plastic balls that are in there, they're going to  
29 go into the Bay, and fish are going to eat them. I didn't know anything about that. As far  
30 as the health concerns, as Daren has pointed out, there has been so much flux, so much  
31 change in the industry that the health concerns are getting less. They're not all gone, but  
32 they're less. Having a policy that says we will never have synthetic turf, I think is not  
33 going to happen because they are improving the synthetic turf to get rid of the health  
34 issues. They know about the environmental issues. I think they're going to be working  
35 on those. We have to work on those as well. The natural grass, you have to use organic  
36 fertilizer, and you've got to use enough water but not too much water. Now they're  
37 creating new kinds of grasses, like the bunch grass that kept coming up, that is easier to  
38 water. If we had a policy that says no more synthetic turf or no more natural grass, I  
39 don't think that that would be appropriate at this point because it's changing so much. If  
40 you could come back and tell us that we are improving the synthetic turf that we use from  
41 now on and we're improving the natural grass that we're using from now on and we  
42 should on a case-by-case basis use one or the other, we could make a policy like that.

1 What Abbie is saying is we don't know all the health risks. We don't know all the  
2 changes in the industry for both natural and synthetic.

3  
4 Chair Lauing: All five of us are in agreement on that point, so I think we can't do a  
5 policy change on that. To the extent you want input then, I think Kristen said you could  
6 have a person aligned with a staff member as you work on it or we can do an ad hoc or  
7 you can come with a staff report. Lots of options.

8  
9 Mr. de Geus: I just would (inaudible) there isn't a policy. It's not a policy change; there  
10 is no policy on that.

11  
12 Chair Lauing: Correct.

13  
14 Mr. de Geus: I don't want to speak for the Council, but I've heard some Council  
15 Members speak about this and also probably don't have enough information really to  
16 understand it but nevertheless have an opinion that we should abolish all synthetic turf or  
17 at least consider that.

18  
19 Vice Chair Knopper: They're pro synthetic?

20  
21 Commissioner Hetterly: No, they're anti.

22  
23 Mr. de Geus: It seems to be silent on the topic. It would be ...

24  
25 Chair Lauing: We can take it on as a project, but we can't take it on without more  
26 knowledge.

27  
28 Mr. de Geus: Then I think we ought to have that in the Master Plan, that says something  
29 about what we ought to be doing to better understand and be educated about whether we  
30 should or shouldn't use synthetic turf. Maybe that's as far as we can go in terms of a  
31 policy statement or program (crosstalk).

32  
33 Chair Lauing: What I had said at the top of hour is maybe there's a third list of policies  
34 that have to be investigated for change or development but just aren't there yet. That  
35 seems to be one to me.

36  
37 Mr. Jensen: (crosstalk) too that's interesting in this one is that stemming from a policy  
38 currently I guess the program that we use to decide if we're going to use synthetic turf is  
39 that we set up a testing system for the synthetic turf that has to meet standards that are set  
40 by the Federal or local government, that meet the environmental whatever for land and all  
41 those kinds of things that we're testing for. You can start to get and develop, I guess, the  
42 policy or the program that supports the policy to start stating that on a case-by-case basis

1 if we do consider this that we do have these things in place that—instead of us trying to  
2 figure out what is the best because, as we discussed, it is changing. The material is  
3 changing. They're making it more environmentally friendly. Every time, they have to  
4 show us these test results that it passes.

5  
6 Vice Chair Knopper: Criteria for evaluation?

7  
8 Mr. Jensen: Right. I think that's where the last one comes into play. It is kind of like the  
9 out that we're basically making up. It's not a really definitive policy, but it is considered  
10 on a case-by-case basis. Under that policy, it would have these steps of what you would  
11 do to determine what the best scenario is for what you would do there.

12  
13 Commissioner Reckdahl: How does this affect our actions? Obviously when you put a  
14 soccer field in, it would change whether the surface is natural or synthetic. It wouldn't  
15 change the number of fields we'd need, would it? Are we trying to say ...

16  
17 Mr. de Geus: Yeah.

18  
19 Chair Lauing: It could over the long term.

20  
21 Commissioner Reckdahl: Are we saying that if we don't have synthetic, we have to have  
22 more soccer fields?

23  
24 Commissioner Hetterly: I don't think we're saying that.

25  
26 Mr. de Geus: There's significantly more hours of use on a synthetic field, so it's less ...

27  
28 Commissioner Hetterly: By adopting a policy about whether we're pro or con synthetic  
29 turf, that's not also adopting a policy that we want more soccer fields, therefore ...

30  
31 Mr. de Geus: No, not necessarily.

32  
33 Commissioner Reckdahl: If you want to maintain the same number of games per week  
34 played on Palo Alto fields, then you would have to have more fields.

35  
36 Mr. de Geus: There's less capacity. If you have no synthetic turf, just say as an example,  
37 there's less capacity than ...

38  
39 Commissioner Reckdahl: This is ...

40  
41 Mr. de Geus: It has an impact. Next?

1 Chair Lauing: No policy on that.

2  
3 Mr. de Geus: I get a sense of what we might do there, what we might bring back.

4  
5 Commissioner Hetterly: I have a question on that just really quick. This third bullet,  
6 building an all natural turf system with enhanced drainage, irrigation and turf grass that  
7 can support intensive play by organized sports, is there such a thing?

8  
9 Mr. Anderson: Yeah. Every field aims for that. It's really about investing in it and  
10 making it as robust as possible. If you are playing on a field with inadequate drainage,  
11 for example, it will underperform, wear out more quickly and be less safe. If you were to  
12 invest in it and put in the right drain system, a more modern irrigation system and  
13 perhaps a more robust maintenance program, it would be enhanced and better, safer.

14  
15 Mr. Jensen: Most of the turf fields that we have in the parks weren't really built for high-  
16 use sports activities. They were built for people to go out and casually play on. If we  
17 wanted to increase the capacity of those, then we'd have to increase the amount of money  
18 that we'd have to spend on those because we'd have to rebuild them again with the  
19 framework of a sports field not just an area of grass so someone can go kick a ball  
20 around, which would help to expand the usability of those as far as our sports fields go.  
21 Of course, they could still be used as they were before, as passive play areas. On the  
22 weekends when you wanted to have soccer games there, you could have them there. You  
23 could have more. You could have them for longer periods of time, because your  
24 infrastructure is built to hold that capacity. Right now, most of them aren't which puts a  
25 lot of burden on Daren and his team because they're trying to maintain those fields at the  
26 level that we want them to be, but it doesn't really have the infrastructure to really do that  
27 stuff.

28  
29 Commissioner Hetterly: That, it seems to me, is the most compelling reason why we  
30 would want to consider these questions as why we would want to consider creating a  
31 policy around these questions. If in fact the Commission were to come around and say  
32 we all agree about Bullet Number 3 being the direction we should go, then we definitely  
33 want a policy in the Master Plan that would help support funding for this investment  
34 because it would be a significant investment.

35  
36 Mr. Anderson: I should point out they're not mutually exclusive of course. You can  
37 enhance your natural grass fields and still do whatever you want with the synthetic ones  
38 and add more. They're not mutually exclusive.

39  
40 Commissioner Hetterly: Maybe the question that we're dodging by focusing on the type  
41 of turf is really do we want to expand our sports fields inventory and/or capacity. Do we  
42 need to play longer on the fields that we have and do we need new fields? I think we

1 keep always saying the data says we don't need new fields, and MIG keeps saying you  
2 need new fields.

3  
4 Mr. Jensen: I think too in terms of new fields that you're saying the new fields also  
5 encompasses retrofitting the current fields that we have just to have the infrastructure that  
6 will take more of a pounding.

7  
8 Mr. Anderson: Part of this analysis that we're talking about with the synthetic versus  
9 natural would naturally include the fact that we have inadequate rest periods for our  
10 existing natural grass fields. We do that so we can increase capacity. The result of that is  
11 poorer conditions. If you expand the rest periods, you have a better quality field. We see  
12 that time and time again when we happen to get windows long enough to properly restore  
13 and re-grow turf. When they're shrunk, we see the reverse. If you had more fields, you  
14 could in theory sustain the same amount of play in better conditions with longer rest  
15 periods. What I'm getting at is that would be one element of many in this discussion on  
16 synthetic versus natural, and inform all of those policy discussions.

17  
18 Chair Lauing: There is a separate policy on fields that there's a recommendation in here  
19 on that as well, which would obviously impact that whole area even more significantly.  
20 Can we move to dogs?

21  
22 Mr. Jensen: Sure. This one already has—Jen may have ...

23  
24 Commissioner Hetterly: Where does that leave us? What is our next step on the turf  
25 question?

26  
27 Chair Lauing: Staff has to decide ...

28  
29 Mr. de Geus: What I heard—we have to think about this and discuss it—this idea of  
30 building a more rigorous, robust turf management from the natural grass systems is  
31 something that would be good.

32  
33 Commissioner Reckdahl: You still can't get the same capacity as artificial turf.

34  
35 Mr. de Geus: No.

36  
37 Commissioner Reckdahl: If you wanted to get rid of our (inaudible) turf fields, you'd  
38 need more soccer fields to keep the same capacity?

39  
40 Mr. de Geus: Right. I'm not sure I would—say that last part again?  
41

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: If you converted artificial turf fields to natural turf, you would  
2 need additional playing areas to keep the same capacity.

3  
4 Mr. Anderson: That's right.

5  
6 Mr. de Geus: What I also heard was we'd get a lot more information about synthetic turf  
7 to have a specific policy that would guide whether we should add more synthetic turf or  
8 get rid of some of the synthetic turf.

9  
10 Commissioner Moss: I would like to see more synthetic turf that's environmentally  
11 sensitive and that covers all the health concerns.

12  
13 Mr. de Geus: If it can be done, right.

14  
15 Commissioner Moss: I would see a healthy mix of natural and synthetic on a case-by-  
16 case basis. If you have two incredibly good alternatives, a really, really good synthetic  
17 turf and a really, really good natural turf, that would be my policy. (crosstalk)

18  
19 Chair Lauing: The answer is that you need to come back to us with a bit more  
20 information.

21  
22 Mr. de Geus: I think around synthetic turf, it's probably as someone said—I think it was  
23 Peter—around some set of standards and criteria for what it means to have an  
24 environmentally sustainable turf which (crosstalk) fully exist now. I know we're doing  
25 some work on it, but there's still questions even about the best products that are out there.

26  
27 Vice Chair Knopper: The criteria also would affect natural turf because you need a lot  
28 more water to maintain natural, so that's a sustainability issue. That would fall under the  
29 same kind of criteria. The only thing I'm thinking about too is this goes to your point  
30 about do we need more fields. Like, is that a policy? They're linked. If you're changing  
31 from synthetic to natural, they're completely linked, those two issues. Do you want more  
32 passive play? Like, can a family go to a park on a Saturday and actually have a picnic  
33 without getting a soccer ball kicked (crosstalk).

34  
35 Mr. de Geus: I haven't seen any data that convinces me that we should aggressively go  
36 out and be converting fields to synthetic turf. The user groups say they want more, and  
37 they want lights too. They want to play five days a week or seven days a week or  
38 whatever.

39  
40 Vice Chair Knopper: There's other people that use parks for different reasons besides  
41 organized sports.

1 Mr. de Geus: That' where we are, and I think that's where the (inaudible) is.

2  
3 Commissioner Reckdahl: We also need to talk to the users too.

4  
5 Mr. de Geus: We have.

6  
7 Commissioner Moss: They want four seasons.

8  
9 Mr. de Geus: They want four seasons.

10  
11 Commissioner Moss: They want to 10:00 p.m.

12  
13 Vice Chair Knopper: The whole place would be a (crosstalk).

14  
15 Chair Lauing: That's what I just said. There's a policy on that that we can review if we  
16 want. The recommendation from staff is that we maintain the existing policy which  
17 includes the limited, if we want to call that limited, non-seven days a week for practice  
18 times as a way of controlling the capacity for fields. That's an existing policy. Can we  
19 go to dogs?

20  
21 Mr. Jensen: Yes. This one too I hope that Daren chimes in a lot. Of these that we're  
22 going to review tonight, this one does have an ad hoc group that has been spending a lot  
23 of time on it. Really when you get down to the policy itself, address the need for more  
24 off-leash dog spaces throughout the City but continue to exclude off-leash dogs from  
25 open space preserves, would be what to review. The directions you could go would be to  
26 modify the City ordinance or park rules and regulations to exclude dogs leashed or  
27 unleashed from park playgrounds but to allow off-leash dogs in designated off-leash  
28 areas and maintaining the current policy of limiting dogs to enclosed, fenced areas but  
29 funding additional and improved dog parks. Again, this is what, I think, the ad hoc  
30 committee for this has been trying to tackle, but what one of these policies would be the  
31 best. Of course, now we have that you have to have your dog on a leash and if it's not, it  
32 has to be in a dog park, fenced area, is our current policy for that. Do we want to keep  
33 and maintain that or do we want to expand it to having these off-leash dog areas? Or a  
34 combination of them both.

35  
36 Mr. Anderson: I'd be glad to chime in, Peter. Thanks for that. The ad hoc committee, as  
37 you know, I think I've given you several updates on this. There's not a lot new from our  
38 last update. A tremendous amount of work and research and analysis and thinking has  
39 already gone into this, much like we are talking about doing for synthetic versus natural.  
40 I think we're at a good stage. We're really close to being able to come back to the  
41 Commission, I believe. We've got a meeting with the ad hoc tomorrow to talk it through.  
42 We've got something I'm hoping to share with them. I haven't had their feedback yet, so

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1 it's not complete. I think it's the potential basis for something robust. You could say, I  
2 think, this is a feasible plan that says here's a policy regarding dog parks. Let's go with  
3 dedicated sites only. We have an equal and fair distribution across the City, and it'll  
4 answer some of the questions on which way to go policy-wise, is my hope. I hope to  
5 bring that back to you real soon pending our discussion tomorrow with the ad hoc. We'll  
6 see where it goes from there.

7  
8 Chair Lauing: Which seems like in the context of this Master Plan planning, we could  
9 come up with a new policy or an existing policy, but new information.

10  
11 Mr. de Geus: Daren, is it fair to say that it's basically the second bullet point here? It's  
12 not to try and change the ordinance but to fund additional and improved dog parks across  
13 the City.

14  
15 Mr. Anderson: It would. The first bullet point is sort of independent from all this, that's  
16 keeping the dogs out of playgrounds. That would kind of be its own park rule and  
17 regulation. It's not affiliated necessarily with dog parks or off-leash areas. It's just  
18 whether leashed or not dogs in playgrounds have been a problem, frequent complaints  
19 from visitors. No specific rule. I think it's a very easy thing to amend in our park rules  
20 and regulations. It's really separate from this, but a policy consideration for the  
21 Commission to think about. Now is an opportune time to wrap it into our discussions, to  
22 say does that sound right, should we be precluding them from playgrounds. I would  
23 encourage that. It's been something I've received a lot of complaints about for many  
24 years. I think it's a good idea for a number of reasons. Separate, again, from this  
25 discussion on where you should have off-leash and whether it should be fenced or  
26 unfenced.

27  
28 Chair Lauing: Commissioner Hetterly, you had a comment?

29  
30 Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah. I was just going to clarify that I don't think that the ad  
31 hoc committee has really addressed in any full way whether or not we should modify the  
32 leash law to allow off-leash dogs in unfenced areas anywhere. That's on here because  
33 that's something that we really need to get a sense from the Commission as a whole  
34 whether that's something worth pursuing. Is it a dead-on-arrival kind of idea? Is it a  
35 great idea that we should figure out whether it can work here? They're doing it in  
36 Mountain View. I think it takes—that would be a really hard and controversial choice to  
37 go with that policy to change that leash law. It would require a lot of leg work to prepare.  
38 I think it doesn't make sense to spend a lot of staff energy on it until we have even a straw  
39 poll or a general idea from the Commission whether that's something we're interested in  
40 or not interested in. Do you want to add to that?

1 Vice Chair Knopper: No. I totally agree. The only other issue is policy direction. Open  
2 space still excluded, that's not even on the table.

3  
4 Chair Lauing: It's possible at the next meeting you would come back with a report and  
5 we can sound off about that issue that you just raised?

6  
7 Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah. Maybe it makes sense to push the whole thing off,  
8 because with that report we may all conclude that's good, we don't need to go further.  
9 We may say ehh.

10  
11 Mr. de Geus: I'm curious. Is there anyone on the Commission that thinks modifying the  
12 leash law is a good idea?

13  
14 Vice Chair Knopper: I do.

15  
16 Commissioner Hetterly: I would love to have no leash law for my dog. I think it would  
17 be a very challenging policy to promote in Palo Alto.

18  
19 Mr. de Geus: I'm just curious where ...

20  
21 Vice Chair Knopper: I don't think challenging should preclude you from (crosstalk).

22  
23 Commissioner Hetterly: I agree.

24  
25 Vice Chair Knopper: Anything worthwhile is usually hard.

26  
27 Commissioner Reckdahl: I think it's a bad idea. I think it's a dodge. We're trying to get  
28 out of providing enough dog parks, and this is just a way of dodging the responsibility. I  
29 think we should just bite it off and put the dog parks and make them dog parks and have  
30 people parks.

31  
32 Vice Chair Knopper: (crosstalk)

33  
34 Chair Lauing: We'll tackle that one again next month.

35  
36 Mr. Jensen: The next one is restrooms. Again, I know that Daren has been working on  
37 this as well. This is just on one slide because the policy direction is now just associated  
38 in the verbiage of what is being recommended to address the need of restrooms  
39 throughout the City except for alternatives in adjacent buildings or public facilities or site  
40 is under 1 acre. This starts to look at the size of the park and giving criteria to where we  
41 should have restroom facilities. Also, it looks at if other restroom facilities are around,

1 then a park of 1-acre size can be precluded if there's already facilities in adjacent  
2 (crosstalk).

3  
4 Commissioner Reckdahl: How many parks do we have that are 1 acre or above?

5  
6 Mr. Anderson: That's the process I just started, seeing where we've got parks, which ones  
7 fit this criteria, how many would we need, and do they make sense. I just preliminarily  
8 went through it last week. I want to do that in a more robust fashion. I think it would  
9 behoove us to have a couple of Commissioners join me so I can walk them through that,  
10 kind of run my thinking past them, because not all of them make sense to me. I think it  
11 would be great to have a couple of Commissioners look at that with me. I think it would  
12 be a short-term thing. I don't think this would be like the dog parks where it goes on such  
13 a long time. I think we can knock this out in one or two meetings.

14  
15 Mr. de Geus: A restroom subcommittee.

16  
17 Chair Lauing: How come everybody's hand didn't go up? Just for our one new  
18 Commissioner, I just want to point out that every time we've done an individual park  
19 review in my six years, it has been very controversial when we wanted to put in  
20 bathrooms where they weren't. Everybody except the people that live around there want  
21 bathrooms. People that live around there don't want bathrooms. I just want to point out  
22 this is not a noncontroversial issue that feedback comes back from the surveys and we do  
23 gung-ho. I don't have a position on that; I'm just saying that's been the past feedback  
24 we've gotten.

25  
26 Commissioner Moss: Why did you limit this just to restrooms? In the discussion that  
27 you had with the people at the stakeholders, they talked about every park having a loop  
28 walking path or a bench or an open lawn or bunch grass or some kind of activity or some  
29 shade. I was just wondering why—is that separate?

30  
31 Mr. Jensen: It's separate.

32  
33 Commissioner Reckdahl: I don't think you want to bite all those off at one time.

34  
35 Commissioner Moss: Why did they bunch them altogether?

36  
37 Mr. Jensen: I think it was mostly for the stakeholder conversation and so they could have  
38 an understanding of—in the stakeholder thing it was referred to as park amenities or it  
39 had another heading on there that you could consider all of these. It's a reference size.  
40 For our discussion tonight and because of time constraints and because the restroom and  
41 those things definitely ranks higher as far as the controversial thing where you get pro  
42 and con for either one. This is the one that's definitely going to generate the most

1 discussion that really needs the most kind of feedback. I don't know if you want to go  
2 with Daren's suggestion. I don't know if there's Commissioners here that want to discuss  
3 that issue more. I see a lot of excited faces.

4  
5 Mr. Anderson: If not, I'm glad to do the analysis just with staff and then bring it to you  
6 and walk you through it. I'm glad to do that.

7  
8 Mr. de Geus: I think it is controversial in terms of actually implementing it because the  
9 local neighborhood of the park it definitely will be an issue. This is one where I think we  
10 heard a lot of feedback from the community. They want to see more restrooms.

11  
12 Commissioner Reckdahl: The Council too.

13  
14 Mr. de Geus: The question for us really now is where and how and how many and a  
15 policy that speaks to that.

16  
17 Commissioner Hetterly: It's not cheap either. Sorry, Daren, I cannot help you with this.  
18 I would throw in my two cents that I think it might be worth considering some kind of  
19 usage metric for the park. Parks that get a lot of use by young kids might move higher on  
20 a priority list for bathroom consideration.

21  
22 Mr. Anderson: I have done that in my preliminary examination. For example, Esther  
23 Clark is 22 acres, but there's no amenities at all at that site, very little use. It just didn't  
24 make sense to put a restroom. My preliminary recommendation, that for example would  
25 not have one based on the criteria you just mentioned.

26  
27 Commissioner Reckdahl: Do we know how many people visit each park?

28  
29 Mr. Anderson: No. The ones where we have data are Foothills Park and the Baylands.  
30 We have trail counters, official entrances rather than porous parks where you can enter  
31 every single way. It's not to say that we don't have fairly reasonable, anecdotal evidence.  
32 We go to Magical Bridge; I can tell you that's our most popular playground. I think I can  
33 get your agreement for that.

34  
35 Mr. de Geus: Bathrooms are (inaudible).

36  
37 Chair Lauing: (inaudible) this policy is going to be something like increase bathrooms in  
38 Palo Alto parks according to the following criteria, with staff judgment on exceptions.  
39 Something like that.

40  
41 Commissioner Reckdahl: I don't think we want a blanket statement that thou shalt put in  
42 ... I think thou shalt consider would be reasonable.

1  
2 Mr. Anderson: That was my kickback as well to MIG. When we had this discussion, I  
3 just thought that blanket statement, I can already think of several parks where that's not  
4 appropriate. MIG and Lauren in particular had said the risk you do is you weaken it and  
5 allow more flex when we come do to a restoration project at Monroe or wherever the  
6 park is that fits this 1-acre size that would normally have one. You would open a window  
7 to say, "I guess there's mitigating factors. Let's not do one there," was MIG's concern. I  
8 thought it was a good one to consider at least.

9  
10 Chair Lauing: There are mitigating factors. If you have a 22-acre park that you say we  
11 don't need it because nobody's there.

12  
13 Mr. Anderson: I agree.

14  
15 Mr. Jensen: The last one we have to review tonight is (inaudible) service areas. The  
16 definition of that is your access to a particular amenity. We talk about this map that I'm  
17 showing you up on screen now which is the quarter and half-mile distances to access  
18 each park. This tries to divvy out certain experiences and the distance that they are away  
19 as a way of broadcasting those amenities across the system. This deals again with  
20 distance, and it is adopting the following services areas as a desired maximum distance  
21 between a resident's home and the nearest park or recreational facility in order of priority.

22  
23 Commissioner Reckdahl: Can you switch back to the map for a second?

24  
25 Mr. Jensen: Sure.

26  
27 Commissioner Reckdahl: A quarter mile is really short.

28  
29 Mr. Jensen: A quarter mile, yes. I will preface it by saying that unlike the old school  
30 maps before—we've talked about them before—this map is a lot more accurate because  
31 it's actually showing how you would access the areas. Before they would just basically  
32 draw a perfect quarter-mile circle around each park and that would represent the quarter  
33 mile. We know from accessing it that that's not the real case. The brown is showing the  
34 quarter mile; the orange is showing half mile. Of course, the items in the white are the  
35 areas of the City that fall out of those areas.

36  
37 Commissioner Moss: There was also brought up that if you put more bike paths and  
38 pedestrian-friendly routes that you could expand that half mile because it would take you  
39 less time to get there than walking the half mile or quarter mile.

40  
41 Mr. de Geus: Other comments?

1 Commissioner Hetterly: I'll make comments.

2  
3 Vice Chair Knopper: I was going to ...

4  
5 Commissioner Hetterly: Go ahead.

6  
7 Vice Chair Knopper: I feel that we've had a lot of feedback with regard to dog parks and  
8 one mile. When you're going to walk your dog, to walk roundtrip 2 miles to come to a  
9 dog park without getting in a car, because we want to try to discourage that and you can't  
10 put most dogs on a bike, it's too far. We know this, that there's a shortage of dog  
11 facilities. We'll address it, but in this particular policy, I think that's too far.

12  
13 Mr. Jensen: The one difficult thing about that is I think that when you start to get below  
14 the 1 mile just by looking at the map there, that you start to state that every park needs a  
15 dog park. That's then where ...

16  
17 Vice Chair Knopper: I know.

18  
19 Mr. Jensen: ... the idea of the 1 mile gives you a further distribution that's less, but at  
20 least you have them around and it's not in every park. I think that's kind of the real thing  
21 to look at here, that these distances from the mile below is these things will probably  
22 appear at most parks, while the mile and above is more about distribution through the  
23 system and not proximity.

24  
25 Mr. de Geus: It's 1 mile or less, right? One mile is the standard ...

26  
27 Commissioner Hetterly: The max.

28  
29 Mr. de Geus: ... the max. Most people are below that.

30  
31 Chair Lauing: This is the one where you're just going to have to spend 2 miles on gas.  
32 It's just the usage for walking the dog. It is, if you want to go to a dog park.

33  
34 Vice Chair Knopper: You can (crosstalk).

35  
36 Chair Lauing: There's just not enough land to put that many dog parks in. It's just that  
37 it's a non-starter.

38  
39 Vice Chair Knopper: I know. I just thought I'd mention that.

40  
41 Chair Lauing: I mean, one seemed short to me for that reason.

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: How many dog parks do we need if we wanted 1-mile  
2 coverage? Have we looked at that?

3  
4 Mr. de Geus: Daren's done some heavy lifting on this that he's going to share with the  
5 subcommittee tomorrow.

6  
7 Mr. Anderson: I hadn't looked at that particular park yet. What I really looked at is  
8 distribution north and south. It was very difficult finding those locations. Redrawing it  
9 to make sure I—pulling a string with a pencil to try to hit the 1 mile for every spot, I'd be  
10 glad to do it to see where it would shake out.

11  
12 Commissioner Hetterly: (crosstalk) we had something like 33 neighborhood parks,  
13 somewhere around there. They don't serve everybody with the half-mile radius. If you  
14 took half of those maybe or in a mile radius, you would need half as many to serve a mile  
15 radius very roughly, then you're talking about 15 dog parks.

16  
17 Commissioner Reckdahl: Actually it would be a square.

18  
19 Commissioner Hetterly: They're a little bit apples and oranges on the distances.

20  
21 Commissioner Reckdahl: Even 1 mile is going to be challenging.

22  
23 Chair Lauing: We need to revisit this one too as opposed to just signing off on it right  
24 now?

25  
26 Commissioner Hetterly: I don't want to sign off on it.

27  
28 Chair Lauing: That's what I'm saying.

29  
30 Mr. de Geus: No, we're looking for feedback, where do you see the big issues.  
31 Obviously the dog park one but other ...

32  
33 Commissioner Reckdahl: The community garden is one that also 1 mile is going to be  
34 challenging.

35  
36 Commissioner Hetterly: I agree with that. I think the bottom three ...

37  
38 Mr. de Geus: Do we even want a policy on this?

39  
40 Commissioner Hetterly: ... I don't really want in there at all for a (inaudible) radius.  
41

1 Mr. de Geus: The consultants were saying the pure distance to a park is not sufficient.  
2 We'd need more specificity about the experience that one is having in a park or can have  
3 at a park coupled with distance is a more meaningful policy.  
4

5 Commissioner Hetterly: I just think we're already struggling to not meet the half-mile  
6 goal for any kind of public park experience. Adding in additional requirements that we  
7 can't meet is (inaudible).  
8

9 Chair Lauing: I think dropping those last three can make some sense, in answer to Rob's  
10 question. Go ahead.  
11

12 Commissioner Hetterly: Just to pile on. Dog parks, community gardens, picnickers are a  
13 very small subset of the full resident population, or at least a subset. While you can  
14 justify it for any kind of public park near your house, it's hard to justify specialized uses  
15 that that (inaudible) house consistently.  
16

17 Mr. de Geus: (inaudible) make sense. This isn't one ... We did have full ownership over  
18 these.  
19

20 Commissioner Reckdahl: What were we thinking of with play experiences? We were  
21 thinking of parklets or something?  
22

23 Mr. Jensen: That would be either playgrounds or like a natural play area. There's really  
24 not like a specific, mostly playgrounds. The playgrounds, though, can take on different  
25 types of things. I mean, you can have access to a creek, and that can be a natural play  
26 area. The play experience is a broad definition of being able to be outside play. Most of  
27 the issues are to your standard playground.  
28

29 Commissioner Reckdahl: We're very close to a creek.  
30

31 Commissioner Hetterly: I'd definitely not want a playground within a quarter mile of  
32 every single house.  
33

34 Vice Chair Knopper: If one of our policy points from 2 hours ago was acquisition, if we  
35 are actively looking to buy a corner lot, whatever, land that comes available to the City,  
36 then that helps us achieve the goal of whatever the acreage per resident policy that we  
37 want to try to achieve. Maybe that fulfills instead of—I think this is a very tricky policy  
38 point, the service area.  
39

40 Mr. Jensen: I think too what the consultant is also trying to get at here is if you do add  
41 land, then what amenities make that park usable. Is it a playground and a place to kick a  
42 ball and a place to have a picnic and a place to sit outside on a bench to enjoy nature?

1  
2 Commissioner Moss: A dog park.

3  
4 Mr. Jensen: And a dog park.

5  
6 Commissioner Moss: And a field for ...

7  
8 Mr. Jensen: It starts to—once you acquire that space, what do you want to put in there?  
9 It also starts to speak to the size of the space. Is it a little parklet? Do we want to spend  
10 that amount if you're only going to get—you're not going to get all these things; you're  
11 only going to get one of them to do. Is that really beneficial in the system just to add  
12 space if it's not really providing an opportunity to do things even though it may just  
13 provide the opportunity to be outside and be surrounded by nature? I think that's the  
14 other thing that they're trying to ...

15  
16 Commissioner Moss: This is my personal biggest frustration. I know going to that City  
17 Council yesterday, knowing how desperate everybody is for land for housing and for all  
18 kinds of services, and we're just one of those groups looking for land. You're not going  
19 to get much land. If you're going to get land, you're going to get a tiny parcel. How do  
20 you put a dog park in everyone one of those little parcels? It's not going to happen. If we  
21 put it in here, are we setting an unrealistic expectation? That's my biggest fear. I want to  
22 be fair. I want to be fair to all the stakeholders. There were 12, 15 stakeholders. I want  
23 to be fair, but I don't want to set unrealistic expectations. We're not going to have 15 dog  
24 parks.

25  
26 Commissioner Hetterly: That being said, I think it's not enough to just say we want to  
27 have more community gardens and more dog parks. I think we have to figure out a more  
28 compelling way to include it in the Master Plan that maybe has some ...

29  
30 Mr. Jensen: There is a step that is beyond this that is—the next step in this process is  
31 actually creating the site-specific plans. The site-specific plans will start to call out areas  
32 of—mostly they'll look at the park and maintain what's in the park, but then they'll start to  
33 locate a dog park or a community garden or restroom or all those things that aren't there  
34 now to distribute them across. On that specific level, we can start to review that at the  
35 time when you have like specific parks to start looking at as far as the project goes. It's  
36 like maybe there isn't a need to have a policy doing that. We set a distribution across the  
37 system with doing those specific plans. There is another layer, I guess, of this that's  
38 going to talk about specific sites of things.

39  
40 Commissioner Hetterly: Can I just throw out one more issue around that first bullet, the  
41 public park or preserve within a half mile or quarter mile preferred? That is my personal  
42 preference, to retain that current policy that's in the Comp Plan. It has been suggested to

1 me—I throw this out for other folks to think about how compelling it is—whether it  
2 makes some sense to, instead of a geographic radius, consider somehow residential  
3 density in a certain area. Instead of targeting your parks to where there's the gap in that  
4 quarter-mile mark, you target your parks to where more of the people are.  
5

6 Mr. de Geus: Like some of the maps (inaudible).  
7

8 Mr. Jensen: I'll just bring up the map that you're talking about. This is the inverse of the  
9 quarter and half-mile map. The blue areas are the areas that are lacking park space. The  
10 little dialog boxes that have been put up there, now you can start to see that Section E has  
11 the highest population density. Section D has the highest population. Area B has the  
12 lowest population density. I think what this is starting to tell us is that if you were going  
13 to go out to acquire parkland, these would be the places you would look. How we would  
14 prioritize that is by looking at population density. You would say that "E" would be your  
15 primary zone that you would start looking at first to acquire parkland in that area. This is  
16 now starting to feed some information. You can see, though, like in Area B the purple  
17 little building in there is signifying a school. Maybe the tactic is, instead of trying to buy  
18 land there, to try to form some type of better agreement with the School District that  
19 allows the use of their school grounds to be used on non-school times as a park. That  
20 would start to fulfill some of what we want to have there. Maybe the City and the School  
21 District work together, and the City starts to—maybe there's a playground that's built on  
22 the playing field that's out there—give it more amenities. That's taken care of by the  
23 City, but the community is allowed to use it as parkland. This starts to look at what  
24 you're saying, where would be the most optimal place to really actually start looking for  
25 based on population density and the lack of ...  
26

27 Commissioner Hetterly: Council struggles a lot with this concept of having a minimum  
28 required acreage, or several Council Members feel like that. How are we ever going to  
29 achieve that? I think it might help them retain this kind of a service area radius if it was  
30 coupled with a policy with a priority to the highest density areas or something to that  
31 effect.  
32

33 Commissioner Reckdahl: One of the things that bothers me, though, is if you're just  
34 saying by radius, that may force people to put a bunch of tiny little parks everywhere. Is  
35 a tiny park that's a quarter mile from a house better than a bigger park a half-mile away?  
36 There's some critical mass that you need for a park. If it's too small, is it usable at all?  
37

38 Mr. Jensen: I think that's what MIG would like to pinpoint. We talked about this, I  
39 think, in the original matrix. They would like guidance from us of the amenities that we  
40 think are vital to make a park useful. I think that is more important to us because of the  
41 cost of land. If you're going to buy someone's corner lot, does that make a lot of sense to  
42 do if we can't get amenities there and it just becomes a green lawn space that ...

1  
2 Vice Chair Knopper: That costs millions.  
3

4 Mr. Jensen: ... doesn't have a lot of use to it. I think that goes back to they start to talk  
5 about these things because they want to incorporate that. If you're going to build a new  
6 park, then you should have at least these minimum things in it to make it usable. If you  
7 level the house and turf the whole area, it gives you a park there, but what is it actually  
8 giving you as far as the amenity goes to use?  
9

10 Chair Lauing: We can definitely take action on that through one of the items.  
11

12 Commissioner Reckdahl: Over at Fayette Park in Mountain View, they knocked down  
13 two houses and that is really used. It's very popular.  
14

15 Mr. Jensen: If you start to look at that little park, they start to cram—there's a lot of stuff  
16 in it. They've got a playground going in. They've got a lot of equipment. They've got a  
17 turf area. They've got pathways. It is a tiny little thing, but it is highly used. One of the  
18 main reasons why it's highly used is because it does offer the opportunity to do all these  
19 other things. You draw in multiple user groups which makes it a successful space instead  
20 of not having anything designated there. Like I said, mow the houses down and just plant  
21 grass. That (inaudible) give us what we're looking for as far as usability goes.  
22

23 Commissioner Moss: Are you talking about the one on Del Medio?  
24

25 Commissioner Hetterly: Yeah.  
26

27 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm sorry, Del Medio Park.  
28

29 Commissioner Moss: That is incredible, how busy it is. They just knocked down two  
30 little houses among huge apartment buildings with a lot of little kids.  
31

32 Mr. Jensen: If we were having the conversation too about synthetic turf, that would  
33 probably be a good place to use synthetic turf. Their little grass area is so small, it just is  
34 beat to dirt. That's just about preferences of how to use synthetic turf and what it's used  
35 for. Personally I feel that if you're going to have big open turf areas, I think they should  
36 be turf because that's where you want to spend your money. If you have these little tiny  
37 spaces where the grass never lives, then that usually is a good spot for synthetic turf.  
38

39 Chair Lauing; Commissioner Hetterly, was that your last point?  
40

41 Commissioner Hetterly: Yes.  
42

1 Chair Lauing: That concludes this section unless we want to go into other things. I'd like  
2 to get the speakers to have their comments now that we've had this. The first speaker is  
3 Shani Kleinhaus.  
4

5 Shani Kleinhaus: Thank you. That was a very interesting discussion. Thank you for  
6 everything you've been talking about. I'm Shani Kleinhaus. I speak as a resident and for  
7 some of the environmental organizations, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and the  
8 Sierra Club. I want to say something about little parks. There is a little empty lot next to  
9 my house that had a house that burned out years ago. That place is so busy with children.  
10 There's no grass, there's no nothing. They build teepees. They're creative. They do stuff.  
11 I don't even know where they come from because we don't have that many children in our  
12 neighborhood. A little empty lot with nothing, not plastic turf, no nothing are valuable.  
13 This is an aside; I hope I get to the things I really wanted to talk about. In the policy  
14 section on the first slide you looked at, there was nothing about protection of nature.  
15 Commissioner Hetterly mentioned it later, but I think it needs to start from protection.  
16 Somewhere resource conservation plans such as you guys mentioned for Foothill Park  
17 and for the Baylands does need to find their place. They have to go all the way back to  
18 plan framework and definitions. I found that that piece was missing just as  
19 Commissioner Hetterly expressed. I think that the issue of efficiency is also somewhat of  
20 a problem. I think it would be good to look at the Urban Forest Master Plan where they  
21 look at diversity. Diversity cannot always be efficient to get to the lowest common  
22 denominator when you save water on everything and you don't allow a few trees with a  
23 little bit more water in some areas. It's good to look at it through ingenuity. It's good to  
24 look at diversity and not always just try to get to the lower common denominator which  
25 this is leading us into intentionally or unintentionally. Under Goal 4, integrate nature,  
26 natural system and ecological principles throughout Palo Alto, I think that the discussions  
27 that I've been through—I've been to every one of them, I think—people really wanted to  
28 see frogs in the parks. They wanted to see nature in terms of animals. They did not talk  
29 about sustainability so much. Not that it's not important, but it wasn't the focus. The  
30 focus was preservation of nature in parks that are outside of the urban core and some of  
31 the urban core and integration of nature into the urban parks. That was very, very clear in  
32 all the different meetings. It was a high priority for people in every survey that Parks and  
33 Recreation did. I think looking at that, from what I look at the four policies, first I would  
34 separate preservation from integration and kind of define where is what. Then look at the  
35 policies, and only one of them actually has to do with nature. The other ones are about  
36 access to different programs. That's a great thing, but it doesn't belong in this. "4.A"  
37 does not belong here. "4.C," "D" and "E" are also not part of this. They're part of  
38 sustainability and other things. What should be here is really policies about integration of  
39 the Urban Forest Master Plan, about resilient ecosystem which is a document. I just gave  
40 one of them to Peter. Maybe that would help. I think the protection of nature and  
41 looking at policies that actually have to do with nature is really, really important. Thank  
42 you.



1  
2 Chair Lauing: Thank you. The next speaker is Mad Huri [phonetic].  
3

4 Mad Huri: Good evening. I'm here again. I'm sure you guys are bored of seeing me at  
5 this point. Again, I'm here to ask you for dog parks, particularly in north Palo Alto.  
6 Some of the discussion was very encouraging. To even consider 15 dog parks, I never  
7 thought I'd hear something like that. Even I don't expect you to come up with 15 dog  
8 parks. If you can come up with five or three more, certainly in north Palo Alto which is  
9 north of Oregon, we would be very, very grateful. There are larger parks here that are  
10 quite underutilized at least by the local residents. Parks like Eleanor Pardee. Parks like  
11 Rinconada. There is usage but maybe it's worthwhile to see who it is that's using it. Not  
12 that I have any problems with anybody else, I just want a place to take my dog to play, I  
13 and lots and lots of other people in Crescent Park. Heritage Park, while it's very used,  
14 there is the area behind the museum, between the museum and the apartments, that  
15 nobody uses. It's shaded; there's no sun there. It's just empty. All we need is a fence and  
16 a gate and a trashcan. Please do something about this. We would really like you to make  
17 some progress and put in a few dog parks this side of the town. Thank you.  
18

19 Chair Lauing: Thank you. We'll do a status and process check. If people are motivated  
20 to go on with more policy debates, we can pick a couple more, if they're hot buttons. Or  
21 we can do what we had talked about of just kind of give feedback on all of these, and  
22 then pick it up at the next meeting after you do the review. Any views?  
23

24 Commissioner Reckdahl: I think I would prefer the feedback. Do we have time to go  
25 through the slides on the survey results?  
26

27 Mr. de Geus: We do. They are preliminary, so we don't want to spend a lot of time on  
28 them.  
29

30 Commissioner Reckdahl: Even if it's like 5 or 10 minutes, I think it'd be useful to at least  
31 see a first peek at that. I think that might be more fruitful than going over more policies.  
32

33 Chair Lauing: Have you got those slides?  
34

35 Mr. Jensen: Yes. There was one last slide as far as next steps go. Next time we will  
36 again focus on the policies and the minor revisions to the goals. We will also be looking  
37 at a Master Plan outline next time. Those are more next meeting, but the general overall  
38 that we are doing a City Council study session in May, review of the draft plan in the  
39 summer, and then approval of the plan in the fall is the general schedule for the Master  
40 Plan. We'll just quickly go through the three maps that were put together, these concept  
41 maps. The first one we've already discussed which is the park service areas. The second  
42 slide of that (inaudible) same slide, starts to talk about the density of the specific areas

1 and the areas that we would want to concentrate on first as far as park acquisition goes.  
2 That is the service area plan. The next two plans which do reflect each other, the purple  
3 line in the plan is talking about the connections or pathways between parks to start to  
4 create the linking to them. If you wanted to extend the park system by making the link or  
5 access to them easier and more connective, then these would be the pathways that we  
6 would look at to do that. The paths from west to east, from the Baylands to the ridge  
7 trails, are those trails, basically the Bay to Ridge Trail system that is already currently  
8 established by our transportation plan using the (inaudible) as the east-west access. The  
9 north-south access are looking at our transportation plan and our bike plan and using  
10 those connections there. I will say that in the meeting with the stakeholders that Pathway  
11 Number 1 right now is following Cowper. The actual bike route is Bryant. They are  
12 going to make a modification to the plan and move Pathway 1 over a couple of blocks to  
13 align with the bike pathway there. The third plan is referred to as a pollinator trail. This  
14 mostly talks about habitat and linking habitat and creating the links there. Again, it  
15 follows the same pathways that are called out on the previous plan. These pathways do  
16 connect the parks together in a more linear way and expands the system in that respect. If  
17 you were going to enhance these pathways in the future, then this plan is also proposing  
18 incorporating nature, whatever that would be, either patches of milkweed for butterflies  
19 or you plant oak trees just along these to create a natural canopy habitat that would go  
20 throughout the City. This is something that really has never been done as far as a Master  
21 Plan goes, as far as making recommendations like this. It is kind of a cutting edge thing.  
22 The other things that are interesting to look at on this plan is that the tan areas are the  
23 areas in the Urban Forest Master Plan that designate where our urban forest, I guess, has  
24 the least amount of coverage. It's just looking kind of at those environmental factors that  
25 can be used to link the habitat corridors together. All of these are just kind of concept  
26 plans. Further discussion can be had. You can also see that—Rob will probably cringe  
27 that I'm bringing this up—there is a 3-foot rise of the waterline there in the City. For our  
28 purposes, if you were going to build yourself a gymnasium or a pool or a community  
29 center one day, then that line would probably mean something to you as far as building  
30 an amenity like that that would cost a lot, that maybe wouldn't be in that area where it is  
31 projected a 3-foot ocean rise.

32  
33 Chair Lauing: Where's that one?

34  
35 Mr. Jensen: That's like a pink dotted line.

36  
37 Vice Chair Knopper: See the dotted? All that's going to be under water.

38  
39 Commissioner Reckdahl: There's a lot of houses in that area, I see.

40  
41 Mr. Jensen: I can't say the water is going to get to that point. Obviously we'll try our  
42 hardest to make it stop doing that. Again, if you were going to invest millions of dollars

1 in a building over a long period of time, maybe the other areas of town it would behoove  
2 you to consider other than right there.

3  
4 Chair Lauing: A lot of water hazards on that new golf course.

5  
6 Vice Chair Knopper: You could be like the Netherlands and build a proper dike system.

7  
8 Mr. Jensen: I think that is actually something being considered right now by the Joint  
9 Powers actually.

10  
11 Vice Chair Knopper: As long as they look at the Netherlands versus New Orleans.

12  
13 Mr. Jensen: (crosstalk) build a levee all around it.

14  
15 Chair Lauing: Survey.

16  
17 Commissioner Reckdahl: The golf course has enough that even we had a 3-foot rise, the  
18 golf course would not be under water? We put enough dirt on there?

19  
20 Mr. de Geus: For what length of period? For the next 100 years?

21  
22 Commissioner Reckdahl: What is the minimum elevation of any part of the golf course  
23 after the renovation?

24  
25 Mr. de Geus: I'd have to look at the maps. It's several feet. No, that's not actually true.  
26 There is still some wet prone areas that will be very low actually.

27  
28 Mr. Anderson: More critical is the levees adjacent to that stopping the water from the  
29 creeks coming in, which are robust and high. More so once the JPA finishes their  
30 project.

31  
32 Commissioner Moss: Make sure on the bikeway thing that you add the San Francisco  
33 Bay Trail and the Stanford Perimeter Path as well as (inaudible).

34  
35 Mr. Jensen: That was brought up in the stakeholders meeting. MIG is working on  
36 adding a few more paths that aren't designated on this. The Bay Trail is definitely one of  
37 the main ones. The final thing that we have to look at tonight is just the preliminary  
38 results of the online challenge. It did close a few Fridays ago. In association with that,  
39 we did have the community meeting with that as well that provided the opportunity for  
40 people to come out to do the survey if they did not want to do it online. As we alluded to  
41 before, it seems that most people just did take it online and didn't really come to our  
42 community meeting. Of the 731 respondents, it broke down in this way: 605 of those

1 were from Palo Alto. It definitely, I think, captures the community at hand as far as the  
2 responses go. Other results, of the 46 who live in nearby communities, 9 described  
3 themselves as visitors, 48 own a business in Palo Alto, and 223 of those also work in Palo  
4 Alto. That was kind of the breakdown of the demographics of those that did do the  
5 survey. Of course, the survey was broken into the 12 areas of focus, divided into the  
6 three elements of the plan which were the parks, trails, open space and recreation  
7 facilities or recreational programs. In the survey, which you have all taken it and looked  
8 at it, you were asked to divvy up dollars between each of those three and then do a final  
9 one that brought the whole list together. In the bar graphs that I'm going to show you  
10 next, it gives three pieces of information. The first line item is the average allotment of  
11 dollars, who got the most dollars for which line item. The second one is what the  
12 percentage was of people that did the survey that used \$2 or more on a specific thing.  
13 The final one is the tally of who of the people that allocated money, they didn't allocate  
14 anything for that specific thing. You can see things like the dog park, number five there.  
15 You can see that 16 percent of those put multiple allotment of money, \$2 or more, on it,  
16 but 66 percent of the people taking the survey didn't put any money on that. That starts to  
17 tell you information that there is an organized, passionate group that will definitely spend  
18 that on there. The general population doesn't think that's a big deal, so they didn't put any  
19 money towards it at all. This one is the parks, trails and open space. It had the seven  
20 areas of focus that were reviewed, and this is how it ranked. The first one was enhancing  
21 comfort and making parks more welcoming. Integrating nature into parks was number  
22 two. Number three was distributing park activities and experience across the City. Four  
23 is expanding the system. Five, improving spaces and increased options for off-leash dog  
24 parks. Six was increase the variety of things to do in existing parks, and seven was  
25 improving accessibility with a full range of park and recreation opportunities. These are  
26 ranked per the percentage of the first line. If they got the most money out of the full  
27 group, then that's how they were ranked per this. It goes through the next two elements.  
28 This one is the recreation facilities. Improving and (inaudible) community centers ranked  
29 high. Enhancing capacity and quality of sports fields was number two. Distributing park  
30 and recreation activities and experience across the City is number three. Improving  
31 spaces, increase options for off-leash dog parks and increase the variety of things to do in  
32 existing parks, number five. Number six, increasing health and wellness opportunities in  
33 parks. Number seven, improving the accessibility of a full range of art and recreation  
34 opportunities. Of course, a few of the areas of focus came up in multiple ones of these.  
35 The dog park one as well as the accessibility, there was further discussion in the  
36 stakeholder meeting. Because the word accessibility gets applied or people have the  
37 feeling of being inclusive or for allowing access to those that have disability or can't  
38 access those, but in our sense it's talking about economics and being able to afford things,  
39 actually being able to physically access the parks as well. It has a lot of meanings that go  
40 along with it that I wanted to bring up because there wasn't a lot of focus on that in the  
41 stakeholder meeting. It was felt it was just talking about ADA and accessibility for that  
42 which this doesn't quite do. People were concerned that it was ranking last in these.



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1 Recreation program was the third area that came in the survey. To run through the six  
2 there. The improving and enhance community centers and recreation, again, was one that  
3 showed up in the facilities as well. That is seen by the community as being a high  
4 priority. The interesting part to look at there is that the community does have a good  
5 grasp on that. 37 percent allocated multiple dollars on it because they understand that  
6 that's going to be an expensive endeavor. It's good to see that there's kind of that general  
7 idea that thing is going to cost more, so people will put more money on it. They do care  
8 about that and would like to see enhancement of community centers and the system itself.  
9 Exploring new types of programs and events was number two. Offering more of existing  
10 programs and classes, number three. Distribution of park and recreation activities and  
11 experiences across the system, number four. Number five was increase health and  
12 wellness opportunities in parks (inaudible) number six was improving the accessibility.  
13 Again, very similar to how it ranked in the one before. Of course, the interesting part of  
14 this is looking at the whole list together. The list is broken into these two slides. These  
15 are the top six things of all 12 areas of focus that were given allocations of the money.  
16 For the purpose of the whole list, integrating nature in Palo Alto parks was actually the  
17 number one thing that got the most money allocated for it. Number two, improving and  
18 enhancing community centers. Number three, improving spaces and increase  
19 opportunities for off-leash dog parks. Number four is enhance comfort and make parks  
20 more welcoming. Number five, distributing park activities and experience across the  
21 City. Number six, expanding the system. MIG also felt that number seven kind of fits in  
22 the top grouping. They described this as you have a top group and a lower group. They  
23 felt that number seven was in the upper group as well, even though the slide is showing it  
24 in the bottom group. You can see that there is—as far as the percentage goes, from 11 to  
25 9 is pretty close. You have a definitive drop-off from 7 'til 5. That's how the community  
26 ranked the priority of spending or allocating dollars to these areas of focus. Besides  
27 breaking it down in the two ways that they have, they are also putting a full summary  
28 together of the survey that we'll have the next meeting to talk about this list more and  
29 how it breaks out. I don't know if there's any more conversations or questions about that.  
30

31 Chair Lauing: Anybody just want to make any random comments?

32  
33 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm surprised how tight it is. Like this last 12, the worst is 5  
34 and the best is 11. They're all pretty clustered. It's just not people spreading it evenly  
35 among all the projects. On the right, there's a lot of people putting zeroes on these things.  
36

37 Chair Lauing: I'm surprised at how high more capacity ranks, more parklands. I guess  
38 it's easy if you're only voting with \$2 as opposed to the \$20 million a year it would take.  
39 There was a lot of support for it. Let's get even more.  
40

41 Mr. de Geus: I gave that \$5.  
42



1 Commissioner Hetterly: I think the top six are in pretty good alignment with what we've  
2 heard from every other source.

3  
4 Mr. Jensen: I think from the preliminary summary is that it's ...

5  
6 Commissioner Hetterly: They seem to mean what they say.

7  
8 Chair Lauing: Fields didn't make the top six except for MIG's comment that it was kind  
9 of tied for six.

10  
11 Mr. Jensen: It's on the border of the lower group.

12  
13 Chair Lauing: As we expected, there was a little bit of—I don't say this unfairly—a  
14 stuffing of the ballot box by interest groups which was what we would expect, so there's  
15 no problem with that.

16  
17 Mr. Jensen: I think that's why they were trying to show like who put multiple dollars  
18 towards one thing and who didn't put any so you can see that there was ...

19  
20 Chair Lauing: That's very helpful stats. Very helpful.

21  
22 Mr. Jensen: ... like a specific group that was more interested in that. Again, there will be  
23 a full summary for the next meeting about this. We did want to show you or reveal what  
24 kind of the early findings were. They are interesting just to look at too. Also what I  
25 think we kind of rate these as.

26  
27 Chair Lauing: Thank you, Peter and staff.

28  
29 **5. Other Ad Hoc committee and Liaison Updates.**

30  
31 [No discussion.]

32  
33 **V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

34  
35 Chair Lauing: We'll go onto the next item which is Comments and Announcements.

36  
37 Kristen O'Kane: I just wanted to hand out a flyer for Cubberley Day which is coming up  
38 on March 19th at Cubberley Community Center. What this does is it brings all the  
39 different groups that are behind the doors, working in their different rooms, out into the  
40 open and the community can come and see what they do. They can show off their work  
41 that they do. There will be performances. There will be artists there. I encourage  
42 everyone to attend. There will also be a very short sort of activity that we'll be asking

1 people who come what their vision is for, not necessarily their vision, but what does  
2 Cubberley mean to them and what they think Cubberley could be and where do they  
3 think it could be eventually be in the future. That will be part of it as well.  
4

5 Commissioner Hetterly: What's the date?  
6

7 Ms. O'Kane: March 19th. I'll hand these out.  
8

9 Commissioner Moss: Can you send us an email?  
10

11 Ms. O'Kane: I can, sure.  
12

13 Commissioner Moss: I'd like to pass it around to all my (crosstalk).  
14

15 Chair Lauing: Do you have others?  
16

17 Ms. O'Kane: No, that's it.  
18

19 Chair Lauing: Rob, a golf course update?  
20

21 Rob de Geus: Kristen had an interesting meeting and Daren with the Fish and Wildlife  
22 staff to look at—why don't you explain it? You were at the meeting.  
23

24 Ms. O'Kane: Sure. City staff which included Community Services and Public Works  
25 and our biological consultants met with Fish and Wildlife Service and the Army Corps of  
26 Engineers at the golf course. The purpose of the meeting was for Fish and Wildlife  
27 Service to look at the different wetland areas and try to make a decision if they feel salt  
28 marsh harvest mouse could be present on the golf course. The reason they need to make  
29 that decision is it will determine which route they go as far as permitting. One route,  
30 which is an informal consultation, could take a few months. Another route, which is a  
31 formal consultation, could take much longer. They didn't make a decision there. They're  
32 going to go back and discuss it and talk with their supervisors. They need to provide  
33 their biological opinion to the Army Corps of Engineers, and then the Corps will either  
34 have to continue working with Fish and Wildlife Service or they could issue us the  
35 permit. We're sort of still in limbo a little bit. We feel like the meeting went well, but we  
36 really didn't get a read from them on where they were headed. We should know which  
37 direction they're headed in a couple of weeks.  
38

39 Chair Lauing: A couple weeks more of analysis and discussion?  
40

41 Ms. O'Kane: Mm-hmm.  
42

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: Is this mouse endangered or is it ...

2  
3 Ms. O'Kane: Yeah.

4  
5 Chair Lauing: That mouse has never been sighted out there. Right? Rob, didn't you say  
6 the mouse hasn't ever been sighted out there?

7  
8 Mr. de Geus: That's what I've heard. Daren (crosstalk).

9  
10 Ms. O'Kane: It's not just that there may not be a sighting there, but they do look at  
11 dispersal distance, how far is the closest sighting from the golf course, and is it likely that  
12 the mouse could travel from that location to the golf course, are there barriers. They look  
13 at a lot of different things.

14  
15 Commissioner Hetterly: Is this directly related to the golf course as opposed to the water  
16 project?

17  
18 Ms. O'Kane: Correct.

19  
20 Mr. de Geus: They're at least looking at our project which is a big step. I did want to  
21 mention we didn't talk about the ad hoc committees. I don't know if there is an update. I  
22 think we jumped straight from (crosstalk).

23  
24 Chair Lauing: We did, yes. We were going to talk about dog parks, but he kind of  
25 handled that. If you guys have something else you want to add.

26  
27 Commissioner Hetterly: No, that was it. We were just going to explain that new process.

28  
29 Chair Lauing: Other announcements?

30  
31 **VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR MARCH 22, 2016 MEETING**

32  
33 Chair Lauing: We want to take a look at the agenda for the March 22nd meeting. One is  
34 more of these policies which we've discussed. Is the zoo going to be ready to come  
35 back?

36  
37 Rob de Geus: It might be. They've got a new design. I'm eager to see it; I haven't yet.  
38 They're going to look at it with the Friends Board in the next couple of weeks. It might  
39 be ready. I hope it is because I'd like to see it come back, particularly if it's something  
40 different. We're pushing it along. If it's ready, we'll bring it.

41  
42 Chair Lauing: Wasn't there also a project to come back to us with signage or Boardwalk?

1  
2 Kristen O'Kane: The Baylands Boardwalk project will be coming back next month.  
3 That'll be Public Works presenting it.  
4

5 Mr. de Geus: Does the existing ad hoc committee with (inaudible) for the Parks Plan in  
6 its purview and discuss the policies (inaudible)? I think it does.  
7

8 Commissioner Hetterly: I think we left it open-ended.  
9

10 Mr. de Geus: That's what I thought. That'd be good. We might want to get together  
11 before the next meeting.  
12

13 Chair Lauing: If we do that, we should do it well before the next meeting. It was kind of  
14 a really short timeframe this last time.  
15

16 Commissioner Hetterly: I'd like to have a Cubberley update next month or now or  
17 whenever it's convenient for you. What's the status of conversations?  
18

19 Mr. de Geus: I can tell you the Cubberley Day is a little bit of a milestone. What's going  
20 to happen before that, actually there will be a press release. I believe it's currently  
21 planned for March 9th with City Manager Jim Keene and Superintendent Max McGee  
22 who have both written what they're calling a compact to make progress on the Master  
23 Planning process here and move along. That's been drafted and being planned. We  
24 really get much more serious about the process of Master Planning that site, what is that  
25 going to be, what is that going to look like, how is the public going to be included, and  
26 how are we going to build on the work of the CCAC. There will be some activity in  
27 March, that compact and Cubberley Community Day.  
28

29 Chair Lauing: Just for a moment back the policies, our assignment is now with the draft  
30 that we have to give feedback to you, directly to you?  
31

32 Ms. O'Kane: Yeah, Catherine and I.  
33

34 Chair Lauing: Can you guys communicate with the two missing Commissioners this is  
35 the assignment so we can get that?  
36

37 Vice Chair Knopper: No, three.  
38

39 Chair Lauing: Now three, yeah.  
40

41 Commissioner Hetterly: Just go policy by policy and by item.  
42

1 Mr. de Geus: Yeah.

2  
3 Commissioner Reckdahl: Some of them might not be policy; we could just say not a  
4 policy or whatever.

5  
6 Mr. de Geus: Right. You don't have to rewrite the thing.

7  
8 Chair Lauing: Anything else?

9  
10 **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

11  
12 Chair Lauing: Motion for adjournment?

13  
14 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Reckdahl and second by Vice Chair  
15 Knopper at 10:15 p.m.