

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES ELEMENT

The Community Services and Facilities Element in the City's current Comprehensive Plan contains five goals aimed at emphasizing the importance of providing responsive, efficient, and cost-effective community services.

In preparation for the Comprehensive Plan Amendment, a Community Services White Paper was prepared in April 2009 to describe the existing level of services relative to current and projected population in the City of Palo Alto's neighborhoods and to identify possible gaps in community services that could arise between then and 2020. A subcommittee of the Planning and Transportation Commission worked with staff of the Planning and Community Services Departments to review the existing element and identify suggested changes.

On October 4, 2011 a Community Stakeholders meeting, including but not limited to Palo Alto Recreation Foundation, Children Advisory Commission, and Avenidas, was held to discuss any gaps in services and answer a series of questions that would inform the necessary updates to the element. Planning staff then worked with the Library, Human Relations, and Parks & Recreation Commission on reviewing the proposed changes through a series of public hearings.

The ideas and comments generated through the various outreach efforts were used to inform the changes recommended by the Planning and Transportation Commission.

What follows is an annotated version of the existing Community Services & Facilities Element with questions and annotations intended to highlight suggested changes recommended by the Planning and Transportation Commission. Public Comments received, through 9:00AM on August 5, 2015, via the Digital Commenter, from the project website and those submitted to staff directly have been incorporated into this document.

EFFICIENT SERVICE DELIVERY

GOAL C-1: EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

This goal focuses on collaborating with PAUSD, Stanford, and neighboring jurisdictions to reduce the cost of service delivery. The PTC has recommended that this Goal be changed to "Community Partnership" and introduced a new concept for engaging the community.

Question 1.1: Do you agree with this approach? What criteria would you use to evaluate potential community partnerships and should any of these be made explicit?

Policies C-1 through C-3 focus on partnering with neighboring communities to address shared problems and create solutions for community service needs. The PTC has recommended that policies C-1 through C-3 be grouped under a subheading to emphasize a focus on regional collaboration.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Can this include support for housing and services for the homeless population? It seems to be an issue beyond one city's means.
- How would "regional collaboration" impact level of service in Palo Alto?

POLICY C-1: Encourage the creation of partnerships within the Mid-Peninsula or the greater Bay Area to seek effective solutions to shared problems and community service needs.

POLICY C-2: Where economies of scale are possible, cooperate with neighboring communities in providing municipal services such as police and fire protection, libraries, and recreation.

POLICY C-3: Palo Alto should continue to take a leadership role in addressing community service issues that cross jurisdictional lines.

Question 1.2: Do you think the suggested program below is needed to further a policy about collaborating with Stanford University?

The PTC has recommended encouraging a partnership with Stanford in sharing cultural resources with the City. In order to achieve this, they proposed the following new policy to capture this partnership and proposed an additional program to augment existing programs C-22 and C-24.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C2.5): Continue to form partnerships between the City and Stanford University with the goal of enhancing the quality of life for both communities by increasing opportunities for shared use and the development of programs, facilities and community services.

New PTC Recommended Program (C2.5.3): Study opportunities for jointly-funded community and/or municipal services such as libraries, recreation programs, and educational services.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Begin to solve our traffic problems by working with Stanford, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, Caltrain and maybe even ride sharing services (Lyft, Uber, etc.)
- NO. Crossing jurisdictional lines can be more general and not specific to Stanford. POLICY C-3 (In interest of less imperious tone)"Palo Alto will be continue to be proactive in developing community service enhancements that cross jurisdictional lines."

POLICY C-4: Maintain a close, collaborative relationship with the PAUSD to maximize the use of school services and facilities for public benefit, particularly for young people, families, and seniors.

Question 1.3: Comprehensive Plan implementation can be monitored effectively if programs consist of discrete tasks or activities. Are there programs listed here that can be eliminated because they are effectively addressed by Policy C-4?

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Program C-5. Shared library resources would be a good idea at the middle school level. The library system has a poor collection for young adults, and the middle schools have a good collection. Children's access to that collection during off-school hours is currently a problem.

PROGRAM C-1: In cooperation with existing public and private agencies and PAUSD, develop a service program that will coordinate the efforts of agencies providing services to families and youth in Palo Alto.

PROGRAM C-2: Continue to use the City/School liaison committee to remove barriers to community use of schools and facilities and coordinate other areas of mutual interest.

PROGRAM C-3: Assess the potential for City use of PAUSD facilities for child care, libraries, recreational facilities, community meeting space, education, health care, culture, and computer resources.

PROGRAM C-4: Work with PAUSD to determine ways that schools can be made more available to the community for weekend and evening use.

PROGRAM C-5: Consider joint provision of library services with PAUSD.

Question 1.4: What ideas do you have about collaborating with our schools in providing programs, services, and facilities within the City?

The PTC has recommended that policies C-4 through C-6 be grouped under a subheading to focus on “Partnering With Our Schools.” They also stressed the importance of including private schools and recommended the following new program under Policy C-5:

New PTC Recommended Program (C2.7.1): Explore ways to collaborate with public and private schools in providing programs, services and facilities that enhance the social and economic vitality within the city.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- None.

POLICY C-5: Recognize the importance of schools to the social and economic vitality of the City.

POLICY C-6: Continue and enhance City efforts to assist PAUSD in anticipating and addressing land development-related school enrollment impacts.

PROGRAM C-6: Provide regular status reports to PAUSD on potential and approved development projects.

PROGRAM C-7: Require an assessment of school impacts prior to the approval of development projects that require legislative acts, including general plan amendments and zoning changes.

POLICY C-7: Actively work with private, nonprofit, and public community service organizations to avoid duplication and to coordinate the delivery of services like child care, senior services, and recreation.

Question 1.5: How should the City explore partnerships with non-profit community partners to support City programs and services?

The PTC has recommended that Policy C-7 be categorized under a subheading Non-Profit Community Partners. However, the adopted element does not include much mention of community partnerships with agencies, clubs and friends groups to support city programs and services – especially for teenagers.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Use a community center space at Mitchell Park for seniors. I would like to see a table tennis space! Palo Alto does not have a convenient and democratic space for table tennis and we have been frustrated for years. We bought equipment, paddles and balls, and then could not play at the only space available. Now we are seniors and would still like to play.
- Palo Alto should help build capacity and encourage diversity in non-profits working in the City. Duplication, in this case, can only benefit the City.
- In relation to Non-Profit partners, the text proposes "avoid duplication". I think the Comprehensive Plan should actively seek to build capacity in non-profit partners in our community, at the risk of some duplication - this should create more diversity and serves the community better.

POLICY C-8: Welcome and encourage corporate citizenship in the provision of community services.

Question 1.6: If you agree that businesses can play a role in supporting community services, do you think this group of programs and proposed new policy effectively addresses the issue?

The PTC has recommended that policy C-8 be categorized under a subheading “Business Partnerships” and has recommended adding a new program (C2.10.2) to existing Policy C-8. In addition, they have recommended adding a new policy and program.

New PTC Recommended Program (C2.10.2): Acknowledge and provide recognition for local business and corporate activities in philanthropy and community service in order to encourage other businesses to also support community services.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C2.11): Encourage Palo Alto businesses and their employees to take an active role in the future of the City.

New PTC Recommended Program (C2.11.1): Seek new opportunities for private sector sponsorship of community activities and City cultural events.

New PTC Recommended Program (C2.11.2): Develop partnerships between the City and businesses to help maintain and enhance the community services and amenities available to the employees of the partnering businesses.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- This section needs reverse engineering: we see that more and more businesses are sequestering the amenities and services that previously were provided by and for the community. They are also shaping the city to their needs, to the detriment of residents. Thus, Policy C-8 should be **REQUIRING** that businesses enhance the community services as part of the cost of doing business here. Being required to buy in to the health of the community would be good for the community and good for business.
- I suggest that the language “corporate citizenship” be modified to “Businesses and Corporations”.

PROGRAM C-8: Establish a program to facilitate continuing corporate support for community services through contributions of funds, time, materials, and expertise.

NEW SUBSECTION/CONCEPT: Engaging with the community

Question 1.7: Do you agree that the policy below should be included? Are there others (or different) programs that would support this policy about better engaging with the community?

During the October 4, 2011 Stakeholder Group meeting, feedback was received regarding a need for the City to better engage with the community. In response, the PTC has recommended that a new subsection “Engaging With the Community” be added to the Comp Plan and that it include the following policy and two new programs.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C2.1): Explore innovative ways to encourage residents to volunteer, take pride of ownership, and contribute to Palo Alto’s community services.

New PTC Recommended Program (C2.1.1): Use technology and popular social media to engage the community and increase awareness and participation in Palo Alto’s recreation, arts, cultural experiences, libraries, community programs, and volunteer activities.

New PTC Recommended Program (C2.1.2): Develop and maintain an internet listing for volunteers to encourage the community to find opportunities for volunteering with the City and community organizations.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Lacking concision and appeal. How about Policy: use technology and social media to invite community into Palo Alto's recreation, arts, cultural experiences, libraries, community programs, and invite volunteer participation by New Program: maintaining an internet listing REQUESTING volunteers, posted on the city's website.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

GOAL C-2: A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AND HIGH QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE AMONG CITY OF PALO ALTO OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES.

This goal focuses on providing high quality, responsive customer service and reinforces the customer-service ethic. The PTC has recommended that this goal be changed to "Working with the Community" and that it be listed as the last goal in the element.

POLICY C-9: Deliver City services in a manner that creates and reinforces positive relationships among City employees, residents, businesses, and other stakeholders.

Question 2.1: Do you agree with the recommended additions below? Are there others you would suggest?

New PTC Recommended Policy (C5.3): Develop highly motivated, professional, engaged staff and volunteers who are valued for their integrity, commitment and contributions towards the City and community.

New PTC Recommended Program (C5.3.1): Continue education, training and skill building for City employees in order to assure a knowledgeable, professional and responsive staff.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Keep Customer Service. It's the correct frame. City Staff works FOR the community, and is expected to provide excellent service to residents and taxpayers who pay their salaries. City Staff is not "working with the community." Using that phrase ("working with") as a goal connotes an equal relationship and is wrong. "Working with" is an expected QUALITY of good customer service.
- Zoning officers and others with citizen-interaction responsibilities should be held to standards of respectful and courteous behavior. I hope the new program will be helpful toward the stated goal. We could use a complaint system about how our complaints are handled. A major issue is language that is used by Community Services. That offensive language is "customer." We are residents, citizens, visitors, property owners ('stakeholders'). We are the Community. This language was discussed 25 years ago when my husband Ralph Libby was a librarian. The word "patron" was changed to "customer." Didn't like it then, find it more abrasive now.
- Changing this to "working with the community" and putting it as the last goal in the element does not appear appropriate to me. Working with the community is a tepid description of a customer service goal. It merely describes the process and is not a goal. I mean it is a given staff work with the community.

PROGRAM C-9: Establish performance review criteria for City employees that consider the quality of customer service provided.

PROGRAM C-10: Establish tangible incentives and enhance rewards and recognition programs to encourage City staff to deliver high quality services.

POLICY C-10: Perform customer-oriented evaluations of City service delivery and develop strategies for improving customer service.

PROGRAM C-11: Continue to budget for City staff training in customer service-oriented management techniques.

PROGRAM C-12: Encourage City work groups to examine and improve operating procedures.

SOCIAL SERVICES

GOAL C-3: IMPROVED QUALITY, QUANTITY, AND AFFORDABILITY OF SOCIAL SERVICES, PARTICULARLY FOR CHILDREN, SENIORS, AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

This goal focuses on services for children, youth, seniors and persons with disabilities. Moreover, it identifies opportunities for coordination among the various agencies and organizations providing these services given the limited resources. The PTC’s recommendation includes eliminating this goal and splitting the policies and programs under two new goals; “Health and Well Being” and “Planning for the Future.”

POLICY C-11 Support and promote the provision of comprehensive child care services in Palo Alto by public and private providers, including employers.

Question 3.1: Do you agree with the recommended policy below? Are there others you would suggest?

In 2006 the City Council directed an evaluation of the existing childcare policies. The Child Care Master Plan was revised in Fiscal Year 2006 and renamed to the Early Care and Education Master Plan. The PTC recommends the following new policy:

New PTC Recommended Policy (C1.8): Work to ensure that all children have places to play and to learn, and will be safe in our community.

PROGRAM C-13: Use the Child Care Master Plan to guide the delivery of child care services. Update and amend this Plan to include standards for evaluating the impacts of new development on child care service needs.

PROGRAM C-14: Work with the Child Care Advisory Committee to evaluate the feasibility of requiring child care impact assessments for proposed development projects.

POLICY C-12: Coordinate delivery of child care services with other service providers, including the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD).

POLICY C-13: Continue strong support for and long-term commitment to school age child care programs on PAUSD sites.

POLICY C-14: Encourage inter-generational interaction in providing solutions to child care needs.

POLICY C-15: In residential or neighborhood commercial development projects, strongly encourage child care and/or senior care facilities, along with measures to mitigate potential conflicts between these facilities and surrounding uses.

PROGRAM C-15: Study changes in zoning, parking, and landscaping requirements that would facilitate the development of neighborhood child and/or senior care facilities.

PROGRAM C-16: Create development incentives (such as increased floor area ratio or reduced parking requirements) for employers or developers who include child and/or senior care facilities in the design of new housing and commercial buildings.

Program C-17: Facilitate the application process for proposed child and/or senior care centers. Work with applicants or potential applicants to identify appropriate locations for such centers.

POLICY C-16: Identify existing or potential locations for child and/or senior care in public facilities and actively promote the establishment of such facilities.

POLICY C-17: Continue to support provision, funding, and promotion of services and programs for children and youth (e.g., those offered at the teen center).

Question 3.2: What do you think of the following proposed policies? Do they capture the needs of the youth and teens? Are there others?

The City Council has prioritized a focus on community health and Community Services Staff recommended strengthening this policy by adding physical and mental aspects of youth and teens. As a result, the PTC's recommendation includes a new subsection dedicated to "Places for the teens in the Community" and they have recommended the following 3 new policies and 4 new programs:

New PTC Recommended Policy (C1.10): Teens needs a place in the community; work with stakeholders to give form and identity to those places.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C1.11): Continue to support provision, funding, and promotion of services, programs and activities for teens that strengthen leadership skills, encourage a culture of community service and promote a diverse range of interests and vocations.

New PTC Recommended Program (C1.11.1): In collaboration with the teen community, continue to evaluate the range of programs offered by the City and community partners to ensure a balanced offering representing the diverse interest of teens.

New PTC Recommended Program (C.11.2): Seek opportunities to expand outreach and increase involvement while continuing to support youth leadership programs and events.

New PTC Recommended Program (C11.3): Foster a culture of peer to peer support through existing programs that promote and encourage developmental asset building within the community.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C1.12): Support the Project Safety Net Community Collaborative Strategic Plan for youth well-being in Palo Alto.

New PTC Recommended Program (C1.12.1): Leverage available funding to continue support of Project Safety Net goals and objectives in order to achieve maximum long term impact for youth well-being.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- As I commented in another section, during the school year, students pour down Maybell and Los Robles from Gunn, and maybe elsewhere, to hang out in front of Walgreens (corner of Maybell and El Camino). They need a community facility on the west side of El Camino, with a teen center (and other options for other constituents of the surrounding neighborhoods).

PROGRAM C-18: Encourage the continuation and development of after-school and evening programs for children and youth. Maximize participation in such programs by increasing the number of locations where the programs are provided and by supporting transportation options to these locations.

POLICY C-18: Support and promote the provision of comprehensive senior services in coordination with senior service providers.

Question 3.3: The percentage of Palo Alto's population 65 and older is 17% and expected to increase by 2030. Do the suggested policy and programs effectively address needed community services and facilities? What would you change or add?

At the October 4, 2011 community stakeholder group meeting the importance of providing community service needs of seniors was discussed. The PTC recommendations include a new subsection dedicated to "Engaging Senior Services in the Community." The following four new programs are recommended by the PTC under Policy C-18 along with one new policy.

New PTC Recommended Program (C1.14.1): Continue to support non-profit organizations in the provision of convenient, low-cost meals and nutrition education to seniors.

New PTC Recommended Program (C1.14.2): Maintain existing senior programs and seek opportunities to expand programs, including programs promoting health, life-long learning, recreation, arts and cultural experiences designed for seniors at all public community facilities and parks.

New PTC Recommended Program (C1.14.3): Encourage and promote activities, events and services that welcome and engage the senior population.

New PTC Recommended Program (C1.14.4): Develop a program to engage the talents and skills that older people possess and provide volunteer opportunities for seniors throughout the City.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C1.15): Provide services for seniors at convenient locations that are accessible to public transit, parking, walking or biking.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Policy C-18: Promote **EQUITABLE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION** of comprehensive senior services throughout the city, in coordination with senior service providers.

POLICY C-19: Continue to support provision, funding, or promotion of services for persons with disabilities through the Human Relations Commission, the Parks and Recreation Division, and other City departments. Support rigorous compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

POLICY C-20: Support and promote services addressing the needs of the unhoused community.

Question 3.4: What are your ideas to better coordinate services for the homeless?

Community Services Department staff recommended strengthening this policy given an increase in the number of homeless. In addition, the PTC has recommended the following new program:

New PTC Recommended Program (C1.7.1): Work with Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, non-profit agencies and other organizations to define roles and responsibilities in the comprehensive provision of temporary shelter, food, clothing and transportation for those in need.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Community Services Dept recommendation is an excellent one, including the suggestion to work across jurisdictions. I would add that the City needs to strengthen its support of local social service to the unhoused, especially at the Opportunity Center and similar programs. I am talking about additional money.
- Some city funds should go towards supporting a permanent shelter. Additionally, the city should find good places for RV and car dwellers to spend the night that would provide them with washroom facilities and hopefully more.

NEW SUBSECTION/CONCEPT: Health and Well-Being

Question 3.5: What strategies do you think the City should employ to encourage healthy diet and lifestyles? Do you agree that these strategies should be included as Comprehensive Plan policies?

The adopted Community Services and Facilities Element does not address the promotion of a healthy lifestyle or general wellness. This concept was identified as lacking through the various outreach efforts conducted between 2009-2011. The City Council's priorities for 2015 include healthy city/healthy community. The PTC's recommendation includes adding a new goal around health and well-being and the following four policies:

New PTC Recommended Policy (C1.3): The City's community services should be a catalyst in creating a culture of health, well being and active living in our community. It shall contribute to the intellectual physical and social health of the community by providing opportunities for learning, expression and social interaction for all ages at our libraries, community facilities, parks and cultural centers.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C1.4): Incorporate the "Developmental Assets" approach into the City's planning, development, implementation and evaluation of programs and services for children and youth.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C1.5): Promote and expand the City's initiatives and commitment to access to and availability of healthy foods and beverages.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C1.6): Develop strategies to help the community identify and combat depression, isolation, stress and other mental health issues.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Please address noise impacts and how they affect our health and welfare. We are bombarded daily with noise from airplanes, loud Caltrain horns, excessive traffic trying to access Alma, garbage & recycling trucks going up and down our streets, school buses, 18 wheeler deliveries, police, fire & ambulances sounding sirens on Embarcadero in the wee hours of the morning. It's reaching a boiling point and needs attention.

PARKS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

GOAL C-4: ATTRACTIVE, WELL-MAINTAINED COMMUNITY FACILITIES THAT SERVE PALO ALTO RESIDENTS.

This goal focuses on Palo Alto's parks, community centers, libraries, and other civic buildings that are an important part of what makes the City a desirable place to live. The PTC has recommended that this goal be changed to "Maintaining Parks and Facilities" and that the existing Goal 5 related to "Access" be included under this goal.

POLICY C-21: Where appropriate, maintain existing community facilities in public ownership to prevent potential shortages in the future.

Question 4.1: What are your thoughts on the following changes and additions?

The PTC recommends that Policies C-21, C-24, C-25 and C-26 be grouped under a new subsection entitled "Maintaining our Parks and Facilities." The following new program is proposed under Policy C-21:

New PTC Recommended Program (C3.1.1): Continue to seek long-term public-private agreements for the operation and enjoyment of public facilities for the community's benefit, such as Avenidas, Gamble Gardens, and Environmental Volunteers.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

POLICY C-22: Design and construct new community facilities to have flexible functions to ensure adaptability to the changing needs of the community.

Question 4.2: What are your thoughts on the following changes and additions?

The PTC recommends that Policies C-22 be grouped under a new subsection entitled "Community Facilities with Adaptability for Diverse Uses." The following new program is proposed under Policy C-22 along with a new Policy and program:

New PTC Recommended Program (C4.3.1): Require a multi-use analysis on all future community facilities and parks.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C4.4): Plan new public community facilities and parks to meet the needs of the City's multi-generational community.

New PTC Recommended Program (C4.4.1): Seek opportunities to provide intergenerational activities and programs that increase senior activity within the community.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- The Barron Park and Green Acres neighborhoods desperately need community facilities. During the school year, students pour down Maybell and Los Robles to hang out in front of the Walgreens (corner of Maybell and El Camino). West of El Camino offers no community facilities for them. A facility with a teen center (and other options) for these neighborhoods is much needed.
- We could really use more meeting spaces and for them to be really easy to book online. The current system even in the new library is very unfriendly and costs a significant amount of money.
- Policy C-22 has a new program that requires multi-use analysis for all future community facilities and parks. However, parks that focus on nature and open space should not be required to provide such analysis, and other parks (golf is an example) are also specific and should remain so. Please consider removing this requirement for parks.

POLICY C-23: Explore ways to expand the space available in the community for art exhibits, classes and other cultural activities.

Question 4.3: What are your thoughts on the following changes and additions?

The PTC recommends that Policies C-23 be grouped under a new subsection entitled “Celebrating Cultural Diversity.” The following new policy and program are also proposed to augment this idea.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C1.17): Explore ways to reduce language and cultural barriers within our diverse community to encourage greater citizen participation and inclusiveness.

New PTC Recommended Program (C1.17.1): Based on identified needs, continue to provide and expand the provision of multilingual literature, program information and educational displays at public community facilities and parks.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

POLICY C-24: Reinvest in aging facilities to improve their usefulness and appearance. Avoid deferred maintenance of City infrastructure.

Question 4.4: These suggested programs are derived from the Infrastructure Blue Ribbon Commission's work in 2011. Do you think they effectively address infrastructure issues related to community services and facilities?

The PTC recommends that Policies C-21, C-24, C-25 and C-26 be grouped under a new subsection entitled “Maintaining our Parks and Facilities.” The following five new programs are proposed under Policy C-24:

New PTC Proposed Program (C3.2.1): Align capital improvement projects with statewide and regional grants and outside funding sources in order to leverage limited City capital funds.

New PTC Proposed Program (C3.2.3): Evaluate the findings of the City’s Infrastructure Blue Ribbon Commission report and implement recommendations as appropriate to assure that maintenance is not deferred, and operating maintenance and planned maintenance are adequately funded to maintain community facilities in functional, safe, and different facilities required for delivery of future community services.

New PTC Proposed Program (C3.2.4): Implement an infrastructure management system that serves as a tool for analyzing the costs associated with the City’s infrastructure, including maintenance, operation, depreciation and replacement, as well as investment in new and different facilities required for delivery of future community services.

New PTC Proposed Program (C3.2.5): Enhance existing childcare and senior care facilities to meet emerging and future needs.

New PTC Proposed Program (C3.2.7): Develop improvements plans for the maintenance, restoration and enhancement of the City’s public art collection, and keep the collection viable community assets by investing the necessary resources for their conservation and protection.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Make a limited number of PAID parking permits available online that allow non-residents to visit Foothill Park and reinvest that revenue into maintenance for the park.
- It's time to rebuild Rinconada Pool- the locker rooms are disgusting and the children's pool is badly in need of an upgrade. Palo Alto's pools are in sad shape compared to Menlo Park and it's a shame- this facility should be a highlight of the community as it used to be.
- Cubberley has been neglected. It is disgraceful to see the lack of attention. I hope this is the place to post this.

PROGRAM C-19: Develop improvement plans for the maintenance, restoration and enhancement of community facilities, and keep these facilities viable community assets by investing the necessary resources.

PROGRAM C-20: Conduct comprehensive analyses of long-term infrastructure replacement requirements and costs.

PROGRAM C-21: Incorporate as an additional criterion used in prioritizing sidewalk repairs, a standard related to the level of pedestrian usage.

PROGRAM C-22: Assess the development of a performing arts center as an asset to the community and local economy.

Question 4.5: Do you agree on the inclusion of the program about a performing arts center?

The PTC recommended strengthening the existing language about the performing arts center and proposed the following new policy and new program be included under a subsection entitled “Regional Relationships”:

New PTC Recommended Policy (C2.5): Continue to form partnerships between the City and Stanford University with the goal of enhancing the quality of life for both communities by increasing opportunities for shared use and the development of programs, facilities and community services.

New PTC Recommended Program (C2.5.3): Study opportunities for jointly-funded community and/or municipal services such as libraries, recreation programs, and educational services.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

POLICY C-25: Make infrastructure improvements on public open space only when these improvements are consistent with the goals of protecting and conserving the natural environment.

POLICY C-26: Maintain and enhance existing park facilities.

PROGRAM C-23: Study and recommend methods of private and public financing for improved park maintenance, rehabilitation, and construction.

PROGRAM C-24: Preserve El Camino Park as a recreational resource for the community.

El Camino Park Restoration Project: El Camino Park is currently undergoing a major restoration project following the installation of an underground water-supply reservoir which supplements the City of Palo Alto's Emergency Water Supply and Storage Planning objectives. The Project is expected to be completed late in 2015. For more information visit the project webpage by clicking [here](#).

POLICY C-27: Seek opportunities to develop new parks and recreation facilities to meet the growing needs of residents and employees of Palo Alto.

Question 4.6: What are your thoughts on the following changes and additions?

The PTC recommends that Policies C-27, C-28 and C-29 be grouped under a new subsection entitled "Opportunities to Develop New Parks and Community Facilities." The following three new programs are proposed under Policy C-27:

New PTC Recommended Program (C4.7.3): Encourage private development proposals, to include creation of park, plaza, or other recreational, and art facilities to meet the needs of the community.

New PTC Recommended Program (C4.7.4): Encourage the inclusion of publicly and privately financed art in the design of new and renovated public spaces, facilities and parks.

New PTC Recommended Program (C4.7.5): Charge new developments park and community facilities impact fees as calculated by periodic Nexus studies.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Rincanada Pool is crazy busy in the Summer. I saw huge crowds wait listed outside, and very unhappy families who couldn't get in. Is there any discussion about adding another pool, including a wading play pool? Also, Rincanada Pool lap swim hours are extremely limited on the weekends. To swim on the weekends, lap swimmers have to give up either sleeping in on the weekends or their family dinner hour. Could the City consider offering lap swimming at Gunn High School to supplement at least the weekend swim slots?
- This is saying we want parks and parks are valuable, but it's leaving the ownership open, which is wrong. thus: If parks and art are to be on private property and privately operated, it should be in the zoning code. In principal, Parks and Community Facilities should be publicly owned and operated. (SF has lots of experience with Publicly Owned Privately Operated "parks" exchanged for entitlements -- and they are charming-- yet hidden, poorly signed, and only open to those who are "in the know" from 9-5. Thus they are not really "parks" nor are they "community facilities.") so: New Program: New developments will be charged community facility development fees (I'm not sure why they are called "impact" fees.) based on the average per square foot cost of

replacement of all recreational parks and spaces per resident at the time of permit. pool is badly in need of an upgrade. Palo Alto's pools are in sad shape compared to Menlo Park and it's a shame- this facility should be a highlight of the community as it used to be.

- Everyone loves parks but they shouldn't come at the expense of sorely needed housing. Increase density and height limits for residential buildings in exchange for them providing some park space.
- Set aside a predetermined percent of the budget each year to buy more parkland.
- Turn parking into parks: Timothy Hopkins park along San Francisquito Creek would be greatly improved if we removed parking on the creek side and made it into a pathway. Reducing amount of parking on University Avenue would help transform it into a walking boulevard.
- I would also like to see University from Middlefield down become a walking boulevard similar to the one in Santa Monica. Closing their main boulevard off to traffic allowed for it to become a much more popular destination and it meant that they could add small restaurants, vendors, and fountains in the middle of the street.
- We need an aquatic center with a 50m pool in South Palo Alto. The only facilities available in this part of the city are private clubs with small pools. Please look at the Soda Aquatic Center at Campolindo High School in Moraga, which supports school and community programs. We could have a facility like this at Cubberley. When the Gunn pool is next refurbished, the city and PAUSD should rebuild as a 50m x 25y pool.

PROGRAM C-25: Consider potential park sites when preparing coordinated area plans.

PROGRAM C-26: In conjunction with new development proposals, pursue creation of park, plaza, or other public gathering places that meet neighborhood needs.

POLICY C-28: Use National Recreation and Park Association Standards as guidelines for locating and developing new parks. These guidelines are as follows:

- **Neighborhood parks should be at least two acres in size, although sites as small as one-half acre may be needed as supplementary facilities. The maximum service area radius should be one-half mile. Two acres of neighborhood parkland should be provided for each 1,000 people.**
- **District parks should be at least five acres in size. The maximum service area radius should be one mile. Two acres of district park land should be provided for each 1,000 people.**
- **A park should be provided within walking distance of all residential neighborhoods and employment areas. The National Recreation and Park Association defines walking distance as one-half mile.**

Question 4.7: Do you have ideas for new/additional public parks? What do you think of these changes and additions?

The Parkland ratio, adopted in Chapter 21.50 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code, is 5 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. The PTC recommends the following three new programs under existing Policy C-28 and one new policy.

New PTC Recommended Program (C4.9.1): Conduct a survey to evaluate usage and capacity of existing facilities and parks to access community needs and to identify underserved neighborhoods.

New PTC Recommended Program (C4.9.2): Assess the value and cost benefits of new parks, plazas and other green spaces that are less than one half acre in size, in meeting the needs of surrounding neighborhoods.

New PTC Recommended Policy (C4.10): In planning new open spaces, balance the enjoyment and community use of public land with protecting natural ecosystems.

New PTC Recommended Program (C4.10.1): Follow the adopted guidelines in the Baylands Master Plan.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- As we become a denser city the idea of 5 acres of parkland for every 1000 people becomes not only not practical but also not very useful. More than half the city is already open space or parkland. We're not low on parks by any definition. What we should be doing is instead making better use of the spaces we already have and making access to them via biking and walking paths easier. We should also be actively encouraging small parks throughout the city as part of new development so that kids and adults have a place to sit or play outside, but it doesn't have to be a half acre. Even a nice pond and some benches go a long way if there are quite a few of them.
- Please add or include bathrooms in all parks! It's hard to take kids to a park and have to run home, no matter how close that is, for a bathroom trip. There are parks in Palo Alto that I consider to be unusable due to lack of nearby bathrooms.
- Retain municipal code of 5 acres of parkland for every 1000 residents. Establish a 2 acre minimum for neighborhood parks. We should continue to provide community space, beauty, recreation, and peace commensurate with what we have enjoyed in the past. The New Program to "assess the value and cost benefits of new parks..." might be helpful if it's being proposed to improve what we have (and not a ruse to sell it off). In which case it should say: Preserve all parkland and improve it by surveying residents for their unmet needs, while protecting natural ecosystems. Unmet need: Install bathrooms in all parks.

- For people with younger know kids, building a jungle gym structure appropriate for toddlers and another for older kids goes a long way and only needs to take up a small part of existing or new parks. Sandboxes are popular. Having natural shading (trees) as well as artificial (removable tarping) also increases usability throughout the summer and helps protect our kids from sun damage. Thanks!

ACCESS

GOAL C-5: EQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL, RECREATIONAL, AND CULTURAL SERVICES FOR ALL RESIDENTS.

This goal refers to the location of facilities, their design, and the availability to transportation to reach them. The PTC has recommended that this goal be incorporated into a new goal related to maintaining parks and facilities. In addition, they recommend changing the goal heading name to "Expanding Access" and that it be included under the goal which addresses the maintenance of parks and facilities.

POLICY C-29: Strategically locate public facilities and parks to serve all neighborhoods in the City.

Question 5.1: How should the Comprehensive Plan Update address the need for additional public facilities and parks?

In 2012 the Parks and Recreation Commission provided comments on the existing 1998 Comp Plan. They stressed the importance of providing smaller public use areas, parks and gardens. The PTC recommends the following two new programs:

New PTC Recommended Program (C4.8.1): Actively implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan (BPTP) guidelines for locating new parks within one half-mile of all residential neighborhoods and employment areas (based on the National Recreation and Park Association's definition of walking distance.

New PTC Recommended Program (C4.8.2): Implement the strategies of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan in order to create Safe Routes to parks and community facilities.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Facilities are lacking in South Palo Alto. We need a public pool in the south and more facilities for teens. There is little for teens to do in the neighborhoods south of Page Mill Rd and west of El Camino Real. We need better access to cross Alma, so kids and adults can get to services located east of Alma, like Mitchell Park. Palo Alto has three underpasses for pedestrians, all located north of Oregon Expressway. Those are needed but we need several in South Palo Alto, for example at East Meadow and at Charleston.
- The closure of the Page Mill YMCA has negatively impacted senior recreational facilities in the Barron Park area as well as west of El Camino Real in Palo Alto. A PC was established in 1979 for the Landlord (Wheatley Properties) to create such a recreational facility. The Landlord now wants to use that space for offices. That PC must be "saved" as recreational and enforced by the Planning Department and the City Council.
- Great! Very similar to my idea which was to ensure that every child/teen is able to walk or bike safely and comfortably to his/her park, school, library.

POLICY C-30: Facilitate access to parks and community facilities by a variety of transportation modes.

POLICY C-31: Facilitate access to educational, recreational, and cultural services by continuing to provide financial assistance programs for residents with low-incomes and/or disabilities.

POLICY C-32: Provide fully accessible public facilities to all residents and visitors.

Question 5.2: A resident survey conducted in 2009 indicated that only 50% of residents visit their community centers during the year. What strategies do you suggest the City employ to make our community centers more accessible or appealing to different populations? Are there real and or perceived barriers to the use of these community centers that the City should address/remove/reduce? What do you think of these suggested additions?

The PTC recommends grouping Policy C-19, C-30, C-31 and C-32 be grouped under a new subsection "Expanding Access." They also proposed the following 3 new programs and policy.

New PTC Proposed Program (C3.6.2): Provide elements of expanded access to play equipment at all City parks when they are renovated or built.

New PTC Proposed Program (C3.6.3): Provide information in a variety of different formats to inform people with special needs about the level of accessibility of parks, playgrounds, trails and other amenities that are accessible for their particular circumstance.

New PTC Proposed Program (C3.6.4): Improve access for persons with non-physical or sensory disabilities, including cognitive or social/emotional needs. Partner with agencies such as Abilities United, Youth Community Services, Best Buddies, PAUSC, etc. for support so that all children can participate as appropriate in Palo Alto recreational programs.

New PTC Proposed Policy (C3.8): Incorporate new technology where applicable to improve public access to City's information and programs. Adopt privacy standards to protect customer information and data.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Expand hours of operation so that non-working and working residents alike can enjoy the facilities, and not have to travel to and from them during rush hours.

PROGRAM C-27: Continue to implement Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements in City facilities including, but not limited to, sidewalk curb cuts, building entrances, meeting room access, and sight and hearing adjuncts.

General Public Comments:

- I am very concerned about the idea of eliminating the goal C-3 and splitting the policies and programs under Health and Well-Being and Planning for the Future. Children, seniors and people with disabilities are not always seen, heard and valued as they should be. I think it is important to keep a goal that specifically names them and keeps the policies and programs that support each of these groups together in one place.
- The city is starting to look a little messy what with littering, construction/road work, illegal signages citywide - perhaps more enforcement is due, more coordination and communication between the services depts. (PW and Utilities) on their schedules and most of all signage for South Palo Alto is warranted on amenities/public facilities availability and locations - don't see any at the moment! I would recommend notifying/reminding residents when their streets will be swept so that they can move their cars on that day and time - this will ensure our beautiful streets remain clean and gutters free from any debris whether it be summer or in a drought season, does not hurt to have our city stay beautiful and clean!
- Each week the roads get more congested in the corridor between El Camino Real and across the tracks to Alma at East Meadow. Yesterday there was even a Google bus commuting there! It is absolutely mandatory that the city promote, encourage, incentivize the building of a decent size grocery store in the Barron Park area! The site of the Buena Vista park corner shopping area was, is and must be perfect for that use. What's there does not meet the needs of the community enough as a walking distance center.
- Policy C-26 Please consider: ADD policy: Manage nature preserve and open space using Comprehensive Resource Management Plans ADD Program: Develop and complete Comprehensive Resource Management Plans for the Baylands/Byxbee Park, Foothills Park and Arastradero Preserve.

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