



City of Palo Alto

(ID # 3976)

Planning & Transportation Commission Staff Report

Report Type:

Meeting Date: 7/31/2013

Summary Title: Review of Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course/Athletic Center Expansion DEIR

Title: Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course, 1875 Embarcadero Road [13PLN-00103]: Continued Public Hearing for Review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course and Baylands Athletic Center Expansion Project. Zone District: PF(D).

From: Joe Teresi, Senior Engineer

Lead Department: Public Works

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) conduct a continued public hearing and provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Renovation and Baylands Athletic Center Expansion Project.

Background

At the June 26, 2013 PTC meeting, staff submitted a Site and Design Review application for the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Renovation Project for approval by the PTC. The PTC also held a public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Renovation and Baylands Athletic Center Expansion Project. The Site and Design Review application and the DEIR are described in the attached PTC staff report (Attachment A). The PTC approved the Site and Design Review application on a vote of 7-0 for referral to the City Council. During the June 26, 2013 public hearing, the PTC received comments from members of the public on the DEIR, and individual PTC Commissioners also asked questions and provided preliminary comments on the document. Draft minutes for the June 26, 2013 PTC meeting are attached (Attachment B).

The public comment period for the DEIR was originally scheduled to end on July 19, 2013. At the June 26, 2013 meeting, the PTC voted to continue their review of the DEIR to the meeting of July 31, 2013. As a result of the PTC continuance of their review of the DEIR, the public

comment period was extended to August 1, 2013.

Summary of Key Issues

During the June 26, 2013 public hearing, comments were made by members of the public and by individual PTC Commissioners on the impacts and proposed mitigation measures described in the DEIR. Responses to these comments will be issued in the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), and the FEIR will be modified, as appropriate, to reflect the comments submitted. The comments made during the public hearing fell into the following general categories:

1. **Tree impacts:** Concern was expressed regarding the large number of trees being removed from the Golf Course as part of the Project. It was requested that staff consider transplantation of trees where feasible and that replacement trees be planted as close to the Project site as possible.
2. **Siting of Gymnasium:** Several PTC Commissioners questioned the proposed inclusion of a gymnasium in the Baylands Athletic Center Expansion Project. They opined that the Golf Course is not an appropriate location for a gymnasium due to its lack of public transportation options and its large distance from neighborhood population centers.
3. **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Several PTC Commissioners expressed concern that the DEIR cites a significant and unavoidable Project impact on greenhouse gas emissions, primarily due to the increased amount of mobile emissions attributable to new vehicular trips to and from the proposed athletic playing fields and the gymnasium. Commissioners suggested that staff consider a number of additional mitigation measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including purchase of carbon-neutral electricity, encouragement of transportation demand management measures including ridesharing, use of transit and/or alternative transportation modes (e.g. bicycles, walking, etc.), and encouragement of electric and plug-in hybrid vehicle usage through installation of electric vehicle chargers at the Project site. There was also discussion regarding the methodology used to count the number of new vehicle trips to and from the Project site and a suggestion that the number of trips could potentially be reduced if some of the trips were reclassified as redirected trips (to and from other existing recreational facilities) rather than new trips.

Staff is reviewing the comments made at the June 26, 2013 public hearing and will address them in the FEIR, which will be presented at a future PTC meeting. Staff from the City's environmental consultant and Transportation Division staff will be present at the July 31 PTC meeting to answer questions.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: June 26, 2013 P&TC Staff report with attachments (PDF)
- Attachment B: June 26, 2013 P&TC Draft Excerpt Minutes (PDF)



City of Palo Alto

(ID # 3718)

Planning & Transportation Commission Staff Report

Report Type:**Meeting Date: 6/26/2013****Summary Title: Approval of Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Site and Design Application****Title: Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course, 1875 Embarcadero Road [13PLN-00103]: Request by the City of Palo Alto Community Services Department for Site and Design Review of the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Renovation Project and Public Hearing for Review of the Project's Draft Environmental Impact Report. Zone District: PF(D).****From: Joe Teresi, Senior Engineer****Lead Department: Public Works**

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) conduct a public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Report and recommend that the City Council approve the project based upon the findings and conditions in the Record of Land Use Action (Attachment A).

Background

Project Description

The Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course was constructed in the mid-1950s on approximately 170 acres of flat former salt marsh and bay fill. The course was designed by noted golf course architects William P. and William F. Bell of Pasadena, California. The 18-hole, par 72 course is a classic championship course that measures over 6,800 yards from the back tees. The course was constructed on a relatively flat site raised a few feet above the underlying, highly-saline salt marsh soils through the placement of imported fill material. The original clubhouse buildings were replaced with the current facilities in the mid 1970's. Major course renovations, including the rebuilding of selected fairways, tees, and greens, a new drainage system and lift station, and a new irrigation system and pump station, were completed in 1998.

The potential for Golf Course modifications originated with the SFCJPA's Bay-to-Highway 101 flood control project. The project, currently scheduled to start in April 2014, includes

construction of new earthen levees that will encroach onto the footprint of the Golf Course. The revised levee alignment will necessitate the reconfiguration of golf holes 4, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 in order to maintain an 18-hole course. Community Services Department staff and the City Council identified the flood control project as an opportunity to reexamine the future of the Golf Course and to explore alternatives for providing supplemental City funding in order to undertake the renovation of the entire course. On July 23rd, 2012, Council formally adopted Golf Course Renovation “Plan G”, which includes a full renovation of the Golf Course as well as the set-aside of 10.5 acres to be carved from the Golf Course footprint for future recreation uses. Implementation of “Plan G” will transform the Golf Course from a flat, park-like expanse of maintained turf grass to a blend of landforms, vegetation, and golf course furnishings that are compatible with the unique Baylands setting. On October 15, 2012, Council awarded a contract to golf course architect Forrest Richardson & Associates to complete the design of a renovated Golf Course based on “Plan G”, prepare final bid documents (plans, specifications, and cost estimate) for the project, and prepare an environmental impact report for the proposed Golf Course modifications, including a conceptual analysis of the future recreation area.

Forrest Richardson has completed the preparation of the plans and related materials required for the Site and Design application. The site plan and related design documents included in the application package are consistent with the “Plan G” layout adopted by the Council. The Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Renovation Project (Project) would reconfigure all 18 holes of the Golf Course, a portion of the driving range and practice facility, and replace a restroom facility. The reconfigured Golf Course would be designed with a Baylands theme that would incorporate or modify the existing low-lying areas into the Golf Course, reduce the area of managed turf, and introduce areas of native grassland and wetland habitat.

The Project design has been developed to achieve the following objectives:

- A golf course that provides enhanced wildlife habitat, improved wetland areas, and a more interesting course that offers challenges for the experienced player and that can also be enjoyed by the beginner, while reducing water and pesticide use and labor.
- Integration of the Golf Course into the Baylands theme.
- Mitigation for impacts on the Golf Course resulting from the SFCJPA’s Flood Reduction Project.
- Improve Golf Course playing conditions – turf, drainage and irrigation.

The Project will reconfigure the entire Golf Course to an 18-hole, par 71, PGA-regulation course measuring 6,655 yards from the back tees. Following the designation of approximately 10.5 acres of the existing Golf Course for the future recreation facility and the loss of 7.4 acres to be incorporated into a widened San Francisquito Creek, the resultant area of the reconfigured Golf Course will be reduced to approximately 156 acres. The existing driving range will be expanded to the north by approximately 8,000 square feet to accommodate six new driving stations. A new Youth Golf Area including elements designed to attract young people to the game of golf

will be established along Embarcadero Road south of the existing driving range. The Project will include new 6.5-foot-wide concrete golf cart paths, compacted decomposed granite footpaths at the practice putting green area, and compacted gravel maintenance path connections between the concrete cart paths. The Project will also include a new 300 square foot restroom building located on the Golf Course. The Project does not include any modifications to the parking lot, clubhouse/restaurant/pro shop complex, or maintenance facility. The Site and Design application does not include any detailed design information for the future recreational uses to be sited in the southwest corner of the Golf Course. These improvements will be submitted for review at a future time when a specific type of recreational feature is selected and funding becomes available.

The Golf Course renovation will result in the following changes:

- Relocate 18 golf holes
- Construct 18 new greens on the course and two new greens in the practice areas
- Create a par 71 course
- Create a course with 6,545/6,091/5,374/4,588 yardages from each set of tees
- Reconstruct or construct all new bunkers
- Transform 66 irrigated acres to naturalized areas (non-managed turf)
- Reduce irrigated turf from 135 acres to 81 acres
- Create new practice green/short game area and Youth Golf Area
- Expand driving range tee area
- Replace entire irrigation system
- Complete temporary grading, drainage, and seeding for the future athletic fields

The Project will reduce the Golf Course managed turf area by 40 percent from 135 acres to 81 acres. New managed turf will include Creeping Bentgrass on the greens and salt-tolerant Paspalum (v. PE Platinum) at all other areas. During replacement, non-native plants and trees will be replaced with native grasses, and low-lying Baylands zones will be planted with indigenous halophyte plants (i.e., plants that survive in saline soil). The Golf Course will include three types of vegetated zones: managed turf area, non-turf native grass zones, and Baylands native zones. The Project will also include a dramatic increase in topographic variability throughout the course, including buffer mounds which will act as a visual and acoustical barrier between the Golf Course and the future recreation area. The buffer mounds will be 15 to 25 feet tall. Of the 711 trees on the existing Golf Course site, 123 trees will remain, and 588 will be removed. The loss of trees will be mitigated through a combination of new trees to be planted on the course as part of the Project and the planting of trees at a suitable off-site location that would benefit from an increased tree canopy. In accordance with the requirements of the City's Tree Technical Manual, the number of on-site and offsite trees to be planted will serve to replace the loss of tree canopy resulting from the tree removals within a period of ten years. 300 new native trees, including a variety of 15 gallon and 24 to 36 inch boxed sizes, will be planted across the site. The remaining number of trees required to achieve the mitigation goals will be planted off-site. The off-site trees will primarily consist of native oak seedlings and

acorn plantings at the Arastradero Preserve and elsewhere in the foothills. The off-site tree planting effort will be overseen by the City's Urban Forester and coordinated with Canopy and Acterra.

The Project will replace the existing Golf Course irrigation system with a new high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe system with limited metal components to eliminate corrosion and leaks. The sprinkler heads will be individually controlled and adjustable to provide full or part circle coverage. The Project will also include underground soil sensor units which will monitor soil moisture levels to prevent overwatering. Overall water usage for Golf Course irrigation is expected to be reduced by between 30 and 35 percent.

A new main entry sign is proposed along Embarcadero Road to replace the existing sign. The proposed sign conforms to the Baylands Design Guidelines by utilizing weathered wood sign supports, rusted metal fittings, and an overall low profile (11.6 ft. in width by 4.25 ft. in height) with muted colors. Primary lettering will be internally lighted within reverse pan channel letters that cast a low-light halo back onto the primary background.

One of the latest additions to the project design is a new Youth Golf Area along Embarcadero Road south of the existing driving range. Design of this area is being coordinated with local non-profit organization First Tee Silicon Valley (FTSV). Although this area is primarily intended to attract new young golfers, it will also accommodate other golfer groups, including seniors, men's and women's groups, and new player (lesson) groups. The area consists of three short holes measuring from 30 to 65 yards in length. At the far western end of this area will be a practice putting green with sand bunkers. Implementation of the Youth Golf Area will require a management plan jointly administered by the City and FTSV to ensure that the area is safely utilized and fits golf programs approved by the City.

It is anticipated that the Golf Course will be closed for approximately 12-15 months during construction, anticipated to begin in April 2014.

Site and Design Review

The Site and Design Review process, for major projects in areas within Palo Alto having the (D) zoning overlay, requires PTC, ARB, and City Council review. The PTC considers whether the project meets the Site and Design Review objectives set forth in Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) Chapter 18.30(G).060. The PTC meeting minutes and recommendation are shared with the ARB, and eventually forwarded to the City Council. After the PTC public hearing, review and recommendation, the project would be forwarded to the ARB. The ARB is scheduled to conduct a public hearing on July 18, 2013 to consider the project. The ARB would be requested to make a recommendation based on the findings for architectural review in PAMC Section 18.76.020(d). The project, as recommended by the PTC and ARB, would then be scheduled for a public hearing before Council for final action.

The PTC is asked to review the proposed project, and recommend approval, or recommend

such changes as it may deem necessary to accomplish the following objectives:

- (a) To ensure construction and operation of the use in a manner that will be orderly, harmonious, and compatible with existing or potential uses of adjoining or nearby sites.
- (b) To ensure the desirability of investment, or the conduct of business, research, or educational activities, or other authorized occupations, in the same or adjacent areas.
- (c) To ensure that sound principles of environmental design and ecological balance shall be observed.
- (d) To ensure that the use will be in accord with the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan.

These Site and Design Review findings are included in the attached draft Record of Land Use Action (Attachment A) for PTC consideration.

Previous Review

Both the PTC and the Architectural Review Board (ARB) conducted Study Session reviews of the Golf Course Renovation Project in 2012 and 2013. In addition, the project has been reviewed on multiple occasions by the Golf Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation Commission, Finance Committee, and the City Council.

The project received preliminary review by the ARB during a Study Session on December 20, 2012. Golf Course Architect Forrest Richardson presented an overview of the proposed Golf Course renovation project in order to solicit input from the Board members. During the meeting presentation, Mr. Richardson highlighted the project's key design concepts, including integration into the Baylands setting, reduction in the amount of managed turf and associated irrigation water demand, making the golf course more interesting and challenging for golfers through the design of the course layout and topography, and conformance with the Baylands Design Guidelines. The ARB was supportive of the project and the proposed design approach. Board members commented and asked questions regarding proposed perimeter fencing, colors and energy conservation strategies for the new restroom building, and project signage. The PTC received its initial briefing about the project at a February 13, 2013 Study Session. Commissioners commented and asked questions regarding the project's benefits to golf course drainage, benefits and challenges of using reclaimed water for turf irrigation (water conservation, increased soil salinity, etc.), efforts to encourage youth participation in golf, methods to increase the appeal of the golf course as compared to the existing course and surrounding competing golf courses, flood risk to the course and its users, and signage/branding for the renovated course. The staff report and minutes from the PTC Study Session of February 13, 2013 are attached to this report (Attachment B).

During the last week of March, staff submitted the project development drawings to the Golf Advisory Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission in order to solicit their endorsement of the project prior to the start of the formal Site and Design review process. Both advisory bodies had reviewed the project on multiple prior occasions and provided

substantial input to the golf course architect as to what they would like to see incorporated into the project design. The Golf Advisory Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission gave the project a positive review and endorsed the Site and Design application for submittal to the PTC and ARB.

Summary of Key Issues

Integration of the Golf Course into the Palo Alto Baylands

The existing Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course was constructed in 1956 with little regard for its setting in the Palo Alto Baylands. The levees along San Francisquito Creek were being raised to provide increased flood protection following the catastrophic Christmas 1955 flood. The adjacent low-lying marshland was filled with imported soil to “reclaim” the area for recreational purposes. The course was designed with a parkland theme, featuring vast expanses of turf and planted with a large number of non-native trees to provide visual interest and serve as a windbreak. The flat, low-lying topography of the course combined with the raised perimeter levees prevented any visual connectivity to the surrounding creek and Baylands.

Forrest Richardson’s proposed design for the renovation of the Golf Course, inspired by the visions presented in the Baylands Master Plan, is intended to reunite the course with its scenic and ecologically-rich setting. On the renovated course, large areas of managed turf will be replaced with low shrubs and grasses native to the Baylands environment. Although the number of trees will be reduced, the modified landscape will more closely resemble the vegetation types found in natural Baylands settings. Placement of a large amount of imported fill throughout the course will elevate the ground and provide vista points from which golfers will enjoy views of San Francisquito Creek, San Francisco Bay, and the surrounding coastal mountains. The golf course architect has carefully designed the course signage and furnishings to further celebrate the Baylands theme. The proposed branding of the renovated course, Baylands Golf Links – Palo Alto, was developed to attract golfers to the unique setting of the venue.

Reduction of Irrigation Water Demand

Although the existing Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course is partially irrigated with reclaimed water effluent from the nearby Regional Water Quality Control Plant, the amount of irrigation water required to maintain the course is higher than an ideal amount. Irrigation demand is increased by the large area of managed turf throughout the course at the fringes of the fairways and between the golf holes. Reclaimed water cannot be used to satisfy the full irrigation demand because it has much higher salts content than potable water. As a result, the course requires the use of a blend of potable and reclaimed water (rather than 100% reclaimed water) because of the type of non-salt-tolerant grass planted on the course and the high saline content of the near-surface soils underlying the course.

Overall water usage at the renovated Golf Course is expected to decrease by 30-35%, and potable water usage is expected to drop by even more due to a number of factors. The fairways will be planted with salt-tolerant Paspalum turf, which can tolerate a much higher percentage of reclaimed water (due to their intensive usage and to satisfy aesthetic and playability constraints, the new course greens will be planted with Creeping Bentgrass, which requires potable irrigation water). The area of managed turf will be reduced by 40% on the new course, with fringe areas planted with native grasses and shrubs that have a much lower irrigation demand. In addition, innovations in irrigation system technology, such as ground moisture sensors and individually-controlled sprinkler heads, will help the golf course maintenance staff to avoid overwatering the turf.

Policy Implications

The Golf Course Renovation Project is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan programs and policies, the Baylands Master Plan, and the Baylands Design Guidelines. An extensive list of the applicable policies and programs is included in this report as Attachment C.

Timeline

The Golf Course Renovation Project is subject to the Site and Design review process. The tentative meeting schedule for the review process is as follows:

Planning and Transportation Commission	June 26, 2013
Architectural Review Board	July 18, 2013
City Council	Late Fall 2013 (following circulation of the project environmental review document)

Environmental Review

The Golf Course Renovation Project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) has been prepared to evaluate the proposed potential impacts of the project and to identify the appropriate mitigation measures, with the City acting as the lead agency (Attachment D). The DEIR was released for public review for a period of 45 days beginning on June 3, 2013 and ending on July 19, 2013. The June 26, 2013 PTC meeting is serving as the public hearing customarily held during the public comment period for the DEIR. Comments on the DEIR made by PTC Commissioners and members of the public during the public hearing will be entered into the official administrative record for the Project. The final EIR will be modified as appropriate to address the comments made during the comment period, and the comments will be listed along with the City's official responses in the final document. The City Council will be asked to certify the final EIR in late Fall 2013, along with approval of the Site and Design application.

The Project impacts are summarized in Table ES-1 of the DEIR. For potentially significant impacts, mitigation measures are identified where feasible to reduce the impact on the environmental resources to a less-than-significant level. Chapter 3 (Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures) contains a detailed discussion of Project impacts and detailed description of the proposed mitigation measures. Significant and Unavoidable Impacts related to the following topics would remain significant despite the implementation of mitigation.

- **Aesthetics.** The Athletic Center would create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area during Project operation.
- **Air Quality.** The Project would violate an air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation during Project construction. The Project would result in a short-term increase in particulate matter (PM), which consists of PM that measures 10 microns in diameter or less (PM10) and PM that measures 2.5 microns in diameter or less (PM2.5) and diesel particulate matter (DPM) due to grading and construction during Project construction.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions.** The Project would generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment during Project operation. The Project would conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases during Project operation. The greenhouse gas impacts of the Project are largely attributable to increased vehicle trips that would be generated by the enhanced golf course and the addition of new recreational facilities at the expanded Baylands Athletic Center.

Although CEQA criteria does not define the level of significance for the impact of climate change, the DEIR does contain a qualitative discussion of climate change. The Project site would be subject to increased flood risk due to future sea level rise resulting from projected climate change. Any new structures (e.g. golf course restroom, gymnasium) would be elevated above the current Base Flood Elevation, and the renovated golf course will be elevated 3 to 25 feet through the placement of imported fill. The Project site will have increased flood protection as a result of the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority's (JPA) flood reduction project slated to begin in 2014.

Courtesy Copies

Golf Advisory Committee

Len Materman, SFCJPA

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Draft Record of Land Use Action (PDF)
- Attachment B: P&TC Minutes, February 13, 2013 (PDF)
- Attachment C: Comprehensive Policies & Programs (PDF)
- Attachment D: Draft Environmental Impact Report (Commission only) (PDF)
- Attachment E: Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Reconfiguration Site and Design Plans (Commission only) (PDF)

ATTACHMENT A
APPROVAL NO. 20013-XX
RECORD OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALO ALTO LAND USE ACTION
FOR 1875 EMBARCADERO ROAD (PALO ALTO MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE):
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND SITE AND DESIGN REVIEW
APPLICATION [FILE NO.13PLN-00103]
(CITY OF PALO ALTO COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT, APPLICANT)

On _____, 2013, the City Council approved Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Site and Design Review application for the Golf Course Reconfiguration and Baylands Athletic Center Expansion Project on a 176 acre site located in the PF(D) (Public Facilities) zone district.

SECTION 1. Background. The City Council of the City of Palo Alto ("City Council") finds, determines, and declares as follows:

A. On March 6, 2013, the City of Palo Alto Community Services Department applied for a Site and Design Review application for a new 18 hole regulation Golf Course with a par of 71 to replace the existing 18 hole Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course in the PF(D) Public Facility with Site and Design Overlay zone district ("the Project"). The Project includes the replacement of a portion of the existing driving range and practice facility, and a the construction of a new restroom facility.

B. The scope of the EIR includes the new golf course project and the potential future expansion of the Baylands Athletic Center which would include a maximum of five full-size athletic playing fields and a 24,100 square foot gymnasium with additional parking and lighting.

C. Following staff review, the Planning and Transportation Commission (Commission) reviewed and recommended approval of the Project on June 26, 2013.

D. Following Commission review, the Architectural Review Board (ARB) reviewed and recommended approval of the Project on July 18, 2013.

SECTION 2. Environmental Review. The City as the lead agency for The Project has determined that the project is subject to environmental review under provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared to evaluate the potential project impacts and identify appropriate mitigation measures. The Draft EIR (DEIR) was available for public review on June 3, 2013 through July 17, 2013.

SECTION 3. Site and Design Review Findings.

1. *The use will be constructed and operated in a manner that will be orderly, harmonious, and compatible with existing or potential uses of adjoining or nearby sites, in that:*

City standards and regulations will help to ensure that the use, or operation, of the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course will be conducted in a manner that is compatible with the existing uses located in the immediate area. During construction, it is expected that there will be temporary impacts to the area in terms of construction-related noise, dust/debris and traffic. These impacts will be offset by applicable City construction standards, such as restrictions on hours of construction, the City's noise ordinance, and the mitigation measures found in the attached DEIR(Attachment D). The proposed golf course renovation will be consistent with the existing functions of the park uses at the adjacent Baylands Athletic Center. The Project will not adversely affect the operation of the Palo Alto Airport or other adjacent land uses.

2. *The Project is consistent with the goal of ensuring the desirability of investment, or the conduct of business, research, or educational activities, or other authorized occupations, in the same or adjacent areas, in that:*

The Project site is located in the Public Facilities (PF) zone district and will be reconfiguring an existing public facility/golf course with a new public facility/golf course. The Project will maintain desirability of investment in the same and adjacent areas in that the proposed goals and design are consistent with the existing Baylands environment, and the construction of all improvements will be governed by the regulations of the current Zoning Ordinance, the Uniform Building Code, and other applicable codes to assure safety and a high quality of development.

3. *Sound principles of environmental design and ecological balance are observed in the Project, in that:*

The Project will implement appropriate sustainable building practices as deemed feasible. The Project is required to comply with the City's Construction and Demolition requirements during construction activities. The Project elements have been designed in a manner consistent with the Baylands Design Guidelines. The Project has been evaluated in the Environmental Impact Report for environmental impacts, and mitigations have been provided to reduce potentially significant impacts. Mitigation Measures in the areas of Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazardous Materials, Hydrology, Land Use, Noise, Public Services, Recreation, and Transportation and Circulation have been provided and are listed in DEIR provided as Attachment D.

The proposed project would have unavoidable significant impacts with regard to aesthetics (lighting), short-term air quality, and greenhouse gas emissions.

4. *The use will be in accord with the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan, in that:*

The Project complies with the policies of the Land Use, Natural Environment, Transportation, and Community Services elements of the Comprehensive Plan as well as the Baylands Master Plan. The applicable Comprehensive Plan and Baylands Master Plan goals and policies and are provided as Attachment C.

SECTION 4. SITE AND DESIGN APPROVALS GRANTED. Site and Design Approval is granted by the City Council under Palo Alto Municipal Code Section 18.30(G).070 for application 13PLN-00103, subject to the conditions of approval in Section 5 of the Record.

SECTION 5. Draft Conditions of Approval.

Planning and Transportation Division

1. The plans submitted for Building Permit shall be in substantial conformance with plans received and date stamped March 6, 2013, except as modified to incorporate these conditions of approval.
2. All mitigation measures identified in the DEIR shall be incorporated into the project implementation.
3. The project is subject to meeting all the requirements of Palo Alto Municipal Code Chapter 18.44, the City's Green Building Ordinance.
4. To the extent permitted by law, the applicant shall indemnify and hold harmless the City, its City Council, its officers, employees and agents (the "indemnified parties) from against any claim, action, or proceeding brought by a third party against the indemnified parties and the applicant to attack, set aside or void, any permit or approval authorized hereby for the Project, including (without limitation) reimbursing the City its actual attorneys fees and costs incurred in defense of the litigation. The City may, in its sole discretion, elect to defend any such action with attorneys of its own choice.

Planning Arborist

5. Transplant or compensate for loss of Protected Trees by planting both on-site and off-site consistent with applicable tree protection regulations as listed in the Tree Technical Manual and Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) Ch. 8.10 Tree

Preservation and Management Regulations.

Public Works Engineering

6. REGULATORY PERMITS: Obtain all necessary regulatory permits and approvals for working in the wetlands from Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), Regional Water Quality Control Board, US Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, etc.
7. OFFSITE IMPROVEMENTS: At the end of the project, Embarcadero Road at the frontage of the project may require repaving (2-inch grind and pave) due to the damage from the construction traffic. The condition of the pavement will be assessed at the end of the project. Furthermore, as part of this project, the applicant must replace the existing sidewalks, curbs, gutters or driveway approaches in the public right-of-way along the frontage(s) of the property that are broken, badly cracked, displaced, or non-standard per Public Works' latest standards and/or as instructed by the Public Works Inspector.
8. The plan must note that any work in the right-of-way must be done per Public Works' standards by a licensed contractor who must first obtain a Permit for Construction in the Public Right-of-Way ("Street Work Permit") from Public Works at the Development Center.
9. STREET TREES: The applicant may be required to replace existing and/or add new street trees in the public right-of-way along the property's frontage. Call City Public Works' arborist at 650-496-5953 to arrange a site visit so he can determine what street tree work will be required for this project. The site or tree plan must show street tree work that the arborist has determined including the tree species, size, location, staking and irrigation requirements. Any removal, relocation or planting of street trees; or excavation, trenching or pavement within 10 feet of street trees must be approved by the Public Works' arborist. The plan must note that in order to do street tree work, the applicant must first obtain a Permit for Street Tree Work in the Public Right-of-Way ("Street Tree Permit") from Public Works' Urban Forestry.

10. STORM WATER TREATMENT: This project must meet the latest State Regional Water Quality Control Board's (SRWQCB) C.3 provisions.
11. The applicant is required to satisfy all current storm water discharge regulations and shall provide calculations and documents to verify compliance.
12. All projects that are required to treat storm water will need to treat the permit-specified amount of storm water runoff with the following low impact development (LID) methods: rainwater harvesting and reuse, infiltration, evapotranspiration, or biotreatment. However, biotreatment (filtering storm water through vegetation and soils before discharging to the storm drain system) will be allowed only where harvesting and reuse, infiltration and evapotranspiration are infeasible at the project site. Complete the Infiltration/Harvesting and Use Feasibility Screening Worksheet (Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program C.3 Stormwater Handbook - Appendix I). Vault-based treatment will not be allowed as a stand-alone treatment measure. Where storm water harvesting and reuse, infiltration, or evapotranspiration are infeasible, vault-based treatment measures may be used in series with biotreatment, for example, to remove trash or other large solids. Reference: Palo Alto Municipal Code Section 16.11.030(c) http://www.scvurppp-w2k.com/permit_c3_docs/c3_handbook_2012/Appendix_I-Feasibility_2012.pdf In order to qualify the project as a Special Project for LID treatment reduction credit, complete and submit the Special Projects Worksheet (Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program C.3 Stormwater Handbook - Appendix J: Special Projects). Any Regulated Project that meets all the criteria for more than one Special Project Category may only use the LID treatment reduction credit allowed under one of the categories. http://www.scvurppp-w2k.com/permit_c3_docs/c3_handbook_2012/Appendix_J-Special_P

Utilities Engineering

13. The most recent plans submitted on March 6th, 2013 do not show any changes to the electrical utilities. If there are any changes to the load requirement or physical relocation of utilities infrastructure (including the

meter), the customer is required to contact CPAU and fill out a Utilities Service Application

Fire Department

14. Cart path design for emergency medical response recommended.

SECTION 6. Term of Approval.

Site and Design Approval. In the event actual construction of the project is not commenced within two years of the date of council approval, the approval shall expire and be of no further force or effect, pursuant to Palo Alto Municipal Code Section 18.82.080.

PASSED:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

City Clerk

Director of Planning and
Community Environment

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Senior Deputy City Attorney

1
2 **Planning and Transportation Commission**
3 **Verbatim Minutes**
4 **February 13, 2013**

5
6 **EXCERPT**
7
8

9 **1875 Embarcadero Road (Palo Alto Golf Course)** : Community Scoping meeting
10 regarding the scope and content of the Draft EIR's environmental analysis for the Palo
11 Alto Municipal Golf Course Renovation and Baylands Athletic Center Expansion
12 Project. Request for Study Session review of preliminary plans for the golf course
13 renovation. Zone District: PF(D).
14

15 Chair Martinez: And we'll go right into our first agenda item which is a let me get it right, an
16 Environmental Impact Report (EIR) scoping session and study session for the Palo Alto Golf
17 Course. And we will begin with a staff report. Excuse me, before you start, members of the
18 public that care to speak on this item you can submit speaker cards. Thank you.
19

20 Aaron Aknin, Assistant Director: And Chair before we go into this can, you may want to
21 mention that Item Number 1, which was the public hearing that was initially set to a date certain,
22 which was tonight, has been continued at staff's request to the 27th. We'll be sending out notices
23 to the neighborhood about that, but since it's on the agenda tonight it might be... I'm sorry now
24 March 5th not February 27th.
25

26 Chair Martinez: So noted. Thank you. Ok let's begin with our first item tonight. Staff report.
27

28 Mr. Aknin: Thank you and good evening honorable Chair and Planning Commission. Tonight
29 we have basically two items within this one item. Initially we were thinking of having them on
30 separate nights. We thought it would be best for the Commission to both get an overview of the
31 Master Plan for the Palo Alto Golf Course as well as have the EIR scoping session on the same
32 night so the public could have some background about what is being proposed in order to
33 formulate their comments on what should be in review from an environmental standpoint. So at
34 this point I will turn it over to Rob De Geus as well as Joe Teresi to give their presentation.
35

36 Joe Teresi, Senior Engineer, Public Works: Thank you and good evening. I'm Joe Teresi a
37 Senior Engineer with the City's Public Works Department and I'm the Project Manager for this
38 project. And at this point I would like to just introduce some of the other staff members and
39 consultants who are here to assist us with this item. On my left is Rob De Geus from
40 Community Services. Also in the audience is Joe Vallaire from the Golf Course and then we
41 also have our consultants here this evening; Forrest Richardson is the Golf Course Architect and
42 Shilpa Trisal is the Environmental Consultant. And they'll be both going to be making parts of
43 the presentation.
44

45 Again as Aaron mentioned the purpose tonight is twofold. One it's the scoping meeting for the
46 Environmental Impact Report so we're seeking input from both from the Commission and the
47 members of the public on what issues and items should be covered in the Environmental Impact
48 Report that we're about to start. And then secondly even though this project has been reviewed

1 several times by various bodies like the Council, the Finance Committee, the Parks and Rec
2 Commission, the Golf Course Committee, and the Architectural Review Board (ARB), you
3 haven't had a chance to see it yet. So this is an opportunity for us to introduce the project to you.
4 It will be returning to you in several months as part of a formal site and design application, but
5 we wanted to present it tonight so you could become acquainted with it. So at this point I'm
6 going to introduce Forrest Richardson our Golf Course Architect to give you an overview of the
7 project.

8
9 Forrest Richardson, Forrest Richardson and Associates: Good evening Commissioners. Thank
10 you for having me here so that we can get into your questions I'm just going to go through a very
11 brief overview of the project to show you some of the hallmarks of it. This project is really all
12 about transforming the existing golf course in Palo Alto to one of a Baylands theme. We spent a
13 lot of time with your staff working and understanding the approved Baylands Master Plan and so
14 virtually everything we're doing is aimed at that. And Joe, tell me what I'm doing here to get
15 this to go forward? Sorry. There we go. How do I go back? Yeah. You want to do it? Just go
16 back to the first slide. Sorry, second slide.

17
18 So real quickly this is the existing golf course boundary, the red line that you have there. It's
19 171 acres. Next. That is the existing golf course. It's largely what we call a parkland golf
20 course currently. Wall to wall turf and was built in the early 1950's. It's changed a lot but the
21 turf footprint and the parkland setting really hasn't changed. So it really the way we describe it
22 as golf course architects it's kind of like an island within the Baylands environment. Next.

23
24 The project goals were very clear. Reconfigure the golf course to accommodate the necessary
25 flood control with the Joint Powers Authority (JPA). Reinforce a sense of place to the completed
26 facility. Celebrate the Baylands environment. Restore the golf asset as a point of pride for the
27 community. Conserve resources by transforming the fully turfed course to one with more
28 naturalized areas that are in harmony with the Baylands. And then promote Palo Alto by
29 establishing a must play golf experience for the residents as well as bringing people into the City.

30
31 I won't go over each of these individually, but the hallmarks of the project it's basically
32 rebuilding the golf course; so all of the features, the landscape, all of the areas of the golf course
33 will be fully replaced. And I'll get to some of the highlights of that as we look at the plan. The
34 green line on this represents the project boundaries of the golf course. So it's 142 acres of the
35 171. It does not include the clubhouse; it doesn't include the parking area, the entryway, or the
36 maintenance facility. It's just the golf course portions itself.

37
38 This document gives you a little bit of idea of what's being carved out of the golf course which
39 was direction from your Council to create an athletic field area, sports area. That is represented
40 by the orange. The yellow happens to be buffer mounding that was a very strong public request
41 that would separate the athletic field area from the golf course. And the red line represents a
42 stockpile area which is not only for the benefit of importing soil to the golf course but also would
43 serve the JPA and the creek realignment of San Francisquito Creek. The purple area, which is on
44 this plan, the, I think if you go back one... the purple area there, that is just showing you the area
45 that is being removed from the golf course for realignment of the creek.

46
47 This is the plan in July of last year that was adopted by your Council affectionately known as
48 Plan G of seven different plans that were created. This is just showing you the turf acreage.
49 Currently 135 acres of turf on the parkland golf course. The new acreage would be 81.3, a forty

1 percent reduction. The next slide will show you the naturalized areas of the course. The tan
2 color are native; what we call Baylands themed native areas. The kind of bluish color are
3 lowland areas. They're not really water, but they would be prone to halophyte type plants, the
4 salt tolerant plants. The cart paths and buildings have a 4.5 percent coverage to the site. Just to
5 give you an idea of the impact of that. And this is the grading plan that's currently in progress
6 which shows the importation of soil onto the site.

7
8 This is just giving you an idea of some of the landscape theme for the site. So the idea is to
9 transform the parkland setting to more of a Baylands compatible landscape. We will be retaining
10 and preserving some of the trees onsite such as the Stone Pines and some of the landmark
11 Eucalyptus, but not the ones that are in poor health or dying condition. On the left side here are
12 the native grasses for the upland areas and on the right are the salt tolerant plants for the lowland
13 areas just to give you an idea of the look that would be expressed in the finished landscape.

14
15 These are conceptual plans that have gone through your Golf Advisory Committee and the Parks
16 and other public meetings that just show the look and feel of the completed course. This is just a
17 document to show you some of the irrigation water saving measures that will be installed. Won't
18 get into detail on it, but the idea is to remove much of the reliance on water for the site;
19 somewhere between 30 and 40 percent. The restroom building that will be relocated goes here in
20 this area up toward the West along the relocated creek. These are some of the plans that are
21 currently in progress for that building. And this is just showing you the earthwork. There's a net
22 increase to the site of about 340,000 cubic yards of material.

23
24 I'm now going to turn it over to Shilpa from ICF International to talk to you about the scoping
25 and cover the sequence of how that process will unfold. Shilpa?

26
27 Shilpa Trisal, ICF International: Thank you. Thank you for having us here. My name is Shilpa
28 Trisal. I'm with ICF International the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) consultant
29 on this project. On January 22nd we released the Notice of Preparation for an Environmental
30 Impact Report announcing that we're starting the CEQA process. And it's a 30 day scoping
31 process which will end on February 21st during which time we will be seeking comments from
32 the public and public agencies on what should be included in the EIR, what issues to be
33 examined, etcetera. Today's meeting here also serves as the scoping meeting for the EIR.

34
35 The purpose of scoping in general as I explained is to get comments and input from the
36 Commission today and members of the general public and any agencies on what should be
37 examined in the EIR and to resolve any early issues as early as possible and also get a sense of
38 what should be the range of alternatives to be examined in the EIR and then examine potential
39 issues and strategies to deal with various issues that are raised here today.

40
41 The EIR will examine a broad range of resource areas. These are included in the Appendix G of
42 the CEQA guidelines. These are recommended by Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to be
43 examined in environmental documents. These range from aesthetics which includes lighting
44 analysis, scenic resource analysis, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources to
45 hazardous materials, noise, construction noise, transportation, any change construction traffic,
46 etcetera. Also in addition we will be looking at alternatives; looking at cumulative impacts,
47 growth inducing impacts, and all other required sections within the EIR.

1 Regarding public outreach the project team here has over the last one year held several meetings
2 with the public and various commissions. They've been engaged in seeking feedback on the golf
3 course plan and the Plan G that was presented by Forrest today is a result of that communication
4 and feedback. And we as a project team hopes to come back to the Commission during the draft
5 EIR stage and have a site review and also meet with other departments and commissions and the
6 City Council and this will be an ongoing process and we hope to have a project that meets, that
7 includes all the feedback that we get.

8
9 The EIR process we expect will be a 12 month process. We initiated the EIR last month. So this
10 will be a 10 to 12 month process. In the next couple of months we will be preparing the
11 administrative draft EIR with the City's input and then we hope that in the summer we will be
12 releasing the public draft for public comment. And through fall we'll be responding to any
13 public comments and then certification at the end of the year. And at that point we'll be back in
14 front of you. And thank you very much for your time today.

15
16 Mr. Teresi: That concludes our presentation. We're here to answer any questions that you might
17 have.

18
19 Chair Martinez: Ok. I'd like to open the public hearing and ask if there are any members of the
20 golf community that care to speak on the project. I see none. Oh, I'm sorry. Well, I'm glad I
21 asked. Thank you very much. You'll have three minutes.

22
23 Emily Renzel: Well thank you. I'm Emily Renzel, 1056 Forest Avenue, and I admit to have
24 coming a bit unprepared. But I'm very concerned about the proposed gymnasium that is
25 suggested for this athletic center addition. New fields when they're not in use at least provide
26 some semblance of habitat. A gymnasium will not. It will also be an increased urbanization
27 which is contrary to our Baylands Master Plan of no further urban intrusion. Part of this athletic
28 center expansion is very close to the creek and as a result will be an area that has a higher
29 habitat, potential habitat value than further toward Embarcadero Road for example.

30
31 I'm also very concerned about increased night lighting out there in the Baylands. I would
32 consider that a serious urban intrusion. I think the general thrust of changing the golf course to
33 being more water tolerant, salt tolerant, and Baylands habitat is a good one, but I think it may be
34 countermanded by some of these urban intrusions. I don't know how many parking spaces, but it
35 seemed like there was a huge amount of additional parking proposed, which is paving. And I'm
36 not sure where that goes. There is an acre of land on the, where Palo Alto Sanitation Company
37 (PASCO) used to be located, that is part of the Baylands Athletic Center. And I don't know if
38 that's proposed to be used as part of this project, but certainly before going and putting
39 something urban close to the creek it would make more sense to put it in that acre site that is
40 right next to an industrial area. And that may be where some of this proposed parking is going, I
41 don't know, but the trend seems to be going in a very bad direction from preserving Baylands
42 habitat in general. And I think to the extent that this project can avoid those kinds of impacts it
43 would be desirable. Thank you.

44
45 Chair Martinez: And thank you too.

46
47 Vice-Chair Michael: So the next speaker is Trish Mulvey. You'll have three minutes.

1 Trish Mulvey: Thank you and I'd like to thank Ms. Renzel. She introduced the concerns I share
2 particularly about the lighting and the habitat value in the area of the athletic fields. Currently
3 the edges of the golf course have become quite useful habitat to a number of small creatures
4 particularly the native grey fox and I want to make sure that those needs are understood and to
5 the extent impacts can be mitigated. I particularly share the concerns about the night lighting
6 aspects at the athletic fields.

7
8 The other comment I have is very different and that's about bicycle access to the athletic fields.
9 Between the work that's going on now with Facebook and the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open
10 Space District to complete the Bay Trail basically through Menlo Park to Mountain View as well
11 as the East Palo Alto plan for a bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing that will terminate on Clark
12 Avenue in East Palo Alto. I'm particularly interested in making sure that we are accommodating
13 and acknowledging the impacts of an awful lot more opportunity for bicycle access to the
14 athletic area as well as to the golf course and as I say on beyond in both directions. I'd like to
15 make sure that there's clear identification of the connection between this site and the JPA project
16 at the Palo Alto Pump Station and that there's consideration of making sure we have adequate
17 bicycle parking as well as safety features. So thank you for your attention.

18
19 Chair Martinez: And thank you.

20
21 Vice-Chair Michael: Next speaker is Shani Kleinhaus.

22
23 Shani Kleinhaus: Good evening. I'm Shani Kleinhaus with Santa Clara Valley Audubon
24 Society, also a resident of Palo Alto. I'm here to ask that alternatives would be considered that
25 have been perhaps eliminated already but should be part of the CEQA analysis that you would
26 have maybe fewer athletic fields, maybe no gymnasium, and maybe more nature. So those types
27 of alternatives could have less, could be feasible and could have less of an impact on the
28 environment and should be included in the EIR. At the heart of the EIR is really the alternative
29 analysis. It seems like the City has done a lot of it pre EIR, but that doesn't mean that it should
30 not be part of the EIR as well. Thank you.

31
32 Chair Martinez: And thank you. We'll leave the public hearing open and we'll go to members of
33 the Commission for questions. Let's start with the Vice-Chair since he's our resident golfer.

34
35 Vice-Chair Michael: Your resident "duffer" I think is more accurate. So I think this is an
36 interesting project. Obviously there's been significant community outreach and visibility to the
37 Council and other boards and commissions. And I appreciate it coming to the Planning
38 Commission for our role in the process.

39
40 As a golfer and not so much as a Commissioner I wonder if the period of construction and the
41 disruption of play and habits of your patrons, the golfers who play the course, is going to create a
42 challenge to bring them back when it's done? And I think probably the significance of this is
43 twofold. Probably in terms of planning and budgeting and forecasting I would be cautious or
44 conservative in terms of the extent of play you'd get when you reopen, particularly if the course
45 is going from a course which is parkland but relatively flat, not a lot of out of bounds, not
46 particularly challenging to really skilled golfers, so your base of play is probably a group that
47 doesn't include a lot of low handicap golfers who maybe don't think of Palo Alto muni or the
48 new Baylands Golf Club to be as a place they'd like to spend their time and money. So
49 importance of marketing, but also being cautious in the forecasting.

1
2 One of the things that's probably down in sort of the weeds in terms of the design is as you move
3 to a more challenging golf course but you have golfers of sort of more normal abilities currently
4 playing probably very important to have the maximum amount of multiple tee boxes from
5 championship to forward tees and everything in between. I know that there's a course that I've
6 experienced in the Palm Springs area which is SilverRock that has five tee boxes and it's really
7 fabulous to have that level of choice involved so that you can be at any level you can have a
8 great experience. And so I don't know if this is in the design, but I would really maximize and
9 optimize the multiple tee box kind of idea so you can appeal to all levels.

10
11 And then there are a number of current Planning Commission Members who served on the
12 Infrastructure Blue Ribbon Commission (IBRC) and as part of that we looked at a number of
13 infrastructure issues in the City including the Municipal Services Center (MSC). And we
14 engaged in a little sort of speculative thinking; what if things were changed in the City relative to
15 the facilities that currently at the MSC or in that area and with respect to the Baylands Master
16 Plan which is very important and obviously takes precedence over a lot of these things. I
17 wondered if it might be feasible not as part of this current project, but maybe a future possibility
18 to think about some sort of a hotel conference facility that would be conveniently nearby the
19 course that would attract players that would be interested in the beauty of the Baylands, the
20 amenities of the golf course, and so forth. I last year had a chance to visit Alabama and there's a
21 state project there the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail and they partnered with a hotel, I think
22 Marriot Hotel, to have facilities at each of these Robert Trent Jones courses. And they use that to
23 stimulate a lot of visitors and play to Alabama that wasn't otherwise happening. So just as a
24 golfer I would make some suggestions about things to think about.

25
26 Chair Martinez: Yes?

27
28 Mr. Richardson: Honorable Commissioner "Duffer." Regarding the multiple tees, well first of
29 all as someone who has to come here and visit your lovely City I support more hotels, especially
30 ones that are under a couple hundred dollars a night. But as far as the multiple tee boxes we've
31 spent a lot of time with the Golf Advisory Committee. I serve on a number of national
32 committees that addresses the very concern that you brought up. And to put it in perspective
33 your course now is about 5,000 yards at the forward tees. And we will be able to accommodate
34 just below 4,000 yards. And it's very important to us because it obviously needs to cater to as
35 you say a variety of skill levels.

36
37 Chair Martinez: I have kind of a related, I don't think I would call it a follow up, but yeah, let me
38 call it a follow up. In the analysis that the Vice-Chair referred to of the profitability or the break-
39 even point, does it take into account the current usage and by raising the fees what number of
40 people will be priced out of the market? I know there are low income people from East Palo
41 Alto and retired folks that use the golf course. Is that factored in? And as kind of a follow up to
42 my follow up, is it something that the EIR can take into account?

43
44 Rob De Geus, Recreation Services Manager, CSD: Rob De Geus, Recreation Services Manager.
45 I can start a response to this. I'm not sure if it's included in an EIR analysis. I know that it was
46 included in our staff analysis. As we considered the different golf course design options. I think
47 we started out with seven from very sort of simple reconfiguration to sort of more complicated
48 and ambitious, which is what Council ultimately wanted to do. As part of that work we also
49 retained the National Golf Foundation (NGF) that does financial analysis on pro formas and how

1 a golf course is likely to perform given the new features and how it competes with Shore Line
2 and our other competitive golf courses in the neighboring area. And so they took a very close
3 look at that and did ten year pro formas and in terms of the pricing they anticipate that we can,
4 and not that we will, but we can increase fees probably 15 percent above where they are today
5 given the improved golf course product. So that's exciting for us to hear because as we look at
6 the trend of golf play over the last 10 years it's been on a steady decline every year and so we do
7 need to change it up a little bit to capture more play.

8
9 Chair Martinez: And to the second part of my question about?

10
11 Mr. De Geus: Who gets priced out of the market? That question?

12
13 Chair Martinez: Well, is there kind of a connection to the EIR that can be part of our scoping.

14
15 Cara Silver, Sr. Assistant City Attorney: Chair Martinez I'll take a crack at that and then perhaps
16 the EIR consultant can tag on. I think in terms of a change in the user ship of the golf course that
17 could have an environmental impact in the area of traffic and greenhouse gas emissions. It
18 probably will not have an impact on the traffic analysis because we typically look at peak hour
19 and golf course usage typically doesn't occur in peak hour. However, it could have an impact in
20 vehicle miles traveled if the current usage is more of a local based and it's expanding to more of
21 a regional facility I think that would be an appropriate area to look at in the EIR and it's good
22 that you brought the point up in this scoping session. This is exactly the type of feedback we're
23 looking for.

24
25 Chair Martinez: But no socioeconomic impact is being considered, is that correct?

26
27 Ms. Silver: Oh, in terms of social impacts and economic impacts those typically are not looked at
28 in the EIR except if those impacts will result in a physical impact such as blight or something
29 like that. And we wouldn't anticipate that type of analysis here.

30
31 Chair Martinez: Did you care to add something?

32
33 Ms. Trisal: No, that's exactly what it is. That unless we have a physical impact EIR/CEQA does
34 not consider economic impacts.

35
36 Chair Martinez: Commissioner Keller. Before you begin I apologize I should've acknowledged
37 that Commissioner Tanaka arrived shortly after we began on this.

38
39 Commissioner Keller: Yes. Just for the record perhaps Forrest Richardson who spoke earlier
40 could identify himself?

41
42 Mr. Richardson: I'm sorry, yes. Forrest Richardson, American Society of Golf Course
43 Architects, Forrest Richardson and Associates. Thank you.

44
45 Chair Martinez: And for that matter, our Senior Assistant City Attorney did not acknowledge
46 herself.

47
48 Ms. Silver: Guilty as charged. Cara Silver, Senior Assistant City Attorney.

1 Commissioner Keller: So my first question is I guess a very high level scoping question. And
2 that is will the EIR include the playing field changes or proposed changes or options there or
3 only include the golf course and its proposed changes or alternative changes?
4

5 Ms. Trisal: The EIR will consider the Baylands Athletic Center expansion, which includes five;
6 right now the plan includes five new athletic fields and a new gymnasium. And we're open to
7 considering as part of the scoping any other alternatives that come out.
8

9 Commissioner Keller: Thank you. So that's very helpful for us to know that suggestions on what
10 might be in terms of playing fields or gymnasiums or placement is within scope. Thank you.
11

12 So here's some things, some questions and things that I'd like considered in the EIR. The first is
13 consider impact of playing field noise on golf course play. And whether the lowlands area of the
14 golf course are potentially become classified as wetlands. And if they are potentially classified
15 as wetlands under the federal definition then what restrictions does that entail for the golf course
16 and for the City of Palo Alto? Is there a potential for creek and bay flooding? In other words,
17 even after the project is done is there creek flooding that may diminish, but bay flooding may
18 still continue? And if bay flooding, if either of these still exists how much notice would there be
19 for this flooding? And would there be adequate notice and time for people who are in the flood
20 prone area to leave safely considering particularly for example, congestion on Embarcadero
21 Road at peak hours? What is the effect on wildlife of both the golf course and the athletic center
22 in terms of noise and light, particularly at night or in the evening? Is there potential for the use
23 of reclaimed water on watering the athletic fields or watering the parts or all of the golf course?
24 And particularly consider the issues of the reclaimed water and its salinity and other things that
25 are in the reclaimed water.
26

27 Perhaps we could hear a little more about the proposed ideas for the playing fields and the
28 gymnasium so that we could better articulate questions and thoughts about them. And finally I
29 actually would like to understand a little bit more about whether the PASCO site is part of this
30 analysis and how. So perhaps those last two questions you could address now and the rest of
31 them are things that would be properly addressed in the EIR.
32

33 Mr. De Geus: Again, Rob De Geus, Recreation Services Manager, Community Services
34 Department. Regarding the PASCO site that is included in the study and it is the site where we
35 thought, we're thinking about the gymnasium. That location where the gymnasium would go, so
36 the other side of Geng Road. The question about the athletic field area and what are the
37 possibilities and thinking of that space the design and concepts of that area is not as far along as
38 the golf course design, but the current thinking is multiuse athletic fields that allows for lacrosse
39 and soccer and football and a variety of sports to be companion fields to the baseball and softball
40 field across the parking lot.
41

42 Mr. Teresi: And can I add to that a little bit? I just wanted to clarify that although the athletic
43 fields and the possible inclusion of a gymnasium are going to be addressed in the Environmental
44 Impact Report those facilities are not yet funded. They're not really a project yet. They're just
45 more or less concepts. And when we come back to you with our site and design application it
46 will not include those elements. We're coming back only with the specifics of the golf course
47 renovation. But the EIR is meant to cover these other athletic fields as a future project.
48

1 Commissioner Keller: Well I appreciate that. Certainly the EIR is supposed to look at the whole
2 of a project and even if a project is segmented it should consider the whole thing. So certainly
3 from the point of view of the CEQA analysis it should include these playing fields and potential
4 gymnasium. And also from the point of view of a comprehensive analysis and cost it's certainly
5 better to do it that way.

6
7 Could you identify perhaps the diagram that seems to make the most sense to me is this diagram
8 here, which is, I don't think it's, it's sheet five, by the way somebody likes extra "e's" in the
9 word "sheet," but sheet five seems to be the diagram I can figure out as to what's going on. And
10 perhaps, I'm not sure where that fits on your diagram. Perhaps you can tell me where on that
11 diagram the PASCO site is currently.

12
13 Mr. Teresi: So the area that I'm highlighting with the mouse, that is this PASCO site. This area
14 right here.

15
16 Commissioner Keller: So just if I get you correct it's the triangular parking lot that you've placed
17 between the current Baylands Athletic Center and Geng Road in that little triangular space.
18 That's what we're talking about?

19
20 Mr. Teresi: Yeah.

21
22 Commissioner Keller: Is that correct?

23
24 Mr. De Geus: Yes, that's correct.

25
26 Commissioner Keller: Thank you. I just figured I'd verbally describe it so somebody looking at
27 the minutes would be able to figure out what we're talking about. Thank you very much.

28
29 Chair Martinez: Thank you. Commissioner Panelli.

30
31 Commissioner Panelli: Thank you Mr. Chair. If our esteemed Vice-Chair describes himself as a
32 "duffer" I aspire to be a "duffer." I think I'm more of a "hacker." But having spent a couple
33 years on the Parks and Recreation Commission as well as some time on the Infrastructure Blue
34 Ribbon Commission I'm glad to see this finally, we talked about this for some time and it's nice
35 to see that this come to fruition of course sped up by the JPA project. I have a few questions.
36 First of all do you have any, to go to Commissioner Keller's question; is there an anticipated site
37 for this possible gymnasium?

38
39 Mr. De Geus: The current concept is at that PASCO site that Commissioner Keller pointed out
40 earlier. That triangular piece if you come down Geng Road and enter the Baylands Athletic
41 Center, right as you enter on the left side, that would be the location.

42
43 Commissioner Panelli: So on this diagram that we're looking at now it would be between the
44 triangular parking lot and Geng Road there's a strip there that?

45
46 Mr. De Geus: It's right here in this area here.

47
48 Commissioner Panelli: Ok.

49

1 Mr. De Geus: The other side of Geng Road.

2

3 Commissioner Panelli: Ok.

4

5 Mr. Teresi: I mean if I could just clarify, I think when the Council initially was looking at this
6 Plan G the idea of a gymnasium hadn't entered the discussion yet. Later on there was an
7 overture by someone who wanted to maybe make a contribution that would possibly add a gym
8 and that's why we've got it added to the scope of the EIR because that's a possibility. It's
9 certainly not a foregone conclusion at this point, but it was kind of a late addition to the idea of
10 these athletic fields.

11

12 Mr. De Geus: Right and I would say that's true. That is the current thinking of a potential
13 location, but there is still a lot more community outreach that needs to occur about a location and
14 even if a gym is really appropriate for this space.

15

16 Commissioner Panelli: ok. Because I saw one very brief mention in the staff report. I didn't see
17 it on any of the diagrams. So I was just curious about that.

18

19 Can you just from an engineering standpoint just give me an idea, from what I understand part of
20 this renovation is being done to sort of make the course more water resistant because it's often
21 either shut down or barely playable when there's even just a little bit of precipitation. Can you
22 tell us when this project is done how much it should be able to handle? How many additional
23 playable days per year the course could probably accommodate?

24

25 Mr. Richardson: Sure Commissioner, Forrest Richardson again. The infrastructure of the golf
26 course, most of it was replaced or significant amount of work in the late Nineties. So the one
27 element that we're preserving is the master drainage system, which was installed and paid for by
28 the City. But with the importation of soil we will be creating gradients that allow the golf course
29 to drain. So to your question all of the golf course should drain very rapidly, within a 10 to 12
30 hour period whereas now there's a lot of standing water on the golf course that compounds all of
31 the issues that come with standing water: more geese, settling, rutting from golf carts and
32 maintenance equipment, which then leads to more low areas, and the issues go on and on.

33

34 The rest of the infrastructure, the irrigation system and some of the other features and structure
35 of the golf course is past its useful life cycle. And just to give you an idea the irrigation system
36 that will be installed will be all High-density Polyethylene (HDPE) long life pipe as opposed to
37 the metal couplings and Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) that's there today and that's why it's
38 deteriorated with the high salts in the soil it's only lasted 12 or 13 years whereas normally we'd
39 like to get 20 or more years out of the irrigation system.

40

41 And to Commissioner Keller's question just real briefly the golf course is irrigated with effluent
42 water and it would, we would, by putting in Paspalum grass, which is on the sheet you have
43 there, we would be relying more and more on effluent and not as much on the potable water. So
44 right now it's a blend and that blend will be significantly to the City's favor and the community's
45 favor because the reliance on potable water will go down. Effluent in ratio will go up, but the
46 overall water usage will go down with the improvements. Did I answer your question about the
47 infrastructure and the drainage?

48

1 Commissioner Panelli: One of the things that I was trying to get at though is, will this project
2 effectively make it, make the course more usable? If I were to describe it in terms of number of
3 days in a year.

4
5 Mr. Richardson: It will drain as well as any golf course can, given the ambient rainfall and the
6 environment. So right now if you experience days when it's simply too wet those will go away
7 and play would be able to resume as soon as the weather's clear.

8
9 Commissioner Panelli: Thank you. Question for, the assumption is that it's going to take a year
10 to do the project so the course will be down for an entire year. Is there an opportunity to keep
11 the practice range open? Because it seems like perhaps that might take a lot less work and it
12 might be a way to sort of keep people engaged and to Vice-Chair Michael's question, you know,
13 out of sight out of mind, so if at least people are using the range and they see the project
14 advancing and they don't necessarily fully detach.

15
16 Mr. De Geus: We haven't developed all of the sequencing yet, but the concept is that we would
17 keep some things open like the range, certainly the restaurant and pro shop and have lessons and
18 those types of things to keep activity going as much as we can.

19
20 Commissioner Panelli: Thank you.

21
22 Chair Martinez: Commissioner Alcheck.

23
24 Commissioner Alcheck: I was going to ask about drainage so that's check. Ok, so my first
25 question is I guess to the Planning Department. Would you guys provide a little more
26 background with respect to the athletic center and proposed gymnasium? I noted in the report
27 that the athletic center and/or gymnasium isn't funded and is anticipated to be completed
28 sometime after the golf course reconfiguration. Does that, does approval of this project mean
29 approval of the gymnasium? Are they going to be sort of treated together or are they separate?
30 Would we be reviewing the gymnasium potentially years later?

31
32 Mr. De Geus: Right, they'll be separate projects. You know unless a developer comes forward
33 and says, "We want to help you make this happen and build it within the next year." Then we
34 may bring it back to you at the same time, but it's unlikely. Really what we're doing for the
35 most part is carving out land for potential playing fields and a gymnasium sometime in the
36 future.

37
38 Commissioner Alcheck: So is it safe to assume that as we continue to discuss this project over
39 the next three or four months the concerns that some of these residents had about the increased
40 urbanization as a result of this gymnasium essentially unaddressable because it's not really on
41 the table?

42
43 Mr. De Geus: It probably won't be completely addressable, but it'll be important to hear because
44 we haven't fully developed a concept for what is going to be there and if there is significant
45 concern about a gymnasium or lights or other things then that's going to help inform the concept
46 as it develops. And as our funding stream becomes, comes into sight then that's when we really
47 will get to work on further development at that space.

1 Mr. Teresi: I mean I think the purpose of the intent is to kind of in the environmental document
2 to depict the most intense use that could happen so that's kind of the worst case so that we're
3 covered as far as the environmental document. And then when we actually come forward with
4 the project for planning review it would be a lot more specific, but the environmental document
5 would have covered kind of the most intense changes and impacts.

6
7 Commissioner Alcheck: Just a quick follow-up. What sort of precipitated the notion for an
8 additional athletic facility? Was there sort of a need identified or a gymnasium need that there
9 was sort of a, there wasn't a lot of background on the gymnasium component and I sort of
10 wondered where that came from.

11
12 Mr. De Geus: Yeah I think I can help respond to this. The City doesn't have any gymnasiums,
13 no community gymnasiums. The only gymnasiums we have access to is the school gymnasiums
14 at some times, which we have to pay for and we have the Cubberley Community Center, which
15 hangs in the balance a little bit as to what the future of Cubberley is. So there's a documented
16 need for a gymnasium. We have lots of kids and families going outside of Palo Alto to get their
17 volleyball practice and those types of things, so we've known for some time that it would be
18 great to have or build a gymnasium somewhere in town. So that's I mean something that we've
19 been thinking about for a while.

20
21 And with regard to the athletic fields there was a report written about 10 years ago now called
22 "Got Space" where it identified the lack of athletic fields and playing fields in our sort of built
23 out community. And it indicated I don't remember what the number was, but a significant
24 deficit in athletic fields. So that allowed us to build the fields on El Camino/Page Mill and so
25 we've done some things to add capacity but it still remains a problem. There are insufficient
26 fields to meet the demand of the community. And so the Council is well aware of that and as we
27 presented options to the Council about golf course design several had no athletic fields. It was
28 just purely golf course. We were instructed to go back and rethink, in fact I think there was one
29 design that had one athletic field and the Council asked staff to go back and maximize the
30 amount of athletic fields we could build into the design. So we did that and went back to
31 Council and they liked it. So told us to go forward with that design.

32
33 Commissioner Alcheck: Ok thank you. That's actually really helpful. I have two more quick
34 comments. There's a golf course in Davis, California called the Wildhorse Golf Course and it
35 uses signage, low level signage, to sort of provide insight into the surrounding natural landscape
36 and habitat and I've always thought that was sort of special because you're sort of learning about
37 the random rodents that are feet from you and little owls. And they, you know, they sort of give
38 you the scientific, it sort of feels like you're on a little nature hike when you're playing a round
39 there. and this sort of seems like an ideal addition to this concept plan considering that you're
40 sort of playing into the theme of Baylands and how the natural landscape, I think it would be
41 interesting if the people who visit our community to play this and also our constituents can "Oh,
42 and that's the that bird that we were trying to save or whatever, that's where they live or
43 whatever." You know? I don't know, I think that would be interesting.

44
45 I also found it surprising that there are 844 trees on that course. I am also a golfer and I've
46 played that course a number of times and I've always thought it was ridiculously open. And the
47 notion that there are 844 trees is so surprising because I feel like there are no trees. And I
48 understand that nearly three quarters of those trees are going to be removed. Will they be
49 replaced in some fashion and is there an alternative to provide sort of separation between

1 fairway... this is going to sound sort of funny, but between fairways and enhance sort of the
2 intimacy of a round of golf there? It sort of feels like you can see every single golfer on the
3 course when you're playing there and I wonder if there's going to be some more separation?
4

5 Mr. Richardson: Those are good questions. Let me just go back to one comment that you had
6 just so that you understand from a planning point of view as the golf course architects when the
7 Council decided to see what area could be carved out we didn't know what would go there. That
8 was very conceptual in Plan G as far as the three soccer fields or whatever. But from a land
9 planning point of view just so the Commissioners understand the process our role became not
10 only to see what we could carve out, but very importantly what we could preserve in the way of
11 the golf course. We didn't want to leave a golf course that wasn't viable. And secondly we
12 heard very loud and clear from both the people that play golf as well as the people that might be
13 using whatever athletic field that they wanted separation. So those mounds, that area between
14 Hole 10 and the ten and a half acres those are what we call these buffer mounds that are very
15 large, very strong mounds that will create a separation between those two uses. So I just wanted
16 to make sure that you understood that.
17

18 We've just been given a signage scope and I think some of what you've said are things that have
19 been talked about are really good ideas, I'm not familiar with the Wildhorse project specifically,
20 but it's really a good idea to educate people about the habitat. And as far as separation and the
21 trees go many of the trees on that list are in the perimeter of the project so they're up against the
22 airport or small trees that are on the Embarcadero property. Just in general there are 200 trees
23 that have been identified on the golf course, just 180 some trees that will be preserved. Some of
24 the trees are in the way of the creek. Some of the trees are in the way of top soil importation.
25 Right now the budget calls for approximately 300 trees to be replaced by the golf course project.
26 There will ultimately be trees replaced by the JPA's project and that number hovers between 80
27 and 120 and there will, the project that you'll see in the future for the athletic fields will have its
28 own set of landscape. So I don't know what the exact number is, but the intent of the golf course
29 is to change it to more of a links seaside Baylands environment. So it will be more open and the
30 trees and the shrubs and the plants will be lower on the landscape.
31

32 And the seclusion between holes will come from the terrain rather than the vegetation. So right
33 now you see it as an open landscape because there's not much terrain difference across one side
34 of the course to the other. And in the grading plan that's been created you have 25, 28 foot high
35 landforms that go way out onto Hole Twelve and then you have some on Hole Seventeen and
36 Hole Five and then the big mounds along Hole Ten. And in between that you have differences
37 of landforms and instead of being flat will be anywhere from four feet to twelve feet at any one
38 place on the golf course. So they'll be quite a bit of separation, but it's not the kind you're used
39 to now. You're used to now a few trees.
40

41 Commissioner Alcheck: Well I'm not really used to any trees. Ok, I want to end with just sort of
42 one comment about the noise study, which is with all due respect really nobody plays Palo Alto
43 for the quiet of the course. Its proximity to the airport makes certain holes really, really loud
44 (interrupted)
45

46 Mr. Richardson: Someone told me there was an airport nearby.
47

48 Commissioner Alcheck: Yeah, so I would sort of think that the potential noise implications from
49 the fields for example wouldn't necessarily pose sort of a significant problem to the golf

1 community considering that when they're in the first half of their round they're going to be next
2 to landing airplanes, which are really loud. But there's something to be said for... I guess what
3 I'm understanding is that those mounds that you're talking about, their purpose is for sound
4 isolation?
5

6 Mr. Richardson: Well they're for the purpose of, yes. They're for the purpose of separating the
7 uses and distinguishing a physical difference between the two sites and you have one group of
8 people using the athletic fields that have one use and type of need and then you have the golfers.
9 So, yeah, those mounds to give you an idea they're 30, the highest one I think is 32 feet above
10 adjacent grades. So you're talking about anywhere from a three story down to a one and a half
11 story building difference in terms of height between those two uses. The idea was also safety.
12 We wanted to create a physical barrier for a number of reasons: landscape aesthetics, safety, and
13 then also keeping the golf carts from going over there and keeping the kids and the patrons from
14 the athletic field from coming over to the golf course, so.
15

16 Commissioner Alcheck: Ok.
17

18 Mr. Richardson: And the noise was part of it. That was, I think if you look at the Community
19 Services Department held a very large forum. I think there were a couple hundred people or
20 thereabouts and they all broke into workshops and the minutes of that are very useful to
21 understand what was on people's mind as things were being contemplated for this 10 acres.
22

23 Commissioner Alcheck: Thank you. I think every golfer in Palo Alto is excited about the notion
24 of a must play golf course in our neighborhood, so I'm excited and thank you.
25

26 Mr. Richardson: I'm surprised you find the trees, I found them all. I don't know why you
27 haven't found them.
28

29 Commissioner Alcheck: No. Well, you know what I mean. It's not quite as dense as you would
30 think with 844.
31

32 Chair Martinez: Ok, thank you. Commissioner Tanaka.
33

34 Commissioner Tanaka: Yes, first of all thank you for your work on this it's quite nice. A few
35 questions. So first one is do we know like what, who plays at this golf course now? What
36 percentage of them are Palo Alto people versus others?
37

38 Mr. De Geus: We do know that. It's approximately 20 percent of total play is Palo Alto
39 residents, 80 percent is non-residents.
40

41 Commissioner Tanaka: Ok, so most people are driving to this place? Ok. And do we know how
42 this golf course is, I assume other municipal golf courses, other golf courses in general are also
43 evolving and changing. Do you know how this golf course is going to compare to other nearby
44 golf courses in terms of how they're changing, how that's going to affect the competitiveness of
45 this course?
46

47 Mr. De Geus: We do know something about that. Certainly as staff we're always looking at our
48 main competitors, Shoreline and Poplar Creek and some of the others. But we had as I
49 mentioned earlier the National Golf Foundation come out just to study that specifically is how

1 would this redesign perform against the competitors in the local region? And what would that
2 mean in terms of how much we could charge and the likely patronage we would see? And that
3 was a big part of why the Finance Committee and Council supported this project, because it was
4 quite favorable. So I think that's a positive.

5
6 Commissioner Tanaka: So the comparison was not against the other golf courses as they are
7 today, but as they will be when this is also completed?

8
9 Mr. De Geus: Yeah, the comparison was how they are today. I'm not sure that they, I don't
10 think they looked at how they are going to change over the next 10 years? I don't think that
11 was part of the study.

12
13 Commissioner Tanaka: I see. Ok. So I also, do you guys know much about the crime in that
14 area in terms of car break-ins or safety? Is there any data on that?

15
16 Mr. De Geus: You know I don't have any statistics, but we've had some trouble with crime in
17 the parking lot. Laptops being stolen out of cars and we've had to put signage up and had the
18 Police Department do sort of a sting operation, actually caught some people when we had a real
19 big rash of that. As far as sort of vandalism on the golf course over the years it just doesn't
20 happen often, but occasionally it'll happen where we'll get like a motorbike or someone get on
21 the course and damage the turf or some of the greens. It's only happened a few times.

22
23 Commissioner Tanaka: I see. Is it a big enough problem to actually think about it as you guys
24 were designing how to make it a little bit safer for people?

25
26 Mr. De Geus: It's something that we've talked about a little bit, but maybe Forrest if you
27 (interrupted)

28
29 Mr. Richardson: Currently there's a fence that goes on the north and we sit portions of the
30 property that separates the current trail system and the levy from the golf course. And then on
31 the east side there's also a fence that separates the airport.

32
33 Commissioner Tanaka: Isn't there a bridge that goes to East Palo Alto there as well?

34
35 Mr. Richardson: The bridge, Friendship Bridge is where, it's being shown there and as part of
36 the creek work that bridge gets as you can see turned into an island that connects the trail with
37 the areas to the Northwest. We have currently been working with the JPA to make sure that the
38 City gets what they want in the way of a barrier fence replacement. And I don't think those
39 details are worked out yet, but I know it's been on everyone's radar scope as far as how to
40 separate the golf from the trail and to prevent unauthorized access to the golf course. I think the
41 good news is that we'll be creating perhaps a little less inviting environment with all the terrain
42 changes. It's no longer just a big park looking area, but it has broken areas that are I think the
43 feeling will be, "Oh, that's a golf course." Whereas right now maybe the person doesn't realize
44 it's a golf course looks at it and thinks "That looks just like a park." And so I think that will help
45 a great deal.

46
47 Commissioner Tanaka: Ok. You know I think that's important too to do especially if you want
48 to have this as an upscale golf course. I actually also appreciate the Vice-Chair's comment about
49 perhaps a conference or hotel center. I think that's something that on IBRC we actually talked

1 about and thought about and I don't know if that's too late to consider as part of the EIR, but I
2 would also support that thought. And I think that's actually, not necessarily that we're going to
3 do it, but to have it studied and see if that makes sense and can the parking support it? I think
4 that would be something interesting to consider. And in terms of locations of that, you know,
5 perhaps on existing parking lot. But I think the other thing I'm thinking about is 80 percent of it
6 is from non-residents who are visiting. I would imagine that parking would also have to be
7 studied closely to make sure that there's sufficient parking. So if this is a very popular course there are
8 places for people to park. Thank you.

9
10 Chair Martinez: Ok. Developers have a way of making things happen in this town that surprises
11 us all as we've seen. I think the idea of a developer coming forward and offer to build a
12 gymnasium is probably a real possibility. Other places not so much. Here it could happen
13 tomorrow. And I go back to something that struck me about one of the members of the public
14 that spoke and thought of this as urbanization. And I think before going too far with the idea of a
15 gymnasium here I would look at other places in the City where it would be more easily
16 accessible to volleyball players and young people to use it.

17
18 The idea of playing fields is compatible with golf courses. They kind of look the same, they
19 have the same irrigation needs, they don't block views, and they provide a resource to a different
20 segment of our population and its incredible need. The idea of a gymnasium with a ceiling
21 spring line that's 18 feet high it's a little bit, I want to say it diplomatically, a little bit
22 incompatible with the Baylands. And so if this goes forward as a consideration in the EIR I want
23 to make sure that it is treated critically. That we don't just say here's a rectangle that could be
24 there and they'll be 20 kids a day coming there or 100, but that the impact aesthetically,
25 culturally on this precious resource is really, really critically looked at because to me it seems
26 like an unsuitable fit. So I guess I've said enough about that.

27
28 I'd like if we can do like one final round talking a little bit more and Commissioner Keller did a
29 good job on the scoping issues, but talking about some of the items that concern us. Like, for
30 example, the bay rise of the bay water level, sea level rise. Is that being considered in the
31 Environmental Impact Report? And it should be. Is the JPA project the impact of that
32 construction simultaneous or somehow impacting the golf course project? Is that being under
33 consideration? I'd like to make sure the scoping and the EIR address the construction impacts.
34 We've talked about the year or more, two years where the golf course will be closed. Cultural
35 resources, there's still some consideration for the Julia Morgan to be moved to the golf course as
36 a clubhouse. I know that's still in debate, but it's still a consideration. I'd like the, that to be part
37 of the scoping as well as the historic buildings that are still onsite. I want to make sure that those
38 are addressed and I'm certain that they will be by our consultant in this. And Commissioners if
39 we can just begin to add to areas of concern for the, this project that we want to be addressed in
40 the scoping or at least considered, I'd like to have you continue with that. Commissioner Keller.

41
42 Commissioner Keller: Yes. So firstly it's not clear whether Plan G stands for "Golf" or
43 "Gymnasium." So one question is the issue of to the extent that the project is segmented and the
44 golf course is redeveloped and there's land vacated for playing fields, what is the temporary
45 cover of that area that's vacated from the golf course? Because you don't want it to just be
46 muddy and disgusting. So there's going to be a cost and something involved in that. And that
47 cost might not be that much less than putting in the playing fields themselves, so that's an
48 interesting considering.

1 It was also talked about by several people that there would be increased usage of the golf course
2 and as alluded to by Commissioner Tanaka whether there's sufficient parking for the golf course
3 is an interesting question. Several members of the Commission refer to the idea of a
4 hotel/conference center. There's a new item that will be coming before us that came before us
5 several years ago and that is Ming's. And that is an opportunity when considering Ming's which
6 is nearby as redevelopment that is a potential hotel. That's consideration as to whether that's a
7 hotel/conference center. My understanding is that's not what they originally proposed, but it will
8 be coming back. I know this is on our agenda for the next meeting, which I also notice is overly
9 full, so.

10
11 And two last things. One, they are both about the gymnasium. One is I'm wondering whether
12 the Julia Morgan building itself could be a gymnasium. It's certainly a high building and a nice
13 space and so that's an interesting question. And the second question and this is, I'm not sure
14 how to address this, but there is a school nearby. I think it's called The International School of
15 the Peninsula? Located near the Post Office. And I'm wondering if part of the reason that
16 there's an interest in having a gymnasium near, is that that school would like access to a
17 gymnasium. And which would then be perhaps used by them part of the time, partly by the City,
18 and then there's a question as to the private use of a public resource. And I'm not sure whether
19 there are strings attached to any donation that would make that happen, but I notice that schools
20 tend to like gymnasiums and I'm wondering if there's the question. So I'm just going to bring
21 that up as an open question. I'm not sure how to address it, but the conflicts of interest have
22 certainly have raised some questions for me. And with that I'll close. Thank you.

23
24 Chair Martinez: Commissioner Panelli.

25
26 Commissioner Panelli: Yeah, thank you Mr. Chair. I'd like to echo the sentiments of Chairman
27 Martinez. I'm, as soon as I read that just a hint of a gymnasium I felt uncomfortable. It doesn't
28 seem like a particularly compatible use. And frankly I'd rather see a gymnasium built
29 somewhere more central in the City that has more access to public transit. I'm supportive of
30 including it in an EIR analysis because I understand Mr. Teresi's point which is sort of see what
31 the worst case scenario is and you can always work back off of that. I have no problem with
32 that, but I want to echo those sentiments.

33
34 The other thing is the night lighting. I think that's going to take a lot of analysis because as I
35 recall from my days on Parks and Rec Commission the peak demand times are six to ten p.m.
36 Monday through Friday. You know that's going to mean lights, at least for three quarters of the
37 year are going to be necessary. And I'm just wondering if you could, we can do our lightening
38 round and then maybe you can address it at the end, but what your thoughts are how to minimize
39 that. Anyway, I'm going to pass on the rest of them.

40
41 Chair Martinez: Thank you. Commissioner Alcheck.

42
43 Commissioner Alcheck: Ok, final few comments. I want to know if the issue of bike and
44 pedestrian safety over 101 is going to be considered. I mention that because if we enhance this
45 area with an athletic center that'll invite children it's going to mean kids and pedestrians biking
46 and walking across the Embarcadero and that's a pretty unsafe intersection. I don't anticipate
47 that they'll all use the bike bridge to get there and it's a concern because I think both off ramps
48 on the freeway are sort of unprotected and there's no crosswalks and we want to encourage the
49 use, so.

1
2 I also want to suggest or wonder if the course would consider a Palo Alto resident discount in
3 terms of its financial feasibility. I think this would obviously apply only to a minority of current
4 users. And I mention it because it might be a nice way of saying “Thank you” to the City for
5 whatever costs and expenses that are undoubtedly going to be borne by the City.
6

7 And then the last thing, actually two more things. I know when we looked at Rinconada Park we
8 talked about outdoor sand courts, volleyball courts. Maybe that’s something that could be
9 considered in the athletic area to kind of address some volleyball needs if the gymnasium is one
10 of the options then maybe sand volleyball courts could be a second option.
11

12 And then I don’t want to suggest that I’m against the gymnasium idea, but I think one of the
13 concerns that I came across in my mind when I read about it was the notion that we were sort of
14 putting a gymnasium on the edge of our City. And not that I’m suggesting it’s not available for
15 all, but I sort of thought are we building a gymnasium for East Palo Alto? Because we’re
16 essentially putting it adjacent to the good, what’s the name of that bridge? The Friendship
17 Bridge. And I sort of wondered it’s sort of the safest access is sort of directly over that bridge
18 and I can’t imagine that we’re going to get a lot of attendance to that gymnasium from the far
19 other side of the City and it sort made me pause to think where we were locating an amenity like
20 that. Ok, that’s it.
21

22 Chair Martinez: Thank you. Commissioner Tanaka.
23

24 Commissioner Tanaka: So I think Commissioner Alcheck actually brings a good point. I was
25 thinking the same thing so he kind of stole my thunder, but I think that the City is going to incur
26 a lot of expense doing this project and so if we do build facilities there it should be something
27 that the City’s residents can access easily through some sort of pedestrian access or perhaps also
28 by vehicular access. I also like the idea of resident discounts for usage of the golf course. Or the
29 other way of looking at it is higher fees for non-residents. I think that makes a lot of sense in my
30 mind.
31

32 In general if we can get good access to these facilities I do think about whether it makes sense to
33 have a gym here as well. And I think if a gym is here it has to be something that does kind of fit
34 the environment, so. But I think the purpose for the EIR is still worthwhile to consider like was
35 said earlier, the worst case scenario so I think having a gym, having some sort of
36 conference/hotel facility or conference center makes a lot of sense so should be considered and
37 look at the worst case scenario and then back off on it if it doesn’t make sense. Thanks.
38

39 Chair Martinez: Vice-Chair.
40

41 Vice-Chair Michael: So in the spirit of brainstorming just a few more things to consider. One is,
42 and this is in no particular order, I recently heard that the First Tee Open Program which is
43 nationwide is particularly successful in Monterey County. They got an award, The Best First
44 Tee Open Program in the country, and they, I heard what they’re doing with the kids they have
45 5,000 kids and it’s just really inspirational. So one of the things about getting more people out at
46 the golf course and more kids and develop lifelong habits and this is very values oriented,
47 integrity, sportsmanship, respect, and it’s a wonderful program and I think if Palo Alto, and I’m
48 not aware that there’s a lot of awareness of this in Palo Alto or Santa Clara County unlike
49 Monterey County where it’s a big deal. So this might be something in terms of community

1 services and getting people out to try new things and maybe get excited about the sport of golf
2 and the values of playing it and sort of the with the proper attitude.

3
4 One question and I don't really want an answer now, but I was really surprised recently to see
5 how Shoreline Golf Course had deteriorated over the last several decades. And I know that they
6 started with great plans and they hired Robert Trent Jones, Junior and built 14 of 18 holes until
7 they ran out of money and but when I went back and played most recently it was just awful .
8 Absolutely had fallen apart and they had lost, they were lowering the rates to nothing because
9 they couldn't get anybody to play the course. So you might just want to make sure you
10 understand the lessons learned. What happened there? I don't know where they went off the
11 tracks, but they definitely lost it. So just be careful.

12
13 The comments from Emily Renzel and Trish, I forget your last name, about respect for the
14 purpose and goals and the policies of the Baylands Master Plan I think are really important.
15 There are a couple of golf course projects which are sort of extraordinary on a national level.
16 One is The Links at Spanish Bay has a links style golf course. And when they got their permit
17 they had an edict that they had to have environmentally sensitive areas which are kind of a
18 problem because you hit a golf ball and you're not supposed to go get it. But it's beautiful and
19 they make a big, they respect the environmentally sensitive areas. So I wonder if maybe we
20 could when we do the environmental review and whatever conditions there are in the permit or
21 whatnot consider really formally respecting the environment maybe much like they did at the
22 Spanish Bay. And it's a beautiful, beautiful course. Attracts a lot of play and it's just a
23 wonderful asset for that region.

24
25 Another course that was remodeled spectacularly was the Monterey Peninsula Country Club
26 shore course, which is now used in the AT & T Pro Am where I was last week. But,
27 phenomenally beautiful, unbelievably beautiful. And they had to move a lot of dirt. I mean they
28 basically had a flat landscape just going out to the ocean there and it's incredible. And the
29 habitat for birds and wildlife is just magnificent and it's just inspirational. So if you're going to
30 do something nice, think just expand the realm of possibility. You can make it really nice. The
31 Bay and Palo Alto in general is a wonderful location for this. So just go for it and respect the
32 environment.

33
34 The gymnasium topic has been addressed I think by everybody. But I wonder and I know that
35 Rinconada Park has got a new master plan, Mitchell Park is, if you could consider the access to
36 kids on bikes, on foot, center of town, Rinconada Park, Mitchell Park, maybe the Lawn Bowling
37 Center has lived out its purpose and you can get more use out of changing it, repurposing it for a
38 different generation.

39
40 And on the sea level rise issue this is bigger than the golf course. So I personally think it's
41 happening. You know, the useful life of this golf course isn't as long as we might hope, but it's
42 such a bigger issue. It's going to hit the airport and it's going to hit the Municipal Services
43 Center and I would really recommend to the Council that as they think that they're working on
44 infrastructure really start thinking proactively about how this is going to impact not just the golf
45 course, but things which are vital to the Public Works and other operation and safety and needs
46 of the City.

47
48 Chair Martinez: Very nice. Would you care to comment about the golf course design and the
49 Vice-Chair's thoughts about that?

1
2 Mr. Richardson: Well we're in agreement with you and Mike Strantz, who did the shore course
3 that you mentioned was a terrific guy and we miss him. He passed away as you know a few
4 years ago. And my artificial brother Forrest Fezler built the course. I've spent a lot of time
5 there. It's a beautiful, beautiful site. We're trying to do similar things with the Baylands Golf
6 Facility to take advantage of that Bay and the views and the proximity to the shoreline. I can't
7 address exactly the sea level rise concerns that you mentioned tonight, but I will say that the
8 JPA's work resolves a lot of the flooding and the sea level rise will be part of what ICF weighs in
9 on their report.

10
11 I was remiss Chairman Martinez for not saying earlier you had mentioned about the economic
12 part of this project and I was going so fast I didn't mention that there is a dedicated youth
13 component to the project which is south of the driving range along Embarcadero, which is
14 intended to be a First Tee like facility and actually has good potential to be, have some dedicated
15 portion of it or use to the First Tee. And that is something that we're working very diligently
16 with the staff to get integrated to the bid documents on this project. We feel it's very important
17 and that would be a stand-alone designated kids learning center that would be right off the
18 driving range to the left of the driving range. In addition there's a new short game area which is
19 north of the driving range and that could also have a component for bringing new players to the
20 game, introducing people to golf, etcetera. So there's been a lot of thought put into bringing
21 people in here.

22
23 There's been discussion of the rates and I'll not get into that, but one thing the Commissioners
24 that are interested in it might want to get from staff would be the National Golf Foundation
25 Report because it addresses so many of the questions that each of you have had about rates and
26 resident rates, comparison to the other courses. One question came up that I can just touch on
27 real briefly. None of the other area courses that are competitive to Palo Alto have any Capital
28 Improvement Projects (CIP) that have been funded or appear to be funded in the next decade as
29 we can see it now. And the NGF spent a lot of time looking at San Jose and Shoreline and
30 Poplar Creek and all the competitive facilities. You have an advantage with the population base
31 and being sort of in the heart of the 101 corridor here that they don't have. And so I won't get
32 into the details of Shoreline, but there are nuances of all these facilities and even though we have
33 some issues with this site, high salts and everything, we've addressed all of those and will
34 continue to do so as we answer all of these questions.

35
36 Chair Martinez: Ok and I want to thank you. First I'm going to close the public hearing and
37 close with only my last sort of sentiments. I know in branding that it's important to really look
38 to be progressive and such, but I'm not that happy with dropping Palo Alto off the name. So if
39 there's time to consider it to be the Palo Alto Baylands Golf Course we should continue with
40 that. And with that we're going to close this item. Take a 10 minute break. Thank you all very
41 much.

42
43 Mr. Richardson: Thank you.
44

45 **Commission Action:** Commission provided comments and recommendations to staff

Comprehensive Plan and Baylands Master Plan

Policies/Goals

Golf Course Comp Plan Policies/Goals

1. **Policy N-1:** manage existing public open space areas and encouraged the management of of private open space areas in a manner that meets habitat protection goals, public safety concerns, and low impact recreation needs.
2. **Policy N-10:** Work with the Santa Clara valley Water District and other relevant regional agencies to enhance riparian corridors and provide adequate flood control by the use of low impact restoration strategies.
3. **Policy C-22:** Design and construct new community facilities to have flexible functions to ensure adaptability to the changing needs of the community.
4. **Policy C-24:** Reinvest in aging facilities to improve their usefulness and appearance.
5. **Policy C-26:** Maintain and enhance existing park facilities.
6. **Policy C-27:** Seek opportunities to develop new parks and recreational facilities to meet the growing needs of the residents and employees of Palo Alto.
7. **Program C-1:** Develop improvement plans for the maintenance, restoration and enhancement of community facilities, and keep these facilities viable community assets by investing the necessary resources.

Golf Course Baylands Site Assessment and Design Guidelines Policies/Goals

1. Preserve the horizon with low and horizontal elements
2. Use only muted natural colors. Choose materials and finishes that will weather without degrading.
3. Maintain and continue to improve standards of low external glare lighting.

Baylands Master Plan Policies/Goals

1. Install a new irrigation system.
2. Use reclaimed water upon completion of the new blending station. Continue to use

potable water on greens and tees as long as possible.

3. Improve site drainage through regrading. Rebuild and reshape the aged greens, tees, bunkers and traps in conjunction with the drainage improvements.
4. Address airport safety issues by raising the fence near the sixth fairway and planting additional trees.
5. Install improvements such as repaved cart paths and rest room modifications required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
6. Continue with the implementation of the *PaloAlto Municipal Golf Course Master Improvement Plan*.

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DRAFT
Planning and Transportation Commission
Verbatim Minutes
June 26, 2013

EXCERPT

1875 Embarcadero Road [13PLN-00103] – Request by the City of Palo Alto Public Works Department on behalf of the City of Palo Alto Community Services Division for Site and Design Review of the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course reconfiguration project. The meeting will serve as a public hearing for the review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Reconfiguration and Baylands Athletic Center Expansion Project. Zone District: PF(D).

Chair Martinez: We have one item on tonight's agenda and this is a review of site and design of the Palo Alto Golf Course redesign and to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). This is a quasi-judicial item as our City Attorney has reminded us so at this point we, Commissioners if there's any disclosure of ex-parte communications with members of the public or those involved in this project? Commissioner Keller.

Commissioner Keller: Yeah, I got an e-mail on the unrelated matter that mentioned a complaint about all the trees being cut down on this project. So that part of the e-mail was relevant to this project.

Chair Martinez: Anyone else? Ok and with that let me give you a little preview of this. There are two parts to our review tonight. One is as I mentioned site and design review. The second is comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report. Normally our City Attorney reminds us the review of the DEIR should come first. I've recommended that since it's such a lengthy report that we divide up our review into at least two sessions and asked that we continue the comment period until at least July 31st if that's possible so that we can comment on some of the most significant aspects of the Draft EIR tonight, perhaps have staff come back with some responses and complete the review at our subsequent meeting, which I think the next appropriate time was July 31st. So with that background we would review, staff is hoping that we complete site and design review tonight so that our recommendations can go forward to the review with the Architectural Review Board (ARB). So if I didn't quite get that right you can during your report you can correct me on that. So if that's clear enough let's open the public hearing and begin with a staff report.

Joe Teresi, Senior Engineer – Public Works: Good evening, I'm Joe Teresi. I'm Senior Engineer with the Public Works Department and I'm here with Rob De Geus from Community Services here at the table this evening to lead the presentation on the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Reconfiguration Project and Baylands Athletic Center Expansion Project. As the Chair mentioned I just wanted to clarify that we're asking for two specific and slightly different actions this evening. The first is that you recommend to the City Council the approval of our site and design application for the golf course portion of the project. And secondly and separately is to conduct a public hearing and provide comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report that covers both the golf course and the Athletic Center expansion. So on the screen here I'm showing the golf course project and this is the subject of the site and design application. This is the modification of the golf course. The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) also includes the separate but related future project for recreational facilities on the site at the Baylands Athletic Field, the Athletic Center. And so what's been analyzed is the most intensive potential use of that expansion area for up to five playing fields and a gymnasium located across Geng Road from the golf course site.

This evening the presentations are going to be made by two of our consultant team. First of all we'll start off with a presentation by Forrest Richardson our Golf Course Architect with Forrest Richardson & Associates and that will be followed up with a presentation about the environmental process by Shilpa

1 Trisal from ICF International. Before we get to that however, I believe that the Senior Assistant City
2 Attorney Cara Silver would like to make some comments.

3
4 Cara Silver, Senior Assistant City Attorney: Thank you Joe. Cara Silver, Senior Assistant City Attorney.
5 And since this is the first full blown EIR that this Commission as constituted has heard I did want to
6 provide some more detailed background on California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the EIR
7 process than we normally would in a presentation like this. And again, I'm here for any follow up
8 questions, but I will provide some level of detail right now.

9
10 So the overall purpose of CEQA is very important to keep in mind when you are reviewing the EIR. CEQA
11 is a statute that is with promulgated to provide decision makers with information before they made, make
12 a decision. And so the EIR is really for informational purposes only. It does not have a substantive
13 requirement. It is something that is provided to decision makers and the public to let people know what
14 the environmental impacts of a project are so that they have that information when they act. The EIR
15 should of course disclose the reasoning behind the very detailed technical studies. These technical
16 studies are generally contained in appendices, but the EIR document itself will contain a summary of the
17 important impacts, the analysis that was used, the methodology so that a layperson can understand
18 these very technical studies. The CEQA law actually requires that EIR's be only 200 pages and
19 unfortunately nobody complies with that requirement and over the years we have seen EIR's grow to
20 multiple bound documents. This EIR though is a very nice, compact, well written EIR written by a very
21 well respected consultant and the information is very easy to follow.

22
23 What we're looking at in the EIR process is the physical impacts on the environment. And what CEQA
24 does is look at the projects impacts on the environment. It does not look at the environmental impacts
25 on the project. And that's an important distinction to keep in mind. So that also determines what types
26 of decisions go through environmental review process. So for instance an interior remodel of a building
27 does not go through environmental review process because it doesn't typically have impacts on the
28 overall environment. If you are changing the exterior of the building and demolishing the building,
29 constructing a new building that has the potential of having an impact on the environment.

30
31 What an EIR does is look at these impacts through either a qualitative or a quantitative basis. There are
32 a series of different thresholds that are used and the lead agency in this case of course, the City of Palo
33 Alto, has the ability to set its own thresholds and has a fair amount of discretion on what thresholds can
34 be used. It's common, the State publishes a series of thresholds, it's common to use those thresholds.
35 Palo Alto has its own thresholds that it has used in other EIR's and you will see this EIR adopts many of
36 the thresholds that have been used in prior EIR's. You will find that in some areas as the, as things
37 change those thresholds are also changed and updated. In this particular EIR as we will discuss in more
38 detail later the greenhouse gas emission section utilizes some new analysis that is continuing to evolve
39 and this is one of the first EIR's that actually looks at climate adaptation. So it would be good to spend a
40 little bit more time with that particular chapter. It is very interesting to see that type of evolution in our
41 EIR analysis.

42
43 The primary components of an EIR are first of all what you want to do is define the project objectives
44 and that's very important because as you go on in the process you look at other mitigations and other
45 alternatives to the project you always of course have to keep in mind the project objectives. Then the
46 EIR also will of course look at the various impact categories and that really is the meat of the EIR, the
47 impact analysis. The EIR is required to look at both the project based impacts, what we refer to as the
48 footprint impacts and also it is required to look at cumulative impacts. And we generally see cumulative
49 impacts in the area of traffic and greenhouse gas emissions. You sometimes see them in other areas for
50 instance, in the Stanford Medical Center EIR we saw a cumulative impact in the historic resources area,
51 which was a result of having some, the Edward Durell stone building demolished and there are only a few
52 of those buildings it left in Palo Alto and there were a couple of others that were being demolished
53 around the same time and so we look at the cumulative impact of losing a series of Edward Durell stone
54 buildings. You typically do not see cumulative impacts in aesthetics though.

1 Another key aspect of course of an EIR is the mitigation measures. Those are really important and it's
2 also important to note that mitigation measures must be, must look at them to of course avoid an
3 impact, but also to reduce an impact. And so even if a mitigation measure does not completely eliminate
4 the impact, but it could reduce it to some extent the agency is required to impose that mitigation
5 measure.

6
7 Then of course the EIR looks at alternatives and generally alternatives come into play when a mitigation
8 does not completely mitigate an impact and that's when you look at the alternatives. To the extent the
9 EIR does have any impacts that are not mitigated either through mitigation or through alternatives the
10 lead agency is required to adopt a statement of overriding considerations. And what that does is it looks
11 at some of the other benefits of the project that my justify moving forward with the project in light of the
12 residual impacts.

13
14 So the consultant will focus on some of the impact categories themselves. I did want to highlight for you
15 as you mentioned the greenhouse gas section. There are two types of analyses done for greenhouse gas
16 emissions. One is the project contribution to greenhouse gas emissions in general and then the second is
17 climate adaptation, which is the impact on the project of climate change. And we are starting to get
18 some case law in this area. It's a very new evolving field. There was a recent case in the Southern
19 California area in relation to the Playa Vista build out. And so we do have a recent court ruling that says
20 that climate adaptation is not required under CEQA, but that does not mean that an agency is not
21 precluded from studying those impacts. Given the fact that the golf course is of course subject to
22 flooding and in the flood plain and so close to the bay and I believe in the scoping meeting climate
23 adaptation was brought up as a potential issue. This EIR does look at that issue in a qualitative sense
24 and I believe it's the first EIR in the City that does that.

25
26 The EIR also looks at a more traditional analysis of greenhouse gas emissions and uses a standard that
27 has been promulgated by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, a numeric standard of
28 greenhouse gas emissions of 1,100 metric tons per year of Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions for project
29 operations for non-stationary source projects. And under that threshold this EIR does find an impact
30 primarily relating to the playing fields and the additional car trips that will be generated as a result of the
31 playing fields and the pick-ups and drop offs and that type of thing. So that's currently the EIR has found
32 that that impact cannot be mitigated. So I think that staff is going to take another look at that issue. It,
33 we're going to internally explore some additional mitigations and that is certainly an area that we would
34 like some input from this Commission on as to whether there are some other mitigations or whether an
35 alternative or whether a statement of overriding considerations would be needed. So with that I will turn
36 it back to Joe.

37
38 Mr. Teresi: Thank you Cara. At this point I'd like to invite our Golf Course Architect, Forrest Richardson,
39 up to the podium to make the presentation, make the first part of the presentation.

40
41 Forrest Richardson, Golf Course Architect – Forrest Richardson & Associates: Thank you for having me
42 back Mr. Commissioners, Commissioners, and Mr. Chairman. It's been four months. Before I go through
43 some of the slides I thought I'd just recap the notes that we took as it related to the golf course design
44 when we were here four months ago. Really had to do with seven areas that have been addressed in the
45 design and of course I'll answer any questions about them as you have additional questions. And those
46 areas were drainage; you wanted to know that we had done everything possible to rectify the poor
47 drainage that exists on the site and we have as far as best practices that we're able to do with the site.
48 You asked about signage and we still have the conceptual entry sign that's on Embarcadero to show you.
49 You wanted to know about the future wetlands and how those would be interpreted by the corps in the
50 areas that we're creating on the golf course and I think we have some good understanding of that from
51 ICF, the environmental consultants, early meetings with the corps. They seemed very pleased about the
52 approach that we've taken to the golf course so it really would be no change in the wetlands from what
53 you have now. There's delineated wetlands now and there could be in the future, but those have been
54 integrated into the design.

1 Next you asked about the water use and reclamation and I think we've answered that as well as we can.
2 We're reducing potable water use, reducing the overall water use, and changing the ratio of more
3 reclaimed water to be used with the turf choices and the smaller footprint of turf from what it is today.
4 The next area was playability. I think there were comments on making sure that this golf course was
5 fun, challenging for better players, but fun for beginners and bring people into the game. And then there
6 was some comments about market competitiveness and again I would refer I think Mr. De Geus could
7 answer any questions about that, but there was a very extensive study that was done prior to Council's
8 decision last summer that really addressed the issues of competitiveness and that's where the design
9 came from was trying to create something for Palo Alto that would be market competitive compared to
10 the other regional golf courses.

11
12 Lastly there were some comments about the name. And I think in the four months since coming before
13 you there's been at least one other Golf Advisory Commission meeting in which they've really been
14 enthused and have adopted the idea of the Baylands Golf Links at Palo Alto as being the new branding
15 and name for the facility. So keeping the name Palo Alto, but creating this new excitement to the name
16 Baylands Golf Links at Palo Alto.

17
18 So with that I'll quickly go through these slides. I think you've seen most of them, but just to go through
19 them again. The existing golf course is 171 acres. The actual area of the golf project is 143. It doesn't
20 include the parking, the clubhouse, and the maintenance facility. This is a new slide that was put in to
21 really address the questions that have come up about the stockpiling of offsite import material to the golf
22 course and the yellow area represents the area that is designated for importation of soils for the golf
23 course and then the red colored area is where the Joint Powers Authority's (JPA) soils would be
24 stockpiled. The reason to keep those separate is there're two different soil specifications. The JPA needs
25 a different type of soil for the levy construction. The golf course needs a different type of soil to have a
26 growth medium for the turf. The temporary reconfiguration of the golf course during the stockpiling
27 shown in yellow, which really creates an 18 hole course that's a little shorter in yardage, but still offers
28 the public a place to play and experience the golf course and as you can see it really uses most of the
29 existing golf holes with the exception of the ones that are within the stockpile area.

30
31 These are the project goals real quickly to go through these: reconfigure the golf course of course to
32 accommodate the JPA's flood control project, reinforce a sense of place to the completed facility,
33 celebrate the Baylands environment through the new design, restore the golf asset as a point of pride to
34 the community, conserve resources by transforming the fully turfed parkland course to one that's more
35 naturalized with less turf and fits more to the Baylands Master Plan, promote Palo Alto by establishing a
36 must play golf experience in the region, which addresses the market competitiveness that I talked about.
37 The project hallmarks are the same, nothing's changed here: replacing all of the golf features, preserving
38 the existing drainage system that was invested in in 1998, replacing the irrigation system with high-
39 density polyethylene (HDPE) noncorrosive fittings, reducing the turf by 40 acres from existing, using a
40 salt tolerant turf grass the paspalum variety, which can withstand more of the reclaimed water, adding
41 the 55 acres of naturalized areas, new cart trails, the new restroom building, new practice putting greens,
42 the new youth golf area, the expanded range tee, and the new Baylands image, which I mentioned.

43
44 This is the July 2012 Plan G as it's referred to that was decided on by your City Council. And this really
45 set all of the design decisions that we've been making in motion; so all of the importation of top soil of
46 the conversion of areas to the Baylands themed native areas, the configuration of holes all pretty much
47 fit to this plan back from last summer. This again is just showing the acreage that has been shifted
48 around if you will to make room for the expanded Baylands Athletic Facility. At the top there you see at
49 the right 7.8 acres was what is being required by the JPA's project that comes out of the golf course.
50 10.26 acres is the orange area, which is the future recreation use. And then the yellow is just shown for
51 informational purposes. That's the buffer mounds that provide the physical and sound buffer between
52 the golf course and what will potentially be built on the recreation site, which was an important part of
53 the public process and some of the workshops that we had.

54
55 This is the current plan that just shows uses of areas. The green is the turf area that's managed turf.
56 The straw colored, buff colored is the native areas and then the grey/blue color are what we call the

1 Baylands areas, which are native areas, but they're salt tolerant plantings that are depressed into the
2 landscape generally as opposed to being mounded. So really this plan would kind of show you the grey
3 areas are what's low into the landscape and mimics the original estuary flow across the site and the buff
4 color is the higher areas that represent the dunes and the separation between golf holes and then the
5 green is the actual playable area of the golf holes.

6
7 These are the tree palates. On the left are the two trees that we identified as being useful where we
8 could preserve them. And that was the eucalyptus that were in good health, that were sturdy and not in
9 poor health or in danger of falling over and also the stone pine, which does very well in this soil type.
10 And then we have the proposed tree palate which is the myrtles, coffee berry, the oak, which would be
11 on the buffer mound area not on the rest of the golf course, and then the lupine. This is the proposed
12 native grass palate. The left portion represents the areas that are raised with imported soils and the
13 right are the salt tolerant plants and grasses that would form what we call the Baylands or the lower
14 areas.

15
16 These are the landscape concept pictures on the left showing the golf course as it's envisioned in its new
17 configuration. On the middle would be the low areas and at hole 12 we have the wooden bulkhead,
18 which borders the 12th green and forms really what amounts to an island of the 12th green even though
19 it's not surrounded by water it's surrounded by native area. And then on the right is the cart path and
20 the Baylands, I'm sorry, the buffer mounds and the cart paths.

21
22 These are some of the before and after pictures. I can't remember if we showed these to you before,
23 but this is looking at what would be the proposed 5th hole, which faces toward the east out on to the bay
24 with the elevated tees looking out across the airport. And then the next one is the 12th hole, the one I
25 mentioned with the bulkhead around it, which is looking north on the far northwest corner of the golf
26 course looking out toward the San Francisquito Creek bend as it makes its bend around the top of the
27 golf course and heads east.

28
29 Irrigation technology is an integral part of the plan. Soil sensors, rain, and weather gauges and there's
30 been so many exciting things going on in irrigation it's like software development and computers and cell
31 phone technology. It's just an amazing what we can do now with telemetry and being able to control the
32 water that we deliver to the golf course. So these are all part of the new system that has been designed.

33
34 The restroom building, which is located in the northwest corner, currently it's on the east and toward the
35 north over by the airport. The building is really unchanged since you've seen it. One little addition is a
36 storage room on the back, which was requested by your City staff and Park staff. This is the signage
37 that we showed you, the proposed signage for the, to replace the existing sign that's on the Embarcadero
38 street front and then some of the on course furnishings and signs that are being proposed for the, out on
39 the golf course within the interior of the course.

40
41 One thing that you had talked about was access and involvement of youth and so I put this slide in here
42 just to show you the youth golf component that is along Embarcadero. That's your existing driving range
43 in the large area and then the clubhouse you can see up there, existing clubhouse, which is not part of
44 the project. The new practice greens and then between the range and Embarcadero is this three hole
45 golf area that would be fenced so that it could be, you could keep the classes in one area just like a
46 playground for safety and they would have access to this at certain times of the week and during the
47 summer really for the purpose of bringing new players into the game and training kids to get involved in
48 golf.

49
50 These are the technical sheets that, for your submittal, for site and design review. This is the site plan.
51 The tree management plan. The planting plan showing new trees and different turf types and where
52 those different turf types fall, and then lastly the grading plan which obviously relates to everything else
53 and fits to the tree plan and all of the other plans. That really concludes my portion and I'm obviously
54 here to answer questions or follow up as needed.

55
56 Chair Martinez: Ok, thank you.

1
2 Mr. Teresi: Thank you Forrest and now we're going to have (interrupted)
3

4 Chair Martinez: Can we, since we're going to separate site and design from EIR can we see if there's any
5 questions for Forrest from Commissioners and then we can go on? Commissioners at this point you want
6 to ask any questions of the golf course design? Commissioner Keller, yes.
7

8 Commissioner Keller: Yes, so I'm wondering about what happens when somebody hits the ball off course
9 and they have to go into the rough and get that ball. So is there an issue in terms of the maintenance of
10 the rough area and damage to it from?
11

12 Mr. Richardson: What we've done, Dr. Froke, Jeff Froke who has been the biological resource consultant
13 to us on this project he's working down in Pebble Beach now on the redevelopment of Poppy Hills Golf
14 Course and he's quite well known throughout California. He has put together this list of plants so that we
15 and the planting rates are such that where we have areas that might be in play we have a little less rate
16 of planting than we do off in the deeper portions. But what we've tried to do and the intent is to develop
17 a native area that is, requires little to no water once it's established and little to no maintenance. But
18 there obviously are things that have to be done to it over time. The good news is it's not intensive
19 managed turf. So the answer to the question is it's sort of what we call in golf the rub of the green. If
20 you hit your ball in there you go in and look for it and hopefully those thinner areas are where it's easy to
21 find and execute a shot and play it.
22

23 Commissioner Keller: Thank you.
24

25 Chair Martinez: Vice-Chair Michael.
26

27 Vice-Chair Michael: For some reason Chair Martinez seems to think that I'm a tremendous golf enthusiast,
28 which at different times in my life has definitely been true. So at the moment there's a pond which is
29 really attractive to geese. What's going to happen with the migratory water fowl in the redesigns?
30

31 Mr. Richardson: Well the pond is on the future Baylands Athletic Field expansion area and not a part of
32 the future golf course area. As far as what happens to it, my understanding is it gets slowly drained. It's
33 not a naturally occurring pond as you may know, it's filled with the pump system through the golf course
34 and I don't know if Matthew if you want to speak to that or Shilpa if you have any comments about
35 actually what happens to it. I think it's just a process of draining it at the appropriate time of the year
36 and the habitat they find other places to go. And hopefully the Canadian Geese go really far away. We
37 can get them to go far away.
38

39 Vice-Chair Michael: Maybe back to Canada.
40

41 Mr. Richardson: Maybe. Yes, Edmonton.
42

43 Vice-Chair Michael: Or asylum in the Ecuador Consulate or something. So I think for people taking up the
44 game of golf or people who are long time enthusiasts this is pretty exciting. I just want to say that I had
45 a chance last year to take a trip to Alabama and play an unusual course called Farmlink, which is the only
46 research and development golf course in the country and it's on a mere 3,500 acres. And I'm astounded
47 at what you're proposing to do in 170 acres of Palo Alto. It's really quite impressive to have this quality
48 of design.
49

50 I also had a couple years ago a trip to another great course, which is on the shores of Lake Michigan,
51 Arcadia Bluffs, which is sort of a top 20 course consistently. And what surprised me there was that they
52 had basically removed all the trees as far as I can remember and they really made it very naturalistic with
53 just the configuration of the dunes sloping down towards the lower elevation of the lake, which made for
54 a surprisingly extraordinary pleasing aesthetic golf experience. It was one of the best days on a golf
55 course I've ever had aesthetically. And so I was wondering with the, particularly with the rebranding of
56 the golf course as the Baylands Golf Links are you actually thinking of really promoting a real Scottish

1 links style experience in terms of maybe drier fairways with more potential roll to the ball and more ups
2 and downs? What's the plan for that? Or is it going to be more like say Spanish Bay where it's a links,
3 but it's well irrigated and (interrupted)
4

5 Mr. Richardson: Well, I think the good news is the new irrigation system and what we've done with the
6 drainage will allow the City to make that decision. It's difficult sometimes in my role as you can imagine
7 to, you know, we say we should keep it a little drier and make it fast and firm like you're talking about,
8 but obviously that's not in my control, it's in the City's control. The good news is the City has the ability
9 and flexibility to do that if they want to. And I would encourage it. I think what we find and what the
10 United States Golf Association (USGA) finds is when courses are fast and firm the less skilled golfer, the
11 average golfer who doesn't play that well benefits because the ball rolls and rolls and rolls and they're
12 very thrilled. The better player who can hit the ball a long way gets into more trouble because typically,
13 giving you a little secret here, we tend to funnel things and narrow them out there a little further and
14 make it more challenging. So you saw some of that if you watched the US Open recently where on a
15 relatively short course, by the way the exact same length as Baylands Golf Links will be, 6,800 yards, the
16 better player was the one hit the ball a long way was getting into perhaps more trouble. So I would
17 encourage that and I think that the Scottish links concept will play very, very well in this region of the
18 Bay Area. There's nothing else like that here. There have been some attempts up toward Oakland
19 metropolitan, but I think it makes perfect sense on the Baylands site to do a links style golf course.
20

21 Vice-Chair Michael: Ok, well that's really exciting to hear. And the other thing that's exciting to me is the,
22 sort of the golf learning area, the bringing youth golfers into it and I think the possibility of encouraging
23 whatever organizations like the First Tee Program or whatnot to really affiliate with Palo Alto and the
24 Baylands Golf Links to bring more golfers into the game and really have a love and appreciation of not
25 just the physical environment, but the values that make golf great. You know the integrity and they have
26 I can't remember all the values that they promote, but it's really a part of growing up to be good people
27 and that's a great quality of golf and I think your project will help the City move in that direction.
28

29 Rob De Geus, Division Manager Recreation & Golf - Community Services Division: I just, good evening
30 Commissioners, Rob De Geus, Community Services Department. I just wanted to chime in on the youth
31 component. We have the First Tee at the golf course already four days a week and we also have as part
32 of our middle school athletic program, which the City runs for the three middle schools we've added golf
33 to that program so they're out there as well and we provide the course for the high school golfers. And
34 so it's one of the markets and one of the demographics that's actually growing and we want to grow it
35 even further with the new course. And we're partnering with the First Tee and they've approached us
36 and want to help us pay for some of these youth development areas on the course, which is very
37 appreciated.
38

39 Chair Martinez: Great, thank you. Commissioner King.
40

41 Commissioner King: Thank you. So I had one question, apologies if I missed that somewhere in the
42 packet, but one of the bullet items is "turf area reduction of 40 percent from existing, water reduction by
43 30 to 40 percent." So can you explain why with all this, you spoke of the high tech irrigation system all
44 the sensors, why wouldn't there be at least commensurate reduction in irrigation relative to reduction in
45 land?
46

47 Mr. Richardson: It's a difficult formula to put together. That was a conservative number that was done
48 about a year ago when the National Golf Foundation was doing their study, but we do have a slight
49 increase in the size of greens, the putting surfaces on the golf course and those require potable water.
50 So there are different uses. We tried to make a general statement 30 to 40 percent is what our goal is
51 and with the idea to maybe not water as much and make it a faster, firmer course if that were
52 implemented and other, the soil sensing technology proves we don't ever know exactly what it's going to
53 do because we can't contemplate what the soil is across 140 acres. You know we don't know what it is
54 exactly, but it is entirely possible, probably reasonable that we approach the 40 percent. And in addition
55 to that we know we have leaking irrigation system now. That's not something we can quantify. We

1 really don't know by the water meter how much we're putting on the course versus how much is leaking.
2 So we're making a lot of assumptions on the existing system to get to that 30 to 40 percent.
3

4 Commissioner King: I see. And why, the style of course is why the greens are larger (interrupted)
5

6 Mr. Richardson: Well the greens shrink over time. Don't listen to this joke, but as the maintenance just,
7 you know as the mowers just kind of come in a little bit and the greens get smaller and so over the last
8 20, 30, 40 years some of the greens have gotten smaller and for a public facility, especially a links facility
9 with wind influences we thought the greens needed to be a little bit bigger. They're not very, I mean
10 we're only talking 10, 15 percent larger than the existing greens, but it fits the style of the course.
11

12 Commissioner King: And then my other question following on Commissioner Keller's question about the
13 native plants in the rough; so then it would seem since they are slow growing that there's the potential
14 that if there is any damage to them they could be maintenance intensive because they grow so slowly.
15

16 Mr. Richardson: Well they're self-propagating so those areas sort of take care of themselves. They
17 rejuvenate and what we find when we plant native areas to courses is we do our best to figure out what
18 won't impact pace of play and make the course too difficult. Over time little adjustments get made to
19 them and with so many people walking this golf course you'll also get little pathways through them and
20 there might be some adjustments, but for the most part the idea is they take care of themselves and the
21 biggest maintenance impact that they seem to have is when we have to go in and mow them down
22 because they're getting too much water. We've tried to avoid that in the design. We think we've been
23 successful. So in other words we're picking up and containing our water before it gets to these areas and
24 putting it in the drainage system or reusing it. What happens though if you have a low area off the side
25 of a golf hole and it's getting continual irrigation water running off then these areas can overgrow, which
26 we try not to let happen.
27

28 Commissioner King: I see. And then what you just mentioned that with the high numbers of people
29 walking is that just a traditional number with the existing course or this style of course will result in
30 (interrupted)
31

32 Mr. Richardson: Well hopefully it will encourage more walking, but I think you do a fair amount of
33 walking rounds now. And the trend in the industry is we see more and more of a new generation of
34 golfers wanting to walk, which is the benefit of having a public play golf course is sometimes you see in
35 private facilities they mandate the use of golf carts, which is a revenue generator. But in a public course
36 I mean we like to see people out there walking and I think Palo Alto currently has a very healthy
37 percentage. I want to say it's 35, 40 percent of walkers.
38

39 Commissioner King: Thank you.
40

41 Chair Martinez: Commissioner Alcheck.
42

43 Commissioner Alcheck: Ok, I have a couple of questions for staff. Assuming we recommend that the City
44 Council approve this project based on the findings and conditions what does the, what is the impact of
45 the fact that we're not, that the project doesn't really develop the other area, the recreational areas have
46 on a future project on that area? Would they need to go through another EIR process or?
47

48 Aaron Aknin, Assistant Director – Planning: Thank you Commissioner Alcheck. They would need to go
49 through a separate, so if the Environmental Impact Report covers for instance the playing fields and
50 gymnasium they may not have to go through a separate environmental review process. But what they
51 would have to go through is a separate site and design application process, which will go in front of the
52 Planning Commission, go in front of the ARB, and ultimately go to the City Council and during that
53 process we would have to make a finding that it is consistent with the environmental review that was
54 covered within this Environmental Impact Report.
55

1 Commissioner Alcheck: Is there any reason to think that that wouldn't, is there anything that we should
2 be covering now to make that process, that future potential process better or in any sense not worse? Is
3 there any considerations we should be having now about those areas that are not really?
4

5 Mr. Akin: Rob can correct me if I'm wrong, but my understanding is we're looking at a worst case
6 scenario in terms of traffic generation associated with the playing fields and the gymnasium so I think
7 we're covering our bases there in terms of looking at what's the maximum potential for playing fields in
8 that area and just based on the area that's dedicated to that.
9

10 Mr. De Geus: I would agree. So we're looking at the sort of highest, most intensive use and included
11 that scenario in the EIR.
12

13 Commissioner Alcheck: Ok. I have a, there's another question I didn't get to ask before we met today.
14 So this may be sort of irrelevant, but there was a recent 60 Minutes episode about the use of coal ash as
15 a material for soil fill and in one particular case on a golf course. So they used what is a byproduct of
16 coal production, coal ash in what is considered a recyclable way. I guess this is sort of an
17 environmentally friendly practice, but now it's sort of controversial and I'm just curious if again, it's sort
18 of off the topic, but do we anticipate the introduction in this design of a lot of additional soil fill or
19 alternative fill on the site? Does anybody know what I'm even talking about?
20

21 Mr. Richardson: I think you're talking about the golf course down in South Carolina or West Virginia that
22 was built on top of an ash reclamation project.
23

24 Commissioner Alcheck: Yeah.
25

26 Mr. Richardson: And now I think my understanding of that is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
27 and everyone signed off on it so many years ago and now they're kind of thinking that maybe they
28 shouldn't have done that? I think that's the way (interrupted)
29

30 Commissioner Alcheck: I don't mean (interrupted)
31

32 Mr. Richardson: ... to best summarize that project.
33

34 Commissioner Alcheck: I just watched it on Sunday and then the notion that (interrupted)
35

36 Mr. Richardson: What we are doing on this project the City Council approved plan that you saw, Plan G, I
37 think the Council was very strong in suggesting that staff look at bringing in imported soils from projects
38 around the area, Stanford and whatever and that's what we did. So the current number is 360,000
39 yards, cubic yards of material coming to the golf course and then another 100 and something coming to
40 the JPA's project. And all of that material has a very strict specification for contaminants and things that
41 we wouldn't want and Mr. Teresi can answer questions. That's currently been awarded to a contractor to
42 start that process in the next few weeks actually.
43

44 Commissioner Alcheck: Alright.
45

46 Mr. Richardson: But it's not ash from South Carolina.
47

48 Commissioner Alcheck: It could be from anywhere.
49

50 Chair Martinez: Commissioner Panelli.
51

52 Commissioner Panelli: Thank you Mr. Chair. When this came to us the first time around one of the
53 questions I had was whether it would be possible to keep the practice range open during all the
54 reconfiguration efforts. And the response I think I got was "We don't know yet." Do you know yet?
55

1 Mr. Richardson: Yeah. The intention is to keep it open and the specification will be that it has to remain
2 open except for the small window to expand the netting and rebuild the tee surface.
3
4 Commissioner Panelli: Ah.
5
6 Mr. Richardson: So we don't know exactly right now, but we're guessing it will probably be closed for no
7 more than two weeks. That's our hope.
8
9 Commissioner Panelli: Ok.
10
11 Mr. Richardson: Yeah.
12
13 Commissioner Panelli: But not the 14 months or whatever it was for the length of the project?
14
15 Mr. De Geus: That's correct. And the restaurant will remain open and the pro shop and as far as the
16 sequencing for the practice facility we're also taking a look at that to see, to maximize that space as
17 much as possible in its existing condition while we're doing the primary course.
18
19 Commissioner Panelli: And then I really like the before and after pictures. It really gives a great visual
20 sense of what's going on. Is there any chance that that was done for the hole that borders where that
21 tall steep berm is going to be between the athletic fields and the golf course? I'd really like to see what,
22 I mean to me that's one of the bigger sort of elements of this project. I understand why it needs to be
23 done and why it's good that it should be done, but it would be helpful to see that.
24
25 Mr. Richardson: That hole was not included in those because I think that that direction to look at buffer
26 mounding came after the before and after was done. It would be a good idea. I think some of the
27 pictures that are in your booklet that you have that show the concept of the buffer mounding might be
28 somewhat of a placeholder for what you're asking for.
29
30 Commissioner Panelli: Yeah, it's not the same as these. I really like these in the presentation. So
31 anyway if it could get squeezed in that's great, but don't go out of your way to do it. Thanks.
32
33 Chair Martinez: Commissioner Keller, follow up?
34
35 Commissioner Keller: Yes, I'm following up to the question that Commissioner Alcheck asked and what I
36 understand is that there has been and in some cases continues to be an interest in terms of green
37 building of using what is called fly ash as opposed to coal ash. However, my understanding and
38 somebody who knows more about this than I might want to wish to chime in is that more recently people
39 are concerned about fly ash because of the heavy metal in it. So I think that's six in one and half a
40 dozen in another, but they've determined that the disintegration, what I understand is they've
41 determined the disintegration of concrete does happen over time will release the heavy metals. It wasn't
42 a way to dispose of it as they thought it was. So I'm not sure where we stand on that, but I would be
43 quite concerned about the use of fly ash in the concrete and I'm hoping that if we do that that we do so
44 very cautiously. Thank you.
45
46 Chair Martinez: Ok, before you go I understand the Vice-Chair's exuberance for the golf course design.
47 I'm trying to understand. Ok. But in the staff report it says that the mounding or the elevation changes
48 varies from 3 feet to 35 feet on the golf course. Is that correct?
49
50 Mr. Richardson: The fill areas except for those low areas that are on the plan, the fill areas are all a
51 minimum of about 2 to 3 feet and then only the buffer mound areas get up into the 20's and I think the
52 peak of one of them might be at 32; now that's 32 above sea level, not 32 above the grade that's out
53 there. So the grade in that area is about 8 to 10 so 32 minus 10, so about 20 feet give or take above the
54 existing grade. And that's just the area that is on the, that separates the future recreation area from the
55 10th hole.
56

1 Chair Martinez: So the golf course itself you're saying only varies two to three feet?
2

3 Mr. Richardson: No the golf course has other mounding on it I'm sorry, but nothing as strong or as large
4 as the ones that are the buffer mounds. There are some that get up into the 12, 14, 15 feet. So what
5 we've done is we've taken the existing drainage system, the trees we wanted to preserve, the playability
6 and the routing of the golf course and all of these other factors and we created the grading plan to fit
7 within those constraints and to provide the undulation throughout the entire golf course. And then they
8 sort of geomorph down into those low areas so that it looks like it was a natural area rather than
9 something that's just created by machine. So the idea is it has a very natural look when it's finished.
10

11 Chair Martinez: Ok, so that's getting at the point of my question. The natural areas are supposed to echo
12 the look of the Baylands? Is that correct?
13

14 Mr. Richardson: I think they're supposed to echo the look of the Baylands as if they were the tidal dunes
15 area that would be adjacent to a waterway such as the bay itself. So they would be the immediate
16 shoreline that you would expect in a windswept environment like this. And the buffer mounds are further
17 away from the bay than the other areas. You know those are more inland.
18

19 Chair Martinez: Ok. I got it. When I look at a golf course to me they look as kind of a lonely kind of
20 place. You know just a few people out there, but I was impressed with Pebble Beach that there are
21 actually places for non-golfers to walk and to observe and to see this beauty that you're creating. Is it
22 going to be anything like that for the public?
23

24 Mr. Richardson: There, on the plans that we did when the Council looked at this back in July there was a
25 conceptual plan put together for that future recreation site that showed a public trail going from the
26 Baylands Athletic Center down to the clubhouse and that went through the new player development area
27 and I would still support that. I think that would be a terrific connection between the restaurant and the
28 restrooms and the airport and the Baylands Athletic Center. I think it would be a great connection.
29

30 As far as the golf course itself with the smaller footprint we have we really don't have the flexibility to
31 have any public trails through the golf course. That's the effect of going from 170 acres down to 143,
32 but what we do have, which I think will be very good is the levy trail that the JPA is improving will have a
33 tremendous connection to the golf course. I think this goes way back to the first work we did with the
34 JPA and the staff where the idea was to create not so much when you're on the levy trail looking out at a
35 park that's wall to wall turf and big tall trees that obstruct your view, but to look out at something that
36 makes sense in the foreground before you look out to the territorial view, to the bay itself and the
37 mountains in the distance. So that was the heart of the planning concept for what we've done on the
38 golf course is to try to create that terrain connection between the water and the public trail that goes
39 around the outside. And that really came from the JPA. That was a very, very, very important thing to
40 them was to make that connection and to have it be more like the natural creek area rather than some
41 park that happens to be next to the trail.
42

43 Chair Martinez: Ok. And then finally the trees. We're losing 500 trees. Can you tell us a little bit about
44 sort of why that great amount of trees had to be taken out?
45

46 Mr. Richardson: I can do my best. We, once the decision was made to raise the site and separate the
47 turf from the salt prone soils. You know you're bringing in 300,000 or 400,000 yards of material you're
48 not going to be able to fill the site and preserve all of the trees that are there. So what we did is went
49 out and looked for what we call the iconic trees, the ones that would fit into the design and that had
50 value and were in good health. We used the City's tree survey, which was very extensive. And if you
51 read over that and peruse it you'll see that a great percentage of the trees on that survey are in very
52 poor health and very marginal, some are even since died, since the survey was completed. So based on
53 that what we did is we developed a list of the trees we wanted to preserve if we could and we were very
54 successful I think, give you a, I think it was about 80 percent of the trees that I wanted to see in the
55 finished design that we were able to integrate. The stone pine for example we worked very, very

1 tirelessly to get those stone pines preserved because they do well in that, the salt soil. And then the
2 large eucalyptus were the other trees that we looked for preserving.
3

4 I think, describe it we had a great public meeting last night. We had comments; we had lots of questions
5 about the trees. People were able to share both sides of the issue. And I think one of the things that
6 became apparent is there's a misunderstanding when you say 500 trees that sounds like a lot of trees
7 and it is a lot of trees, but this City Hall sits on two acres and the 500 trees on that site would represent
8 me taking out 5.8 trees on this entire City Hall site. So just putting it in perspective less than 3 trees per
9 acre is what we were able to attain in terms of the removal and then we're adding back 300 trees in the
10 planning plan. And then the City staff has developed a mitigation that goes beyond that for offsite
11 mitigation.
12

13 I think the best way to describe your, the heart of your question is that when you're bringin in almost a
14 half a million yards of offsite import and you're preserving the wetlands that are there, which you can't
15 plant trees in those wetlands really. There are not many varieties that will do well at sea level. We're
16 simply faced with having to make tough decisions about some trees. The other important thing that
17 came out of last night's meeting there was a question that I had about, from a couple of people about
18 the trees on the perimeter of the site. And for the most part all of those trees are remaining. So the
19 trees along Embarcadero, most of the trees at the clubhouse putting green area, the trees along the
20 airport, and the trees that are not part of the JPA's new alignment the ones on the north fence line.
21 Those are all trees that we've preserved in place. Does that help answer that question or?
22

23 Chair Martinez: It was a very good answer. I appreciate that.
24

25 Mr. Richardson: Thank you.
26

27 Chair Martinez: Ok, thank you. Staff we'll give it back to you now for, to continue with your presentation.
28

29 Mr. Teresi: Ok, I was maybe ask... are you going to want to act on the site and design element now or
30 wait till the end?
31

32 Chair Martinez: I think there might be some relevance of the Draft Environmental Impact Report.
33

34 Mr. Teresi: Ok.
35

36 Chair Martinez: So I'd like to... Pardon?
37

38 Commissioner Keller: We need to hear from the public before we make any Motions.
39

40 Chair Martinez: Yeah, definitely, but I thought the public would also want to hear from the environmental
41 consultant.
42

43 Mr. De Geus: Right so at this point I would like to invite Shilpa Trisal out from ICF International to give a
44 short summary of the environmental document and the environmental process we're following.
45

46 Shilpa Trisal, Consultant – ICF International: Good evening Commissioners. My name is Shilpa Trisal.
47 I'm with ICF International; I am the EIR consultant to the City on this project. My presentation here is
48 focused on where we are in the CEQA process and what comes next, but I'm happy to answer any
49 questions about the impact analysis or the general EIR, what it covered, etcetera.
50

51 We started the EIR process in January of this year with the notice of preparation to prepare an EIR.
52 That's when the City decided that this project should have an Environmental Impact Report. At that time
53 we had a 30 day scoping period during which we took comments from the public and we came to the
54 Commission to get comments on what should be examined in the EIR and whether they had any
55 concerns about the project itself. There was a meeting here, held here on February 13th and I will speak
56 a little more about that, about the issues that were address, were raised at that meeting. We are now in

1 the 45 day public review period that started June 3rd and it ends on July 19th. And today's meeting is the
2 second meeting that we're holding for the Draft EIR. We had a meeting yesterday at the golf course,
3 which was an open house workshop sort of set up where we had stations for different areas such as
4 engineering, golf course design, and environmental. And the public was asked to interact at various
5 stations and it was sort of a one to one interaction and we made the same presentation at that meeting
6 as well and I will also talk about what kind of comments we received at that, at last night's meeting.
7 Next.

8
9 So the comments we received when we were here last in February were mostly to do with concerns
10 about the location of the gymnasium. That it's located in the Baylands. Is that the perfect fit and what
11 would that, is that a good location for recreational facility? Some of the other comments raised by the
12 public were the increase in noise and lighting due to the athletic fields. What would that do to the
13 wildlife? And then there were some concerns about risk to investment that we're putting in the golf
14 course due to sea level rise and flooding events potentially in the future. Also the Commissioners raised
15 the concern or encouraged the use of reclaimed water and as Forrest explained that has been done in
16 this golf course design. There were concerns about future drainage improvements. I believe right now
17 when there's a rain event the golf course is clogged or unplayable for a few days. That problem has also
18 been solved with the new golf course design. And of course the loss of trees; the City staff and the
19 consultants we've been hard at work to minimize the loss of trees and find feasible mitigation onsite and
20 offsite to cover, to recover the canopy loss as best as possible.

21
22 At yesterday's meeting we had a good turnout. I would say about 25 people came to the meeting. The
23 meeting lasted for two hours. And most of the concerns were about the public didn't seem to know
24 about the athletic center portion of the project. I think people were well informed about the golf course
25 design, but did not know what's going to happen at the athletic center so we shared some information
26 about what is the design, what is the conceptual design right now and how it would go through a site
27 and design review process and how there would be opportunities for the public to comment on the site
28 and design and their input would be taken into consideration. The other question of course was about
29 loss of trees. That seems to be a concern of the residents in the community in general.

30
31 We are talking comments until July 19th. For the members of the public who are here the comments can
32 be mailed or e-mailed and the members of the public can provide comments tonight. Those will be
33 compiled in the final EIR. We will respond to each and every comment and provide detailed responses
34 and if it's necessary we will revise the EIR and make changes if that's necessary. For the members of the
35 public the Draft EIR is available at seven City locations. The hardcopies available at these locations and
36 then it's also located, it's also available on the website for download and viewing.

37
38 The next steps after July 19th the team goes back, reviews each comment, provides written responses,
39 and looks at whether the project needs to be changed or refined in any way. Are there new mitigation
40 strategies that we need to incorporate? Any sort of good suggestions that come out of the comments
41 that we receive? We expect that the final EIR will be ready to be released any time in fall 2003 and there
42 will be more opportunities for the public to provide public comment at that time and we'll come back to
43 the Commission at that time with our findings and what comments we've received and how we've
44 responded to them. And the certification of the final EIR is expected at the end of the year. That
45 concludes my presentation, but I'm happy to have, answer any questions about the impacts or general
46 (interrupted)

47
48 Chair Martinez: Ok that's fine on process, but I think we wanted to get more into the content of the EIR
49 and talk about your section on the greenhouse gas emissions and on traffic.

50
51 Ms. Trisal: Sure.

52
53 Chair Martinez: So if you can go into those for the benefit of the public and for our discussion, thank you.

54
55 Ms. Trisal: Sure. I will try my best and our traffic consultant is also here today so she can supplement,
56 Michelle Hunt from Hexagon Transportation is also here and she can supplement my discussion. So

1 basically I think what's important is the EIR covers six seventeen areas ranging from visual air quality,
2 noise, traffic, to greenhouse gas emissions. So we've made findings in each of those areas for both the
3 golf course and the athletic center and we've kind of looked at the worst case scenario assuming for
4 example, the construction would start on the same date because that helps us quantify air emissions
5 quantitatively together so that's the worst case in that scenario. For air quality the worst case would be
6 all the construction happens together. So in that case that's what we've done. So that's the approach
7 we've taken. In every section we've tried to say what is the worst case if, for both the components of
8 this project and then what is the impact and that's the finding that we've made.
9

10 Right now we have unavoidable significant impacts. That means we have, we've provided mitigation
11 measures but they do not reduce the impacts to a less than significant level for three areas. Those are
12 aesthetics. Since the athletic center does not have, the fields do not have a lighting plan yet and the
13 lighting plan will go through a site and design process and lighting was a concern raised at the
14 Commission's hearing in February we felt we've provided some performance standards in a mitigation
15 measure, but we felt that it could potentially be a significant and unavoidable impact. And that's where
16 we have, that's the finding that we have made for that not knowing what the lighting finding, what the
17 lighting plan would look like.
18

19 Then we have for air quality we have a significant and unavoidable impact due to construction, during
20 construction, which is due to the heavy grading the rough grading that is to occur at the golf course. We
21 will exceed the Air Quality Management District's threshold for construction emissions and that leads us
22 to the finding of significant and unavoidable. We have mitigation measures there to reduce impacts as
23 much as possible, but even after doing, applying all the best available technology and all the feasible
24 mitigation measures we are not able to reduce it to a less than significant level.
25

26 And lastly we have a significant unavoidable impact on greenhouse gas emissions. And I know you're
27 interested in hearing about that. So greenhouse gas emissions this was, we had, State CEQA guidelines
28 do not address greenhouse gas emissions before last year. So last year there were two thresholds added
29 under greenhouse gas emissions that require that all stage projects study greenhouse gas emissions.
30 And one of the thresholds is: does your project indirectly or directly exceed greenhouse gas thresholds or
31 does it conflict with any applicable plan or policy related to greenhouse gas emissions? And on those two
32 issues our project does. We are increasing the traffic at the athletic center by 200 percent due to the
33 athletic fields. We're adding five athletic fields. That leads to an increase of 200 percent in the number
34 of daily trips and that is enough to exceed the 1,100 metric ton CO2 equivalent threshold that we have,
35 but there have been some good e-mails from Commissioner Keller on mitigation strategies that could be
36 applied using electric vehicles and carbon neutral energy and we will together with the City
37 representatives look at those mitigation strategies and incorporate them.
38

39 On the other climate adaptation piece, which is a qualitative, so this is sort of quantitative two thresholds
40 there's a barrier Air Quality Management District has a quantitative threshold so you can compare: what
41 is the emission from the cars? What is the emission from the equipment? So that's all quantitatively
42 done and that's mathematical and you look at whether you exceed the threshold or not. On the sort of
43 qualitative side, which is the climate adaptation side we're all new in this and our approach to the
44 analysis has been to identify what are, the premise is that no single project can, you know no single
45 project can contribute to a greenhouse, you know, we contribute to a greenhouse gas emission, to
46 greenhouse gas emissions, but no single project can violate or exceed some sort because there are no
47 thresholds we just as a single project cannot have a substantial effect on a greenhouse on the, you
48 know, global greenhouse gas emissions.
49

50 So we look at sort of what's happening in the region and in the region we, the climate what's going to
51 happen to the climate is there's going to be sea level rise, there's going to be more risk of fire, frequency
52 of fire. There's going to be more flood events. There's going to be, sorry I have a list here, more
53 precipitation and flood events and shifts in precipitation and plant and animal behavior and distribution.
54 And all those are probably true just because they are true of the region they are probably true of this
55 project as well. However, it's sort of qualitative. We cannot say what our contribution is to these risks,
56 but we identify and sort of lay out what's going to happen in the region in general and say, "Yes, our

1 project could in a small way contribute to these events.” So that’s sort of the approach that we’ve taken
2 kind of disclosing what’s happening in the region and what is the science say and what do the plans and
3 local plan and you have a climate action plan here. What does the literature say, and then sort of leave it
4 at that and not make, because it’s not possible for a single project to make a finding.
5

6 But on the other side to address CEQA questions we have, we’ve done the math and come out with
7 emission calculations and made a determination. And we’re looking at feasible mitigation strategies to
8 reduce so that we don’t have a significant and avoidable greenhouse gas emission. I hope I answered
9 the question, but I’m happy to, I’m not a greenhouse gas expert, but I’m happy to follow up and provide
10 more information on that to help you when you read the document.
11

12 Chair Martinez: Ok, thank you, but don’t go. Commissioners, questions? Yeah, Vice-Chair Michael. You
13 can start.
14

15 Vice-Chair Michael: So, I’m going to ask my last question first because I think it’s maybe one of the easier
16 ones. But on the mitigation of greenhouse gases and I think it was Cara Silver who mentioned the issue
17 of with the athletic facilities which aren’t related to the golf course, but may potentially be significant if
18 you have these facilities and there’s lots of games, drop offs and pick-ups is it a, has there been any
19 study of the possibility of a mitigation in terms of substantial increase in public transit or shuttles that
20 would alleviate the requirement for parents to actually drive their cars to get the kids back and forth to
21 the, participate in the activities?
22

23 Ms. Trisal: I believe there is a weekday, currently a weekday shuttle, but it only runs during the peak
24 hours. So certainly that is an area of further study that whether we can, whether providing a shuttle
25 service would benefit and get us down below the threshold. But certainly I think CEQA says we should
26 apply all feasible and practical mitigation measures. So that’s certainly something that can be examined.
27 It hasn’t been done in any detail by the City I believe.
28

29 Vice-Chair Michael: Ok. And then I’ve been trying to grapple with all the different possibilities related to
30 the trees. The existing trees, the new trees, the trees that might get planted somewhere else and I just
31 have a kind of a starting point that sort of not all trees are created equal. And maybe this is sort of an
32 issue for Mr. Whittaker in terms of the golf course site and design, but there are some great trees
33 associated with some regional golf courses. There’s the cypress tree bordering the 18th green at Pebble
34 Beach, which for a while there was the tree disappeared and the 18th green was defenseless and they
35 moved a new tree back in place and once again that restored the harmony of that really important golf
36 hole. Right now at the Palo Alto Golf Course I think on the 7th fairway, which is a short par four there’s
37 some eucalyptus trees which make it tough to get in there if you don’t hit the right shot and at Stanford
38 on the back nine I think it’s either the 13th or the 14th hole there’s a majestic oak tree in the middle of
39 one of the par fours which kind of makes it for me about a par eight because I always end up dealing
40 with that tree. And Poppy Hills has a, on the 18th fairway the approach to the green there’s a tree that
41 always gets in the way if you sort of drift off to the right.
42

43 And I’m thinking in the, it isn’t so much the quantity of trees, but it’s the quality of trees and kind of
44 where they’re placed. And you can have, this is obviously not going to be a forested area. It’s going to
45 be more sort of seaside/bayside links and but you could do some really interesting things if you put trees
46 in places that created both scenic interest but also maybe some challenge. So maybe this goes to the
47 issue of when the project is done the course is going to get rated and it’ll get a, the slope of the course
48 will get determined. And I don’t know if you’ve got a target for how easy it’s going to be from the front
49 tees or how challenging it might be from the back tees, but I hope that you have a range of challenges
50 that makes it really sort of compelling for people to come back and play again and again because it’s
51 really interesting, which I think is one of the current sort of drawbacks to the course which is really not
52 all that interesting.
53

54 But then along with sort of the tree removal and some of the design concepts the idea of potentially
55 environmentally sensitive areas some courses make that part of the challenge and also it preserves sort
56 of the quality of the foliage if people are sort of encouraged not to walk on them even to get balls that

1 they've, have strayed into the bushes or force carries over waist areas from the back tees maybe to make
2 it more challenging or possibly sort of a relative increase or decrease in the number of bunkers, sort of
3 the placing of bunkers that would create some again challenge for people who are motivated by those
4 things. But some of these golf design issues relate to the environmental impact and I, this is sort of a
5 rambling comment, but is there anything that the public should know about the solution that's being
6 proposed that will sort of incorporate both the preservation of the trees and environmentally sensitive
7 areas, but also make it a really great resource for the City and a wonderful experience for the people who
8 visit?
9

10 Mr. De Geus: I can begin with some comments. I, we are excited about what we are doing at the golf
11 course because although we're concerned about the trees as well and the loss of canopy, but we're
12 excited about the fact that we're adding over 50 acres of natural Baylands areas back to what wasn't
13 there before. From 130 acres of irrigated, fertilized turf to only 80 acres and others can speak better to
14 this than I, but there's ecosystem value to that that I think helps mitigate for the loss of some of the
15 trees. So I think that's important for folks to understand. And even though there is great value in that
16 we're going further than that and we're going to replace the canopy. And we're working on that plan and
17 it's coming together. Working closely with partners like Canopy and Acterra and a local group called
18 Magic and we have a team that's working on a plan to replace the full canopy within a 10 year period
19 some of which will be on the golf course, but other parts will be in areas where trees do much better and
20 they're more appropriate like the foothills.
21

22 Mr. Teresi: Another thing that we've talked about is adding some interpretive signage on the course to
23 make people aware of the significance of some of these specially planted areas that are intended to
24 mimic the Baylands environment and we think that could add to the educational aspect of the course.
25

26 Chair Martinez: Ok, thanks. Let's try to get back onto the environmental impact side of this deliberation.
27 Commissioner Panelli, you first.
28

29 Commissioner Panelli: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I want to take an opportunity to challenge the
30 greenhouse gas emission identification as significant and unavoidable. And since this is relatively new I
31 think, I have a particular concern because the statement that it's going to increase traffic by 200 percent
32 implies that the people making these trips wouldn't make them to recreate somewhere else. So I'm
33 really curious to know whether, are we talking a gross increase in trips or is it a net increase? To me the
34 net increase in trips is probably zero because unless the assumption is these people are just going to sit
35 at home and do nothing unless we build these athletic fields, which I don't believe. I believe the kind of
36 people who are going to use these fields are going to be active in some way whether it's going to the
37 gym, going to Foothills Park, going somewhere, going to the Sunnyvale Recreation Fields. So can you
38 talk a little bit to this?
39

40 Ms. Trisal: Sure. I'm sure there are some trips in there which are people who are going to other athletic
41 facilities who would go now to this new facility, but from the traffic analysis point of view it's a new trip
42 generator and you look at it as we are generating 200 percent increase in trips. That's how the model
43 works. However, I mean to identify whether these people would have been going to any other
44 recreational facility I think we'd have to do some sort of surveys to get that information. But I know
45 Michelle Hunt probably has dealt with this much more and she can elaborate on the methodology and
46 how much of it could be, if we can offset by saying that these people would have gone elsewhere and
47 now they're coming here so in terms of sort of the total number of trips within the City would remain the
48 same.
49

50 Commissioner Panelli: Well and let me just add something to that. If the demand amongst Palo Altoans
51 for these kinds of fields is greater than the supply it suggests that they are currently making trips that are
52 longer to go to other places to do these kinds of activities. And so you could almost argue that you
53 reduce greenhouse gas emissions through this project, but that's speculation on my part.
54

55 Michelle Hunt, Transportation Consultant – Hexagon Transportation Consultants: I'm Michelle Hunt with
56 Hexagon Transportation Consultants. So obviously we did the transportation section not the greenhouse

1 gas, but with regard to transportation the analysis considers these new trips because we're looking at
2 impacts to specific intersections that are right near our site. So while it may be well true that many of
3 the residents are making trips to other facilities whether they're in Palo Alto or outside of Palo Alto to the
4 intersections right around the golf course and the athletic field site the trips are new to those locations so
5 we don't consider any credits for trips that are occurring already. And with regard to greenhouse gas
6 obviously that's not my area of expertise so, but I think that the question is whether you're looking at a
7 site specific impact or whether you're looking at an overall how much emissions are we generating as a
8 city so those are different questions.
9

10 Commissioner Panelli: Well and I get that. I mean it clearly the traffic implications and the greenhouse
11 gas emission implications are related, but they are distinctly separate because if we consider our
12 biosphere, our Earth as one place it doesn't matter if you emit here or over here it's effectively going to
13 end up in the same place so, which is very different than traffic effects, right? And so I'm wondering, I
14 just I have a real problem identifying this as significant and unavoidable without a little asterisk on it.
15 That's all I'm going to say about that. (Interrupted)
16

17 Chair Martinez: Can I do a follow up on that? Sure, go ahead.
18

19 Matthew Jones, Principal – ICF International: Hi, my name's Matthew Jones, Principal with ICF
20 International. I'm the Principal in charge of this project and I would like to speak to it from a CEQA
21 context because CEQA asks us to look at a reasonable worst case scenario. And within that construct we
22 are looking at these trips coming to this location as occurring in a bit of a vacuum. And that does
23 sometimes overstate impacts. I wouldn't argue with that at all, but in order to capture the totality of the
24 effect of a project you want to look at these trips not occurring. You have to look at what's associated
25 with the project itself. And I agree with you, it is probably overstating the impact, but you are looking at
26 something where you can only quantify certain pieces of the puzzle. Without a transportation study
27 that's looking at the effective trips of recreational users within the whole region you really can't put
28 numbers to those things. So you have to deal with the numbers you have and yes, that is probably
29 overstating the impact, but we have to do the best we can with the data we have at hand to make
30 quantitative determinations.
31

32 Commissioner Panelli: I just want to be clear about something. This is, my line of questioning is not a
33 critique of what was done. It's more a challenge to maybe the way that it's presented or the way it's
34 incorporated into an EIR. I think we're sort of treading new ground here and so it's a little bit of an
35 intellectual exercise. Anyway (interrupted)
36

37 Chair Martinez: No (interrupted)
38

39 Commissioner Panelli: I have other questions.
40

41 Chair Martinez: I wanted to do just a brief follow up with our transportation consultant if she can come
42 back. Can you differentiate for us the trips to the athletic facilities versus trips to the golf courses?
43

44 Ms. Hunt: Sure. We created a trip generation estimates for each component of the project: the athletic
45 fields, the gymnasium, and the golf course. For the athletic fields we did surveys at the Mayfield Soccer
46 Complex and our estimates are based on the actual observed trips that are generated at the Mayfield and
47 the number of fields there and then the number of fields proposed at this location. For the athletic fields
48 we estimated that on a daily basis the project would generate 907 trips and during the p.m. peak hour it
49 would be 225 trips. And that's based on an observed trip rate of 45 trips per field at Mayfield and the
50 five trips that are proposed here. For the gymnasium we used published trip rates from the Institute of
51 Transportation Engineers (ITE) because it's a use that common in many locations. It's based on the
52 square footage of the proposed project and the daily trips for that use would be 815. And the peak hour
53 trips would be only 49 during the p.m. peak hour for the gymnasium. So the athletic fields generate five
54 times the number of trips as the gymnasium.
55

1 The golf course generates a total right now of 70 trips during the p.m. peak hour. Based on projections
2 that we were provided with an estimated increase in golf course usage of 14 percent increase above the
3 existing levels, that 70 peak hour trips would grow to 80 peak hour trips if it did increase by 14 percent
4 as projected. And then we estimated the daily trips based on the p.m. peak hour and trip rates that are
5 observed at other golf courses because we didn't do a full survey of 24 hours at the golf course, but
6 based on that projection the proposed golf course would generate 977 trips, which is about roughly 70
7 trips more than what it would be generating right now. So the increase in trips for the golf course would
8 be only 10 trips during the peak hour, 70 trips during the day; so a very small increase for the golf
9 course. For the gymnasium 49 p.m. peak hour trips and the largest number is for the athletic fields,
10 which would be 225 trips. And this was based on surveys of Mayfield and it was being used very heavily
11 at the time even though it was in December, but the Mayfield fields are lighted and they are the only
12 fields that are lighted so therefore the usage at that time was a heavy use.

13
14 Chair Martinez: That's excellent, thank you. Sorry Commissioner. You have the floor.

15
16 Commissioner Panelli: Thank you. On, going back to the athletic fields I understand that the decision
17 about whether to go with artificial turf or natural turf has not been made. Is that correct?

18
19 Mr. De Geus: That's correct.

20
21 Commissioner Panelli: I know when we were on Parks and Rec, when we worked together with Parks and
22 Rec when I was on that commission at the time it was the decision with Mayfield was to go with the
23 artificial turf for a number of reasons primarily a significant reduction in maintenance costs and water.
24 That's what I recall as being sort of the primary drivers.

25
26 Mr. De Geus: That and the more playability of the course. With any grass field we close down
27 (interrupted)

28
29 Commissioner Panelli: Being able to use it for more [unintelligible-talking over each other]. Absolutely,
30 absolutely. My question for Shilpa though is I see the environmental impact of, identified if it goes with
31 natural turf being the use, the runoff of additional water. Did you consider the potential impact of
32 artificial turf on the environment? And I'm specifically thinking about the pellets that are used to sort of
33 soften the field. And I didn't see it on Page 2-8, but I'm wondering if that came up in the discussion or
34 perhaps that needs to be a part of the final EIR.

35
36 Ms. Trisal: You know the options, the two options were considered for example in hydrology what would
37 happen to impervious versus pervious surfaces if you had artificial turf versus natural turf and what it
38 would do to the flow rates. But if I think you're alluding to the hazardous material aspects of the?

39
40 Commissioner Panelli: Well there's been some controversy in the turf industry I suppose about the
41 potential impact of some of the materials that are used that are positioned as nontoxic but might have
42 perhaps not toxicity but other sort of side detriment.

43
44 Ms. Trisal: Right.

45
46 Commissioner Panelli: And I think our esteemed Mr. De Geus can speak to those a little bit in more detail
47 than I.

48
49 Mr. De Geus: Yeah. I don't think that we've looked at that in the EIR.

50
51 Ms. Trisal: Not in any, I mean I think the assumption was that the City would use the materials that had
52 no health risk, known health risk.

53
54 Mr. De Geus: That is what the City would do and there are options. It's actually sort of evolving type of
55 market and we see lots of changes. In fact now they have like a coconut husk type material that can be
56 the infill to that grass. So there's different options, different costs, but to the point about synthetic

1 versus grass the decision hasn't been made. I will say that staff's position is synthetic turf is preferred.
2 If we do build athletic fields out there because it isn't close to homes and it just has so many more hours
3 of playability. So that would be staff's proposal.
4

5 Commissioner Panelli: Ok. Thank you. And then my last issue that I want to identify... so I think just as
6 a general rule all of us as Commissioners I think are very open minded people. We are open to others
7 arguments, but we generally when we consume the materials for that week's meeting we formulate a
8 preliminary opinion. I think it is worth me sharing my preliminary opinion about something very
9 forcefully, which is the gymnasium to me is, and I know it's going to come back to us for site and design
10 review, but I'm just going to let you know right now I think it has no place out there in the Baylands.
11

12 There are two separate policy issues here. One is: do we need more gymnasiums in this City? I will
13 leave that up to our esteemed people in Parks and Recreation to determine whether the demand
14 outstrips the supply. The second policy decision is, if you say yes to the first one, the second is: should it
15 be here of all the places that we can put it? And I, in an area that's zoned OS (Open Space) I just can't
16 get my head around that. So I'm, we always talk about with applicants let them know early. So as the
17 applicant I'm letting you know early. I don't know how the rest of the folks here feel, but I have a sense
18 that they are more in tune with my opinion than perhaps the opposite. Thank you.
19

20 Chair Martinez: Commissioners I know there are further comments but I'd like to have the public have a
21 chance to weigh in and then we can come back to the Commission. Thank you for your patience.
22

23 Vice-Chair Michael: So we have cards for two speakers. The first will be Craig Allen and the second is
24 Libby Lucas. Oh, and three minutes. Craig.
25

26 Craig Allen: Members of the Transportation or Planning and Transportation Committee, my name is Craig
27 Allen. I live at 850, excuse me, 850 Webster Street. I've played at the golf course for over 50 years;
28 gotten a lot of value out of it. I'm now on the Advisory Council, Citizen's Advisory Council for the City
29 Golf and I'm also a member of the Board of Directors of the Palo Alto Golf Club. This project to totally
30 rebuild the course is moving along well as you can see from tonight's presentations and that has been
31 accomplished by a lot of hard work by our architect, by City staff, by citizens involvement, by Council, by
32 commissions, everybody has worked very hard to get to where we are today. Most of the golfers I talked
33 to believe that the end product will be a great place to play golf.
34

35 At this point in time we're going through a very necessary project approval process. However the one
36 thing that can cause the project to run into difficulties at this point is the process itself and the amount of
37 time it takes to complete it. So I urge this Commission and I urge the other City bodies, which have to
38 go on to sign on to do this plan, to do so effectively, sufficiently, and without undue delay. The plan we
39 have has a schedule. It has a growing season, it has a lot of things depending on these approvals and
40 any delays will even increase more the loss of revenue that we're going to proceed and all the other costs
41 associated with the project.
42

43 The United States Golf Association has a new program to encourage speedy play on the golf course. You
44 may have heard it if you watched the US Open. The slogan they're using is "While we are young,"
45 indicating that perhaps the need for players to move swiftly around the course for the benefit of all. So I
46 urge you to complete your work on this proposal while we are young.
47

48 One more point, there's a lot of concern about trees and we've, it was a number that jumped out of all
49 the plans. This decision regardless of the wonderful work Forrest has done on the individual trees, the
50 iconic trees and everything else, that decision was made possible, made necessary by the decision of the
51 City Council to rebuild the entire course. When you shrink the acreage you rebuild the course and you
52 realign the fairways and I know Commissioner Michael has brought three iconic trees to mind, which I
53 have all seen and played at and they are wonderful trees. I don't see those out on the course at this
54 point. However, trees mostly do not belong in the middle of fairways. And since almost every hole has
55 been moved trees which were planted to line a fairway are now not in, are now will be in a fairway
56 unless they remove them. And this is to say nothing at all of the bad trees and the other ones that are

1 out there. I think trees are not an issue we need to spend much more time on, but I did want to make
2 that point. Thank you very much for your time.

3
4 Chair Martinez: And thank you for that.

5
6 Vice-Chair Michael: So the next speaker will be Libby Lucas followed by Zach Rubin.

7
8 Libby Lucas: Hello, I'm Libby Lucas. I'm afraid I'm back on trees. I'd like to start off by saying I am pro
9 golf course, but basically I'm concerned about the cumulative effect of all the projects that you have
10 going on in the Baylands at the moment. You have the Water Quality Control Plant landscaping, which is
11 removing a lot of old shrubbery. You have an upgrade of the landscaping around the Harbormaster's
12 Station and you have the Flood Control Project. Now the Flood Control Project I can't remember the
13 exact number of trees they're removing on that bank in between the San Francisquito Creek and the golf
14 course, but basically they're not doing any mitigation for that loss. They're talking about mitigation
15 within the channel. There's also an acre and a third of Matadero Creek mitigation that's also on that
16 riverbank that they aren't bothering with too. So I think the cumulative loss of trees is a serious
17 consideration.

18
19 Palo Alto has always had a reputation of having the best wildlife biodiversity complex in the South Bay.
20 You've got your migratory Pacific flyway birds; you've got your resident birds. I would like to see
21 mitigation somewhere in the Baylands that will be useful for habitat for these species. I'm still very
22 unhappy that the Water District when they did mitigation for the Matadero Creek they took out the Black-
23 crowned Night Heron trees and they took out the Salt Marsh Yellowthroat shrubbery so those are two
24 species that were highly impacted. And so I think that you have to consider the importance of your
25 wildlife capability in the Baylands and your wildlife corridors. I think you also have a Gray Fox den in
26 there too. So please ask for your mitigation within the Baylands and have it a supplement to this EIR. I
27 think that's the only way to adjudicate this properly. Thank you so much.

28
29 Chair Martinez: Thank you.

30
31 Vice-Chair Michael: Next speaker is Zach Rubin.

32
33 Zach Rubin: Good evening gentlemen. I'm not sure if this is a dialogue or can you just tell me do I speak
34 and then I don't get any comments back. Is that how this works?

35
36 Chair Martinez: Sometimes.

37
38 Mr. Rubin: Fair enough. So I live in Palo Alto recently and I also have a company here based in Palo Alto.
39 I'm the CEO of THiNKnrg and we have offices in New York and as of recent Palo Alto. And I'm sitting
40 here listening to this and we're talking about emissions and we've done some due diligence on this
41 project because we've heard about it through the utilities. We're developing several solar projects in Palo
42 Alto.

43
44 So we looked at the car park that was existing here and I was trying to get some information whether or
45 not that would stay in place. And if it does stay in place we were, wanted to propose and I don't know if
46 it's to be proposed to the Commission or to these gentlemen, but we would be interested in building a
47 car park project which we think we can probably get somewhere between 250 to a half a megawatt of
48 solar. So you're looking at that I mean you've got to step back here you look at the trees, which I
49 understand is an important concern. When you put a half a megawatt of solar there I mean that can
50 equate to a relatively large number to make up for the displacement of the trees. But more importantly
51 we would be interested in building this for the project. We would finance it and put up that capital. All
52 we would ask is that the tenant purchase the energy back from us. So it's a suggestion, but we'd like to
53 explore it further and I'm not sure how that would go from here whether it would be a meeting with Joe
54 or you guys would recommend some kind of dialogue. Thank you.

1 Chair Martinez: Before you go, Joe do you have a card? Yes. Good luck with your project. Ok. I think
2 that's all in terms of public comment so it's going to come back to the Commission. First I would, before
3 going to Commissioner if you'd indulge me? City Attorney Silver you had some thoughts about additional
4 work on the greenhouse gas emissions part of this. Can you elaborate on that?
5

6 Ms. Silver: Yes, thank you Chair. It is unusual to find an impact in the area of greenhouse gases that is
7 just related to car trips. And I think that part of that is due to a point that was raised by Commissioner
8 Panelli that this is taking, this approach, this methodology is taking a very conservative approach by not
9 factoring in any offsetting trips. And so to the extent there is user ship data available I think that it might
10 provide a more realistic disclosure statement if that offsetting data were factored into the analysis. And I
11 think that staff can go back and if the Commission recommends it and do some further analysis on that.
12 And then there are some additional mitigations that have been proposed by Commissioner Keller. I think
13 that the staff should be directed to look at those and perhaps there could be, there are some other
14 suggestions as well. And I think that would be a worthwhile task for staff to do.
15

16 Chair Martinez: Great, thank you. Commissioner Keller.
17

18 Commissioner Keller: Thank you. So the first thing I'll start off with is that on Page 17 of the minutes of
19 the staff report, in the staff report I made a comment about wondering whether the Julia Morgan
20 building could be a gymnasium and I noticed while I share Commissioner Panelli's concern about having
21 a gymnasium in this area that was one of the things which I expected to be in the EIR process and
22 apparently is not. At least I couldn't find it. So if it's there let me know.
23

24 With respect to the issue that Vice-Chair Michael brought up about shuttles there's the Embarcadero
25 shuttle that runs down Embarcadero and that shuttle is likely to be able to displace trips after school for
26 those attending Palo Alto High School (Paly) and perhaps Jordan and perhaps some of the schools along
27 the corridor heading to the athletic fields at the Baylands. That would be acceptable, but it wouldn't be
28 very effective for going home because I don't think it runs that late depending on how, the nature of it.
29 So there perhaps expansion of hours, but it wouldn't work on the weekends. But it's most effective for
30 that direction, ok? In addition in the afternoon the shuttles tend to be more full on the inbound direction
31 from the Embarcadero shuttle from east of 101 because that shuttle was intended to transport people
32 after work to Caltrain. So the question on whether there's capacity there for that purpose.
33

34 I did some analysis which I notice that the Commissioners and staff I'm not sure if the public have copies
35 of this analysis. And there's numbers behind it but the numbers just meant to be illustrative based on
36 the numbers from Table 3.6-4 on Page 3.6-10, which is where I got my data from and I just did analysis
37 on percentages of that. So the first question is about transplanting trees as many as possible and I'm
38 wondering whether the trees could also be transplanted to Bixby Park to part of it that's being reclaimed
39 from the dump. And that a lot of that is kind of denuded and it seems to be that transplanting the trees
40 to Bixby Park might be a suitable place for them and not as far to transport them to somewhere else and
41 they might be some value. I realize that some of the trees have value. Some of them that are being
42 taken out are good trees, some of them are not viable trees, but I think that transplanting trees as
43 opposed to cutting them down it seems to be a strategy that should be considered. I don't know if you
44 want to address the comments one by one or if you want me to address all of them.
45

46 Mr. De Geus: I would say, I might ask Forrest to comment on this, but also in the audience our Urban
47 Forester Walter Passmore is here and Peter Jensen our Landscape Architect is here. They might want to
48 comment on the idea of transplanting trees.
49

50 Commissioner Keller: Sure. Maybe we should address this comment before I go on to the next one.
51 Thank you.
52

53 Walter Passmore, Urban Forester – Public Works: Good Evening Commissioners, Walter Passmore, Urban
54 Forester for City of Palo Alto. In regard to transplanting trees there was some early discussion in the
55 design process about doing precisely that. Bixby Park would obviously be a close location. It would be a
56 good candidate for transplanting trees. However, when we asked a consultant to evaluate the potential

1 to have trees survive the transplant process and reestablish into the new landscape we were given a very
2 low possibility of the trees that are currently on the golf course being good candidates for that process.
3 When trees are transplanted about 75 to 90 percent of the root system is severed and it takes large trees
4 a very long time to recover from the transplant shock. In addition the trees are not actively transpiring
5 so the environmental benefits that they produce following transplanting are very low in comparison to the
6 amount of maintenance that we have to do to help them recover from this very serious surgery of
7 removing so much of their root system. So we did evaluate that. We think that the potential to
8 transplant trees and have them thrive in a new location is not very good. It doesn't mean we couldn't
9 continue to evaluate that, but at this point we don't think that's a very efficient option for us.

10
11 One additional point since Bixby Park was brought up. We did have conversations at last night's open
12 house meeting with members of the public and we are very receptive to planting new trees at the Bixby
13 Park location. We have broad staff support and also support from some members of the community that
14 are very interested in participating in that. So it's likely that we can plant new trees at that location, but I
15 would say unlikely for us to transplant there.

16
17 Commissioner Keller: Thank you. So to the extent that that could be put in the, as a response to this
18 comment in the EIR that would be helpful. On the second comment I'm going to skip to my, skip the
19 second comment and go back to it and then talk about my third comment, which is that I understand
20 that the City of Palo Alto is establishing carbon neutral electricity. And therefore assuming that takes
21 place by 2015 when the project conditions are considered then that should eliminate the electricity
22 greenhouse gases of 122.18 metric tons per year. And so that would reduce the amount of impact there.
23 Similarly if natural gas were to be replaced, that usage were to be replaced by electricity then, which
24 would also be carbon neutral that would reduce 35.47 metric tons and so that would be also a fair
25 amount of savings considering that the total amount of excess above threshold is about 750 metric tons
26 per year.

27
28 The last thing I'm going to bring up in this regard is the issue of the greenhouse gases from traffic. And
29 I'm going to be a little expansive about some of the issues here because there's actually a lot of things
30 that fit in together. So firstly to address the issues that were brought up by Commissioner Panelli I think
31 that there is potential for displacement of other trips to this location. However, that displacement is more
32 likely to take place if there were a surplus of playing fields. Other cities that could easily locate here and
33 I think that there's actually a shortage of at least the Got Space people said 10 years ago when they put
34 the fields in Mayfield that there's a distinct shortage in Palo Alto as well as throughout the surrounding
35 community. So while it's possible that some playing fields, playing field use might be relocated from
36 other cities to here that should also be considered whether some of that relocation might include people
37 who are off, away from Palo Alto traveling to Palo Alto for those playing field replacements. So it could
38 be a wash either way in terms of the amount of displaced travel going from other cities and more travel
39 coming from other cities either way.

40
41 So it's likely that the playing field use overall will increase because of the playing fields and it's likely
42 there will be increased trips, but whether the increased trips are offset is a hard question to determine.
43 And also the issue is that there is a priority for Palo Alto as I understand and correct me if I'm wrong,
44 there's a priority for people from Palo Alto using our fields, but there are people outside of Palo Alto that
45 are also using our fields and considering the shortage of playing field space when you add more fields
46 that may be likely to increase. Is that analysis reasonable?

47
48 Mr. De Geus: Yeah, that's correct. And we do give priority access to our athletic fields to Palo Alto
49 residents and those groups that have 50 percent or more Palo Alto residents in their organization. And I
50 would add that the, it is true that we don't have enough athletic fields to meet the demand for all of the
51 sports enthusiasts that we have particularly in the adult soccer area.

52
53 Commissioner Keller: And I assume that that's not only true about Palo Alto, that's also true about the
54 surrounding communities?

55
56 Mr. De Geus: Correct.

1
2 Commissioner Keller: Thank you. I think that Commissioner Panelli would like to add and I'd like to
3 temporarily cede him the floor if he wants.
4
5 Chair Martinez: I don't think you have that power.
6
7 Commissioner Keller: Ok.
8
9 Chair Martinez: Commissioner Panelli, yes. Follow up?
10
11 Commissioner Panelli: One of the things I just like to add though is that a significant proportion of the
12 non-Palo Altoans who use Palo Alto playing fields actually work in Palo Alto. And so one of the reasons
13 that they want to recreate in Palo Alto is because it's convenient in the sense that they can leave work for
14 example on Page Mill, go play soccer or whatever sport at Mayfield and then head home.
15
16 Chair Martinez: Commissioner Keller, yes.
17
18 Commissioner Keller: Yes so continuing. So I think it's clear that the degree to which there is an increase
19 in greenhouse gases above or below the calculated amount is actually a complicated question. And I'm
20 not sure how well the analysis, whether there's sufficient data to do that analysis. But what's interesting
21 to me is that we don't have significant traffic impacts, but we have significant greenhouse gas impacts.
22 And perhaps that's because our traffic impact thresholds are too high and they are higher in Palo Alto
23 compared to the ones in Menlo Park and San Mateo County so maybe there's a disparity there. And that
24 came up in Stanford. There are a lot of impacts in Stanford in terms of traffic in Menlo Park and much
25 fewer of them in Palo Alto just because our thresholds are that much higher.
26
27 That being said if we were to install electric vehicle charger either on this, at the golf course or the
28 playing fields and or offsite because for example the mitigation for removal of trees is actually an offsite
29 mitigation, those trees being replaced. Then that could reduce greenhouse gases from those vehicles.
30 And so I've done some calculation here. They are not necessarily, they are based on assumptions and I
31 played around with the numbers to show that you can actually achieve a reduction in greenhouse gases
32 from these various measures to be below the amount, below the threshold of significant so that it would
33 be mitigated.
34
35 Interestingly enough brought up by the speaker about the solar panels there is a program that you're
36 probably aware of in terms of feed-in tariff for buying that electricity. And so Palo Alto has a program for
37 that. There's also the potential for when you put in those solar panels putting in electric vehicle chargers
38 with them so that it combines the infrastructure that's needed for both in some useful way. So I would
39 encourage considering that. But I think that, to summarize I think this first of all is interesting in terms of
40 I don't think that there have been that many CEQA analyses with greenhouse gases that have significant
41 impacts. I don't know how many there have been so far because this is in some sense a moving target
42 with the State. And if this project moves forward with electric vehicle and plug in hybrid mitigation for
43 greenhouse gases that could be a first. We'd have to figure out whether that is and I think that that
44 would be an interesting precedent for Palo Alto to set for our community and surrounding communities
45 and for future projects. Thank you.
46
47 Chair Martinez: Ok. I'd like to change course a little bit and talk about the aesthetic section if we can. I
48 understand that the gymnasium that's proposed is one of the aesthetic items that can't be mitigated,
49 which brings us back to Commissioner Panelli's point that perhaps this suggests that one way to mitigate
50 it is not for it to be there. Yeah, go ahead.
51
52 Ms. Trisal: It's the lighting impact which is unavoidable and significant, not the gymnasium. It's the
53 athletic field lighting.
54
55 Chair Martinez: I thought I read somewhere that really the height of the building itself was an aesthetic
56 issue?

1
2 Ms. Trisal: It is an issue but not a significant and unavoidable issue because it's still going through site
3 and design review. But the significant and unavoidable issue is due to the lighting.
4

5 Chair Martinez: Ok. Well from where I sit the significant and unavoidable is the building itself. So I'm
6 going to side with Commissioner Panelli that in our comments and if this should come back to us we
7 don't want to see that building in that location for another reason and that is in the urban planning
8 aspects you may want to rebuke this as well, but I don't think that the environmental document
9 adequately addresses issues of our Comprehensive Plan. For example, there's an issue in our Community
10 Services Element that, a policy that states that we locate community facilities in neighborhoods, near
11 transit, within walking distance. And that location isn't very friendly for that. So in my comments I
12 would like staff and it's not usual for you to do this because we want to look at ways in which we can
13 support projects, and I understand that, but really take a hard look at ways in which this project, I mean
14 the whole project, even the golf course isn't really supported by our Comprehensive Plan. Because I
15 don't think you have been critical enough in that area.
16

17 And in that regard and I don't know whether this is aesthetics or this is urban planning section if you
18 looked at our current golf course and when it was built it represents a time I called it being naïve about
19 this stuff the golden age of golf, but I was corrected. The 50's is the golden age of baseball so I just
20 made an extension that also it must be golf, but be that as it may it was built at the time that Edgewood
21 Plaza was built. They were sort of going on at the same time. And if we were talking about tearing
22 down Edgewood Plaza, which I understand part of it was accidentally torn down, that would be a
23 significant impact. So I don't really see and I'm not sure if my point is clear or not so I'll slow down; that
24 the replacement of an existing historic, I know it's not a landmark, but I'm using it with a little "h" or the
25 "h" is silent, historic golf course has been addressed in the environmental document. So my, or
26 adequately addressed. So I'm not saying that this is the greatest golf course in our land, but as an
27 aesthetic issue or a community value it hasn't been addressed what replacing this golf course with a new
28 modern environmentally correct golf course what that, how that impact has been addressed. There may
29 be photographs of famous people playing in our older golf course or pictures or some documentary or
30 something of that nature, but it doesn't seem to me we've mitigated losing a piece of our history. So I'd
31 like that to be included when this comes back to us. And I understand Vice-Chair is going to make a
32 Motion.
33

34 MOTION
35

36 Vice-Chair Michael: So with the understanding that the Environmental Impact Report process and the
37 next steps slide will be continuing on a separate path I wanted to make a Motion with respect to site and
38 design review. That the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) would recommend that the City
39 Council approve the project based upon the findings and the conditions in the record of land use action.
40

41 SECOND
42

43 Chair Martinez: Ok, we have a Motion to approve site and design. Do we have a second? Yes, second by
44 Commissioner Panelli. Ok, comments on this issue or Commissioners? Commissioner? Oh, yes.
45

46 Commissioner King: So as we move into discussion of that Motion does that preclude questions of staff?
47

48 Chair Martinez: Not at all.
49

50 Commissioner King: Then I have questions of staff.
51

52 Chair Martinez: Ok.
53

54 Commissioner King: If I may. Let's see. And I will have a question for Mr. Passmore a couple of
55 questions down so just to let you know that I'll be asking. So regarding the fields and gym timing is that
56 a known, did I miss that? Is that a known quantity when that might be coming back?

1
2 Mr. De Geus: It's unknown at this time and there's no funding for that project at this time.
3

4 Commissioner King: Ok so it's down the road. Got it. Ok. And I'll just as a counterpoint and my bias is I
5 love basketball and coach basketball and there's a shortage of gym space. I don't know if that's the right
6 place, but I know there are very few places. Just as we find with Below Market Rate (BMR) housing,
7 housing, you name it, there just aren't a lot of places to put things that large. You know the last one
8 that was built I believe was the one on Fabian right off Bayshore there by the freeway, which isn't an
9 ideal location either, but has been successful. In any event that's years down the road so I'm done with
10 that part.
11

12 Second then regarding so the EIR potentially could address the impact of this project on climate change,
13 but I don't think anyone discussed the impact of climate change on this project. So if we are to see a
14 three, whatever we're potentially proposing or expecting a three foot sea level rise what would be the
15 impacts on this on the golf course? Obviously we've got the airport down there as well that's at the same
16 elevation I assume so have we studied that at all? Do we?
17

18 Mr. Teresi: Well, it's kind of being partially handled by the JPA's Flood Control Project. That project is
19 being designed in a way to accommodate future sea level rise so the improvements to be made along the
20 levy of the creek are going to prevent the creek from flooding the golf course even accounting for the
21 future sea level rise. Now what's not accounted for is the possibility of tidal flooding from the bay as sea
22 level rise occurs. The golf course is also in that flood plain and that is in the process of being addressed
23 at the regional level but is not yet addressed so I would say that over time that the risk of tidal flooding
24 at the golf course is going to increase unless subsequent flood control projects that improve the bay front
25 levies are implemented in the future.
26

27 Commissioner King: Ok and of course my concern is we spent all this money, do all this stuff and then
28 bad things happen. I assume flooding with salt water on the course would be fairly catastrophic to the
29 course? Would that be our belief? To the health of the flora and fauna?
30

31 Mr. Teresi: Well there would likely be damage, but I guess I would argue that a type of development like
32 the golf course being on the less intensive side is a better use of that land as far as flood risk then
33 putting say homes or offices there. And certainly you wouldn't have the same risk of loss of life or any of
34 those kinds of things with a more passive use such as a golf course.
35

36 Commissioner King: Ok. Thank you. And then let's see and I also echo Commissioner Panelli's
37 questioning of the overall value of the greenhouse gas emissions again because we don't know as
38 addressed by Commissioner Keller as well that we don't know and I think it shows really how sometimes
39 through the legal system, in this case the CEQA or even just the environmental community grabbing onto
40 one fact that oh, this is going to increase greenhouse gases in the specific project might actually be doing
41 the exact opposite. And again we don't know if kids are really sitting at home and not going to go
42 anywhere versus and they're now creating trips. So anyway I echo that concern that sometimes trees
43 are lost for the forest.
44

45 And the other question I had, this is for Mr. Passmore or anyone on staff who might know the answer.
46 So what percentage of the trees on the golf course were there before the golf course and what
47 percentage were planted for the golf course?
48

49 Mr. Passmore: We did not investigate that. Ok, Rob has it. Great. Guess this is for Rob.
50

51 Mr. Teresi: We'd been asked about that and so I pulled up an image from Google Earth from 1948. The
52 course was built in 1956 and basically the golf course is this area right here.
53

54 Commissioner King: That bare spot.
55

56 Mr. Teresi: So there's not a single tree that existed at that time.

1
2 Commissioner King: Ok, and then the other question I had though is then regarding the, and obviously
3 we all know the bay had been filled and altered over time. What is, are there trees that would be native
4 to that habitat out there?
5

6 Mr. Passmore: Yes, there would be few trees generally occurring along waterways. So San Francisquito
7 Creek would have transported seeds in times of flood and deposited those seeds and some trees would
8 become established in the Baylands environment. Generally these would be trees washing out of the
9 Foothills, the coast live oak, it is represented in the plant palate right now could have been one of the
10 trees that would naturally occur there with or without any human influence as are the other trees picked
11 in the plant palate. Something that's not represented in the plant palate that would have likely occurred
12 there is our native willow trees and probably some native cottonwood trees. These are very common
13 creek side species that are not represented in the current plant palate, but design decisions were made
14 not to include every tree that could have potentially occurred in that Baylands environment.
15

16 Commissioner King: Ok and so when there was a comment made that it will be denuded of trees you
17 could also say or it's going to return to its native state other than along the waterways. It's actually
18 being, if you were to take all the trees out that's really its native state.
19

20 Mr. Passmore: Well I said the trees would be rare and so when these flood occurrences happened the
21 seeds would be distributed over the landscape and where they had adequate soil conditions and sunlight
22 and water conditions to become established you would have rare trees dotted throughout the landscape.
23 The density would be heavier along the waterways.
24

25 Commissioner King: Thanks. And then, so I guess then my question would be as far as mitigation. I
26 think it's a great idea. I think mitigation whether it's for loss of heritage trees or other trees it's a great
27 idea to then have a mitigation to plant somewhere else. But if we're talking about planting at Bixby Park,
28 which of course is not a very natural habitat in that it's a former refuse dump, but if we're and I think if I
29 remember correctly there was some of this discussion out at Bayfront Park I believe in Menlo Park that
30 there was discussion of planting trees there and there were people who were proponents of not doing
31 that because it introduces the nonnative species to the environment of the area. so I guess I would I
32 don't propose to be the guy to decide, but I would express some concern that we're going to create
33 problems by planting trees in Bixby Park when there would not normally be many trees.
34

35 Mr. Passmore: Right and we certainly want to simulate natural conditions as closely as possible. So trees
36 being planted at Bixby Park are only a part of the overall mitigation strategy. What we're proposing is
37 really a hybrid of onsite mitigation, near site mitigation, and offsite mitigation to reach this goal of a total
38 canopy replacement. And I think all of the people that have been involved have worked very hard to
39 plant trees as appropriate to the location. And so we certainly do not want to rely exclusively on any one
40 location to meet our mitigation goal.
41

42 Commissioner King: Thanks and then last question is you had mentioned about the transplant how we
43 didn't think that was viable. So when you see for instance, at Stanford I think I've seen trees in huge
44 boxes. And so were they dug up from someplace or were they grown in those huge boxes and therefore
45 the root systems are more intact?
46

47 Mr. Passmore: They were established on the Stanford campus. They were dug from the site that they
48 were located, temporarily staged in the boxes until they're transplanted into a new location.
49

50 Commissioner King: Ok. Thank you.
51

52 Chair Martinez: Ok. Back to the Motion. Any questions, comment? Commissioner Alcheck.
53

54 Commissioner Alcheck: I would just like to suggest that I think the, that we can feel comfortable, I would
55 like to suggest that I feel comfortable that this has met the objectives of our site and design review. I
56 think that this is a unique opportunity to sort of reinvest and because of the levy, the flood protection

1 project and I think that we've demonstrated that the, I'll just go through the objectives that the
2 construction operation will be orderly and harmonious and compatible with the potential and existing
3 uses, which it's already a golf course so I think that we're ok there. I think this is a very desirable
4 investment. I think that we're enhancing the educational opportunities here where there were sort of no
5 I guess educational opportunities and we're making them. And I think that the notion that we're
6 ensuring the sound principles environmental design ecological balance are being observed I think we're
7 doing that too because again we're literally talking about an existing golf course where we're I think
8 creating a very appealing solution to the changes that are sort of being forced upon this site. And then
9 lastly it's in accordance with the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan. I think that's also sort of very clear.

10
11 So I'm excited to support the recommendation or the approval of the land use plan, the record of land
12 use action and I sort of look forward to this project moving with no unnecessary delay. I think what was
13 it? "While we're young", Is that it? I look forward to playing this while I'm still young. I think I could be
14 more enthusiastic if there was some quid pro quo, maybe a clutch tee time on every fourth Saturday, no.
15 I'm only kidding. I think this is a, I think this is fabulous. You guys put a tremendous amount of effort
16 into this analysis and I think even for us, at least myself with the achievement of not only the objectives
17 that this project set out for itself, which are impressive alone. I mean how many golf course projects set
18 out to enhance wildlife habitats and improve wetlands and create an interesting course that challenges
19 players? So I think the objectives are great. I think we've met them. And I think we should move this
20 on.

21
22 Chair Martinez: Thank you. Well, despite what I said (interrupted)

23
24 Commissioner Alcheck: Can I say one more thing? Last comment.

25
26 Chair Martinez: You want to cut me off, Commissioner?

27
28 Commissioner Alcheck: Sorry. I also want to add that I'm not, I like the idea of us having an actual
29 proposal regarding a design for the site regarding the gymnasium. I'd rather us not spend too much time
30 focusing on the pros and cons of that until some project is in front of us because we may be impressed
31 with that at that time and I wouldn't discourage that sort of thinking in the future. That's it.

32
33 **Vote**

34
35 Chair Martinez: Good. I'm glad you said that so I can talk to the contrary. I, despite what I kind of
36 indicated earlier I really support the golf course project. I think it's going to be beautiful. My main
37 concern about that I've addressed that in that I wish it could have more public access. That this big,
38 beautiful, natural place on the bay for only a few people that play golf is a little it doesn't quite reach sort
39 of the impact in terms of the benefits to all our community that something like this could have. I know
40 that Rob and Greg Betts are actively trying, will pursue making this more accessible to the public. The
41 ideas that our golf course consultant suggested for linking the flood control project trails to the area
42 around the golf clubhouse I think are great and I want to recommend that you pursue that in exchange
43 for our support for this.

44
45 But that gymnasium project... the playing fields really we have no other place to put them because of the
46 expanse of land that they require. But there are many sites within the City that I could think of that are
47 near Caltrain, that are near public transit, that are more central to the City that are in compliance, that
48 our Comprehensive Plan really supports, that we should be looking for a location closer to where children
49 and families go for basketball or any other type of indoor sports. So I support the project and I want it
50 to go forward so we can all be out there watching the Vice-Chair play golf on Saturday.

51
52 So with that let's call for the vote. Those in favor of the Motion on site and design of the golf course, aye
53 (Aye). The Motion passes unanimously.

54
55 **Motion Passed** (6-0, Commissioner Tanaka absent)

1 Chair Martinez: Thank you all. Thanks to our wonderful consultants too. I really learned a lot. Ok,
2 moving on. Let's take like two minutes to allow everybody to reorganize. Yes.

3
4 Mr. Teresi: Could I ask a question? I just wanted to get some more clarity on where you wanted to go
5 with the second question about the Environmental Impact Report. I'm not clear (interrupted)

6
7 Chair Martinez: Well, we had discussed, thank you for that, it coming back to us on July 31st with an
8 extended comment period. There are areas of that that we haven't discussed at all and I'd like the
9 Commissioners to hold onto the environmental document and have another a second session to ask
10 further questions, provide additional comments on that and also for staff to come back with what they've
11 promised us on greenhouse gases and response to some of our suggestions. And Commissioner Keller,
12 sorry I didn't do this before.

13
14 Commissioner Keller: That's right. So firstly I also expressed the skepticism about the gym being there.
15 And before, I think we need a, we can ask the City Attorney do we need a Motion to continue the
16 deliberation of the EIR?

17
18 Ms. Silver: Yeah it would be good and then if you want to hold the public hearing open... do we have a
19 date for this?

20
21 Mr. Akin: Yeah, the scheduled date for the Planning Commission meeting is July 31st. I want to work
22 with you though in that if you need an earlier date of July 24th we have that extra Wednesday that we
23 could move a meeting if it's absolutely necessary. So that's something we can consider if we don't want
24 to continue to a date specific.

25
26 Commissioner Keller: Ok. So may I?

27
28 Chair Martinez: Yes, continue.

29
30 MOTION

31
32 Commissioner Keller: Thank you. So one of the things, I'd like two things. It looks to me if you look at
33 Figure 2-7A, which is the proposed athletic center expansion, it's hard for me to actually tell, but if you
34 rotate, if you remove the gym and rotate Field 3 in a perpendicular to its current direction it may or may
35 not be possible to place two playing fields next to each other in that over where the gym is and over part
36 of the parking lot. I don't know. Worthwhile doing the geometry, but I think that may be something
37 worth being explored; if we can get six playing fields as opposed to five playing fields and a gym that
38 may be worthwhile. And I don't know the geometry works or not, but it's worthwhile exploring.

39
40 And with that I will make a Motion that we continue the comments on the Draft Environmental Impact
41 Report for a date uncertain.

42
43 SECOND

44
45 Chair Martinez: We have a Motion by Commissioner Keller and two seconds.

46
47 Commissioner Keller: I don't think I need to speak further to the comment other than (interrupted)

48
49 Chair Martinez: And it's also to hold the public hearing open for that date. Is that how you said it? The
50 public comment?

51
52 Ms. Silver: Well there are two issues. One is certainly we can hold the public hearing open to a date
53 uncertain. We'll have to reagendaize that so that the public knows when the date is actually scheduled.
54 The second question is whether you want to extend the comment period for the EIR for everyone to July
55 31st or do you want the comment period to end as previously scheduled, but conduct a further Planning
56 Commission hearing and obtain comments at that hearing after the comment period has formally

1 expired?

2
3 Commissioner Keller: So may I?

4
5 Chair Martinez: Well let me just weigh in a bit. So by not extending the public comment period then it's
6 not reflected in the final EIR. Is that not correct?

7
8 Ms. Silver: What that would mean is that the, that we wouldn't accept comments from members of the
9 public outside of the public hearing. They wouldn't be able to submit additional comments during that, I
10 don't know, two week period or something like that. But they could come to the hearing and submit
11 comments at that time and we would respond.

12
13 Chair Martinez: Commissioner Keller, yes.

14
15 Commissioner Keller: So firstly I think it's the prerogative of the Chair as to whether to hold the public
16 hearing open or not, so I'm not going to make that part of the Motion. The second thing is I think that
17 since we don't have a date certain for when we're expanding this to I would just simply like to say that I
18 would recommend that in the process of publicizing when our next meeting, when the meeting is that we
19 will cover this that we will also publicize extending the public comment period to the day after that
20 meeting. But basically that, I don't think it's the place, I'm not sure if it's the place of the Planning
21 Commission to recommend that extension. But anyway.

22
23 Mr. Aknin: Thank you Commissioner Keller. I just leaned over to the City Attorney and said the same
24 thing. I think it would just be cleaner that once we pick a Planning Commission date that we just extend
25 the public comment period to that date. That way everyone has the same time to comment.

26
27 Commissioner Keller: Yeah and the only reason I was suggesting it to be the next day is because usually
28 it's 5:00 p.m. on that day and so the next day would make that cleaner. So I'm not going to make that
29 part of the Motion, just part of the commentary. Thank you.

30
31 **VOTE**

32
33 Chair Martinez: Ok any comments, question on that? Ok. So we have a Motion on the floor and two
34 seconds. Let's vote on the Motion. Those in favor say aye (Aye). Motion passes unanimously with
35 Commissioner Tanaka absent.

36
37 **MOTION PASSED** (6-0, Commissioner Tanaka absent)

38
39 Chair Martinez: Yes?

40
41 Mr. De Geus: Just a last comment from me. If anyone's interested in going to visit the golf course and
42 going out and talking to some of the golfers it's actually a really unique and amazing place and we get,
43 it's not uncommon that we'll have 200 to 300 golfers a day and I'd be happy to give all of you a tour if
44 you want to call me.

45
46 Chair Martinez: And a lesson, please. Thank you Rob, we'll take you up on it, one at a time. Ok,
47 anything else on this item? So we will ok. Commissioner King?

48
49 Commissioner King: One thing maybe you could consider as far as the public access is obviously
50 pedestrians and golf balls aren't a great match, but I know, I can't remember what time the golfing is cut
51 off in the evenings. I don't know if it's totally dark, but maybe you could consider some twilight ranger
52 led twilight hikes on the golf course to provide that public access. Because I agree it would, it is a
53 shortcoming of the structure that the public can't get out there. So either some sort of creative working
54 around the golf schedule. Thanks.

55
56 Chair Martinez: Nice idea. Thank you.

1 **Commission Action:** Commission approved staff's recommendation for Council approval of the projects
2 site and design based upon the findings and conditions with a subsequent follow up to the Draft EIR to
3 date uncertain. Motion for recommendation of site and design by Vice-Chair Michael, second by
4 Commissioner Panelli (6-0, Commissioner Tanaka absent), Motion to move Draft DEIR to date uncertain
5 by Commissioner Keller, second by Commissioner King (6-0, Commissioner Tanaka absent).