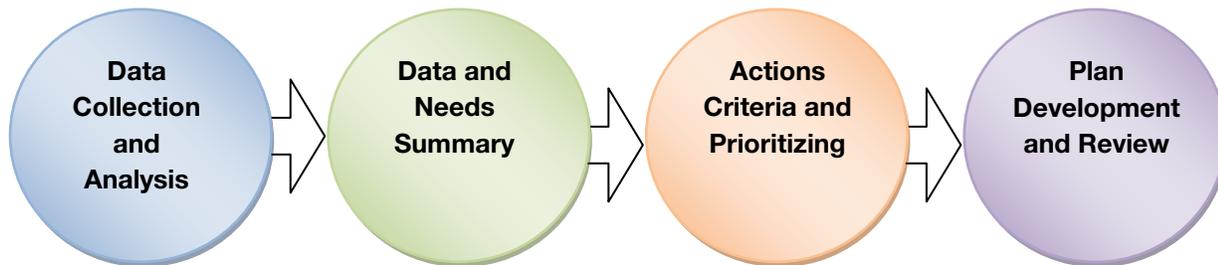## DATA AND NEEDS SUMMARY 4/22/15

In response to the Park and Recreation Commission comments, the planning team is adjusting the schedule and redirecting efforts to build a strong link between the data (developed within and outside of this planning process), the needs (which are the results of the analysis process when taken in whole) and the potential actions before moving to recommendations and the plan. This step will build a bridge between tasks 3, 4 and 5 as part of the initial steps of developing recommendations in task 6. Following PRC feedback on this concept, the planning team will populate the matrix using the data described in the criteria ahead of the PRC's annual retreat, where MIG will facilitate a working session with the PRC to transition from needs to strategic directions. This process is diagramed in Figure 1 on the next page. To support this process, City staff has created a data binder for each Park and Recreation Commission member to collect all of the data and analysis in one place, for use as a reference during plan development and in coming years.

The attached model matrix provides a structure to synthesize and present findings on the city's parks, facilities and programs based on the data collected in the PTOSR process, community input and the team's observations and professional judgment, and to tie that information to policy questions, alternatives and recommendations.

The rows of this spreadsheet are labeled with the elements of the Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation system (Column A) that will be scored or summarized according to a series of evaluation measures (Row 1). For each evaluation measure, we list the sources of data (Row 2, indicating the reference number for each item in the data binder) for our assessment and a ranking scale (Row 3) based on the criteria described below. The criteria will emphasize quantitative data, backed up with the details in the data binder and related reports. The matrix is intended to document and organize data and information in a manner that directly leads to our summary of need findings (Column L).

Figure 1: Data to Recommendations Diagram
The diagram below illustrates how all of the components fit together, leading to the adopted plan. The "Data and Needs Summary" is the additional step, responding to the PRC's request for further consideration of the available data.

Data Collection and Analysis → **Data and Needs Summary** → **Actions Criteria and Prioritizing** → **Plan Development and Review**

- **Existing system**
- **Demographics**
- **Intercepts**
- **Stakeholder Meeting #1**
- **Planning Environment**
- **Sustainability Review**
- **Program Review and Analysis**
- **Revenue Analysis**
- **Physical Inventory**
- **Geographic Analysis**
- **Mapita Results**
- **Workshops**
- **PRC Input and Review**

- **Data and Needs Summary Matrix**
- **Criteria Development**
- **Data Binders**
- **PRC Input and Review**

- **Developing Strategic Directions**
- **Recommendations**
- **PRC Input and Review**
- **Prioritization Exercise**
- **Prioritization Workshop**
- **PRC Prioritization**

- **Draft Plan**
- **PRC Input and Review**
- **Boards and Commissions Review**
- **City Council Update**
- **PRC Input and Review**
- **PRC Recommendation**
- **City Council Hearing and**

A second sheet (Questions) will be completed once the evaluation and documentation in sheet 1 is complete. For each element a follow-up step will present a question to be addressed by the strategic direction of this plan (e.g. should the City add additional, single purpose facilities or ensure that all new facilities support a variety of activities?). Choices will be scored according to a second set of criteria related to capital and operations costs and feasibility within the constraints of the system.

Elements of the PTOSR System

The Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation (PTOSR) Master Plan covers the broad and varied lands, facilities and services provided by the City of Palo Alto. In addition there are a number of related program providers within Community Services who have important interactions with Recreation Services facilities and programs. There are three major elements (each with several components) of the PTOSR Master Plan. The elements form the largest breakdown of this system and include:

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

This proposed breakdown of the elements is a way of looking at the components and systems within the overarching PTOSR system. It is also intended as a framework for organizing plan recommendations as they are developed.

Element: Parks, Trails and Open Spaces

Palo Alto deliberately chose not to classify its parks into traditional categories, recognizing that all of the parks in Palo Alto serve multiple functions. In response, the PTOSR Master Plan process was designed to elicit (though public engagement) the functions and activities the community identifies as essential to provide throughout the system. Providing access to these activities within distances that people are willing to walk or bike is critical to the successful Palo Alto park system.

The components of the Parks, Trails and Open Space element of the system have been broken down first to understand the distribution of park sites in relation to walkability and equity. The next set of components includes essential activities or experiences as identified by Palo Alto residents. The final set of components includes key amenities that support the park experience.

- **Walkability and Equity of Park and Preserve Access:** The distribution of the lands in the park and preserve system and the distance from users homes to the park along the street and trail network.
- **Essential Activity Access: Play for Children:** Activity covering all environments designed for children's play; currently this includes developed playgrounds but this may be expanded in the future.
- **Essential Activity Access: Exercise and Fitness:** This activity set is focused on features users look for to get exercise and stay healthy.
- **Essential Activity Access: Throw/Catch/Shoot/Kick/Hit:** This activity includes playing games that require significant room to play, including, but not limited to a formal field, a sport court or an open area usable for a pick-up game.
- **Essential Activity Access: Gather Together:** This activity includes all the ways of bringing people together and is supported by the facilities to host a picnic or event.
- **Essential Activity Access: Relax and Enjoy the Outdoors:** This activity captures general enjoyment of a park (such as sitting or relaxing) and is supported at most parks with the exception of spaces that are actively programmed 100% of the time.
- **Experience Nature:** An important activity noted by the community across several input methods, using all senses to be a part of or learn about a natural environment.
- **Preservation of Nature:** The mix of activities that protect and restore natural elements in the system (in preserves and elsewhere) balances the impacts of use and developed spaces in the system.
- **Trail Connections:** The linkages between parks and other destinations.
- **Availability of restrooms:** A critical component of the enjoyment of the park experience according to participants in this process.
- **Site amenities and experience:** Other elements of the comfort and quality of a park, as identified by the community, including seating, access to drinking water, etc.
- **Universal Accessibility:** Ensuring through design and programming that the recreation experiences are available to all, regardless of physical or mental ability.

Element: Recreation Facilities

The recreation facilities in the system create some of the more specialized opportunities for sports, play, socializing and programming. The complete Palo Alto park system will include many more facilities than those discussed here. The components called out below are anticipated to be

found in multiple locations across the community or are particularly "big ticket" items.

- **Off-Leash Dog Areas**
- **Community Gardens**
- **Basketball Courts**
- **Tennis Courts**
- **Rectangular Sports Fields: all sizes of soccer, football, lacrosse, rugby and other similar fields.**
- **Diamond Sports Fields: all sizes of baseball and softball fields.**
- **Gymnasiums**
- **Swimming Pools: while only one pool facility is provided (at Rinconada Park) this category accounts for other potential types of pools as well.**
- **Recreation Centers: Lucie Stern, Mitchell Park, Cubberley**
- **Special Purpose Buildings in Parks: Foothills Nature Interpretive Center, Arastradero Preserve Gateway, Lucy Evans Baylands Nature Interpretive Center**
- **Other Indoor Program Facilities: Art Center, Libraries, Junior Museum and Zoo, etc.**
- **Picnic shelters**

Element: Recreation Programs

The Recreation Programs element includes all of the programs, classes and special events coordinated by Recreation Services. The components of this element follow the categorization used by Recreation Services, to allow the analysis to match up to the data reported by the division.

- **Adult Aquatics**
- **Adult Special Interest Classes**
- **Adult Sports**
- **Day Camps**
- **Intervention/Special Needs**
- **Middle School Athletics**
- **Senior Programs**
- **Special Events**
- **Therapeutic Recreation**
- **Youth and Teen Aquatics**
- **Youth and Teen Programs**
- **Youth and Teen Special Interest Classes**
- **Youth and Teen Sports Camps**

Criteria

In order to develop a reference that can summarize a wide variety of data points, both quantitative and qualitative, the following criteria are proposed to describe how the different elements of the system compare across topics. Each criteria with available quantitative data will have the levels on the applicable scale (such as high, medium, low) defined by providing the relevant data point and the thresholds at which an element goes from low to medium and from medium to high. Some of these thresholds remain to be developed based on available data and PRC input.

Current Service/Inventory (Column C)

This column summarizes existing parks, facilities and programs, noting the number of facilities or sites, number of programs offered and/or number of users or participants. No criteria are proposed or recommended. This column is intended to summarize the status of the component today.

Level of Control (Column D)

Some parks and recreation facilities are owned, programmed and maintained by the City of Palo Alto's Recreation Services. In other cases, Recreation Services uses facilities owned or managed by different City divisions/departments or non-City entities. These varying levels of ownership and management mean that Recreation Services has varying levels of control over programming and/or the physical condition of the facility. Sea level rise is also factored into the measurement of control, because like facilities with short-term leases, those that are likely to be compromised by sea level rise may not be high priorities for major investment.

The recommended criteria to rate the level of control are as follows:
- **High = Recreation Services owns and maintains property or infrastructure, property has low risk of impacts due to sea level rise (SLR)**
- **Medium = Recreation Services has a long term lease on property or agreement for programming, maintains or has responsibility for reservations, property has low risk of impact due to SLR, mix of levels of controls, programming is provided by outside partners primarily in Palo Alto controlled facilities**
- **Low = Recreation Services lease ends within 5 years, no maintenance or responsibility for reservations, property has risk of impact due to SLR, programming is provided by outside partners primarily in private facilities**

Geographic Analysis (Column E)

The geographic data was collected through extensive GIS analysis, on-site evaluations, the Mapita survey and a program analysis. Due to the number of different data points and the different factors that are important for different park system components, the Geographic Analysis column includes a summarized statement of:

- Distribution across the city
- Major barriers or transportation network access issues
- Proximity to or distance from schools, cultural centers or other relevant landmarks

Capacity/Bookings (Column F)

The capacity of Palo Alto's facilities and programs has been evaluated against the demand taking into account reservations, program registrations/waitlists and observations by staff and the planning team. This column indicates the outcome of this evaluation.

Capacity evaluation criteria are:

- Below capacity = facility or program has available time or space consistently, including during peak use times; more than 33% of classes not meeting minimums.
- At capacity = no additional space/time in peak hours of use, some available off-peak time; less than 33% not meeting minimums, up to 33% full or waitlisted.
- Over capacity = nearly all offered times and facilities are booked or used, whether at peak or off-peak times; more than 33% full or waitlisted, less than 10% of classes scheduled are cancelled.

Perception of Quality (Column G)

The perceived quality of various aspects of Palo Alto Parks System has been evaluated by Palo Alto community members and the planning team throughout the PTOSR planning process. The score in this column is derived from the planning team's site evaluations, customer satisfaction survey data and ratings from Mapita (as available).

- High = No deficiencies or issues noted; positive public input; Mapita score over 75
- Medium = Some deficiencies or issues exist; positive or mixed public input; Mapita score 65>75
- Low = Multiple or major deficiencies or issues noted; mixed or negative public input; Mapita score <65

- N/A= No specific comments or no rating available

Expressed Need (Column H)

The Expressed Need indicates the frequency with which community members indicated that Palo Alto needs more or expanded facilities and services based on responses to the Community Survey, Intercepts, Workshops, Stakeholder input and Mapita.
- **High = Consistent and/or high need expressed across user groups and engagement platforms**
- **Medium = Mixed and/or inconsistent need expressed across user groups and engagement platforms (For example, expanding dog parks emerged as a discussion in many platforms, with some for and others against building larger enclosed areas)**
- **Low = Little or no need expressed across user groups and engagement platforms**

Demographic Trends (Column I)

Census and Palo Alto Unified School District data on the recent and projected population for the Palo Alto community along with transportation preferences creates a picture of the anticipated user base for Palo Alto's PTOSR system. These trends are important for planning for facilities and programs that meet the needs of growing demographic groups such as baby boomers. This data is analyzed within the context of parks and recreation trends research. The Demographic Trends column indicates the level of expected growth of participation and demand for each area.
- **Growth in participation expected given the trends reported in Demographic Analysis (Sept 2014)**
- **Stable participation expected**
- **Decline in participation expected**

Barriers to Access/Participation (Column J)

Barriers to access and participation may include cost, location, physical accessibility, transportation availability and time that a facility is open or service is provided. These barriers may especially limit access or participation for vulnerable populations in Palo Alto. Barriers of participation are identified using data from the Community Survey, Mapita, and site evaluations.

- **High = many barriers to participation in the program, service or park or there is a single barrier that creates prohibitive conditions for some people**
- **Medium = several barriers that present challenges to access or participation**
- **Low = No specific barriers to access or participation have been identified**

Projected Demand (Column K)

Projected Demand represents a potential need driven by new types of activities and new user groups that are not represented in the existing data. This criteria is applied using the planning team's professional judgment combining demographic and recreational trends with ideas provided by the community.
- **High = Strong opportunity to serve new user groups or populations, or to expand services or experiences**
- **Medium = Some opportunity to serve new user groups or populations, or to expand services or experiences**
- **Low = Little or no opportunity to serve new user groups or populations, or to expand services or experiences**