



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PARKS AND SUSTAINABILITY
COMMISSION REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 06/02/2025

ITEM NO: 1

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
April 7, 2025**

The Town of Los Gatos Parks and Sustainability Commission conducted a Regular Meeting on April 7, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Gleason, Vice-Chair Mapara, Commissioners Buncic, Corenson (arrived 6:02), Stephenson (absent), Vrijen (absent), and Youth Commissioner Mallugari (absent).

CONSENT ITEMS

1. Approve Minutes of the Parks and Sustainability Commission Meeting of February 3, 2025.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Buncic to approve Consent Items 1.

Seconded by Commissioner Corenson.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

No verbal communications.

OTHER BUSINESS

2. Youth Science Institute (YSI) Presentation

Olivia Kramer, Program Administrator, and Allyson Dudzinski, Education Manager, presented on behalf of the Youth Science Institute (YSI), a local nonprofit with over 70 years of history. Based at Vasona Park, YSI connects children with nature through hands-on science education, using live animals, nature exploration, and engaging environmental topics to inspire curiosity and environmental awareness. YSI collaborates with schools, homeschool groups, Girl Scouts, and libraries, offering field trips, after-school programs, and public events like *Bats Alive* and celebrations at Alum Rock Park. Their mission is to make science education fun, accessible, and community-focused, believing that early environmental literacy fosters long-term sustainability. Currently, YSI is developing a new Climate Change program for elementary students, focused on local ecosystems like Vasona Lake and their connection to global environmental issues. This

effort aligns with the Town's environmental goals, and YSI seeks continued partnership to support shared sustainability initiatives.

The Commission asked questions.

Olivia Kramer, Program Administrator, and Allyson Dudzinski, Education Manager, responded to the questions.

3. Pickleball Update

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, provided a verbal update on this item. No changes have occurred since the last discussion in February. At La Rinconada Park, we are still evaluating the potential resurfacing of the court. However, we have not moved forward with the project due to ongoing vandalism challenges at the site. We are also exploring the possibility of installing sound mitigation nets. At Blossom Hill Park, progress has also slowed. The Commission had recommended some form of community outreach, and we plan to focus on that effort before proceeding with resurfacing the court, even though the project is funded.

The Commission asked questions.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, and Jerett Blaskey, Park Services Officer, responded to the questions.

Verbal comment –

Joseph Waldo, a resident, Neighborhood Association President, spoke in opposition to pickleball at La Rinconada Park, citing over five years of ongoing issues. Concerns included after-hours court use, lack of enforced signage, child safety, and increased traffic on Granada Way. These problems have led to multiple conflicts, including a physical altercation requiring police involvement. Despite over 30 communications with Town staff, primarily Director Burnham and Recreation Coordinator Todd Badger, Waldo stated that little progress has been made. Pointed to a recent example in the Town's Summer 2025 program guide, which listed pickleball lessons beyond permitted hours, with no resolution provided. Waldo also recounted incidents of harassment and threats, including racial slurs, physical confrontations, and egging of his home. Reports to the Town and police have largely gone unanswered. Additionally, criticized a comment suggesting vandalism originated from neighbors, calling it inaccurate and dismissive. Due to safety concerns, Waldo no longer reports issues. Shared that his wife fears retaliation, and the situation has escalated to a point where it impacts their sense of safety and well-being.

The Commission asked questions.

Joseph Waldo, resident, Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, and Jerett Blaskey, Park Services Officer, responded to the questions.

4. E-Bike in Town Parks and Trails: Assessment of Regulations in Peer Agencies

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, verbally reported that the e-bike policy will be put on hold until the department finishes the Field Use Policy and the Adopt-A-Bench Policy. The e-bike policy will be on the Parks and Sustainability agenda in a few months.

Meredith Johnston, Administrative Technician, verbally reported on this item.

California categorizes e-bikes into three classes based on speed and motor assistance type, with Class 1 and 2 capped at 20 mph and Class 3 at 28 mph. Other municipalities, such as the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and Marin County, have implemented e-bike policies, allowing Class 1 and 2 on select paved paths while restricting or prohibiting Class 3 use in parks. Regulatory challenges include enforcement, user safety, and identifying bike classes. In Los Gatos, increasing e-bike use has raised similar concerns, prompting the Town to develop a comprehensive e-bike policy over the next few months. The proposed work plan includes research, modification of the ordinance, add a section in the ordinance for treating the Los Gatos Creek Trail different, policy development, adoption the policy, and education.

The Commission commented and asked questions.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, and Meredith Johnston, Administrative Technician, and Jerett Blaskey, Park Services Officer, responded to the questions.

Verbal comment –

Basim Jarer, a nonresident, commented in favor of an e-bike policy. A rider of both a mountain bike and an e-bike on the trails in Los Gatos. Explained the different classes of e-bikes and noted that companies are selling aftermarket add-ons to enhance them. Emphasized the need for enforcement to send a clear message. Also stressed the importance of education, saying it's the rider, not the bike. Acknowledged the challenge ahead, noting it will be difficult to keep up without enforcement.

Jerett Blaskey, Park Services Officer, verbally reported on the documentation of the calls on e-bikes. From January 1, 2025, to today there has been a total of eight calls to the Los Gatos Police Department Dispatch. From 2024 to 2025 total calls was 18. These are only calls to dispatch not calls that are coming into the Parks and Public Works Department.

The Commission asked questions.

Jerett Blaskey, Park Services Officer, responded to the questions.

5. Spring Into Green

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, verbally reported on this item. Chair Gleason volunteered to work Spring Into Green event on behalf of the Parks and Sustainability Commission.

6. Consider Locations of Meeting for June 2, 2025 and August 4, 2025

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Buncic to hold the June 2, 2025, Commission meeting at La Rinconada Park and to hold the August 4, 2025, Commission meeting at Belgatos Park. **Seconded** by Vice-Chair Mapara.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously

7. Parks and Public Works Report

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, verbally reported on the Vegetation Management Project. This is one of the FEMA funded projects. The contractor started March 17, 2025 at La Rinconada Park. They then went to Worcester Park clearing defensible space along the boundary of the residents. They are now at Novitiate Park. They expect to finish limping at Novitiate and cutting this week. We are working on getting them over to Belgatos, Heintz, and Santa Rosa. They will start with work around the border of the properties to get defensible space for the residents. There's a more environmental considerations happening there. Work will be slower in those areas.

The Commission asked questions.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, responded to the questions.

a) Volunteer Activities – Adopt a Highway, Santa Cruz Mountain Trail Stewardship Group (2/22), Planting Activities

On February 22, 2025, the Santa Cruz Mountain Trail Stewardship organized a successful volunteer event on the Flume Trail, around 40 participants. It's a great example of what can be accomplished with the right team in place.

The Commission asked questions.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, responded to the questions and provided information.

Jerett Blaskey, Park Services Officer, verbally reported on the Adopt-a-Highway Project. Last Saturday's cleanup resulted in 15 bags of garbage collected. We also had two recent volunteer events at Live Oak Manor Park, one with a local employee group and another with the Lions Club. Both helped extend the mulch path from the Carlton side toward the playground. Our goal is to continue this path all the way to Lester as more volunteer projects come together. The Beautification Committee removed dead lavender and other plant material last Saturday. The area had been temporarily landscaped based on plans that didn't move forward. Now, we're focusing on a general refresh. I'm working with Operations Manager Steve

Souza to choose new plantings, and we'll coordinate with the Beautification Committee for a future planting day to complete the upgrade.

The Commission asked a question.

Jerett Blaskey, Park Services Officer, responded to the question.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, verbally reported on the Live Oak Manor. They are in a fundraising phase right now.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, verbally reported on the grand opening of the Los Gatos Creek Trail Connector Project on Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Chair Gleason commented, I went back and noted all the remaining tasks from the Flume Trail and sent a document to Nicole and Matt from Trail Stewardship. It sounds like they're interested in having what they call their 'trail stages', volunteers who lead their own projects, come in and possibly pick and choose from those tasks to work on.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the April 7, 2025, meeting as approved by the Parks and Sustainability Commission.

/s/ Nicolle Burnham, Director of Parks and Public Works