

Flynn, Allison

From: William Lambert <
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 1:19 PM
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
Subject: Comments for PRC Agenda Item 5.2
Attachments: Letter to PRC Jan-17-2024.pdf; Chart.pdf

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PRC Commissioners,
Please see my attached comments on Item 5.2 on tonight's PRC Agenda.

I also plan to make a public comment and if possible, would like to have the chart presented while I am speaking.

Thank you,

Bill Lambert

[William Lambert](#) |

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Friends of Mountain View Parks

Chairman Robert Filios
Parks and Recreation Commission
City of Mountain View

Comments on Park and Recreation Commission and Urban Forestry Board
Agenda Item 5.2, January 17, 2024

Chairman Filios and PRC Commissioners,

Section 41.5 of the City Code states “The public interest, convenience, health, welfare and safety require that three (3) acres of property for each one thousand (1,000) persons residing within the city be devoted to public parks and recreational facilities.”

Under the Quimby Act enacted in 2015,

66477. (a) The legislative body of a city or county may, by ordinance, require the dedication of land or impose a requirement of the payment of fees in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, for park or recreational purposes as a condition to the approval of a tentative map or parcel map, if all of the following requirements are met:

66477(3)(A) The land, fees, or combination thereof are to be used only for the purpose of developing new or rehabilitating existing neighborhood or community park or recreational facilities to serve the subdivision, except as provided in subparagraph (B).

Consistent with the City Code and the Quimby Act, a developer can satisfy the park land public benefit by dedicating park land or by paying in lieu fees.

The majority of developers chose to meet the park requirement by paying in lieu fees.

As you are aware the Quimby Act requires that park land in lieu fees be allocated in a planning area in which the development is built up to 3 acres per 1,0000 residents. If a planning area meets this criteria, then park in lieu fees can be spent in another planning area that does not meet the criteria. The city has seven (7) planning areas. Attachment. This means that it is difficult to accumulate sufficient funds to purchase park land that now sells in Mountain View for anywhere from \$10M to \$20M per acre.

It is important to understand that in lieu fees are assessed based on the additional residents provided by a new residential develop, with the number of residents on a particular site used as the baseline.

Also, affordable housing is exempt from park in lieu fees.

Another factor that complicates the accumulation of sufficient funds to purchase new park land is the Quimby Act requirement that park land in lieu fees be spent within 5 years or returned to the

developer. This results in us spending the park in lieu fees on the purchase of very small properties, building amenities in existing parks, or on park maintenance.

The consequence of the way in which in lieu fees are accumulated and spent is reflected in the Staff Report present at tonight’s meeting.

As stated in the Staff Report, as approved by the City Council in June 2023 for the 2023-2024 fiscal year \$8M of developer in lieu fees has been allocated for renovations to the Whisman and Mountain View Sports Pavilions, design and construction of Pickle ball courts, and design and construction of San Rafael Avenue Park. Since then, another \$5.4M has been allocated for additional renovation and construction projects to existing parks.

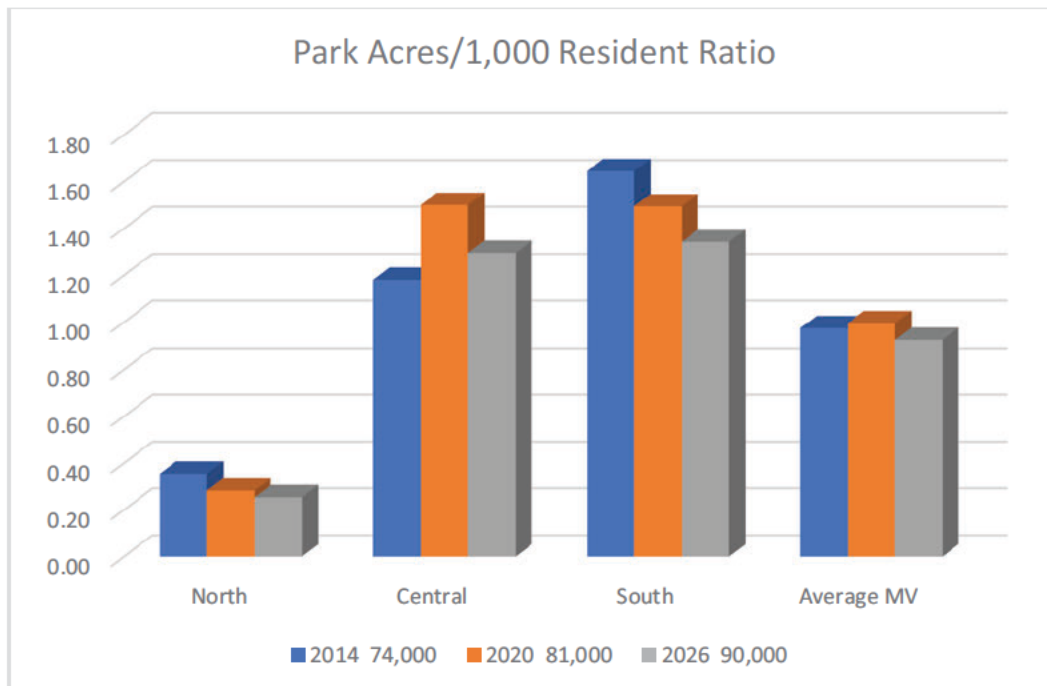
Only a total of \$6M has been committed to the purchase of park land in the Central, San Antonio, and Sylvan planning areas. Less than a third of the park in lieu fees are used for park land acquisition. Two-third of the developer in lieu fees are spent on design, renovations, and construction to existing parks.

Going forward, there will be even less in lieu fees available for parks. To gain approval of the Mountain View 2023-2031 Housing Element the parkland in lieu fee payment was reduced by at least 20%. See Housing Element, Section 1.8 Park Land Ordinance Update, page 42.

We currently use park in lieu fees as the sole funding source for acquiring new park land in Mountain View.

In view of this, it is not surprising that the acquisition of new park land has failed to keep pace with the residential growth in Mountain View.

The following chart shows the park acres/1,000 resident ratio for walkable, neighborhood parks in Mountain View as the population has grown from 74,000 residents in 2014 to a projected 90,000 residents a few years from now.



¹ Referring to the Mountain View Planning Area Map, North Mountain View includes the Rengstorff, Stierlen, Thompson and Whisman planning areas; Central Mountain View includes the Central, San Antonia and Sylvan planning areas; and South Mountain View includes the Grant and Miramonte planning areas.

² The park acres include the walkable, city-owned parks, and exclude the Shoreline Regional Park, MVWSD and MVLHS property, and the undeveloped Cuesta Park Annex. The park acres were based on the park acres presented in the 2014 Park And Open Space Strategic Plan and from the park inventory presented during the Park and Recreation Commission Meeting on January 17, 2024.

³ The Mountain View population estimates were obtained from the 2014 Park and Open Space Strategic Plan (2014), City of Mountain View website (2020), and City of Mountain View documents(2026). The Planning Area Assessment and Map from the staff presentation provides estimates of the population in each of the planning areas. Based on the total Mountain View population for 2020 and the projected population for 2026, the same proportion of residents living in the planning areas as in 2014 was used.

It is clear from this analysis that the developer impact fees for parks and open space, regardless of how that is implemented through land dedication or in lieu fees is not increasing the walkable and accessible parks and open space in Mountain View.

Our reliance on developer impact assessments as the sole funding source for new park land has resulted in the predicament we face today.

The costs of inadequate park land is an externality that the residents of the community bear. These costs can manifest as decreased mental and physical health, increased health care costs for those who can afford it, the need for health intervention programs in our schools.

As stewards of our community it is our responsibility to promote the mental and physical health of our residents.

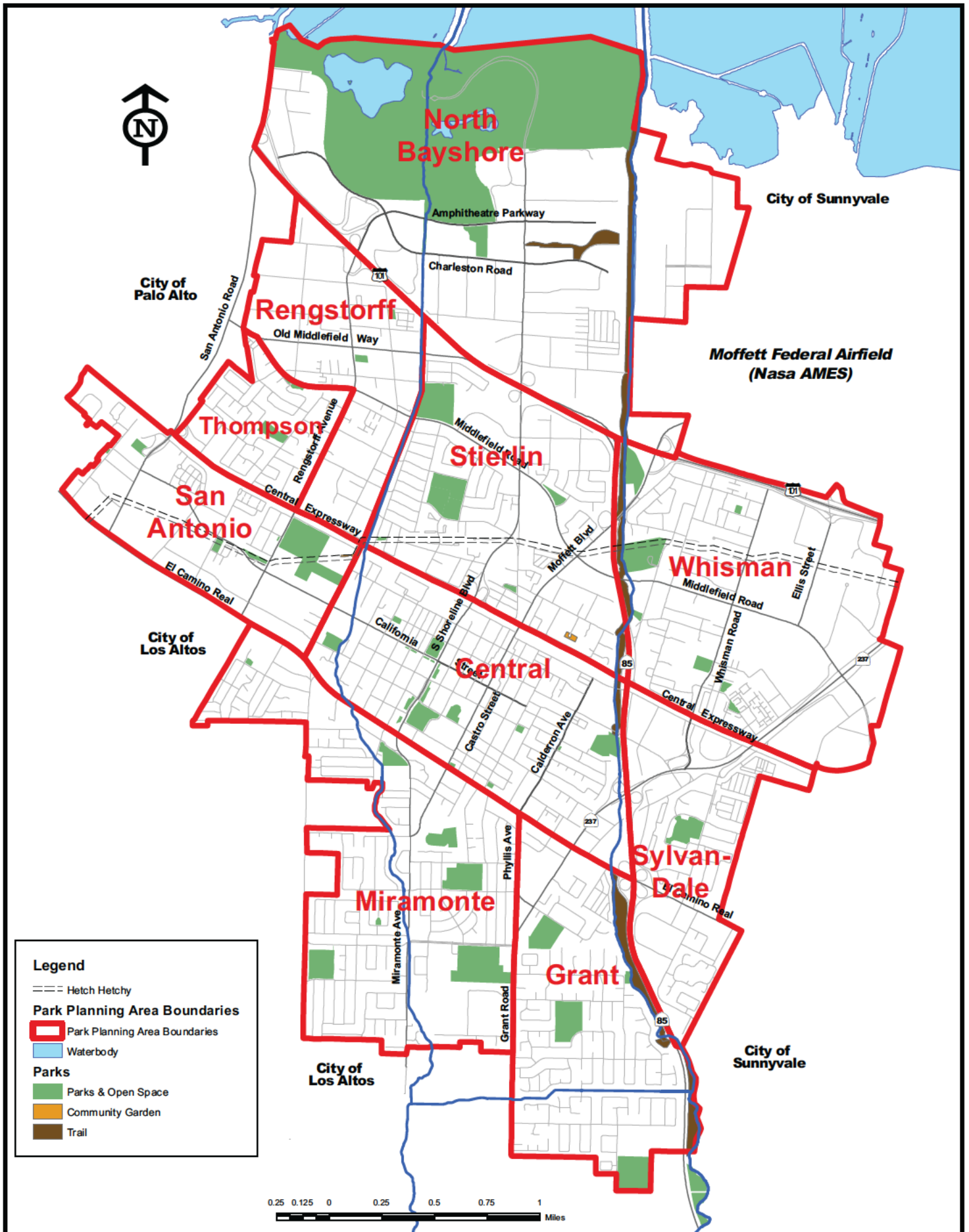
Our community must find additional ways to fund the acquisition of new park land to both ensure that all current and future residents have access to walkable and accessible public parks.

Respectfully,

Bill Lambert, Treasurer
Friends of Mountain View Parks

FriendsofMVParks@gmail.com

Planning Area Boundaries



Park Acres/1,000 Resident Ratio

