

From: [Jonathan Herbach](#)
To: [City Council](#); [Ramirez, Lucas](#); [Hicks, Alison](#); [Abe-Koga, Margaret](#); [Kamei, Ellen](#); [Lieber, Sally](#); [Matichak, Lisa](#); [Showalter, Pat](#)
Cc: [Parks and Recreation Commission](#); [Ronit Bryant](#); [REDACTED] [Joe Mitchner](#); [REDACTED] [Marchant, John](#)
Subject: tomorrow 5/10 meeting consent item 4.2 — community tree master plan and biodiversity strategy
Date: Monday, May 9, 2022 1:25:53 PM

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Hello Councilmembers:

I will not be able to attend tomorrow's council meeting live however **I write with concerns about consent item #4.2 which I think merits some discussion rather than a quick approval.**

I recently completed eight years on PRC. I was deeply involved with major and minor updates to documents like the parks and open space plan, and the community tree master plan, and believe as policy documents they are critical guardrails for the future of our city. I am hopeful that our city is considering both the policy implications of these as well as how to *implement* change. I applaud the work the current commissioners and staff members are doing to move forward to ensure we have a city that considers the importance of biodiversity, open space, and trees generally.

Admittedly, I was surprised to see the proposal to relegate future CTMP be folded into a subchapter of a biodiversity plan. Perhaps the intent here is to tactically accelerate investment in tree canopy plans for the city — I have not had a chance to chat with staff on the matter today. However, the importance of trees is multifaceted — 1/ biodiversity; 2/ improving quality of life and equity of access to nature across *all* residents and visitors, whether homeowners (R1 or otherwise) or renters; 3/ the critical role trees play in climate change and sustainability.

Given the council's prioritization of sustainability in particular, and the opportunity of tree-planting broadly to relatively inexpensively and rapidly affect change, I believe relegating a tree plan to a subchapter of a biodiversity plan is the wrong direction, and I hope you do too.

Tomorrow, please bring this topic up for a broader discussion at minimum.

Ideally, please collectively direct staff (and provide requisite funding) to plan for an in-depth update of the CTMP, and explore ways in which PRC and the council subcommittee on sustainability might be able to work together to achieve more in this space that will broadly benefit all and be eminently actionable.

Apologies again that I will not be able to attend the discussion in person tomorrow! To the extent any here would like to independently discuss these topics, I am happy to do so.

Jonathan

From: [Bill Lambert](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Jessica Chohan](#); [Robin Lin](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 4.2 Parks and Open Space - May 10, 2022
Date: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 9:19:36 AM

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Mayor Ramirez, Vice Mayor Hicks, and Council members,
This letter is directed to Item 4.2 Parks and Open Space Update on this evening's MV City Council Agenda.

We understand that acquiring the significant amount of accessible, walkable, publicly-owned neighborhood park space will be a process, especially considering that many parts of Mountain View currently have so little. It is encouraging that the City is committing to starting the process that is expected to result in a plan two years from now. However, we are not encouraged by the Background section of the Council Report. Rather than acknowledge that there is a problem and the community does not have adequate park space, the City touts its accomplishments and appears to state that with the expected new park being created during through 2030 that there is in fact no problem with inadequate park space whatsoever. This is not the reality. And, in fact the City has continued to rely on privatized parkland such as school property and now POPAs as abstract acreage to satisfy its parkland goals. The point to be made for now is that we can't keep ignoring the problem and need to accept is inadequate meaningful park space for many if not most residents in MV and that the current strategy for providing parkland just leaves us farther behind. To begin solving the challenge of providing more meaningful parkland for the residents we need to accept that the problem exists, accept that past and current strategies are inadequate, and then deeply think about creative solutions going forward.

Our position is further outlined in a letter sent to Kimbra after our first meeting with her, Audrey and John on April 20.

Thanks for your help,
Bill

Kimbra,
Thanks for taking the time to speak with Jessica and me yesterday and including Audrey and John.

After discussing this last night, we've included some of our thoughts (below) about what we would like to see in the staff report. As a starting point we believe it is critical that we move away from counting non-city owned property as public city parkland. For example, the City's over reliance on school-owned property is largely responsible for creating and hiding the situation we are in today. The first step then is to acknowledge that Mountain View does not have enough parkland to serve the needs of its residents. Also, we see a need to inject some type of accountability into the process. Council's change and staff change, and it appears to be easy for well-intended plans to get buried in the on-going churn of ever changing new priorities and projects. Also, there needs to be a sense of urgency. There is now tremendous

momentum to increase the housing in Mountain View, which we support. But now is also the time to make certain that there is adequate parkland for the current and new residents. We are concerned that the standard process of consultants, public outreach, various deliberations, etc. only to determine what the problem is only delays the real issue - how is more parkland to be developed and what to we want the future of Mountain View to look like. We already know what the problem is. Or as Bob Dylan said "you don't need Weatherman to know which way the wind blows". But what we don't know just yet is the solution. Finding solutions should come first in the process and is part of thinking outside the box. In other words, the same process will likely lead to the same result.

Jessica and I will be able to meet with you on Zoom any time today. We'll also loop in Robin.

*Thanks,
Bill*

- *Parks and Recreation Plan Policy Objectives:*
 - *Establish and maintain a standard of at least 3 acres of City-owned publicly accessible parkland, either within a 15 min walking distance or a ¾ mile safe walking distance of every residence in the City (aka the Parkland Standard).*
 - *The Parkland Standard excludes parkland that is privately owned or owned by the School District.*
 - *Establish and maintain a standard of 3 acres per 1,000 residents overall in Mountain View.*
- *Included in the Staff Report:*
 - *Acknowledgment that the amount of parkland is currently insufficient in Mountain View to meet the needs of the residents and that the City has set addressing this issue as a high priority.*
 - *Include the Parkland Policy Objectives defined above.*
 - *Complete an initial review and prepare a high level strategy for long term land use within the City including zoning, Precise Plan and*

General Plan changes to facilitate increasing the parkland in Mountain View based on areas of known parkland deficiency. This should be completed by the end of 2022. Define what changes need to be made to City plans and programs to facilitate the acquisition and development of parkland in Mountain View.

- *Develop a funding strategy for parkland acquisition by the end of 2022.*
- *Develop a high level timeline and milestones for developing the Parks and Recreation Plan.*
- *Commit that the City will define an Oversight Plan to monitor progress toward completing the defined milestones, completing the Parks and Recreation Plan and achieving the objectives defined in the completed Parks and Recreation Plan.*

- *Staff Report Approval and Initiative Plans*

- *The Parkland Staff Report should be provided to Bill and Jessica by Friday 9am PST for review. Efforts toward collecting signatures on the Mountain View Parkland Initiative will be paused after receiving and agreeing to the Staff Report.*
- *The Staff Report will be reviewed and approved by City Council at their May 10, 2022 meeting.*
- *Following approval of the Staff Report, the initiative will be withdrawn.*

From: [Catherine Martineau](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Marchant, John](#); [Sylvia, Brenda](#); [Feisthamel, Matthew](#); [, City Manager](#)
Subject: Canopy Comments for Today's Mountain View City Council Meeting - Consent Calendar Parks and Open Space Update
Date: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 10:03:32 AM
Attachments: [Canopy Comments for 5-10-2022 Mountain View City Council - Parks and Open Space Update.pdf](#)

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Dear Mayor Lucas Ramirez, Vice Mayor Alison Hicks, and members of the City Council,

Please find attached Canopy's comments on today's consent calendar item 4.2 Parks and Open Space Update.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Many thanks for your commitment to trees and nature in Mountain View,

Catherine



Catherine Martineau (she/her)
Executive Director
Working from home
cell: 650-575-5310
[We're hiring!](#)


Staff Leadership

Catherine Martineau
Executive Director
Christie Galitsky
Sr. Director of Programs
Shannon McDonald
Operations Director
Maika Horjus
Sr. Development Specialist
Natalie Brubaker
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Lanie Wheeler

We envision a day when every resident of the Midpeninsula can step outside to walk, play, and thrive under the shade of healthy trees.

May 10, 2022

City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

Dear Mayor Lucas Ramirez, Vice Mayor Alison Hicks, and members of the City Council,

Re.: 5/10/22 City Council consent calendar item 4.2 Parks and Open Space Update

We appreciate the Council, Parks and Recreation Commission, and staff's efforts to align city plans, goals, and implementation as outlined in the consent calendar item 4.2 Parks and Open Space Update. While we agree with consolidating biodiversity strategies and the Community Tree Master Plan (CTMP), we propose to reframe the approach.

Instead of developing a Citywide Biodiversity Strategy from scratch, we recommend using the CTMP as a starting point. We could expand the scope from trees to the entire urban forest* (see definition below from the US Forest Service), and at the same time include strategies for achieving sustainability and livability in addition to biodiversity. The end result would be a more comprehensive, actionable document:

Mountain View Urban Forest Master Plan – A Roadmap to Biodiversity, Sustainability and Livability.

**[What are urban forests according to US Forest Service:](#)*

“Urban forests come in many different shapes and sizes. They include urban parks, street trees, landscaped boulevards, gardens, river and coastal promenades, greenways, river corridors, wetlands, nature preserves, shelter belts of trees, and working trees at former industrial sites. Urban forests, through planned connections of green spaces, form the green infrastructure on which communities depend. Green infrastructure works at multiple scales from the neighborhood to the metro area to the regional landscape.”

There are crucial advantages to this approach. As the CTMP is an existing foundational plan, there is a major opportunity to act sooner than 2024, the proposed timeline for a biodiversity strategy, to enhance Mountain View's urban forest and support the City's strategic priorities, including biodiversity, sustainability, and livability. By using the CTMP as a starting point, it would be more efficient for the biodiversity consultant to help the City incorporate biodiversity, sustainability and livability strategies into a

comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan, which in turn will provide guiding principles for other city plans that impact, include, or rely on urban nature, such as the Climate Action Plan in particular. Additionally, it would be easier to communicate to the public about the transition from the CTMP to a Urban Forest Master Plan than to explain why we are scrapping the CTMP, as doing so could be seen as a step in the wrong direction.

The new Urban Forest Master Plan would keep important strategies and components of the existing CTMP and help achieve the following desired outcomes:

1. A clear timeline of specific, measurable objectives to preserve and enhance urban forest and native biodiversity
2. Increased interdepartmental collaboration with aligned goals and strategies
3. Increased, dedicated budget and resources for implementation, measuring and reporting
4. Leveraging the momentum of the recent CTMP update efforts, including report of the new tree canopy coverage data and analysis of all the community and staff input on how to improve the CTMP

Thank you very much for considering our recommendations. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Best regards,

Catherine Martineau
Executive Director
catherine@canopy.org - 650-575-5310

CC:
Kimbra McCarthy, City Manager
John Marchant, Director of the Community Services
Brenda Sylvia, Assistant Director of Community Services
Matthew Feisthammel, Forestry Coordinator