

**DATE:** April 25, 2023

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Laurel James, Principal Management Analyst

**VIA:** Kimbra McCarthy, City Manager

**TITLE:** **Fiscal Years 2023-24 and 2024-25 Council Work Plan Development: Project Prioritization and Gatekeepers**



# STUDY SESSION MEMO

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Study Session is for Council to: (1) review potential Council work plan projects; (2) receive input from advisory bodies and department staff; (3) provide feedback on the draft Fiscal Year 2023-25 Council Work Plan (Attachment 1) project prioritization proposed by staff for additional analysis and incorporation into a final draft of the Council work plan (which will return to Council for consideration and potential adoption with the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Recommended Budget); and (4) give direction to staff regarding next steps in the Gatekeeper process.

**BACKGROUND**

The City Council approved the development process for the Fiscal Years 2023-24 and 2024-25 (FY 23-25) Council Work Plan to advance the Council’s Strategic Priorities on [January 24, 2023](#). This process is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

**FY 23-25 Council Work Plan Development Process**



**FY 23-25 Council Work Plan Check-In Process**



**Figure 1: FY 23-25 Council Work Plan Development and Check-In Process**

At a [February 28, 2023 Study Session](#), Council reviewed the Strategic Priorities and identified projects for consideration in the FY 23-25 Council Work Plan.

At this Study Session, the Council agreed upon the following minor revisions to the Livability and Quality of Life Strategic Priority:

Livability and Quality of Life: Enhance Mountain View as a great place to live that values community health and well-being. Preserve Mountain View’s unique character, restore and enhance wildlife habitats, and promote arts and culture. Provide and enhance parks, open space, and other key amenities.

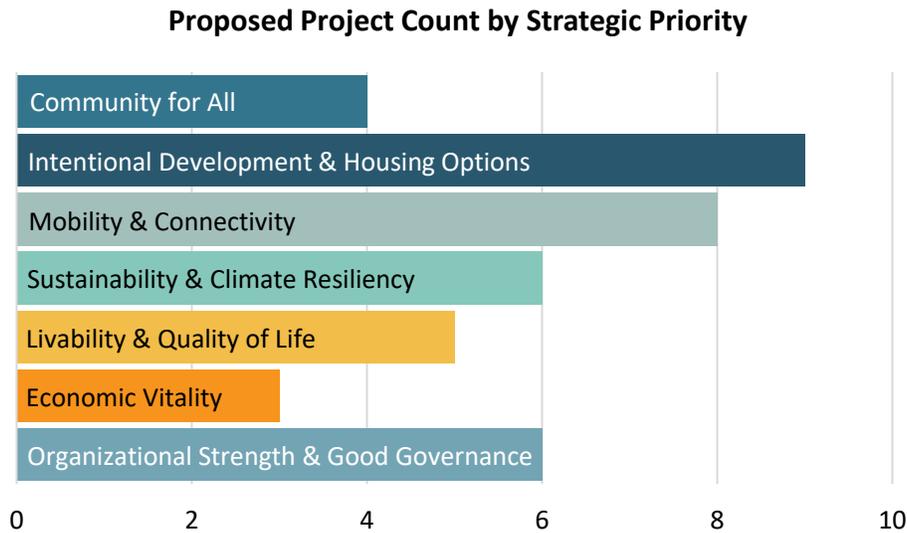
During the discussion of work plan projects, Council identified 20 carry-forward projects from the Fiscal Years 2021-22 and 2022-23 (FY 21-23) Strategic Roadmap Action Plan, 10 planned projects, and 12 new proposed projects for potential inclusion in the FY 23-25 Council Work Plan following the staff recommendation that, due to staff workload and organizational capacity considerations, Councilmembers propose no more than two potential new projects each and that the final FY 23-25 Council Work Plan include no more than 40 projects. The resulting 42 potential projects and their sources are listed below in Table 1.

**Table 1: Potential Council Work Plan Projects Identified During the February 28 Study Session**

Project	Source
Propose revisions to R3 zoning standards	Carry Forward
Develop a Homelessness Response Strategy	Carry Forward
Adopt a Citywide Transportation Demand Management Ordinance	Carry Forward
Review and update the Historic Preservation Ordinance	Carry Forward
Develop a Biodiversity Strategy	Carry Forward
Develop a City Active Transportation Plan	Carry Forward
Negotiate a Community Workforce Agreement	Carry Forward
Develop a Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan	Carry Forward
Explore expanding access to broadband	Carry Forward
Prepare the Citywide Travel Demand Update	Carry Forward
Update the Community Tree Master Plan to create an Urban Forest Plan	Carry Forward
Conduct a Public Services Study	Carry Forward
Facilitate affordable housing development at the VTA Evelyn Site	Carry Forward
Develop a Moffett Boulevard Precise Plan	Carry Forward
Design and construct the Castro Grade Separation project	Carry Forward

Project	Source
Implement strategies for a vibrant downtown, including the Castro Pedestrian Mall	Carry Forward
Implement the Economic Vitality Strategy	Carry Forward
Implement Displacement Response Strategy actions	Carry Forward
Develop a strategy to facilitate low- and middle-income home ownership	Carry Forward
Develop a Citywide Decarbonization Plan (transitioning from SAP-4)	Carry Forward
Review and update the Shoreline Community Shoreline Area Plan	Planned
Bring the Local Road Safety/Vision Zero Action Plan to Council for adoption	Planned
Complete a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment	Planned
Complete a Cost Allocation Plan and Master Fee Study	Planned
Implement an online permitting system	Planned
Update the Race, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan	Planned
Develop guidelines for micromobility, including a scooter share pilot	Planned
Explore the feasibility of a potential 2024 revenue measure	Planned
Expand the Safe Routes to School Program	Planned
Develop comprehensive updates to the Downtown Precise Plan	Planned
Review and update the Gatekeeper process	Proposed
Place a measure on the 2024 ballot to amend the City Charter	Proposed
Work on the Stevens Creek Trail extension	Proposed
Develop a Dark Skies Ordinance	Proposed
Develop an ordinance to ban vaping sales Citywide	Proposed
Develop a comprehensive Citywide storefront activation program	Proposed
Explore implementing a downtown office cap on new development	Proposed
Conduct a holistic Citywide review of parking regulations	Proposed
Explore strategies for enhancing child-care options	Proposed
Consider revitalization of Gateway Park	Proposed
Review and make periodic amendments to the Municipal Code in a phased approach to remove contradictory, unenforceable, or otherwise outdated sections	Proposed
Develop strategies for residents in market-rate rental units	Proposed

The proposed projects advance all the Council’s Strategic Priorities, as illustrated in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2: Proposed FY 23-25 Council Work Plan Projects by Strategic Priority**

At the Study Session, Council also discussed considering potential revisions to the Gatekeeper process, including exemptions for certain types of projects, criteria for evaluation of Gatekeeper requests, and the timing of considering Gatekeeper requests. At Council’s direction, staff prepared a memorandum describing the Gatekeeper process and options for accepting Gatekeeper projects for review (Attachment 2) for consideration during this Study Session. The memorandum was delivered to the Council on April 14, 2023.

## **DISCUSSION**

Following the February Study Session, staff conducted the follow-up information gathering and analysis steps indicated in the work plan development process adopted by Council on January 24, 2023. As described further below, these steps included seeking input from the Council advisory bodies and analyzing the projects proposed by Council against a set of identified criteria. Based on this input and analysis and Council’s discussion at the February 28 Study Session, staff has created a draft of the FY 23-25 Council Work Plan, including a proposed prioritization of projects (Attachment 1), which is also described below.

### **Council Advisory Body Input**

Staff attended meetings of all 11 Council advisory bodies and shared the potential projects list. Advisory body members were asked to identify which projects they deemed most important.

This was accomplished by each member putting forward up to 10 projects and then determining up to 10 projects that had majority support per advisory body. Advisory body members were free to ask questions about the projects and to advocate for the projects important to them, regardless of the fit with the scope of the advisory body.

As shown in Attachment 3, there were only four projects that were selected as “most important” by a majority of the 11 advisory bodies:

- Develop a comprehensive Homelessness Response Strategy (nine advisory bodies);
- Implement strategies for a vibrant downtown, including the Castro Pedestrian Mall (nine advisory bodies);
- Develop a City Active Transportation Plan (six advisory bodies); and
- Expand the Safe Routes to School Program (six advisory bodies).

Support was fairly evenly distributed among the remaining 38 projects.

### **Analysis of Prioritization Criteria**

Additionally, staff analyzed the projects proposed by Council in relation to the predetermined criteria, which are:

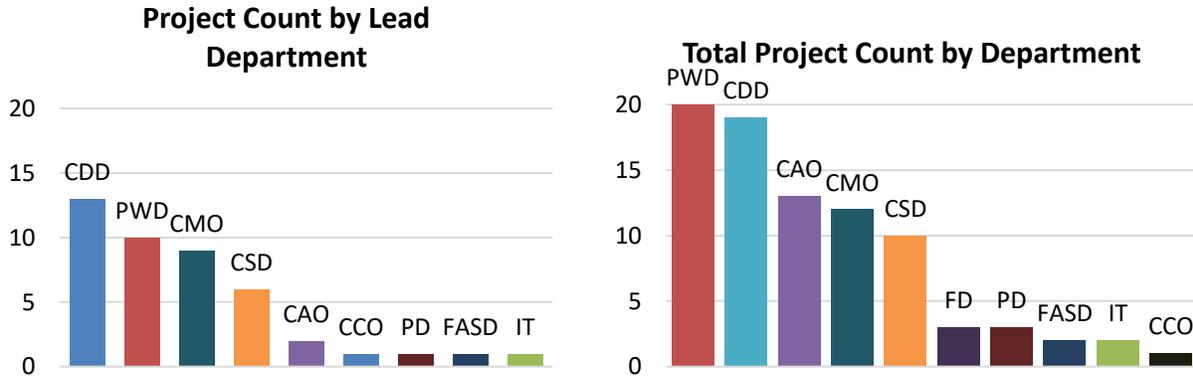
- Their impact on the Strategic Priorities and other initiatives;
- Advancement of the Council’s Race, Equity, and Inclusion goals;
- Urgency and timeliness;
- The project’s potential to support future City work;
- Staff capacity to support the project; and
- Fiscal impact.

As shown in Attachment 4, each project was assessed to have a low, medium, or high rating against these criteria. One of these criteria, staff capacity considerations, was further explored as described below.

**Staff Capacity Considerations**

As discussed during the February 28 Study Session, the vast majority of staff time (varying by department but estimated to be 85% across the organization) is devoted to essential functions and day-to-day operations, which serve to advance the Council’s Strategic Priorities. Staff capacity for special projects is limited and must be allocated to multiple priority projects, including the Council work plan, projects originated from other sources of Council direction to staff, such as the Housing Element and Capital Improvement Program, and projects in department work plans. Additionally, the ongoing pursuit of grant funds and response to emergent community issues are frequent, though unpredictable, sources of special projects.

Approximately 75% of the special projects planned for the next two fiscal years will be led and supported by the Community Development and Public Works Departments. The charts below (Figure 3) illustrate the number of potential FY 23-25 Council Work Plan projects that each department will be leading and the total project count by department. Together, the Community Development and Public Works Departments are responsible for more than 50% of the potential Council work plan projects and are each involved in nearly half of the projects in some capacity. These departments have a particularly limited capacity for taking on new projects.



**Figure 3: Potential FY 23-25 Council Work Plan Projects by Department**

**Proposed Project Prioritization**

Staff recommends prioritizing 41 of the 42 projects identified for inclusion in the FY 23-25 Council Work Plan. Based on the input and analysis above, staff has placed the projects in one of three priority categories as summarized in Table 2 and further described below.

**Table 2: Count of Proposed Work Plan Projects by Priority Category**

Priority Category	Number of Projects
A	20
B	16
C	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>

Projects within each category are considered to be of equal priority and have been numbered for identification purposes only.

*Category A*

Projects in Category A are the highest-priority projects included in the Council work plan and will be considered first in resource allocation decisions. Staff has recommended projects that will make significant progress toward achieving the Council’s Strategic Priorities and other goals and initiatives for Category A. The projects in this category also include those that are associated with specific external deadlines (e.g., ballot measures and Housing Element projects), have the potential to increase organizational capacity, and were deemed most important by a majority of the Council advisory bodies.

The 20 projects that staff recommends for Category A are:

- A1. Review and update the Gatekeeper process
- A2. Place a measure on the 2024 ballot to amend the City Charter
- A3. Explore the feasibility of a potential 2024 revenue measure
- A4. Update the Race, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan
- A5. Review and update the Shoreline Community Shoreline Area Plan
- A6. Implement Displacement Response Strategy actions
- A7. Bring the Local Road Safety/Vision Zero Action Plan to Council for adoption
- A8. Expand the Safe Routes to School program\*
- A9. Develop a Citywide Decarbonization Plan (transitioning from SAP-4)
- A10. Implement strategies for a vibrant downtown, including the Castro Pedestrian Mall\*
- A11. Complete a Cost Allocation Plan and Master Fee Study
- A12. Develop a Homelessness Response Strategy\*

- A13. Negotiate a Community Workforce Agreement
- A14. Develop a Moffett Boulevard Precise Plan
- A15. Adopt a Citywide Transportation Demand Management Ordinance
- A16. Develop a City Active Transportation Plan\*
- A17. Develop a Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan
- A18. Implement an online permitting system
- A19. Develop a Biodiversity Strategy
- A20. Update the Community Tree Master Plan to create an Urban Forest Plan

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\* Project was deemed among the most important by a majority (six or more) of Council advisory bodies.

### *Category B*

Category B projects are considered a high priority and should be considered after Category A in the allocation of staffing resources. Projects in Category B are closely aligned with Council's Strategic Priorities and other goals. Deadlines for these projects are either more flexible or farther in the future than those in Category A. Projects may also be recommended for Category B if the staff teams responsible for their implementation are also responsible for multiple Category A projects.

The 16 projects that staff recommends for Category B are:

- B21. Work on the Stevens Creek Trail extension
- B22. Develop a Dark Skies Ordinance
- B23. Develop an ordinance to ban vaping sales Citywide
- B24. Develop a comprehensive Citywide storefront activation program
- B25. Explore implementing a downtown office cap on new development
- B26. Develop comprehensive updates to the Downtown Precise Plan
- B27. Complete a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment
- B28. Implement the Economic Vitality Strategy
- B29. Explore expanding access to broadband
- B30. Propose revisions to R3 zoning standards
- B31. Develop a strategy to facilitate low- and middle-income home ownership
- B32. Facilitate affordable housing development at the VTA Evelyn Site
- B33. Design and construct the Castro Grade Separation project
- B34. Review and update the Historic Preservation Ordinance
- B35. Prepare the Citywide Travel Demand Update
- B36. Conduct a Public Services Study

### *Category C*

The Projects in Category C are priority projects that will be considered after Categories A and B in the allocation of staffing resources. The projects listed in Category C in the proposed prioritization are projects that are not as critical to advancing the Strategic Priorities and other Council goals and initiatives as the projects recommended for Categories A and B.

Additionally, the recommended Category C projects do not have specific deadlines, include many of the same teams responsible for several Category A and B projects, and/or require additional staff capacity to define the project's scope. Since Category C projects will be undertaken as staff resources allow, anticipated timelines for these projects are not included on Attachment 1 and Attachment 5.

The five projects that staff recommends for Category C are:

- C37. Conduct a holistic Citywide review of parking regulations
- C38. Explore strategies for enhancing child-care options
- C39. Consider revitalization of Gateway Park
- C40. Review and make periodic amendments to the Municipal Code in a phased approach to remove contradictory, unenforceable, or otherwise outdated sections
- C41. Develop guidelines for micromobility, including a scooter share pilot

### *Project Not Recommended for the FY 23-25 Council Work Plan*

The following project is not recommended for inclusion in the FY 23-25 Council Work Plan:

- Develop strategies for residents in market-rate units: In response to concerns shared by community members during the February 28 Study Session, staff has already begun working with landlords in larger apartment complexes to address tenant complaints related to building amenities and safety. The Mountain View Police Department is working with residents, landlords, and building management to address security issues. Community Development staff is working on complaints related to the building. Because these concerns can and are being addressed through existing operations and programs, staff does not recommend creating a new project.

Attachment 5 organizes the list of recommended potential FY 23-25 Council Work Plan projects by department and estimated timeline in light of the previously mentioned workload constraints as well as the proposed prioritization. Projects for which the respective department is the project lead or plays a supporting role in other projects is included on each department's list, providing a visual depiction of each department's anticipated workload related to the implementation of

the Council work plan. (Note, in the attachment, the proposed priority category of “A,” “B,” or “C,” is listed in front of the project number. For example, “A1,” or “B34”).

**Council Question No. 1: Are there any projects whose priority categories should be changed in the draft FY 23-25 Council Work Plan?**

Proposed Process:

1. Review the draft Council work plan in Attachment 1.
2. Identify potential changes, if any, to the project priority categories.
  - a. In suggesting changes to the prioritization categories, Councilmembers are asked to consider the lists of FY 23-25 Council Work Plan items organized by department in Attachment 5 and consider which projects can be reprioritized to ensure that staff capacity is available to accommodate the change.
3. Staff will analyze changes supported by a majority of the Council for feasibility and will bring a final draft of the FY 23-25 Council Work Plan alongside the Proposed FY 23-24 Recommended Budget for consideration in June.

**Gatekeepers**

Attachment 2 details the history, requirements, and staff recommendations related to the Gatekeeper process.

In summary, staff recommends retaining the current Gatekeeper process and requirements, discussing modifications to the Gatekeeper authorization exemptions for residential projects in a Q3 2023 Study Session as required by the Housing Element, and resuming the annual Gatekeeper application hearings in Q3 2024 after the adoption of the modified exemptions. More extensive alterations to the Gatekeeper process beyond the scope of the Housing Element Program could entail other future Study Sessions and amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, requiring additional staff time to complete and delaying implementation of other Council work plan projects. Elimination of the Gatekeeper process would jeopardize City staff’s workload prioritization for State-mandated projects, Permit Streamlining Act development applications, and Council work plan items.

**Council Question No. 2: Does Council agree with the staff recommendation regarding the Gatekeeper process or have any other feedback?**

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Two projects included in the recommended Council work plan require additional funding for Fiscal Year 2023-24 that was not included in Fiscal Year 2023-24 department budget requests. Table 3 summarizes the estimated additional costs associated with these projects along with potential funding sources. Because these projects generate one-time costs and would be included in the General Fund Limited-Period budget and, in the case of the storefront activation program, supported by American Recovery Plan Act funds budgeted to support small businesses, there would be no impact on the General Operating Budget.

**Table 3: Additional Fiscal Year 2023-24 Funding Needed for Council Work Plan Projects**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Develop a comprehensive storefront activation program	\$100,000
Develop a Dark Skies Ordinance	100,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$200,000</u></b>

In addition, there are three projects recommended in Category C that may have currently unbudgeted costs associated with their implementation. In all three cases, further definition and scoping are necessary to develop a rough estimate of the project's fiscal impact. The three projects are:

- Conduct a holistic Citywide review of parking regulations (C37)
- Explore strategies for enhancing childcare options (C38)
- Consider revitalization of Gateway Park (C39)

Because the timelines and scopes of these projects have yet to be determined and the range of potential costs is broad, staff will request appropriations for these projects as the items are considered within staff reports or budgeting cycles.

Based on Council's direction at this Study Session, staff will return with a request for appropriations related to the Council work plan during the consideration of the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Recommended Budget in June.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. Review and provide direction on the draft Council work plan project prioritization.
2. Approve the staff recommendation to retain the existing Gatekeeper process and requirements, hold a Council Study Session in Q3 2023 to discuss new Gatekeeper exemptions for residential projects per the Housing Element, and bring back zoning

amendments for Council consideration in Q1 2024. After the adoption of amendments, accept Gatekeeper applications by June 2024 in preparation for a Council authorization hearing in Q3 2024.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Staff will review any changes to the prioritization and phasing of the Council work plan for feasibility and incorporate them into the final draft of the Council work plan and associated budget appropriations that will come before Council for adoption alongside the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Recommended Budget in June.

If Council approves the staff recommendation for the Gatekeeper process, the next steps will be to:

1. Hold a Council Study Session in Q3 2023 to discuss Gatekeeper exemptions to the ordinance per the Housing Element Program.
2. Return to Council with ordinance amendments for final adoption by Q1 2024 (estimated).
3. Issue a call for Gatekeeper applications by June 2024 consistent with the Housing Element.
4. Schedule a Council authorization hearing for Q3 2024.

### **PUBLIC NOTICING**

Council's agenda is advertised on Channel 26, and the agenda and this Study Session memorandum appear on the City's website.

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- Attachments:
1. Draft Fiscal Year 2023-25 Council Work Plan
  2. Gatekeeper Process and Next Steps Memo
  3. Council Advisory Body Project Prioritization Input Summary
  4. Council-Proposed Work Plan Projects Analysis Summary
  5. Fiscal Year 2023-25 Council Work Plan Projects by Department