



SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Date: 5/12/2020

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Special Meeting Location: Joinwebinar.com – ID# 963-935-259

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS, COVID-19, EMERGENCY ADVISORY NOTICE

On March 19, 2020, the Governor ordered a statewide stay-at-home order calling on all individuals living in the State of California to stay at home or at their place of residence to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Additionally, the Governor has temporarily suspended certain requirements of the Brown Act. For the duration of the shelter in place order, the following public meeting protocols will apply.

Teleconference meeting: All members of the City Council, city staff, applicants, and members of the public will be participating by teleconference. To promote social distancing while allowing essential governmental functions to continue, the Governor has temporarily waived portions of the open meetings act and rules pertaining to teleconference meetings. This meeting is conducted in compliance with the Governor Executive Order N-25-20 issued March 12, 2020, and supplemental Executive Order N-29-20 issued March 17, 2020.

- How to participate in the meeting
 - Submit a written comment online:
menlopark.org/publiccommentMay12*
 - Record a comment or request a call-back when an agenda topic is under consideration:
Dial 650-474-4071 *
 - Access the special meeting real-time online at:
joinwebinar.com – Regular Meeting ID 963-935-259
*Written and recorded public comments and call-back requests are accepted up to 1 hour before the meeting start time. Written and recorded messages are provided to the City Council at the appropriate time in their meeting. Recorded messages may be transcribed using a voice-to-text tool.
- Watch special meeting:
 - Cable television subscriber in Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, Atherton, and Palo Alto:
Channel 26
 - Online:
menlopark.org/streaming

Note: City Council closed sessions are not broadcast online or on television and public participation is limited to the beginning of closed session.

Subject to Change: Given the current public health emergency and the rapidly evolving federal, state, county and local orders, the format of this meeting may be altered or the meeting may be canceled. You may check on the status of the meeting by visiting the City's website www.menlopark.org. The instructions for logging on to the webinar and/or the access code is subject to change. If you have difficulty accessing the webinar, please check the latest online edition of the posted agenda for updated information (menlopark.org/agenda).

According to City Council policy, all regular meetings of the City Council are to end by midnight unless there is a super majority vote taken by 11:00 p.m. to extend the meeting and identify the items to be considered after 11:00 p.m.

Special Session ([Joinwebinar.com](https://www.joinwebinar.com) – ID# 963-935-259)

A. Call To Order

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order.

B. Roll Call

Present: Carlton, Combs, Nash, Mueller, Taylor
Absent: None
Staff: City Manager Starla Jerome-Robinson, Interim City Attorney Cara Silver, City Clerk Judi A. Herren

C. Commission/Committee Vacancies and Appointments

- C1. Consider applicants and make appointments to fill vacancies on the various City commissions and committees ([Staff Report #20-094-CC](#))

The City Council directed staff to extend recruitment through May 22 and make appointments to all advisory bodies on June 9.

ACTION: Motion and second (Carlton/Combs) to extend recruitment through May 22 and make appointments to all advisory bodies on June 9, passed unanimously.

D. Consent Calendar

- D1. Receive and file the investment portfolio review as of March 31, 2020 ([Staff Report #20-100-CC](#))
- D2. Adopt Resolution No. 6557 to adopt the Bay Area integrated regional water resources management plan October 2019 update ([Staff Report #20-101-CC](#))
- D3. Authorize the city manager to execute an agreement with BMS/Data911 for replacement of police mobile computers in an amount not to exceed \$116,915.93 ([Staff Report #20-102-CC](#))

The City Council received clarification that this agreement relates to the systems in police vehicles and does not impact 911 calls.

- D4. Authorize the city manager to renew the Joint-Use Library Initiative memorandum of understanding with Ravenswood City School District for the Belle Haven branch library facility and operations ([Staff Report #20-103-CC](#))

[Web form public comment on item D4](#) (Attachment).

ACTION: Motion and second (Mueller/Combs) to approve the consent calendar, passed unanimously.

E. Regular Business

E1. Provide direction on program and service reductions for the city manager's proposed fiscal year

2020-21 budget and authorize issuance of notice of intent to layoff affected positions
([Staff Report #20-104-CC](#))

[Web form public comment on item E1](#) (Attachment).

Assistant City Manager Nick Pegueros made the presentation (Attachment).

- Christine Padilla spoke in support of retaining all childcare services.
- David Fleishman, member of the Childcare Partnership Council and COVID-19 childcare response team, spoke in support of retaining all childcare services (Attachment).
- Carmen Lo spoke in support of retaining all childcare services (Attachment).
- Mayrin Bunyagidj spoke in support of retaining all childcare services (Attachment).
- Morgan Diolaiti spoke in support of retaining all childcare services.
- Nikhil Kohli spoke in support of retaining all childcare services.
- Gabriela Buendia spoke in support of retaining all childcare services.
- Osnat Loewenthal spoke in support of retaining all childcare services.
- Uri Golani spoke in support of retaining all childcare services (Attachment).
- Kim Bourne spoke in support of retaining all childcare services.
- James Payne spoke in support of the City's continued action in confronting the climate crisis (Attachment).

The City Council discussed the 45-day layoff notice requirements and services with cost-recovery. The City Council had consensus of not eliminating childcare services, expending no more than four million from reserves and one-time revenues from the sale of property.

E2. Update the City Council and public on COVID-19 health emergency and the City's response
([Attachment](#))

City Manager Starla Jerome-Robinson made a presentation.

- Greg Conlon spoke in support of the closure of Santa Cruz Avenue to vehicle traffic.
- Fran Dehn spoke in support of the closure of Santa Cruz Avenue to vehicle traffic.

The City Council discussed the closure of Santa Cruz Avenue to vehicle traffic in order to allow restaurants larger outdoor space to comply with social distancing orders.

E3. Approve Resolution No. 6554 amending the City's records retention schedule
([Staff Report #20-096-CC](#))

The City Council continued item E3. to a future meeting.

F. Informational Items

F1. Annual review of Taser program for the period beginning April 1, 2019 and ending April 1, 2020
([Staff Report #20-080-CC](#))

F2. Annual review of data captured by Automated License Plate Readers for the period beginning April 1, 2019 through April 1, 2020 ([Staff Report #20-087-CC](#))

The City Council received clarification there are no stationary automated license plate readers in the City.

- F3. City Council agenda topics: May 2020 to July 2020 ([Staff Report #20-095-CC](#))
- F4. Employee engagement survey results ([Staff Report #20-082-CC](#))
- F5. Pilot public art project update ([Staff Report #20-088-CC](#))
- F6. Roles of City Council, emergency services director and volunteers during a prolonged state of emergency ([Staff Report #20-099-CC](#))

G. City Councilmember Reports

City Councilmember Carlton reported out on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors providing \$1 million of funding for the Middle Plaza underpass.

H. City Manager's Report

None.

I. Adjournment

Mayor Taylor adjourned the meeting.

Judi A. Herren, City Clerk

These minutes were approved at the City Council meeting of June 9, 2020.

Agenda item D4 Jessica Mihaly


Dear City Council Members,

As Director of Menlo Park City School District's Early Learning Center, I want to strongly urge you to continue operations of both the Belle Haven Child Development Center and the Menlo Children's Center once the shelter in place order has been modified or lifted. The SIP order is devastating child care businesses across the region and parents are going to be left with few options if publicly supported preschool programs such as yours close their doors. The Belle Haven CDC provides an invaluable service to Belle Haven's lower income children, many of whom are also second language learners who benefit immensely from getting a head start before kindergarten. Closing the CDC would create an enormous gap in the availability of high-quality subsidized care and further deplete the region of much needed preschool programs. I understand that the state's reimbursement rate may not be sufficient to cover 100% of your costs, but the long term cost of not providing a safe, educational environment for our most vulnerable children is ultimately much higher. Thank you for consideration.



FISCAL YEAR 2020-21 SERVICE AND PROGRAM REDUCTIONS

May 12, 2020





AGENDA

- Overview of request for direction
- Methodology used
- Revenue options
- Recap of requested direction





REQUESTED DIRECTION

- Provide direction on program and service reductions to include in the city manager's proposed budget
 - Direction on significant budget changes
 - Department reductions
 - Revenue options
 - Use of one-time money
- Authorize issuance of layoff notices to employees



METHODOLOGY





ASSUMPTIONS

- Previously described revenue losses of \$12.7 million in fiscal year 2020-21
- Options for budget balancing
 - Expenditure reductions
 - Revenue increases
 - Use of one-time money
- New framework necessary to address magnitude of changes
- Substantial uncertainty about future conditions



BASELINE BUDGET – REVENUE

Revenue category	Pessimistic	Best guess	Optimistic
Property taxes	\$ (293,715)	\$ -	\$ 293,715
Hotel taxes (TOT)	(7,691,119)	(5,534,568)	(3,378,018)
Sales taxes	(1,674,368)	(1,339,494)	(1,004,621)
Licenses and permits			
Building	(901,923)	(409,965)	-
Engineering	(674,650)	(337,325)	-
Charges for services			
Planning	(438,916)	(199,507)	-
Gymnastics	(1,426,500)	(1,069,875)	(713,250)
Pre-school childcare	(2,244,000)	(1,683,000)	(1,122,000)
Contract classes	(737,500)	(553,125)	(368,750)
School-age childcare	(556,000)	(417,000)	(278,000)
Sports (youth & adult)	(743,700)	(557,775)	(371,850)
Rentals	(370,000)	(277,500)	(185,000)
Events & concerts	(106,000)	(106,000)	(106,000)
Other community services	(270,946)	(203,209)	(135,473)
Other revenue	(800,000)	-	400,000
Total revenue	\$ (18,929,337)	\$ (12,688,343)	\$ (6,969,247)



BASELINE BUDGET – PERSONNEL

Employee group	2019-20 salaries and retirement	Negotiated increases	2020-21 change in fully burdened amount
Council	43,536	0.00%	2,786
Unrepresented management	4,573,182	0.00%	286,788
Police Sergeants Association	2,728,446	4.41%	489,076
Police Officers' Association	8,031,365	3.50%	1,062,967
AFSCME Local 829	4,697,220	2.90%	283,657
SEIU Local 521	12,715,408	2.90%	881,171
Unrepresented confidential	715,275	2.90%	(121,820)
Total	33,504,432		2,884,626



BASELINE BUDGET – NON-PERSONNEL

Department	2020-21 baseline operating budget
Police	\$ 4,051,565
Public Works	6,335,592
Community Services	2,985,093
Library	1,003,717
Community Development	3,591,490
City Manager's Office	1,623,782
Administrative Services	1,293,161
Non-departmental	1,755,170
Total	\$ 22,639,570



STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Category	2020-21 baseline	Recommendation	2020-21 recommended
Revenue	\$ 68,214,481	\$ (12,688,343)	\$ 55,526,137
Personnel	44,689,302	(4,570,057)	40,119,245
Non-personnel operating	22,639,570	(4,100,000)	18,539,570
Use of one-time money			
Decrease capital transfer	3,002,400	(970,000)	2,032,400
Use of reserves	-	2,620,586	2,620,586



SERVICE REDUCTION EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

- Essential or mandated services
- 2016 General Plan guiding principles
- Department identified reductions
- Expenditure impacts



OTHER BALANCING OPTIONS





REVENUE OPTIONS

Revenue source	Potential 2020-21 impact
Utility Users' Tax*	1,921,875
Business license tax**	1,050,000
User fee study	Dictated by cost recovery policy
Transient occupancy tax**	Varies

* Reflects expiration after September 30, 2020

** Requires voter approval of ballot measure, effective for second half of fiscal year



USE OF ONE-TIME MONEY

Item	Estimated balance as of July 1, 2020
Economic stabilization reserve	11,607,781
General Fund unassigned balance	2,100,000
Unused General Capital funds	2,720,000
General Capital transfer	3,002,400



REQUESTED DIRECTION

- Provide direction on fiscal year 2020-21 budget
 - Service reductions
 - Revenue options
 - Use of one-time money
- Authorize issuance of layoff notices to affected staff



QUESTIONS



SERVICE REDUCTION OPTIONS





SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO BASELINE BUDGET (TABLE 2/2A)

- Consolidation of several flexible categories into non-departmental budget
- Expiration of provisional position
- Adjustment for special revenue fund budgetary practice
- Negotiated cost of living adjustments
- Effect of CalPERS rate increases



SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO BASELINE BUDGET (TABLE 2/2A)

Department	2020-21 expenditure decrease/(increase)
Administrative services summary	143,537
City Council/city attorney/city manager/city clerk/sustainability summary	563,108
Community development summary	(109,586)
Community services summary	523,137
Library summary	(186,261)
Police summary	(461,045)
Public works summary	326,198
Total	799,088



ADJUSTMENTS TO UNREPRESENTED MANAGEMENT (TABLE 3)

Department	2020-21 expenditure decrease/(increase)
Freeze community development director position	246,278
Freeze administrative services director position	251,726
Suspend unrepresented pay increases for 2020-21	174,000
Suspend unrepresented bonuses for 2020-21	240,000
Additional reductions to reach 25% reduction goal	231,291
Subtotal Table 3	1,143,295
Cumulative total through Table 3	1,942,383

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT REDUCTIONS





CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE REDUCTIONS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT REDUCTIONS



COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT REDUCTIONS



LIBRARY SERVICES DEPARTMENT REDUCTIONS





POLICE DEPARTMENT REDUCTIONS

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REDUCTIONS



Agenda item E1

Kristen Smith, Menlo Park resident

I am extremely concerned to see discussion of closing MCC on this agenda. As a parent of young children that uses the preschool, after school care and summer camps, our family would be extremely affected by this closure.

MCC has provided exceptional care in a diverse setting for our children. Affordable care in a central location with easy access to public facilities provides a beacon to young families and is sorely needed in a city with few other options and huge challenges adding new daycare facilities. When we first moved here, we spent over 3 months reaching out to daycares with no luck. It was only a lucky last minute cancellation that allowed us to place our children at MCC. If it wasn't for them, I wouldn't have been able to work and we would not be able to afford to live in this community.

In light of our global re-evaluation of priorities post-COVID, the idea that we would choose to eliminate such an essential service is appalling. MCC serves as a community for our children, an essential service for our economy and an example of what is right about city services. Its loss would damage the fabric of our community.

Agenda item E1

Alex Mora, Menlo Park resident

With the stay at home order not being lifted slowly and in phases many of us will now be returning to work what is child care looking like. CDC and summer camps.

For those laid off, will they come back once everything starts to reopen??

Agenda item E1

Chuan Li, Menlo Park resident

Like many of his classmates, my son joined MCC when he barely started to walk. No word can describe how vital MCC has been to my son's growth, as well as to many aspects of our family, from work to life.

Whoever proposed the agenda of closing preschools must live in a different world right now because I honestly cannot think of any worse time to make such a proposal. It has never been clearer to us how much effort the teachers and staffs have to put into their work, so there is the necessary facility to support early education for the local community.

It is devastating to think there could be any reason to close the school or reduce investment into the early education system. Quite the opposite, the council should increase the support because the early school enrollment is extremely competitive in Menlo Park. We are fortunate to get our son a spot at MCC. But at the same time, we know quite a few friends who couldn't get their children enrolled and had to commute to neighboring cities for schools.

On a broader scale, it is true that COV-19 will change many aspects of our lives -- the way we work and the way we study. Maybe economics will go downhill for quite some time and we all have to learn to be frugal. But one thing I am sure about is the irreplaceable value of pre-schools. Nothing is better than having a physical environment where teachers and friends can meet, and the seeds of character, behavior, and wisdom can be planted.

Agenda item E1

Uri Golani, Menlo Park resident

Dear City Counsel of Menlo Park,

Earlier today I've learned that the city manager's office has lumped into the 20/21 city budget, the closing of one of the most important institutions the city has to offer to its residents: Menlo Children's Center.

The parents of Menlo Park were completely oblivious to this agenda item(E1.11), set to vote tomorrow, May 12, and so we have had very little time to prepare and voice our concerns.

I wanted to share a few points for thought, before making such a devastating decision, so that the full implications of the closure are considered and not just the dry number the city manager has attached to it:

1. Our kids have no voice, they cannot advocate for themselves on how important the MCC, the classmates, and teachers is to them. How much they enjoy going to school and how they can't wait for the COVID closure to end, so they can reunite with their friends. How will we be able to break it to them that they have no class to return to? What about the social and mental impact on them? if the COVID has not been enough, this will add even further to the growing damage on their developing personalities and sense of belongingness.

2. MCC as a beacon for attracting and settling strong young families to Menlo Park. I bet the 1.2\$ deficit doesn't nearly compare to the city's loss of the yearly in-stream of such families into the city.

In addition, it is unclear from the city manager's analysis if this deficit is a one time thing related to COVID, or a yearly deficit, and is it lower in years when there is no COVID.

3. MCC builds community, it is for the MCC that we have come acquainted with so many families and children. These children would grow together, continue to go to the same school together, and become the future strong young residents of Menlo Park. Closing the MCC loosens the community, it forces many of us to find alternative child care in different cities, as Menlo Park has very limited child care.

4. Which leads me to my last point and that is Menlo Park's lack of available child care, the long wait lists, and the difficulties of starting new child care establishments. Where would the children go?

I do hope you would consider the above when making a decision tomorrow for the future of Menlo Park.

Remember. as easy as it is to terminate an institution, it is extremely hard to re-establish it.

Best,
Uri Golani

Agenda item E1

Dan Rao, Menlo Park resident

Dear Council members,

That was so shocked when I first heard this news. Then what appears in my mind is when my son just went to MCC, how nervous I was on the first day, The teacher gave me encouragement and support, and the lovely smile relieved my worries, and that day, my son just turned 2 years old. My son had learned so many on MCC for the first time in his life, sharing with teachers and friends. Not just play at the school, our family has a strong bond of MCC community. These are the most precious things in the development of our kids.

As a Mother, as a resident of Menlo Park, I sincerely urge you to reconsider and withdraw your plan to close the MCC.

Agenda item E1

Shelly Sarig Nadav, Menlo Park resident

As a long time resident of Menlo Park, I was deeply disturbed finding out that the city considers closing Menlo Children's Center day care facility. We have been fortunate to be a part of this great institution for the last decade, and all our three children had benefitted from the wonderful teachers and the strong supportive community it provides. This matter had come to my attention by chance only today, yet it should be given due process that insures all parties involved had sufficient time and information to voice their opinions and concerns. The well being of our children, their families and all facility employees are at stake. Preserving this institution should be a priority, given the importance of childcare to local families, especially now, and the shortage of comparable alternatives in the city. At this time in particular, when working families are already struggling to manage under the strain of COVID-19, it seems particularly important to strengthen such services rather than eliminate them. Many families who have used MCC services over the years form the fabric of the local community, providing crucial services, including at Stanford Hospital, and many other important institutions. We ask that all facts and options be laid out in a transparent public manner so that everyone has an opportunity to engage in this crucial civil decision, in a timely manner.

Agenda item E1

Mayrin Bunyagidj, Menlo Park resident

Please reconsider the impact on our community of Belle Haven. I am a teacher at Beechwood, resident of BH for 11 years, and one of my children go to BHCDC. We utilize the services at the Onetta Community Center as well as frequent the BH library. This impacts my students that need after school care for working parents like myself, HW tutoring at the library, free access to books for their literacy development, and parents learning English. The preschool teachers are some of our Beechwood parents and provide our children with quality education socially and emotionally. By closing all 3 places, you are providing us with nothing in BH: no library, community center, or childcare. Personally, if I have no childcare, I will not be able to teach which now impacts the students and my whole school. My child will now miss out on the learning opportunities at his center and the relationships he has grown to love which is crucial for the early ages. Beechwood students are the majority of children that attend the after school care. What are their options? All these cuts will have serious long term effects to our neighborhood and the people you represent!

Agenda item E1

Sandra Guevara, Menlo Park resident

Please DO NOT close down BelleHaven CDC. I work and my daughter is a current student. It's a wonderful program and has helped my daughter with her social skills and speech delay. She gets her services from Ravenswood. Which survives comes to her. I currently work full-time and would not be able to get any other support or child care. The program had been here for years. The teachers and staff are wonderful and amazing. It's a big part of the community.

Agenda item E1 Sarah Kinahan

Dear Mayor Taylor and Members of the City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comment on Item E1 on the agenda for the May 12, 2020 Special Meeting. Among the Tier 2 reductions listed on Page E1.11 of the Staff Report is the elimination of preschool child care at the Menlo Children's Center and Belle Haven Child Development Center. On behalf of the San Mateo County Child Care Partnership Council, the state-mandated local planning entity for early care and education in San Mateo County, I strongly urge the City Council to preserve these two critical preschool child care centers. Early care and education (ECE) has always been essential community infrastructure, contributing to our economy and preparing children for successful futures, and will be instrumental in providing peace of mind for families as we respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The two City of Menlo Park child care centers make up 13% of the preschool center spaces in the City. The loss of these spaces would be devastating to working families, particularly lower socioeconomic-status families accessing subsidized preschool.

As essential workers perform critical functions in the city and surrounding areas, and more families return to work with the easing of shelter-in-place orders, those with young children need reliable, trusted ECE programs to be able to work. We already had a shortage of 11,000 spaces for children ages 0-5 in the county before the pandemic hit. Now, many programs are facing closure. Child care infrastructure is not easily replaceable with new programs often taking years to find suitable space and go through the planning and permitting process. The City's support of preschool and child care is essential to the bedrock of the community's recovery efforts.

Thank you for your consideration of the critical role of ECE programs in our communities and please spare the City-operated preschool child care centers from elimination.

Agenda item E1

Raul Franco, Menlo Park resident

Closing this center will effect everyone. This center has been wonderful and I have a lot of nieces and nephews who go and love it. My daughter is currently enrolled. It has helped her learning. Most Important working families that are trying to provide for there families. Do not close the center. This would be the worst news for our community.

Agenda item E1

Darlene McElhinny, Menlo Park resident

Belle haven child development program has been so great for my son and many other kids I have seen go through the program. All of the Staff and teacher's well prepare not only the kids but the parents for kindergarten.

Agenda item E1
Jocelyn Garcia

Keep BHCDC Open ! My son has learned so much from going here . This center has the best teachers and the best staff . They care so much for our kids , they make us parents feel like family. Please keep it open!

Agenda item E1

Johana Garcia, Menlo Park resident

The school can't close down it has so many memories with all the families and teachers. It has a sentimental value. Specially myself all my kids have attended that school and they love the teachers. My kids have learned so much . With everything going on with the school being closed teachers have still been on top sending kids videos of them reading a book , activities they can do at home . We love the school it will be so sad if it would closed down .

Agenda item E1

Teresa Phan, Menlo Park resident

Please do not eliminate MCC, not just for us, but for future families going through and joining this community. Please listen to the voices of parents who just found out about this proposal and are panicking. And please consider the young families and children of Menlo Park in future proposals, as there are many generations in our community, not just a few interest groups. Menlo Park is an expensive place to live, but we love the community, and there are many young families who work and live here. You are proposing to eliminate a very important part of our community. Our daughter would also like to add she loves her teachers at MCC.

Agenda item E1

Monica Villarreal, Menlo Park resident

BHCDC is a part of our family, my daughter was been in the program since last year of September, I must say that BHCDC made a big improvement to my daughter's Physical, Mentally, Emotional, Socialization and Academically.

As a parent. BHCDC also helped me to go to work with peace, knowing that my daughter was in a good hands with the Teachers and Staff. Shout out for them because they treated the children like their own kids.

Hearing the program could potentially close, breaks our hearts and hopes.

Agenda item E1
Lisa Taggart

As owners of Fleet Feet Menlo Park on Santa Cruz Ave., we want to state our support of the proposal to close Santa Cruz Ave. to cars in order to allow businesses to operate outside with pedestrian traffic. This will be very helpful for us when we are able to restart in-person sales, giving us more space to operate safely.

Agenda item E1 Katalina Tameilau

I would like to express my frustrations with BHCCDC even being considered for elimination/closure. You will be closing THE ONLY subsidized pre-school on the Belle Haven/East Menlo Side. This side has already suffered so much and the City of Menlo Park is continuing to show their lack of interest for that community and families living on that side. I understand MCC is also up for elimination/closure however that just seems political to not seem biased.

With the closing of BHCCDC you are telling families in the Belle Haven community that you DO NOT care about their children and future children. Where do you expect children to go to preschool? You are making families decide between going to a private preschool, a farther preschool or not going to one at all. I am truly disappointed with the City of Menlo Park.

Agenda item E1

Wendy Valencia, Menlo Park resident

I Closing the CDC at Belle Haven is pure evil. All of the families in Eastern Menlo Park have low resources to send their children to school. Closing this program will hurt the dedicated employees, families, and the children. It is not fair. Preschool is high demand and having this program run is important for the deveulopment of the child. CDC Belle Haven has been around for decades. Eastern Menlo Park has limited help and taking this resource away will not help our community. It will hurt the community.

Agenda item E1

Armando Valencia, Menlo Park resident

Closing BHCCDC will be a tragedy. I've lived in East Menlo Park for more than 30 years. This center has helped low income families and we have come a long way. Closing this center will hurt the community.

Agenda item E1 Peter Carpenter, Menlo Park resident

Posted by Peter Carpenter
a resident of Menlo Park: Park Forest
on May 2, 2020 at 5:58 pm

"MP residents need to realize that the city staff has totally captured the elected City Council.

The staff has de facto control of the Council agenda and nothing goes on the agenda that has not been vetted by the staff. Obviously in this arrangement the Council will only be given a very limited set of alternatives to consider.

A test question is - Will the staff recommend outsourcing police services to the Sheriff as is done in both Portola Valley and Woodside? This would save millions of dollars annually and would also improve the level of service. And it would avoid future increases in the city's liability for police pensions.

If not, then we know for sure that the Council is not in charge but rather is being led by the nose by the city staff

Just as predicted - the staff is dealing with all of the nickel and dime issues and does NOT even discuss (much less recommend) the easiest way to save MILLIONS - contract for police services with the Sheriff:

<https://menlopark.org/DocumentCenter/View/25038/E1-20200512-CC-Program-and-service-reductions>

Note that the City spends over \$22 MILLION on police services - twice per capita what other communities pay.

Obviously protect the staff is more important than things like Belle Haven Child Care.

Agenda item E1

Margaret May, Menlo Park resident

I am shocked that closing MCC is being considered, and with so little notice or discussion. The provision of pre-k childcare is a profoundly integral component of a community's economy, civic duty, and community vibrancy. There are overall few options for childcare in this area, and many families depend on MCC. And perhaps most important, MCC is one of the most cherished and praised institutions in our city; it's not as if it has been faltering or struggling lately, it has been flourishing prior to the disruptions of COVID. Do you understand that many of the teachers there have been there for YEARS, even decades? How many parents trust them and how many children love them? How the children feel it is another home where they are loved and cared for? It is rare to have an institution with such staff longevity, particularly in early childcare where turnover in staff is a major problem in other daycares. This speaks to the successes they have found in building a community institution that is meaningful and functional. Also, their staff is one of the most diverse staff you can find. It will be a monumental loss if MCC is eliminated. I speak from experience having had both my kids go through their preschool and continue in their afterschool program. Preschool and afterschool care are some of the most important civic functions that a city can provide. Please think twice.

Agenda item E1

Maria Magana, Menlo Park resident

En mi opinión sería un error cerrar BHCDC, especialmente porque los niños no tendrían acceso a cuidado infantil cerca, tal vez ni siquiera pudieran asistir a un preescolar porque serían demasiados niños y no habría lugar en escuelas cercanas, lo cual los atrasaría y pondría en desventaja con niños de las ciudades vecinas los cuales si tienen acceso a preescolares.

Y también sería algo muy duro para las familias, porque tenemos que ir a trabajar y no tendríamos, donde dejar a nuestros hijos, muchos de nosotros no ganamos lo suficiente para pagar una persona que nos los cuide.

La verdad somos una comunidad pequeña la cual estamos olvidada, porque cada vez en lugar de superarnos nos atrasan, ya nos quitaron la clínica, no tenemos una escuela elemental al nivel de Menlo Park y Palo Alto, por el contrario es de muy bajo nivel y los padres nos vemos forzados a mandar a nuestros hijos a escuelas lejanas porque queremos lo mejor para ellos.

Necesitamos apoyo de parte de la ciudad para que nuestros hijos tengan acceso a escuelas de buen nivel en nuestra comunidad y no que en lugar de progresar vayamos como los cangrejos hacia atrás.

Agenda item E1

Gloria Baez, Menlo Park resident

I believe BHCCDC should remain open and continue to provide care for our children's. If it were to close it would have a huge impact in our community.

Agenda item E1

Maura Sanchez, Menlo Park resident

As a resident of the Belle Haven community for more than 30 yrs I am saddened by the news of the possible closure of the Belle Haven CDC. It is heartbreaking because it seems as though everytime there are budget cuts the first place attacked is the Belle Haven community and try to take the little bit of resources we have left in this community!!! The decision of closing this school is anguishing! It will profoundly affect parents, neighborhood, community, school personnel and of course the students! As a parent who has had a child attend in the previous years and currently have a child attending the Belle Haven CDC, I have seen the hard work and dedication the teachers put in every single day to make sure our children learn. Kids at the Belle Haven CDC are well prepared to enter kindergarten and I've seen this first hand.

The closure of this school also means that the surrounding preschools will be overcrowded with more children than they already are. The ratio of child to teacher will definitely affect the child's learning and there will be less one on one time interaction with a child who could possibly need more help. I hope you reconsider the closure of the Belle Haven CDC. They are the best! **SAVE OUR SCHOOL!!!!**

Agenda item E1
Patricia Aguilar

PLEASE KEEP CDC OPEN IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR US, OUR KIDS ARE LEARNING A LOT IN THIS PLACE, HAVING FUN, ESPECIALLY LEARNING HOW INTERACT WITH OTHER KIDS, THIS PLACE HELP ME A LOT WITH MY KIDS, PLEASE THINK TWICE ABOUT CLOSING CDC, OUR KIDS NEEDS TO HAVE PLACES LIKE THIS BEFORE THEY START SCHOOL.

Agenda item E1 David Fleishman

Dear Mayor Taylor and Members of the City Council,

As the Executive Director of the County's Resource and Referral and Alternative Payment agency, a member of the Child Care Partnership Council, and of the COVID-19 Child Care Response Team, I am writing to request that the Menlo Park City Council preserve the two preschool child care centers slated for elimination as part of the Tier 2 reductions. Preschool and child care are essential services, necessary to support working families, the re-opening of society, and the economic recovery.

Elimination of child care would be stripping away needed infrastructure that will have lasting, detrimental impacts far beyond the short-term gain this budget reduction would bring. The child care field is being devastated by this crisis. The vast majority of our child care centers and homes are now closed and many will not be able to re-open due to overwhelming economic hardship and the extended loss of revenue. San Mateo County was already facing a child care shortage before COVID-19 struck. Please do not take action that will worsen this situation.

Child care is an economic driver in and of itself for the owners, administrators, and workforce that it supports. It is an absolute necessity for families in which both parents (or one parent in single parent families) are working. Low-income families, of which there will be an increasing amount due to job loss, are especially hard hit, with other vulnerabilities and fewer options. The low and moderate wage workers, in particular, will not be able to continue to live or work in San Mateo County without adequate child care. Together, Menlo Children's Center and Belle Haven Child Development Center make up 13% of the available preschool child care spaces in Menlo Park.

As you consider so many things, please take into consideration that Belle Haven CDC is close to 95% Title V subsidized, full day spaces. This means that Belle Haven is serving the lowest-income families in our county. Belle Haven is also part of the Big Lift, a county-wide initiative to raise 3rd grade literacy rates that is focused on communities most in need. So closing Belle Haven would also mean the loss of State revenue and the end of leveraged local funds to support children's developmental needs in a community that needs it most.

Although there is much uncertainty about the future, it is a certainty that society cannot re-open nor can our economy recover without an adequate supply of child care being available to the families who will be driving it.

Please take this opportunity to make the forward-looking decision to preserve Menlo Children's Center and Belle Haven Child Development Center.

Sincerely,
David Fleishman
Executive Director
4Cs of San Mateo County

Agenda item E1

Adriana Walker, Menlo Park resident

The Belle Haven Child Development Center has been very instrumental in preparing my child and that of his peers for gradeschool. It has provided working parents with peace of mind; a safe place for our most precious possession.

Removing BHCDC eliminates peace of mind for parents who would have had the opportunity of utilizing BHCDC services.

Agenda item E1

Cynthia Guerra, Menlo Park resident

How will these proposed layoffs affect the community? What programs are you cutting and how did you make that determination?

Guerra

Agenda item E1

Sambi Sambi, Menlo Park resident

Dear all,

I'd like to express my deep disappointment for considering MCC closure.

It is not easy to find reliable and accessible child care in Menlo Park and having such a great facility has been so helpful. Many families will have troubles in finding a good alternative, should you close MCC.

I think families are the most affected by the COVID crisis, and this action would penalize them even more. And it's Menlo Park City doing it. Very sad.

I hope my voice will be considered.

Regards,
Sara Sambi

Agenda item E1

Peiyu Chen, Menlo Park resident

Please do not shut down MCC. MCC provides good children's care and kids learn and have fun at MCC. Many families got connected through MCC. MCC is indispensable and a benefit to this community. Sincerely hope more kids and families could have chances to know MCC.

Agenda item E1

Marco Patrignani, Menlo Park resident

Dear city council,
on the subject of the closing of MCC there are some remarks:

- you claim it costs 1.2 M\$ to run it, that looks like an awful lot, given the cost of tuition and the fact that there is not so much personnel.
So we'd like to have a precise breakdown of those numbers because the likeliest thing is : you made a mistake
- MCC attracts families and people, and they, in turn, spend cash in MP. Cutting MCC to save a little money now will be a much larger loss in the long run.
If you lose the appeal to attract families, you'll have to compete with all of the other places that attract other targets, and MP cant' compete with SF and other fun places, so really, you're shooting yourself in the foot.
- many other people have raised other valid concerns that the closure of MCC raises, so i won't repeat them here despite the fact that i share them (lack of other options, the city taking another toll on families as if covid wasn't enough, etc)

don't do this.

Agenda item E1
Vanessa Sanchez

Please don't close down BHCDC it's a really good school. My daughter wakes up every morning looking forward so this pandemic can be over so she can return to school. It will break my heart to have to tell her that the school will be close and she will not be able to go back. It took her a while to open up to her teachers and feel comfortable and the teachers have really help her in the process they took the time and had patience with her. It will be devastating if it had to close down. My daughter has also learned a lot from the teachers and her peers and really misses everyone.

Agenda item E1 Kasey Hamilton

Hi,

I am writing as the mental health consultant on behalf of the Bellehaven child development center. I would like to advocate for the center to remain open as it is a major asset to the community. Not only does it provide essential child care to children in need, but it has had a long standing relationship in the community. It feels like much more of a family. As a consultant I have been able to support families in the school dealing with homelessness, trauma, poverty, immigration issues, as well as supporting children's success in the preschool program for the last three years. For many, many years this school has been a safe place for families to bring their children, and their children's children. Many staff have been there to work with these families for over 10 years, some more than 20 years. This dedicated staff have been there to support and educate these children with a rich curriculum, and a thoughtful and caring nature. Without this program, many families will be displaced without a childcare center, in a community that does not have many other options of high quality, affordable child care. Many parents work in Menlo Park, supporting the local economy full time, and need a safe learning environment for their children. Please consider keeping this program alive as it is a vital, beautiful, and special place for young children to thrive.

Agenda item E1 Sheryl Chan

Dear Mayor Taylor and Members of the City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comment on Item E1 on the agenda for the May 12, 2020 Special Meeting. Among the Tier 2 reductions listed on Page E1.11 of the Staff Report are the elimination of preschool child care at the Menlo Children's Center and Belle Haven Child Development Center. As an Early Education Professional who has worked in Title V programs serving under-served families for over 20 years, I can attest that Belle Haven CDC is an important service in the Menlo Park Community. Our families struggle to stay afloat financially everyday living in this high cost county. The need for quality full day subsidized childcare is essential for parents to work without worrying about the care of their young children. In my current position as the Title V State Preschool Manager at the County Office of Education, we are aware of the lack of subsidized childcare in the East Palo Alto - Menlo Park community. Belle Haven CDC offers 95 full day, full year childcare spaces which support the needs of the Belle Haven Community.

In the past two years, I've had opportunities to learn about the Belle Haven CDC structure. I would highly recommend that the City looks at its current operational structure and spending model. With some restructuring of current program model and some stricter spending guidelines, I believe that the Belle Haven CDC can be financially self-sufficient with the current Title V State Preschool contract as well as the grants that the program receives. The County Office of Education is an available resource to support Belle Haven CDC as a Title V program in San Mateo County. In addition, the BHCDC was able to over-earned the Title V contract by about \$100K in 2018-2019 and is expected to over-earn again this fiscal year. Although the CDC currently has a director vacancy, I believe that with the right person BHCDC can thrive as it has for the past two years. In addition, as the City sees a trend of over-earnings in the next two years, there may be opportunities for the City to apply for an increase in the state preschool contract therefore bringing in additional revenue to support annual salary increases.

Title V funding is not meant to be a "money-maker". The State contract provides monetary resources to serve under-served families with a critical service that is much needed in order for parents to work full time and continue to live in the current community. Preschool lays the foundation for later educational success for many children. With Governor Newsom's commitment to early education, there are opportunities for the City to continue to build BHCDC to be one of the quality programs in the county.

As the state is close to ending its Shelter-in-Place order, the BHCDC will play an important role in helping the community restart their livelihood. I urge the Mayor and the City Council to reconsider the elimination of Belle Haven Child Development Center. Let this new phase of re-entering after COVID-19 be a positive one for our families and children by returning to BHCDC rather than a struggle to look for another childcare program which may hinder parents from returning to work.

Sincerely,
Sheryl Chan
Title V Program Manager
Sheryl
Chan

Agenda item E1 Pamela Campos

Dear Mayor Taylor and Honorable Members of the City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to present a public comment regarding Agenda Item E1 of this evening's Special Meeting. I respectfully request your attention to Tier 2 Reductions of the Staff Report, which proposes the elimination of preschool child care at Menlo Children's Center and Belle Haven Child Development Center. Please oppose this budget elimination to support working families in Menlo Park who would be devastated by the loss of these spaces.

Every day, child care providers work tirelessly to create safe and nurturing environments that produce a quality upbringing for the youngest members of our community. Now, more than ever, it is critical that we work to preserve these spaces which are essential in providing a stable workforce for a thriving economy. Early Care and Education (ECE) has always been essential community infrastructure and will be instrumental to response and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. When child care is local, affordable, and accessible, it enables more parents to enter the workforce, thus, allowing businesses to re-open and grow in response.

Prior to the pandemic, the County of San Mateo was facing a shortage of 11,000 spaces for children ages 0-5 with 1,471 of those spaces needed in Menlo Park. The Belle Haven and Menlo Children's Center make up 13% of the preschool center spaces in the city of Menlo Park. Infrastructure for child care is indispensable and must be preserved to combat this shortage! To open a new child care center is a process that often takes years of navigating the planning, permitting, and real estate markets of local communities who are in urgent need of care.

Over the years, research has demonstrated the vital importance and necessity for families to have access to nurturing, high quality Early Care and Learning Spaces in their community. During the first 5 years of life, we know that nearly 75% of the brain develops. At these centers in Menlo Park, children benefit from Big Lift's programs supporting kindergarten readiness and family participation. The loss of these critical resources is devastating to all, especially the 96 low-income families who access these subsidized programs.

Your thoughtful consideration on this issue is greatly appreciated and we have faith that you may consider the devastating impacts of eliminating the Belle Haven Child Development Center and Menlo Children's Center in forming a decision. It is my hope for the community that these assets, which are integral to the economic stabilization and establishment of a robust workforce, will remain intact for a road to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pamela Campos

Child Care Technical Assistance Coordinator, Build Up for San Mateo County's Children

4Cs of San Mateo County

Sobrato Center for Nonprofits – Redwood Shores

330 Twin Dolphin Drive, Suite 119 | Redwood City, CA 94065

650-517-1400 main | 650-517-1436 direct

e: pcampos@sanmateo4cs.org

A new initiative designed to grow and improve the supply of child care and preschool facilities in San Mateo County.

Agenda item E1 Carmen Lo

Dear CMP Council members,

Regarding agenda item E1 Tier 2, Belle Haven Child Development Center(BHCDC) pre-school service elimination: BHCDC is a vital part of Early Education in the Belle Haven Community where there is low and limited subsidized care available to families. As the most recent coordinator successfully managing the program in the past two years, I can assure you the program receives over 1.1 million dollar of external funds through the State contract and two additional annual grants consistently. The savings of 1.7 million resulting in the elimination of the program and staff appear inaccurate. With the 1.1 million the center receives and hypothetically speaking, the 1.7 million in possible savings, it is assumed that the program spends 3 million on the operation of four child care classrooms on site. This has not been my experience in the past two years with the center's expenditures despite years prior to.

With the high amount of external money the center receives, the program can be financially self-sufficient. I recommend the City reach out to San Mateo County Office of Education for budgetary management support with the State contract and additional grants. Additionally, the program has high potential to continuously over-earn their State contract on an annual basis. The program over earned by 106k last fiscal year and is likely to over earn again this year beyond their contract amount of 1,052,000.

Without BHCDC, the community and families are left with no subsidized care in the area, thus impacting the long term learning, development, and growth of all the children. It is understandable for budget cuts to occur during such an unprecedented time. However, such essential services shall not be removed, especially upon the transition of returning education in the near future. Every program has been hindered by COVID-19 however, no programs have closed as it is manageable with the continuing grant funds the State will provide in accordance to contractor's original contracts. I have reached out to a management personnel recently informing the State's direction on contract reimbursements this year and shall minimally impact, if at all.

I urge the City to reconsider the elimination of Belle Haven CDC pre-school services and the staff. This will hinder many lives beyond the staff and currently enrolled children. This will impact the overall community, county, early education field, and the City of Menlo Park as a whole.

Thank you for your time. I hope the proposal can be reconsidered.

Agenda item E1

Mayra Espinosa, Menlo Park resident

I cannot begin to stress how closing in BHCDC will greatly affect my family and other low income families in our community. This amazing program has provided both, childcare and a place where my children feel safe and happy to go to everyday at a reasonable cost. While I do understand the circumstances that we are all facing during this vulnerable time I also believe we will eventually overcome it. Most of us will be joining the workforce once again. If we close this program indefinitely we will no longer have access to affordable childcare and once again low income families will end up losing, per usual. Please make this decision with the knowledge and understanding that this will weigh heavy on many people if you close BHCHC especially the amazing staff that works hard to continue and reach out to all the children they once saw on daily basis. Thank you for your time.

Agenda item E1 Dani O'Connor

My name is Dani O'Connor and I presently serve the City of Menlo Park as the Executive Assistant to the Chief of Police. Tonight, I speak to you to inform you how cutting my position would not be a "low impact on City Wide Equity." I have helped on-board and support six police chiefs during my 12 years working with the City of Menlo Park's Police Department. Most people don't understand that "Executive Assistant to the Chief of Police" is only a title that does not describe the day to day duties I perform which helps Menlo Park continue to function as a one of the safest cities on the Peninsula. For the past six police chiefs I have adjusted and adapted to each chief's priorities and concerns for the department and more importantly, the residents and business community of Menlo Park. As many of you are aware from serving on City Council, it is the people behind the scenes that help make things work smoothly. I am one of those people. I would not be speaking to you tonight if I felt the City of Menlo Park could maintain public safety with the proposed administrative positions. However, in order to realize economic efficiencies over the previous 12 years, three administrative positions have been eliminated in the Police Department. Each of these eliminations and transitions have directly added to my responsibilities as Executive Assistant and I have accepted and excelled despite the significant increase in workload. I now not only support the Chief, but also the entire department. With the proposed reductions, there will be one administrative staff for all ancillary duties for the entire Police Department. To be clear, I share the City Council's ongoing commitment and dedication to public safety.

I take much pride in my efforts as Executive Assistant, as my work product not only benefits the chief, but extends to everyone in the department, the city, and the community as a whole. Internally, I support sergeants, corporals, detectives, officers and every other employee of the police department and often work behind the scenes in order to resolve issues and various challenges far beyond the scope of my job description. I enjoy being a crucial member of the department's infrastructure and look forward to maintaining my position so that I may remain an essential contributor. Although many believe administrative assistants help in only a support capacity, you all know my position is far more important and vital to supporting a complex city like ours. A parallel example is the position of Executive Assistant to the City Manager who strives to excel for not only the city manager, but each member of the City Council, City employees and the residents and business community of Menlo Park. Retaining my position ensures ongoing continuity between functions of the operations of the police department, as well as making a meaningful contribution to support our city. During this period of economic imbalance, along with all the many unknowns, I respectfully request you reconsider the temporary layoff of the Executive Assistant position as it would result in severe service delivery impacts to the Police Department as well as the extended communities of Menlo Park.

Agenda item E1 Christine Thorsteinson

Re: May 12, 2020 Special City Council Meeting Item 1E – FY20-21 Program & Services Reductions

Dear Mayor Taylor and Members of the City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comment on Item E1 on the agenda for tonight's Special Meeting, and specifically on the potential elimination of preschool childcare at the Belle Haven Child Development Center and Menlo Children's Center, identified on Page E1.11 of the staff report. On behalf of Silicon Valley Community Foundation, we urge you to preserve these two critical childcare centers. Early care and education (ECE) is vital to the health and wellness of our community, and a critical factor in our road to recovery.

The Belle Haven Child Development Center and the Menlo Children's Center provide 13% of the preschool center spaces in Menlo Park, including 96 Big Lift funded spaces. High quality ECE programs, such as these, prepare our children to enter school ready to learn and enable our parents to be part of the workforce, confident that their children are safe and well cared for. Prior to the current crisis there was a shortage of over 1,000 childcare spaces in the city, and today we cannot afford to lose any additional spaces. The loss of these essential centers would be devastating to our working families, particularly families of lower socioeconomic status who depend on access to subsidized programs. As we recover from the harmful effects of COVID-19, our childcare system will be critical to allowing parents to reenter and remain in the workforce.

Thank you for your consideration. Belle Haven Child Development Center and Menlo Children's Center are vital community resources. We hope that you will consider the impact of their closure on the children, families and staff that depend on these programs.

Sincerely,

Avo Makdessian
Vice President, Strategic Initiatives & Partnerships

Christine Thorsteinson
Interim Director, Early Education
Christine
Thorsteinson

Agenda item E1 James Payne, Menlo Park resident

Dear Mayor Taylor and Council Members,

Tonight Council will be discussing Menlo Park's budgetary response to the COVID-19 crisis and we, the Environmental Quality Commission, are writing to reaffirm our support for the City's continued action in confronting the climate crisis. It is essential that we do not view our responses to COVID-19 and to the climate crisis as being in competition for unfortunately limited resources. Just as the threats of these crises magnify each other, the actions we take to fight them have the power to address both at once.

COVID-19 is, tragically, but one of two currently declared crises that our city faces. The climate crisis also threatens to entirely upend our normal ways of living, and, like COVID-19, will impact those most heavily who have the fewest resources to adapt. We have even witnessed dangerous synergies between COVID-19 and environmental pollution; poor lung health has been a strong predictor of negative outcomes from COVID-19, and is directly linked to air pollution from automobiles and gas appliances. A UCLA study published just last month showed that the health impacts of indoor gas appliances costs California \$3.5 billion each year, and that these effects are more pronounced for residents of apartments than detached homes. Here in Menlo Park, our lowest lying neighborhood, and thus the one most susceptible to inundation by rising seas in as little as 40 years, is also our most historically disadvantaged.

We are heartened by the strong response to the COVID-19 crisis that our community at every level – government, businesses, and individual residents – has demonstrated. This gives us more hope than ever that we can organize the same strong response to the climate crisis. Indeed, the COVID-19 crisis has shown the necessity of heeding early warnings from the scientific community, which has called resoundingly for rapid, far-reaching, and unprecedented actions to halt climate change. COVID-19 has also showed us the willingness of the community to mount a strong response to a crisis when given clear direction from its leaders.

On December 10th, Council expressed its support for achieving carbon neutrality by 2030, and in January the full Environmental Quality Commission approved a plan recommending ten broad actions to achieve that goal. Many of the actions this will require will also aid Menlo Park in its recovery from the effects of COVID-19. These include actions addressing air pollution, as we have all now seen the toll it takes; housing, as more of our residents than ever before will find themselves facing housing insecurity; and job creation, as our country is already experiencing levels of joblessness it has never before seen.

We are therefore writing to reaffirm the support of the EQC for the City's goal of achieving zero carbon by 2030 and the allocation of the resources necessary to achieve that goal. While on the surface it might appear prudent to delay action on the climate crisis to save money now, it is actually dangerous to delay. As with COVID, every mitigation dollar we fail to invest now will cost us dozens more all too soon in the form of adverse health impacts, destroyed property, sea walls and community stress. As our City begins on the road to recovery from COVID-19, it is imperative that we secure Menlo Park against the climate crisis as well. Just as with COVID-19, every day counts, and the longer we wait, the greater this next crisis will be.

Sincerely - James Payne, vice chair of the EQC, on behalf of the full EQC