



City Council Priority- Setting Workshop

March 22, 2025



Welcome and Agenda

- Opening remarks from Mayor Combs and City Manager Murphy
- Agenda:
 - Accomplishments overview
 - Financial update
 - Community survey results
 - Public comment
 - Environmental Justice Element
 - Top priorities for fiscal year 2025-26
 - Downtown – street closures and other activities





Workshop ground rules

- Actively listen
- Stay present and engaged
- Assume good intentions in others
- Focus on the agenda to honor our time commitment
- Seek shared citywide priorities through consensus building





Bike rack

- Not all items will be discussed today due to our focused agenda
- Bike rack items will be recorded for discussion at a later time





Accomplishments Fiscal Year 2024-25



Accomplishments overview

- City Council priorities work plan is developed with the fiscal year budget and updated routinely throughout the year
- Fiscal year 2024-25 work plan includes 54 items
 - 20% are complete
 - 61% are in progress
 - 17% are ongoing activities
 - 1 not started yet
- City Council received updates in Sept. 2024 and Feb. 2025





Accomplishments overview

- Belle Haven Community Campus opening
- Parks renovations
- Sustainability improvements to City facilities
- Traffic calming and street improvements
- Capital Improvement Plan progress
- Library and Community Services programs
- Public safety enhancements
- City workforce
- Technology advancements





Financial Update

Brittany Mello, Administrative Services Director



Financial update: Revenue

- Property Tax – largest revenue source
- Transient Occupancy Tax – voter approval of Measure CC
- Sales Tax – remains below pre-pandemic levels
- Property Tax in Lieu of Vehicle License Fee (VLF)
 - Fiscal year 2023-24 shortfall of \$2.8 million (amount due of \$6.6 million)
 - Fiscal year 2024-25 shortfall of \$2.9 million (amount due of \$6.9 million)



Financial update: Economic influences

- Inflation and CIP cost escalation
 - Cost of services study issued to help with cost recovery
- Grants update
 - Approximately \$85.7 million in total operating and capital grant awards
 - New grants: \$3.6 million from MTC for housing, transportation, and sustainability projects
 - Monitoring uncertainty with grants: changes at the federal government level may result in a loss or reduction of award funds
 - Caltrain Crossing Safety Improvement Project (quiet zone) – \$3.74 million requested; will not be funded (no projects funded in fiscal year 2024-25)



Financial update: Budget principles

- Fiscal year 2024-25 budget principles approved by City Council on March 26, 2024
 - Promote the City's long-term fiscal sustainability
 - Provide City services and infrastructure that contribute to quality of life in Menlo Park
 - Revenue sources and grant accounting
- Budget principles adoption for fiscal year 2025-26 at April 15 City Council meeting



Financial update: Budget production

- Amendments for Capital Improvement Plan in April/May
- General Fund five-year forecast update
 - Evaluate the overall structural balance of the General Fund
- Overall budget calendar
 - Public budget workshop: May 29
 - City Council public hearing: June 10
 - City Council budget adoption: June 24



Community Input



Annual community survey results

- 544 survey responses
- Strong support for existing priorities:
 - Housing: 207 (38%)
 - Emergency and disaster preparedness: 169 (31%)
 - Safe routes: 167 (31%)
 - Climate action – mitigation, adaptation, and resilience: 149 (27%)
- Additional priorities:
 - Downtown and business revitalization/activation: 168 (31%)
 - Lack of support for housing redevelopment on downtown parking plazas: 126 (23%)
 - Quiet zones: 79 (15%)



Annual community survey results

Public feedback analysis		
Topic	No. of respondents	Percent of responses
1 housing (current top priority for fiscal year 2024-25)	207	38%
2 emergency and disaster preparedness (current top priority for fiscal year 2024-25)	169	31%
3 downtown and businesses revitalization/activation	168	31%
4 safe routes (current top priority for fiscal year 2024-25)	167	31%
5 climate action - mitigation, adaptation and resilience (current top priority for fiscal year 2024-25)	149	27%
6 oppose housing redevelopment on downtown parking plazas	126	23%
7 quiet zones	79	15%
8 revisit high-density housing sites	71	13%
9 oppose builders remedy projects including 80 Willow Rd.	67	12%
10 traffic reduction/mitigation	45	8%
11 City infrastructure maintenance and improvement	32	6%
12 public safety/crime prevention	27	5%
13 park and green space protection/expansion/maintenance	21	4%
14 smart growth in housing development coupled with cap on commercial development	20	4%
15 traffic enforcement/education (vehicle, pedestrian, and e-bike)	16	3%
16 litter/trash removal - cleaner streets and sidewalks	15	3%
17 comprehensive study and refurbishing of the Main Library	14	3%
18 support housing redevelopment on downtown parking plazas	13	2%
19 community collaboration and increased transparency	11	2%
20 improved street sweeping and better storm drainage	11	2%
21 reopen Santa Cruz Avenue	11	2%
22 improved public transportation/shuttle service	10	2%



Public Comment



City Council Priority Setting Workshop

The City Council will return after a brief 15 minute recess.

Session will resume at 12 p.m.



Environmental Justice Element

Calvin Chan, Senior Planner & Rachael Londer, Sustainability Manager



Environmental Justice (EJ) Element

- Provide background
- Review community-identified priorities
- Summarize fiscal year 2024-25 highlights
- Review implementation plans for fiscal year 2025-26
- *Program EJ7.L: The City Council shall consider the community-identified environmental justice priorities during its annual priority and goal setting workshop.*

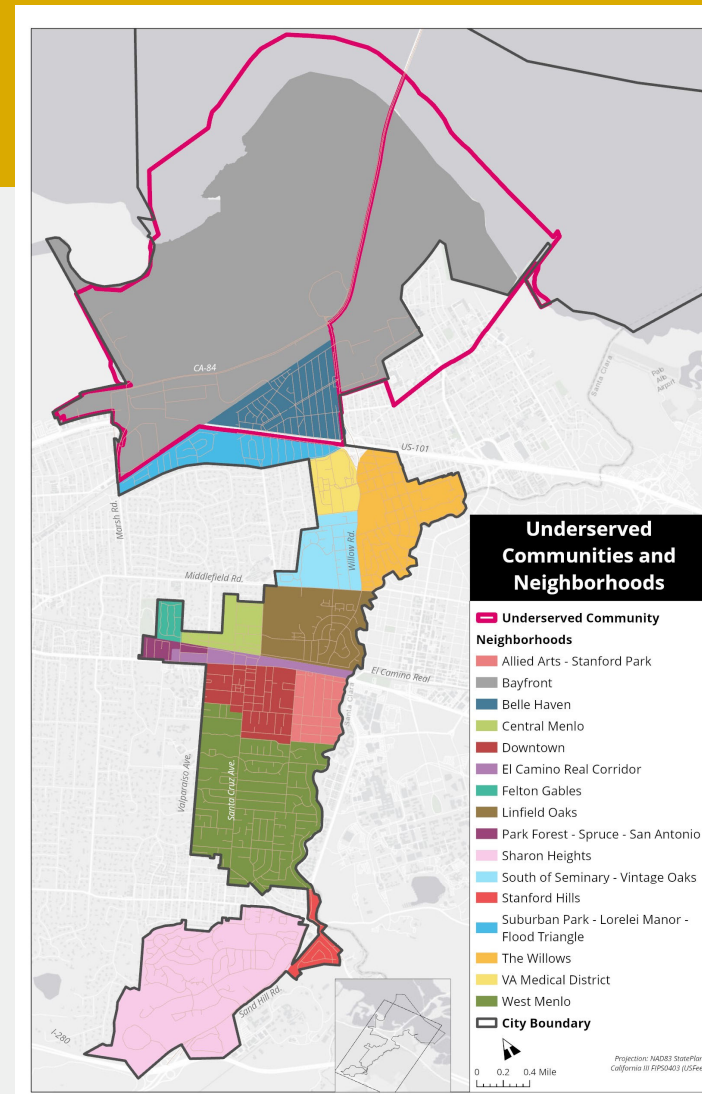


ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
ELEMENT



Background

- Sept. 2024: Menlo Park's first General Plan EJ Element adopted
- Over 15 community outreach and engagement events, and additional digital outreach
- Focused EJ efforts for the Belle Haven and Bayfront neighborhoods





Improving Social Determinants of Health

The EJ Element:

- Identified underserved communities
- Undertook extensive outreach
- Developed a policy and reporting framework to address EJ needs (Action Guide)
- Seeks to address/improve social determinants of health





Community Identified Priorities

Priority #1:

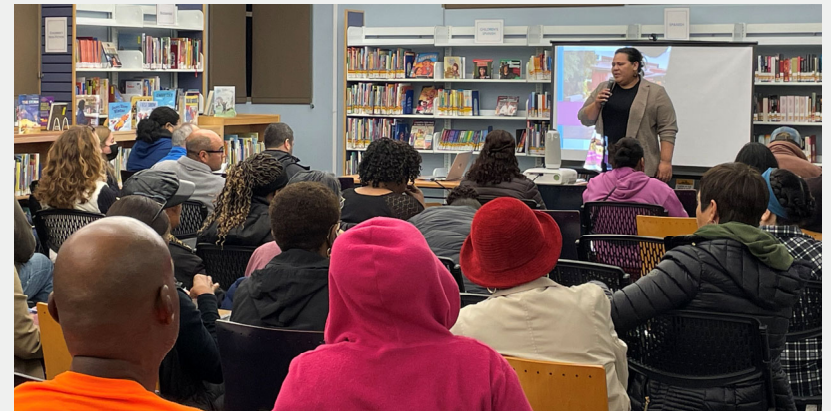
Provide safe, sanitary, and stable homes

Priority #2:

Promote access to high quality and affordable food

Priority #3:

Reduce pollution exposure and improve air quality





Fiscal year 2024-25 highlights

- EJ Element Implementation Fund
- Anti-Displacement Strategy development
- Outreach events with housing resources
- Collaborating with nonprofits and supporting veterans



Community Development Department staff at the Love Our Earth Festival, April 2024



Oak Gardens groundbreaking at 795 Willow Road, February 2025



Fiscal year 2024-25 highlights

- Climate Action Plan implementation with air quality education and outreach
- Planting new trees along US-101 sound walls and in Belle Haven
- Providing equitable access to Belle Haven Community Campus (BHCC) programs
- Completing Belle Haven Traffic Calming Project
- Launching EJ Element webpage



Front terrace of BHCC



New webpage: menlopark.gov/EJElement

Environmental Justice (EJ) Element

In 2024, following three years of community outreach and engagement with a focus on meeting people where they are and empowering the voices of Menlo Park's underserved Belle Haven and Bayfront communities, the City of Menlo Park adopted its first General Plan Environmental Justice (EJ) Element.

Through an inclusive, intentional, and equitable planning process with over 15 outreach and engagement events, and additional digital outreaches over a span of three years, the Menlo Park community together created an action-oriented plan that is intended to evolve with and for the community over time.

The community identified three top priorities for advancing EJ: Priority #1: Provide Safe, Sanitary, and Stable Homes; Priority #2: Promote Access to High Quality and Affordable Food; and Priority #3: Reduce Pollution Exposure and Improve Air Quality. The City looks forward to continually engaging and working with the community to implement the community-identified priorities and actions, which better positions Menlo Park for a stronger, more resilient, and equitable future.



[Click here to view the Environmental Justice Element](#)

Click on the priority tiles below to learn more about highlighted goals, policies, programs, and action items to advance EJ, described below:

- **Goals:** Broad actions to pursue to work toward EJ
- **Policies:** Focused principles to guide decision-making
- **Programs:** Precise steps to further policies and goals
- **Action Items:** Additional details from community-based feedback on preferred methods to fulfill programs

Priority 1: Provide safe, sanitary, and stable homes

EJ Element Goal 5

Priority 2: Promote access to high quality and affordable food

EJ Element Goal 4

Priority 3: Reduce pollution exposure and improve air quality

EJ Element Goal 2

Click on the priority tiles below to learn more about highlighted goals, policies, programs, and action items to advance EJ, described below:

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Priority 1: Provide safe, sanitary, and stable homes

EJ Element Goal 5

Priority 2: Promote access to high quality and affordable food

EJ Element Goal 4

Priority 3: Reduce pollution exposure and improve air quality

EJ Element Goal 2

See the EJ Element Action Guide drop down menu below for the full matrix of all EJ Element goals, policies, programs, and action items.

What is Environmental Justice? +

EJ Element Action Guide +

Project History +

Contact us +

Share     



Implementation approach

- Collaborate across City departments with support from community-based organizations
- Provide annual progress report – March 24 and March 25
- Scope funding opportunities for priority programs and actions



EJ and Safety Elements Introduction Workshop



Looking forward: Provide safe, sanitary, and stable homes

- Developing Anti-Displacement Strategy
- Conducting outreach to connect residents with resources



Community members receiving info. at the Housing Resource Fair at Ivy Plaza in Belle Haven, 2024

Looking forward: Promote access to high quality and affordable food



- Outreach regarding food assistance programs
- Support community gardens and seek opportunities to increase healthy food access



Community members being served at the Black Liberation Month event, 2025

Looking forward: Reduce pollution exposure & improve indoor air quality



- Implement the City's Climate Action Plan
- Conduct air quality education and outreach
- Collaborate with partners for electrification
- Plant trees while continuing to pursue an urban forest management plan



Electric vehicle chargers installed with green infrastructure to promote zero emission vehicles and stormwater protection



Electrifying homes with heat pumps providing air conditioning and heating



Next steps and discussion

- Annual progress report review
 - March 24, Planning Commission
 - March 25, City Council
- Feedback on top programs for fiscal year 2025-26



City of Menlo Park staff, 2024



Priority Setting for Fiscal Year 2025-26



Overview of priority setting

- Select top four to five priorities
- Acknowledge City operations and delivery of basic services is the primary focus for majority of City staff
- Elevate top priorities in City communications to tell our story as a community
- Use top priorities to inform budget development and create a City Council priorities work plan
- Ensure ongoing transparency and reporting on progress



Current fiscal year 2024-25 priorities

- Climate action – mitigation, adaptation, resilience
- Emergency and disaster preparedness
- Housing
- Safe routes

Website: menlopark.gov/priorities



City Council discussion: Fiscal year 2025-26 priorities

- Do current priorities still apply?
- Should an additional priority be added to create five top priorities?



Downtown: Street closures

Stephen Stolte, Assistant City Manager & Fran Dehn, Interim Economic
Development Manager



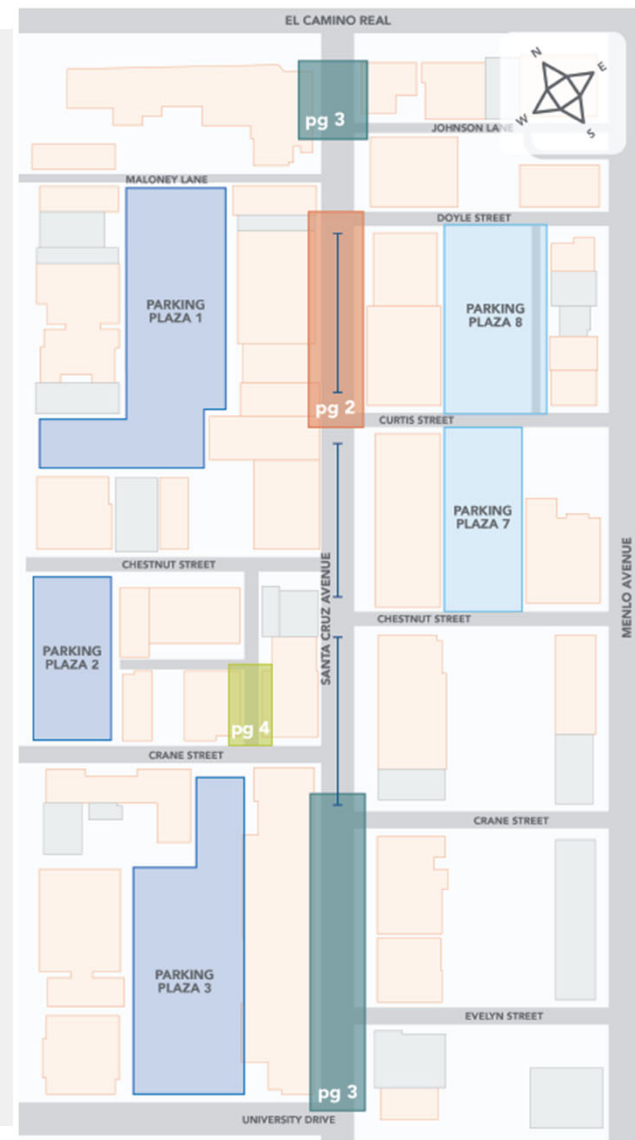
Downtown workshop topic

- Request at City Council meeting on Feb. 11 by Mayor Combs to discuss Santa Cruz Avenue street closure
 - Direction to discuss at City Council workshop
- Overall downtown topic for workshop:
 - Downtown overview maps
 - Street closures on Ryans Lane and Santa Cruz Avenue
 - Outdoor dining update



Downtown maps

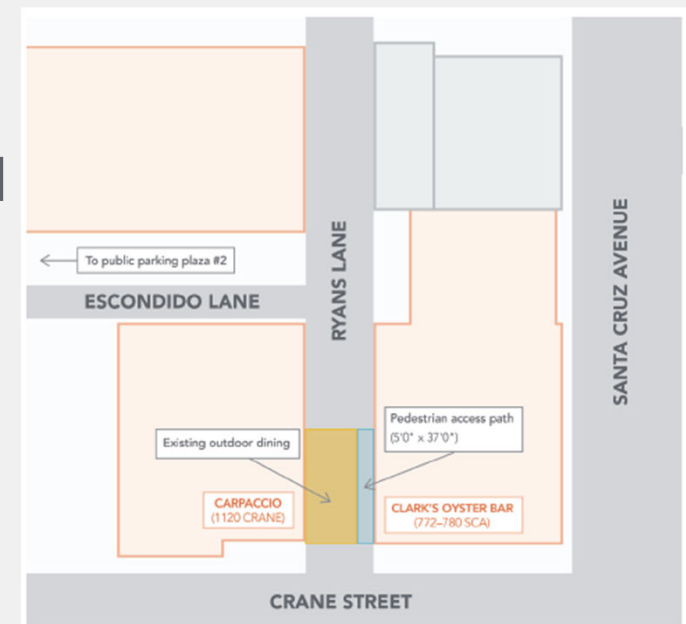
- Four maps provide layout of:
 - Ryans Lane short-term closure
 - 600 block of Santa Cruz Avenue closure
 - Outdoor dining areas
 - City-owned parking plazas 1, 2, 3, 7, 8
 - Medians on Santa Cruz Avenue from El Camino Real to Crane Street – irrigation repair and replanting





Downtown – Ryans Lane closure and outdoor dining

- Oct. 10, 2023: City Council adopted resolution to approve short-term closure of Ryans Lane between Crane Street and Escondido Lane for temporary outdoor dining by Carpaccio until end of construction by Clark's Oyster Bar
- City manager extended closure due to construction timeline
- Clark's Oyster Bar indicates mid-April target for major construction completion





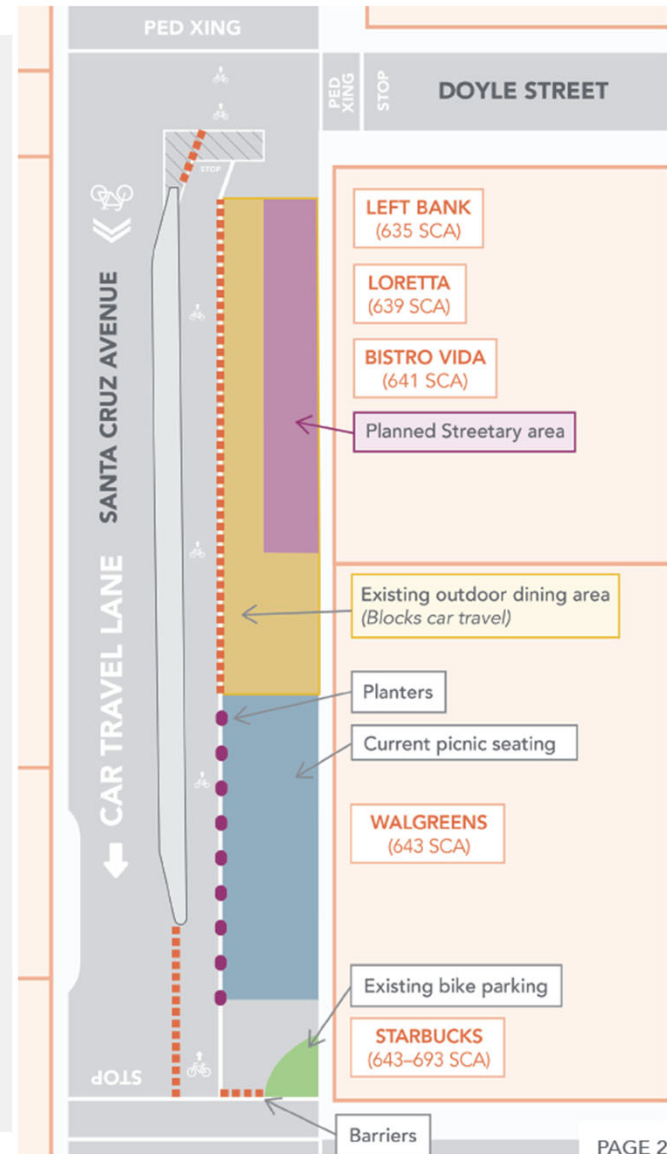
Downtown – Santa Cruz Avenue closure

- Aug. 29, 2023: City Council adopted resolution to close Santa Cruz Avenue between Curtis and Doyle Streets (600 block) for expanded outdoor dining in travel lane and enhanced outdoor communal space
- City installed bike lane and indicated it would research and potentially install improved outdoor furniture in outdoor picnic seating area



Downtown – outdoor dining update

- 600 block of Santa Cruz Avenue:
 - Left Bank, Loretta, and Bistro Vida will withdraw from travel lane to original outdoor dining footprints/business frontage





City Council discussion

- Ryans Lane closure after Clark's Oyster Bar occupancy
- Santa Cruz Avenue closure
- Plans for outdoor picnic seating area



Next steps

- Final workshop report
- Fiscal year 2025-26 work plan
- Fiscal year 2025-26 budget development based on top priorities and EJ Element
- Menlo Park priorities webpage





Thank you!