



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: 2/11/2025
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Locations: Teleconference and
City Council Chambers
751 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

Regular Session

A. Call To Order

Vice Mayor Nash called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Combs (Remote – Brown Act, arrived at 6:34 p.m.), Nash, Schmidt, Taylor, Wise
Absent: None
Staff: City Manager Justin Murphy, Assistant City Manager Stephen Stolte, City Attorney Nira Doherty, Assistant to the City Manager/ City Clerk Judi A. Herren

C. Agenda Review

None.

D. Public Comment

- Will Oursler spoke in support of affordable housing on Downtown parking plazas.
- Vasile Oros spoke in opposition of high density housing on Downtown parking plazas.
- Collette spoke in support of transparency, planning and timing for housing sites.
- Bill Kirsch spoke in support of slow street initiatives on Middle Avenue and on concerns to the traffic impacts on Partridge Avenue (Attachment).
- Mary Seaton spoke in opposition of high-density housing on Downtown parking plazas and in support of housing on the civic center site.
- Carmen Caricchio spoke in opposition of high-density housing on Downtown parking plazas.

DI. Presentations and Proclamations

E1. Certificate of Recognition – Menlo School Boys Cross Country Team

Menlo Cross Country and Track and Field Assistant Director Miles Bennett-Smith made the presentation (Attachment).

E2. Proclamation: Black History Month (Attachment)

- Jenny Michel spoke in support of honoring Black History.

Vice Mayor Nash introduced the proclamation.

F. Consent Calendar

- F1. Consider and adopt a resolution to authorize the city manager to execute the primary grant agreement with the San Mateo County Transportation Authority for future Measures A and W funding (Staff Report #25-013-CC)
- F2. Waive the second reading and adopt an ordinance to amend Chapter 12.18 of Title 12 (Buildings and Construction) of the Menlo Park Municipal Code to adopt local amendments to the 2022 California Building Standards Code 2024 (Staff Report #25-014-CC)
- F3. Consider and adopt a resolution supporting the City's application for the San Mateo County Transportation Authority Shuttle Program fiscal years 2025-26 and 2026-27 and authorize the city manager to enter into funding agreements (Staff Report #25-015-CC)

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

G. Study Session

- G1. Consideration of needs analysis and potential strategies to enhance enrollment and financial sustainability at City-run preschool facilities (Staff Report #25-017-CC)

Library and Community Services Director Sean Reinhart, Library and Community Services Manager Natalya Jones, Library and Community Services Supervisor Kira Storms and consultants Tricia Singleton and Katherine Carter made the presentation (Attachment).

- Collette requested clarification on preschool curriculum.

The City Council received clarification on curricula offered at both city preschools, factors impacting enrollment, licensing and staffing for infant care impacts on enrollment, teacher-to-child ratios for cost benefit analysis, hours of operation, city's role to provide child care services, neighboring city non-profit arrangements, staff input on survey and focus groups, timeline to train staff in infant care and child care services affordability.

The City Council discussed investing in children, consideration of employees returning to workplaces in person, costs and revenues and grants, recently passed local measures and funding options, demand and need for child care services compared to the capacity, increased quality of education and nutrition and collaboration with schools and teachers for cost sharing.

The City Council directed staff to proceed with the following recommendations:

- Enhance consumer awareness of city-run preschools through marketing techniques.
- Create more flexible scheduling options at Menlo Children's Center (MCC).
- Explore options to provide care to 2-year-olds at Belle Haven Child Development Center.
- Explore options for increasing slots for 18-month-olds at MCC.
- Explore partnering with schools for cost sharing.
- Prepare analyses to enhance understanding of the City's subsidy costs to run its preschools.
- Return with additional analysis and recommendations in the context of the fiscal year 2025-26 budget deliberations.

H. Regular Business

- H1. Receive and file the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024 (Staff Report #25-016-CC)

Administrative Services Director Brittany Mello made the presentation (Attachment).

- Collette requested clarification on fiscal year 2024-25 budget for affordable housing projects.

The City Council received clarification on current budget for affordable housing projects, risk areas, exposures and potential subsidy areas, grant-funded projects and revenues.

ACTION: Motion and second (Schmidt/ Wise), to receive and file the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, passed unanimously.

I. Informational Items

- I1. City Council agenda topics: February – March 2025 (Staff Report #25-020-CC)
- I2. Preliminary review of City-owned buildings leased to third parties (Staff Report #25-018-CC)
- I3. Accela Civic Platform update (Staff Report #25-019-CC)
- I4. Update on the City's Five Year Street Maintenance Plan (Staff Report #25-021-CC)

- Ross Silverstein spoke in support incorporating complete streets initiatives and Vision Zero implementation during street resurfacing.
- Kevin Rennie spoke in support incorporating complete streets initiatives and Vision Zero implementation during street resurfacing.

- I5. Parks and Recreation Commission recommendation for the aquatics program including to temporarily suspend the minimum operating hours requirement at Belle Haven Pool (Staff Report #25-022-CC)

J. City Council Initiated Items

- J1. Request by Mayor Combs for a future agenda topic (Staff Report #25-023-CC)

Mayor Combs introduced the item.

- Collette requested clarification on the initial street closure and expectations.
- Kevin Rennie spoke in support of retaining the partial closure of Santa Cruz Avenue.
- Alex Beltramo spoke in support of reopening Santa Cruz Avenue.

The City Council discussed the strategy for closing and reopening Santa Cruz Avenue, preserving the public gathering spot, a Downtown economic study and the consideration of the topic during the City Council priority and goal setting workshop.

ACTION: Motion and second (Wise/ Nash), to include the consideration of the Santa Cruz Avenue closure at the City Council's annual priority and goal setting process, passed unanimously.

K. City Manager Report

City Manager Murphy reported out on upcoming storm with heavy rain and winds and the upcoming Menlo Park Fire Protection District CERT training.

L. City Councilmember Reports

None.

M. Adjournment

Vice Mayor Nash adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Assistant to the City Manager/ City Clerk Judi Herren

These minutes were approved at the City Council meeting March 25, 2025.

Certificate of Recognition

Presented to

Menlo School Boys Cross Country Team

*State Championship Winners and
15th Place in Nike Cross Nationals*

Presented February 11, 2025



Betsy Nash

Betsy Nash, Vice Mayor
City of Menlo Park

Proclamation

BLACK HISTORY MONTH FEBRUARY 2025

WHEREAS, during Black History Month we honor the cultural significance and impactful history of Black and African Americans, recognizing that our society's rich diversity is one of our greatest strengths; and

WHEREAS, Black history is American history, and Black Americans and African Americans, from the Revolutionary War through the abolitionist movement, to marches from Selma to Montgomery and across America today, have always fought tirelessly for freedom, equal rights and justice for all persons; and

WHEREAS, as we rejoice in the victories won by Black and African Americans throughout our history who believed in the idea of a just and fair America, we remember that, throughout that history, our collective success as a people has been driven by bold individuals who were willing to speak out and change the status quo; and

WHEREAS, during Black History Month, we must recommit ourselves to a fair and inclusive democracy in which all persons are respected, valued equally and able to exist in their communities without the fear of persecution, discrimination and prejudice; and,

WHEREAS, the year's theme, Black Americans and labor, focuses on the various and profound ways that work and working of all kinds – free and unfree, skilled and unskilled, vocational and voluntary – intersect with the collective experiences of Black people, and highlights the innumerable contributions of Black business owners, laborers, CEO's, entrepreneurs, craftspeople, artisans and others whose profound impact in building and shaping our nation cannot be overstated; and

WHEREAS, on February 8, the City of Menlo Park held its third annual Black Liberation Month Celebration at the Belle Haven Community Campus, which included cultural entertainment, live music and dance performances, spoken word presentations, youth presentations and more, and celebrated local business owners as well as those working in Belle Haven and neighboring communities; and

WHEREAS, throughout February, the City is hosting several other programs in celebration of Black History Month, including a presentation on Black country music on February 12 and Black History trivia night on February 28, more information available at menlopark.gov/calendar; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED I, Betsy Nash, Mayor of the City of Menlo Park, hereby proclaim and celebrate February 2025 as Black History Month in Menlo Park. May we all take time this month to honor the culture, history and contributions of Black and African Americans in our city, community, state, nation and the world.



Betsy Nash
Betsy Nash, Vice Mayor
February 11, 2025

PARTRIDGE @ UNIVERSITY



PARTRIDGE @ EL CAMINO





PRESCHOOL NEEDS ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIES

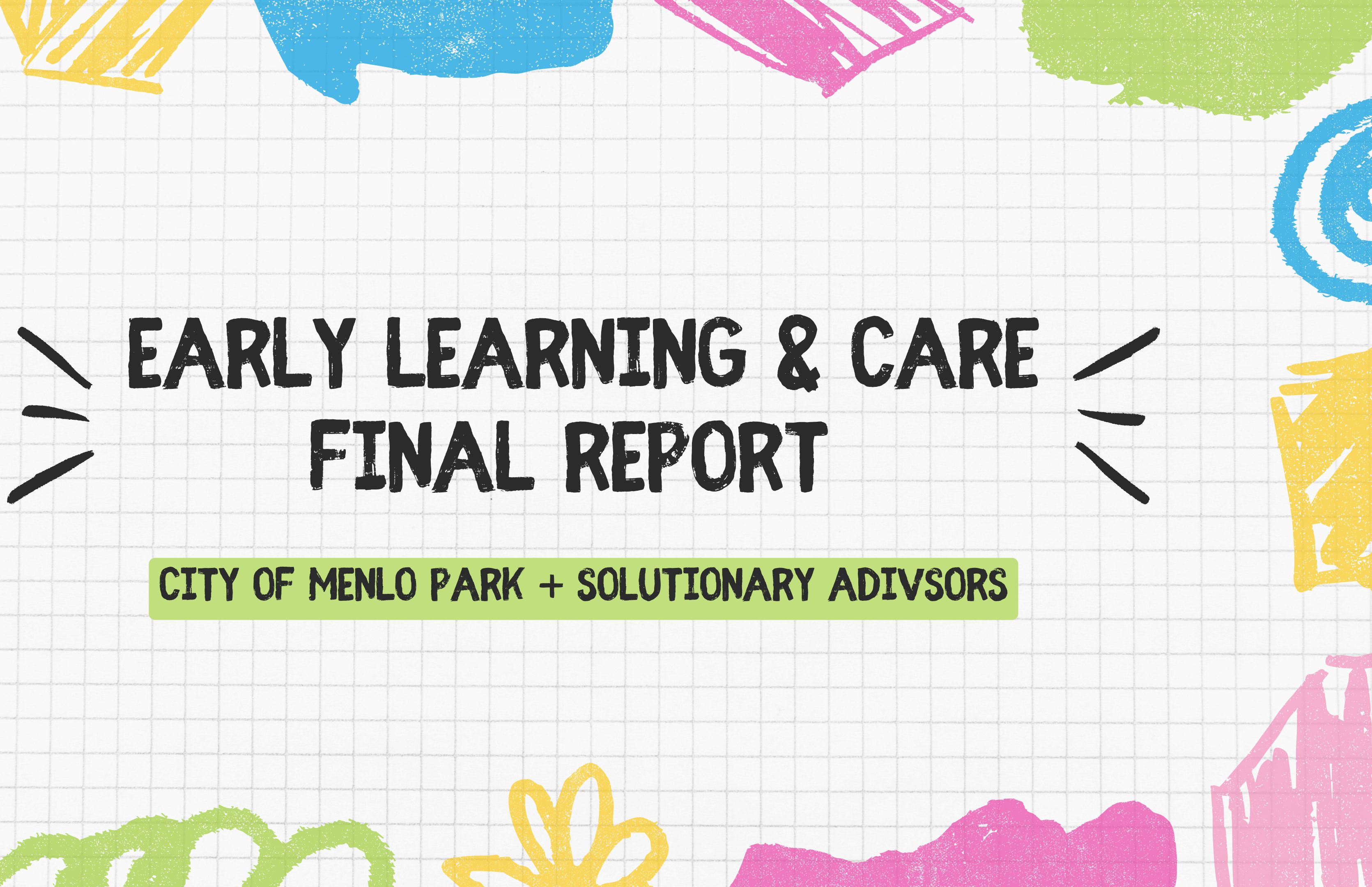
City Council, February 11, 2025



RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that City Council:

1. Review the childcare needs analysis report about potential strategies to enhance enrollment and financial sustainability at City-run preschool facilities (Attachment A)
2. Provide direction to City staff on which of the potential strategies to develop for additional City Council review and potential implementation
3. Staff anticipates bringing back City Council's identified implementation strategies for City Council review in the context of the fiscal year 2025-26 budget deliberations.



EARLY LEARNING & CARE FINAL REPORT

CITY OF MENLO PARK + SOLUTIONARY ADIVSORS

SOLUTIONARY ADVISORS TEAM



Erik Burmeister has 25 years of experience in education, including as Superintendent of Menlo Park School District. He is a nationally recognized expert in using human-centered design to lead systemic change.



Katherine Carter is an accomplished educational reformer and school designer with over 25 years of experience as a teacher, principal, and central office leader from Preschool to 12th grade.



Tricia Singleton has 20+ years of global youth organization senior leadership experience focusing on strategic planning, program design, operations, and project management.



Marissa McGee has over 15 years of experience in the education sector. Growing up in the Belle Haven neighborhood and being a Kindergarten teacher bring insight to this project. She is the author of the children's book, *Free the Curls*.

GOALS & OUTCOMES

DRIVING QUESTION

How might the City of Menlo Park's early care and learning programs better meet the evolving needs of the community while ensuring the financial sustainability of the programs?



METHODOLOGY

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

1. Contextual & historical analysis and forecasting for early care.
2. Early learning services ecosystem review and analysis.
3. City-designed and executed early learning and care needs survey.
4. Community coalition building.
5. Comprehensive Analysis, Report, and Potential Strategies

1

Preparation

- Define project goals and plan
- Gather initial historical/contextual data
- Create survey and interview questions
- Schedule interviews with stakeholders

2

Research & Feedback

- MCC and BHCDC Staff & Families
- Local Preschool Directors
- Demographics, WFH, Pandemic & TK
- Childcare advocates

3

Analysis & Recommendations

- Analyze historical & contextual data
- Compile survey, interview, focus group findings
- Identify critical factors for action
- Develop data-driven recommendations

PRESCHOOL LANDSCAPE

What factors have changed the preschool landscape across the Bay Area, California, and nationally?

NATIONAL, STATE AND COUNTY CONTEXT



Universal TK for 4-year olds and eventually 3-year olds is the most significant factor impacting preschool enrollment.

COVID-19 pandemic is still having a financial and societal impact on preschools and families.

Remote work is continuing to shift the childcare needs and choices of young families.

Birth rates are declining in San Mateo County and Menlo Park.

County wide initiatives are taking place to support early care.

LOCAL DATA ANALYSIS

How have the broader factors impacted preschool in Menlo Park and adjacent communities?

MENLO PARK EARLY LEARNING FINDINGS

METHODOLOGY

Community Needs Survey

627 respondents, 413 comments

Preschool Director Interviews

10 local schools

Center Staff & Family Focus Groups

30 people in 4 groups

Community Childcare Advocates

San Mateo County, Community Equity Collaborative, Ravenswood ECE Collaborative

COMMON THEMES

Affordability

Flexible Scheduling

Infant Care

Toddler Care

Communication of Quality

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

Based on the analysis, what are the high-leverage strategies that the City of Menlo Park should consider to increase enrollment & meet the community's expressed needs?

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES BASED ON COMMUNITY NEEDS

1

Affordability

- Sliding scale fees
- Discounts for City employees and educators
- Cooperative Care

3

Toddler and Infant Care

- Open space for 2-year olds
- Open space for 18-mo-olds
- Add infant care

2

Flexible Scheduling

- Schedule choice
- Drop in care

4

Communicating Quality Care

- Update website
- Community Events
- Marketing materials
- City Channel marketing

1 AFFORDABILITY

STRATEGY	BHCDC	MCC	IMPACT	EFFORT	TIME FRAME
Create sliding scale fee assistance for middle-income	X	X	High	High	Mid-term
Institute discounts for city employees and educators		X	Low	Medium	Mid-term
Create a “cooperative” childcare option		X	Medium	High	Long-term

2 FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

STRATEGY	BHCDC	MCC	IMPACT	EFFORT	TIME FRAME
Allow families to choose days/schedules		X	High	Medium	Short-term
Earlier drop off and later pick-up	X	X	Medium	High	Mid-term

3 TODDLER AND INFANT CARE

STRATEGY	BHCDC	MCC	IMPACT	EFFORT	TIME FRAME
Open space for 2-year-olds	X	X	High	High	Mid term
Open space for 18-month-olds	X	X	High	High	Mid term
Add infant care	X	X	High	High	Long term

4 COMMUNICATING QUALITY CARE

STRATEGY	BHCDC	MCC	IMPACT	EFFORT	TIME FRAME
Update the website	X	X	Medium	Low	Short-term
Host community events	X	X	Medium	Medium	Short-term
Update marketing material	X	X	Medium	Low	Short-term
Utilize existing city channels to “tell the story”	X	X	Medium	Low	Short-term

NEXT STEPS

How will the City of Menlo Park measure “success” and what continuous improvement steps will assist the City in achieving its goals?



WHAT'S NEXT

- Select strategies for implementation
- Determine budgetary and staffing impact
- Set goals and determine success metrics
- Implement selected strategies
- Review progress towards goal
- Adjust as needed



CITY COUNCIL DIRECTION SOUGHT

Staff seeks City Council direction on which potential strategies to further develop for potential implementation:

- A. Create more flexible scheduling options at MCC
- B. Enhance consumer awareness of City-run preschools through marketing techniques
- C. Create a sliding scale that provides tuition assistance to middle-income families who do not qualify for other income-based tuition assistance
- D. Institute discounts for city employees and local educators
- E. Create a “cooperative” childcare option for some families
- F. Expand to provide care to 2-year-olds at BHCCDC
- G. Increase slots for 18-month-olds at MCC
- H. Add infant care (younger than 18 months) at MCC and/or BHCCDC.



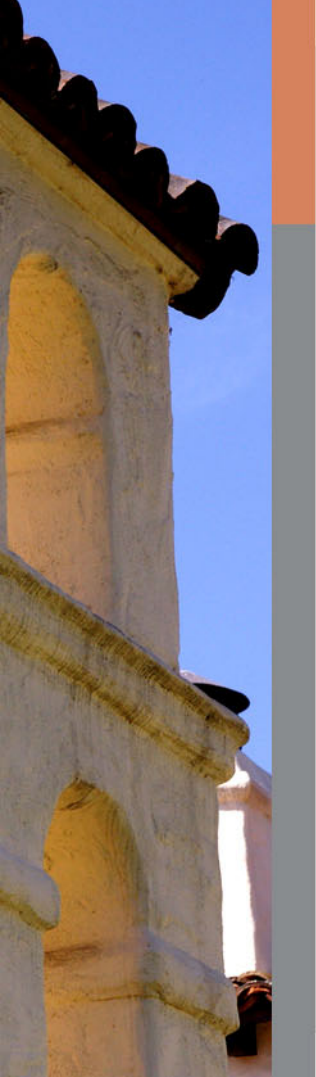
THANK YOU





**FISCAL YEAR 2023-24 ANNUAL
COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REPORT**
Brittany Mello, Administrative Services Director





AGENDA

- ACFR overview
- Basics of fund accounting
- Types of funds
- Revenues and expenditures
- Citywide financial overview



WHAT IS AN ACFR?



- The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, or ACFR, provides a complete overview of the City's financial operations and financial position
- The content and format of the ACFR follows the required principles and standards of accounting and financial reporting adopted by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP)



WHAT IS AN ACFR?



- City staff prepare the financial statements each fiscal year and then an independent accounting firm audits the statements
 - Fiscal year runs from July 1 – June 30
 - The City's current auditor is the Pun Group, LLP



WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A BUDGET AND AUDIT?



- The annual budget is a **spending plan** that outlines anticipated revenues and expenses for the upcoming fiscal year
- The annual audit is a review of the **actual results** of the prior fiscal year's financial activities



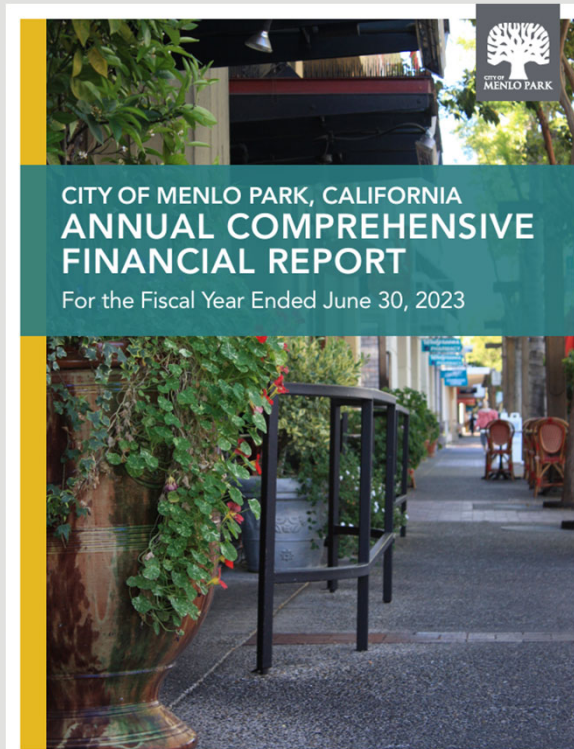
ACFR OVERVIEW



1. Introductory Section (unaudited)
 - Transmittal Letter
2. Financial Section
 - Independent Auditor’s Report
 - Management’s Discussion and Analysis (unaudited)
 - Basic Financial Statements
 - Notes to the Basic Financial Statements
 - Required Supplementary Information (unaudited)
 - Supplementary Information
3. Statistical Section (unaudited)



PRIOR YEAR ACFR RECEIVED GFOA AWARD



Government Finance Officers Association

Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

Presented to

**City of Menlo Park
California**

For its Annual Comprehensive
Financial Report
For the Fiscal Year Ended

June 30, 2023

Christopher P. Morill

Executive Director/CEO





INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT



- After reviewing the City’s financial statements, the Pun Group rendered an **unmodified or clean opinion** that the financial statements...
“present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the City, as of June 30, 2024, and the respective changes in financial position, and, where applicable, cash flows thereof...”
- An unmodified or clean opinion is the most common and desirable opinion an auditor can render



BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



- Government-wide Financial Statements
 - Statement of Net Position
 - Statement of Activities
- Fund Financial Statements
 - Governmental Funds
 - Proprietary Funds
 - Fiduciary Funds
- Notes to the Financial Statements



BASICS OF FUND ACCOUNTING



- Governments employ fund accounting and all funds are combined to create the City's total budget
- Funds are separate “pots of money” set up to track resources for specific purposes
- The source of money determines how it can be spent (i.e., whether it is restricted or unrestricted)
- Each fund is maintained individually with separate accounting



FUND DESCRIPTIONS

Fund Types	Description
General Fund	City's primary operating fund, reserve policy, unrestricted revenue sources
Special Revenue Funds	Revenues restricted to a specific purpose
Capital Project Funds	Revenues restricted to acquire or construct capital facilities
Enterprise Funds	Revenues from charges to users for services provides, similar to a private business
Internal Service Funds	Tracks goods or services provided to other departments for reimbursement and allocates overhead and shared items
Debt Service Funds	Revenues collected to pay for debt payments
Fiduciary Fund	City acts as fiduciary on behalf of others

OVERVIEW OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES



- Revenue categories
 - Taxes – Property tax, sales tax, transient occupancy tax
 - User fees / rates
 - Grants
- Expenditure categories
 - Current
 - Personnel – Wages, retirement, fringe benefits
 - Operating – Materials / supplies, professional services, utilities, internal service fund contributions, etc.
 - Capital outlay – Equipment purchases, construction costs, depreciation and amortization
 - Debt service – principal and interest, fiscal charges
 - Transfers to other funds



NET POSITION



- Overall indicator of the City's financial health across all funds
- Reflects the total revenues versus expenditures for the City
 - Includes increases in non-liquid assets and unrealized investment gains
 - Includes restricted revenues, such as special revenue sources
- Net position as of a single point in time
- As of June 30, 2024, the City's net position increased by \$34.3 million to \$597.3 million



GENERAL FUND



- As the City's primary operating fund, it is helpful to look at the health of the General Fund as well
- General Fund
 - \$ 76.5 million in revenues
 - \$ 73.8 million in expenditures
 - \$ 2.7 million increase to the fund balance
- Fund Balance
 - Starting fund balance: \$34.6 million
 - Ending fund balance: \$37.3 million



FUND BALANCE OF THE GENERAL FUND

Category	Definition	Amount
Nonspendable	Items that are not able to be spent. Examples could include prepaid items, inventories, loans receivable, etc.	\$ 0.6 million
Restricted	Items that are subject to external legal restrictions. Examples could include debt covenants, grantors, other-governmental laws or regulations, etc.	--
Committed	Items that are constrained by governing body direction (i.e., by City Council resolution). The City Council has established three reserves that fall into this category: Emergency contingency, economic stabilization and strategic pension funding.	\$ 28.3 million
Assigned	Items that are intended for a specific purpose. The City Council and the City Manager are authorized to assign fund balance. Examples could include debt service, special projects, etc.	\$ 1.3 million
Unassigned	The amount remaining that does not fall into one of the above categories.	\$ 7.1 million



ONLINE ACCESS



Visit menlopark.gov/acfr to review the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024



THANK YOU