



## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL AND  
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

**FROM:** LARRY A. PATTERSON, CITY MANAGER

**PREPARED BY:** PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

**MEETING DATE:** JUNE 16, 2014

**SUBJECT:** CENTRAL PARK MASTER PLAN PUBLIC OUTREACH FINDINGS

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### RECOMMENDATION

Review and provide direction on the Central Park Master Plan public outreach findings and preferred planning concepts to incorporate into Schematic Design alternatives.

### BACKGROUND

In January 2014 the City Council approved a contract with RRM Design Group to prepare an updated master plan for Central Park. The existing master plan dates from 1982 and is no longer adequate to meet the current and future needs of park users. The scope of work includes the following major tasks:

- 1: Research and Analysis
- 2: Community Outreach and Public Participation
- 3: Schematic Design Alternatives
- 4: Preferred Master Plan and Environmental Document Preparation
- 5: Final Master Plan Adoption

The consultants have completed task items 1 and 2 and before proceeding with the development of schematic design alternatives, it is important to seek direction from the City Council and the Park and Recreation Commission on which of the many suggestions, opportunities or concerns that were expressed by the public are considered by the consultant when developing the Schematic Design alternatives.

The Research and Analysis phase consisted of a complete review of all relevant background data including the following: historical setting and context; 1982 Master Plan; 2004 Design

Charrette Summary; Downtown San Mateo Plan; available infrastructure data, maps and as-builts for electrical, sewer, storm drain, and irrigation systems; and structural assessments of existing park buildings and the Central Park Tennis Court garage. RRM staff, their sub consultants and relevant city staff members also spent many hours on site performing visual inspections and better understanding how program spaces are being used and how they relate to each other.

Following the kick off meeting with staff RRM developed the public participation and outreach schedule that was rolled out over a period of 4 months (February-May). A variety of methods was used to encourage participation in the various forums. A Facebook page was created and we encouraged residents to sign up as members of the Central Park Notify Me list serve. Questions and topics were posted on the City's Town Hall site to supplement information received at the workshops. Direct mailing of project meeting post cards occurred to the surrounding residents and businesses and workshop posters were placed throughout the park. The DMSA also mailed meeting notices to all businesses on their mailing list.

The list of public outreach opportunities is listed below. As summarized in **Attachment 1** (Public Outreach Findings) and as will be reviewed by the consultants at the June 16 meeting, each session was intended to focus on a different topic and ideally, attract a different mix of community members. In total, approximately 250 people have participated to date.

- Stakeholder Meetings**-15 interviews with those who represent the primary user groups of the park and others who have a vested interest in the outcome of the Master Plan
- Workshop #1**-Master Plan Goals and Objectives
- Focus Group #1**-5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Edge and Connection to the Downtown
- Focus Group #2**-Laurel and Ninth Avenue Edges adjacency to neighbors
- Focus Group #3**-Children's Play Area
- Focus Group #4**-Meeting with DSMA and Connection to the Downtown

Each of these forums was intentionally structured differently in order to solicit as many comments as possible and to work towards identifying any common themes. For example, in Workshop #1, participants were divided into five break out groups and then lead through a brainstorming session to identify goals and objectives and a list of desirable features. For Focus Group #1 in addition to a brainstorming session, participants were also asked to prioritize thematic concepts that were generated from the 2004 Design Charrette that best accomplished the goal of strengthening the connection between Central Park and Downtown. Focus Groups #2 and #4 were structured as more informal conversations, seeking to gather individual perspectives and ideas.

The public outreach process also included a survey posted on the Town Hall site that consolidated the priority Park Planning Objectives and Concepts. Respondents were asked to check as many of the concepts they support, i.e. incorporate more art into park spaces and facilities, consider moving tennis courts, etc. Approximately 50 people provided input.

As a result of the multitude of ideas and comments generated during the public outreach process, RRM has identified seven master plan objectives and fifteen planning concepts (topics and areas of study) that we are seeking comment and direction on from the City Council and Park and Recreation Commission. The seven master plan objectives are:

- Maintain and enhance open space
- Preserve and enhance the historic character
- Create a more open park-like feel along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- Strengthen the physical and visual connection between the park and the downtown
- Provide a variety of passive and active uses
- Enhance bike and pedestrian access
- Provide uses and spaces for multiple generations and demographics

The fifteen Planning Concepts are:

- Incorporate a fountain as a focal point
- Incorporate art and historical and educational exhibits into spaces and facilities
- Create plaza/gather space near 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- Increase/add performance areas, e.g. movies, dance, etc.
- Enlarge and relocate Central Recreation Center within park
- Make 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue/San Mateo Drive area pedestrian friendly and more open
- Improve gateways to park
- Move bleachers (rotate field)
- Reduce size of bleachers to open view into park
- Relocate tennis courts away from 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue (potentially to alternative site)
- Increase parking (below grade)
- Distribute parking (less central)
- Expand park (land acquisition)
- Explore new locations and configurations for playground
- Explore future of park along Laurel Avenue

The context of the City Council and Park and Recreation Commission discussion should focus on addressing the following:

- 1) Are you supportive of the seven master plan objectives? Based upon your read of the public outreach findings, are there others that should be added?
- 2) Which of the fifteen planning concepts are you supportive of? Based upon your read of the public outreach findings, are there other areas of study that should be added?

The direction provided by the City Council and Park and Recreation Commission will guide the next step in the master planning process which is the development of alternative schematic

design concepts that will then be reviewed by the public. It is important to provide RRM with a set of planning objectives so as to avoid them spending time and effort on concepts that are not of value or importance to the Council and Commission.

Once the alternative concepts are completed they will be presented at the second community workshop and to various City review boards such as the Public Works and Planning Commissions, the Development Review Board and will be brought back to the Council and Park and Recreation Commission at the end of the process with a summary of feedback and comment.

### **BUDGET IMPACT**

Funds to complete the master plan process are currently budgeted in the department's Capital Improvement Program. There are no funds identified for any future improvements that will be suggested as a result of the updated master plan.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

The master plan development is subject to CEQA review. The contract with RRM includes the development of an Environmental Review Document which is anticipated to be a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

### **NOTICE PROVIDED**

In addition to regular City Council and Park and Recreation Commission meeting notification processes, notices were sent to everyone currently enrolled on the Central Park Master Plan Notify Me list. Neighborhood notices were also mailed to everyone within a 500' radius of the park.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Public Outreach Findings

### **STAFF CONTACT**

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# **ATTACHMENT 1**



## Central Park

### **Public Outreach Findings**

Presentation to City Council and Park and Recreation Commission

June 16, 2014

#### **I. Background**

The City of San Mateo selected RRM Design Group to prepare an update to Central Park's Master Plan. City staff and RRM held a kickoff meeting on January 14, 2014 to discuss the goals and objectives of the Master Planning process and plan the public outreach strategy. Staff has worked closely with RRM throughout their interaction with the community. The Master Plan scope of work includes a report to the Park and Recreation Commission and City Council regarding the findings of the initial public meetings. This presentation is intended to provide the Commission and Council a summary of public input and recommendations for the direction of the Master Plan alternatives.

#### **II. Social Media and Public Notice**

The public outreach efforts have included an extensive campaign to encourage participation in the Master Planning process. A Facebook page for the Central Park Master Plan was created, and the City has included a page for the Master Plan on the City's website. The team has also utilized the City's Town Hall site to expand the participation to supplement input received at the workshops. The activity on the Town Hall website has included a series of questions about Central Park, as well as a survey that was available in the park on May 3, 2014. A direct mailing of project meeting postcards to residents and businesses and placement of workshop posters throughout the park has increased involvement by the community near the park. Given Central Park's proximity to downtown, City staff has reached out to the Downtown San Mateo Association to assist with communications to the business community.

#### **III. Stakeholder Meetings**

From February 10-11, 2014, RRM Design Group conducted a series of fifteen stakeholder interviews regarding the Central Park Master Plan update. The purpose of this exercise was to gain insight into the perspectives, desires, and concerns of a wide range of stakeholders and City officials. The list of stakeholders (see page 8), selected by the City, was chosen to represent the primary user groups of the park and other groups or organizations that have a vested interest in the outcome of the Master Plan.

The intent of this summary is to provide you with a sense of the overall trends and themes that emerged throughout the course of the meetings, rather than simply restating them verbatim. Following are our overall impressions, broken into logical categories.

### **Overall Vision for Central Park**

Stakeholder opinions about Central Park clearly expressed it is a highly valued and treasured community asset for its historic character and location. Several people noted how precious the open space is to a dense urban area, and that they would not like to see any reduction in green space. One stakeholder thought that improving the park should be the City's "grand vision," implying that big ideas should be considered. Another stakeholder offered this vision statement – the park should be a "vibrant, vital and engaging multi-functional gathering place for our community." Another person likened the park to the "city's backyard," just as the library is its living room. Finally, another stakeholder stated; "It's a good park. But it could be a spectacular park."

### **Relationship of the Park to Downtown San Mateo**

The need to strengthen the connection between the park and downtown, particularly the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue edge, was a recurring concept and was highly supported by almost everyone. It was noted that the park is an important visual node at the end of downtown, and both the visual and physical connection need improvement. Other comments that reinforced this perception included: "5<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor feels closed off," and "the park has struggled to connect with the downtown."

### **Parking**

Parking emerged as a primary concern. There was general agreement that parking is a necessity, both for the park and the downtown core; however, there was also a reluctance to lose park space to paved parking. There seemed to be a general consensus that the current total number of spaces should be retained, if not increased. Constructing underground parking was suggested, in order to create more space above (such as for a plaza). If there were to be a new parking garage (below grade or otherwise) it should be well designed (e.g., "prestigious parking to match a prestigious park").

### **5th Avenue Corridor**

The 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor was a topic of much discussion as it is seen as a critical component in connecting the park to the downtown business district. Several ideas were brought forward to address this element. It was generally agreed that the tennis courts and baseball bleachers formed a visual and physical barrier to the park. The location of the tennis courts, especially on the visual axis at the end of South San Mateo Drive, was identified as a critical node. Ideas for this location included a new community center with underground parking or a large plaza (e.g., Redwood City Courthouse Square) that would serve as a civic gathering place. Other suggestions were to treat the streetscape as a part of the park, and allow for the street to be closed off for street fairs. The proposed Essex project was also discussed, and people were curious about how it might interface with the park and streetscape.

### **Community Center**

The current lessee of the community center, Self-Help for the Elderly, occupies the building on weekdays and offers a variety of programs and social services to people that are both local and from neighboring cities. Almost everyone supported their mission, although some questioned

whether Central Park is the best location for this use. Several people indicated they thought the center was underutilized for City programs. There were also several big ideas that involved either relocating the building to a more prominent location or expanding it to offer a greater variety of amenities, such as a teen center, and other indoor recreation. Suggested locations for a new community center building included the end of South San Mateo Street (where the tennis courts are), at the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Laurel, and mid-block on Laurel. Several stakeholders referenced the library as a benchmark for significant civic architecture that would be appropriate for a new community/recreation center.

### **Central Lawn**

The central lawn is a popular area, and home to the Central Park Music Series. It functions well in its current state, but there were a few ideas for enhancing it. A potential feature suggested by a couple of stakeholders was a permanent stage with infrastructure (e.g., power, audio) to make concert logistics more efficient. Opinion was divided about making the lawn bigger - some thought the size is a perfect, intimate scale, while others thought a modest expansion towards the playground or the community center would provide greater flexibility for events.

### **Circulation**

Most of the paths in the park are wide enough for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. However, there are a few limitations on vehicular access and circulation that some stakeholders would like to see addressed. These included widening the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue entry, and making the driveway off of Laurel (adjacent to the senior apartment building) more accessible for larger vehicles like fire engines or delivery trucks. Currently the park is typically accessed from 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and making these improvements would provide one or more ingress/egress points to improve flow and functionality. There is also some concern about the potential conflict between pedestrians and vehicles within park (e.g., cars driving to the pump house).

### **Fitzgerald Field**

Not surprisingly, there were contrasting opinions about the ballfield. On one hand, there is clearly a nostalgic fondness for the facility and its charm (several of the stakeholders played baseball there in their youth, and one stated, “it’s the favorite ballfield in town”). Because of its small size and skinned infield, it is currently used more for adult softball than for baseball, although some youth teams still use it for practice and occasional games. On the other hand, we heard comments like, “the ballfield occupies a disproportionate amount of space relative to its users,” and that a ballfield is “not the highest and best use for a central park.” There were suggestions about reducing the size of the bleachers and rotating the field so that the outfield could be conveniently shared for other park uses.

The outfield is also currently used as an off-leash dog area and for occasional festivals/special events - both ideas that were generally supported by the stakeholders.

### **Tennis Courts**

The six (6) tennis courts offer drop-in, lesson, and league play and are programmed by a third-party contractor who utilizes the courts and a small office behind the ceramic studio. All agreed that the courts are in poor condition. Similar to Fitzgerald Field, there were divergent opinions

about the courts. Some thought the courts should be moved to another site altogether because they occupy a large amount of space and are visually obtrusive. Others thought they could be relocated within the park to open up the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor. Supporters of the tennis courts like the downtown location because it offers workers the opportunity for easy lunchtime recreation, and they generally add vibrancy and life to the park. Four (4) courts is the minimum number of courts to operate a tennis program, but seven (7) would be optimal because it is the best number for running tournaments. It is also desirable to make smaller “10-and-Under” courts for teaching kids. This can be achieved by striping a half-sized court perpendicular to the adult court lines.

### **Playground**

Only a few comments were made about the playground. One stakeholder thought there was too much “dead space.” Others were in favor of a significant upgrade to make it a “huge...destination playground.”

## **IV. Community Meetings**

In the past few months, four (4) public meetings were held in order to provide an opportunity for San Mateo residents to be involved in the formative stages of the Master Plan process. The meetings were focused on gathering information from the community that would help form clear goals and objectives regarding the future of Central Park. Many residents elected to attend more than one of the community meetings, but each event saw new attendees. In total, approximately 250 residents have participated to date. Several subsequent meetings will provide opportunities for the community to see how their feedback in part, shaped the Master Plan.

The approach and results of the initial public outreach are summarized below.

### **A. Workshop #1 - Central Park Master Plan Update**

On March 25, 2014, City staff and RRM facilitated the first public workshop with San Mateo residents at the Central Recreation Center in Central Park. Approximately 70 people were in attendance. A presentation of background information and opportunities and constraints was made, and general questions were taken and answered. Following this, the workshop attendees split into five (5) breakout groups and were led through a brainstorming session to identify two basic elements: the goals and objectives (vision) and a list of desirable features (program) for Central Park. Ideas were written on flipcharts, then participants were asked to place colored sticker dots on ideas that were of priority to them. It was made clear to the participants that this dot exercise was not a popular vote, but rather that it would be used to generally gauge community priorities and information to be used by the City in updating the Master Plan. The results of the dot exercise are summarized in Tables 1 and 2, pgs. 9 and 10.

### **B. Focus Group #1 - 5th Avenue Edge**

On April 9, 2014, City staff and RRM facilitated the first focus group meeting at the Central Recreation Center in the park. Approximately 65 people were in attendance. A brief overview of the first workshop was presented for the benefit of those who were not able to attend Workshop #1. RRM then explained to those in attendance that the intent of this focus group was to generate ideas that would **strengthen the connection of Central Park to downtown San Mateo**. As in Workshop

#1, this was done with a breakout session brainstorming exercise. The participants used three (3) colored stickers (weighted to emphasize 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> best concepts) to note the ideas they most supported. They also received a large sticker to weigh in on which of the suggestions from the evening discussions would best improve the connection with downtown. Folks also had an option to explore the effects of moving park features on the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue edge to other areas of the park by sketching or moving magnet puzzle pieces on a board.

Throughout the evening, attendees were encouraged to review the large body of creative work produced by volunteers during the 2004 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue charrette organized by the San Mateo chapter of the American Institute of Architects. RRM identified nine (9) concepts represented in the schematic plans and illustrations prepared and asked focus group participants to prioritize the concepts that they thought best accomplished the goal of **strengthening the connection of Central Park to downtown San Mateo.**

The results of the dot exercises are summarized in Tables 3 and 4, pgs. 11 and 12.

#### **C. Focus Group #2 - Laurel Avenue and 9th Avenue**

The following evening, April 10, 2014, San Mateo residents were invited to the second of three (3) focus group meetings to discuss the relationship of the adjacent neighborhoods to the City's favorite park. The discussion was informal and oriented around this question: "What Do We Need to Know?" The purpose was to gain an understanding of the perspective of those living close to the park. Approximately 30 people were in attendance. The goal was to discover ideas and/or concerns that nearby residents may have had about the future of Central Park in relationship to their home environment. A list of comments resulting from the discussion are shown on page 13.

#### **D. Downtown San Mateo Association Meeting**

On May 1, 2014, City staff and RRM made a presentation to members of the DSMA in their offices downtown. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the Master Plan and public outreach process and supplement the participation by the community regarding the issue of improving the connection and relationship between Central Park and downtown. The DSMA members shared opinions and ideas while participating in a survey prepared for use during the May 3, 2014, focus group workshop, subsequently posted on the City's Town Hall website. The results from their participation in the survey are reflected along with the other survey participants in Table 5A and 5B. Notes from the meeting are listed on page 14.

#### **E. Focus Group #3 - Children's Play Area**

On May 3, 2014, City staff and RRM set up camp on the edge of the children's playground in Central Park to engage parents and children in exercises and discussions about the future of the play environment and park as a whole. Over a span of four (4) hours, the drop-by format provided an audience of park users in their natural habitat. Morning and afternoon hours on a Saturday also expanded the demographic for the Master Plan outreach effort. Kids were led by RRM junior park planners (kids of RRM's staff) in a quest to determine the best play experiences. While the children were busy, parents, friends, and grandparents answered questions about related topics and a written survey was available that was borne out of the input received during the previous community meetings. Approximately 45-50 kids spent time expressing their emerging design thoughts, and nearly 50 adults completed a survey and gave input on the future play environment.

When presented with a range of photographs depicting various play environments and features, kids and parents alike showed a high level of interest in a natural play environment and water play features. Also receiving strong support were the type of environments that include towers and climbing features. In addition to prioritizing the type of play concept they favored, visitors shared specific comments and suggestions on a range of playground issues including safety and visibility, fencing, seating arrangements, bathrooms, surfacing, and other amenities that make a better experience for the children and families. A summary of the input is shown on page 15.

#### **V. Survey – Park Planning Objectives: Planning Concepts and Features**

Following Workshop #1 and Focus Group Meetings #1 and #2, RRM consolidated the priority Park Planning Objectives and Concepts into a simple survey. The ideas appearing on the survey originated from public input or objectives from the City's various documents, including the Central Park RFP and Downtown Area Plan. The survey was administered at the May 1, 2014 DSMA meeting and May 3, 2014 Focus Group #3 meeting. The survey results are shown in Tables 5A and 5B, on page 16. The City then posted the survey questions on the Town Hall website. The results show support similar to the respondents of the survey, though the Town Hall website provided additional flexibility to the participants regarding how much they supported an objective or park planning concept. See pages 17 and 18 for a summary of the Town Hall website activity. The survey form is shown on pages 19 and 20.

#### **VI. FINDINGS**

##### **Park Planning Goals and Objectives**

During Workshop #1, attendees emphasized the maintenance and enhancement of existing facilities and uses in Central Park. The focus of their input and subsequent prioritization was to remodel and improve current park amenities and protect the character and familiarity of the spaces and park uses they are accustomed to visiting and appreciating.

During the focus group work sessions, the exposure to the 2004 charrette concepts and additional brainstorming by participants expanded the discussion to consider bold and thought-provoking ideas. Much of this input was related to answering the question: How does the Master Plan strengthen the connection between the park and downtown?

##### **Park Planning Concepts and Features**

Similar to the goals and objectives, discussion about specific park planning concepts and features ranged from enhancing and remodeling existing improvements, such as the picnic areas and train, to creation of new spaces for performances and expansion and relocation of the Central Recreation Center.

## **VII. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the information and input gained from the early public outreach as summarized in this report, input from City staff and other City documents, and RRM's park planning experience, we recommend the City Council and Park and Recreation Commission consider the following objectives and conceptual topics as a framework for preparing the Central Park Master Plan. The list of objectives is very important since all proposals for significant future improvements should be consistent with the spirit of the park planning objectives.

**Vision Statement:** (Note: Consultant to complete after hearing City Council and Commission comments)

### **A. Objectives**

- Maintain and enhance open space
- Preserve and enhance the historic character
- Create a more open park-like feel along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- Strengthen the physical and visual connection between the park and downtown
- Provide a variety of passive and active uses
- Enhance bike and pedestrian access
- Provide uses and space for multiple generations and demographics

### **B. Planning Concepts (topics and areas of study)**

- Incorporate a fountain as a focal point
- Incorporate art and historical and educational exhibits into spaces and facilities
- Create plaza/gathering space near 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- Increase/add performance areas (e.g., for movies, dance performances)
- Enlarge and relocate Central Recreation Center within park
- Make 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue / San Mateo Drive area pedestrian friendly and more open
- Improve gateways to park
- Move bleachers (rotate field)
- Reduce size of bleachers to open view into park
- Relocate tennis courts away from 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue (potentially to alternative site)
- Increase parking (below grade)
- Distribute parking (less central)
- Expand park (land acquisition)
- Explore new locations and configurations for playground
- Consider future amenities and improvements along Laurel Avenue

## List of Stakeholders

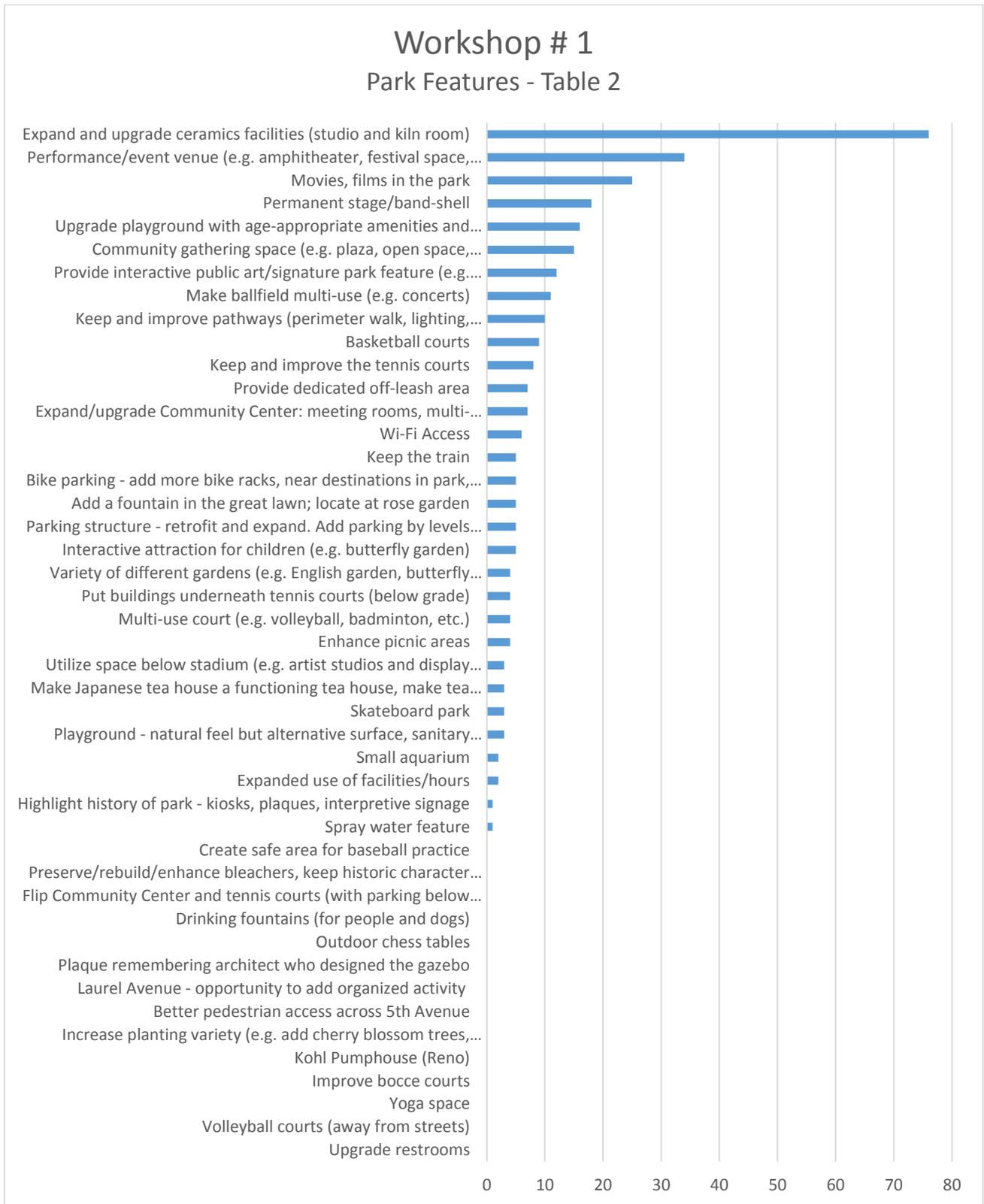
February 10th & 11th, 2014

1. **Robert Ross** (Mayor) and **Jack Matthews** (Council Member)
2. **Sherrie Gong Taguchi** (Park and Recreation Commissioner)
3. **Jessica Evans** (Executive Director of the Downtown San Mateo Association)
4. **Todd Dissly** and **Howell Shaw** (Tennis Pro/Contractor)
5. **Dave Norris** and **Dave Johnson** (Police Department), and **Gary Esch** (Senior Park Ranger)
6. **Matt Bronson** (Assistant City Manager) and **Vivian Ng** (Public Works)
7. **Phyllis Mitchell** and **Sandra Charles** (Arboretum Society)
8. **Dan Hibson** (Adult Softball League Coordinator)
9. **Stan Watkins** and **Cliff Robbins** (Park and Recreation Commissioners)
10. **Maureen Freschet** (Deputy Mayor) and **Joe Goethals** (Council Member)
11. **David Lim** (Council Member)
12. **George Musante**, **Eddie Kertel**, and **Tommy Delvecchio** (Central Park Music Series)
13. **Rob Winters** (Saint Matthew Catholic School Baseball) and **Wally Souza** (San Mateo Pony Baseball)
14. **Bob Bianchi** (Central Park Train Ride and Concession Operator)
15. **Anni Chung**, **Rosalyn Koo**, and **Henri Jin** (Self-Help for the Elderly)



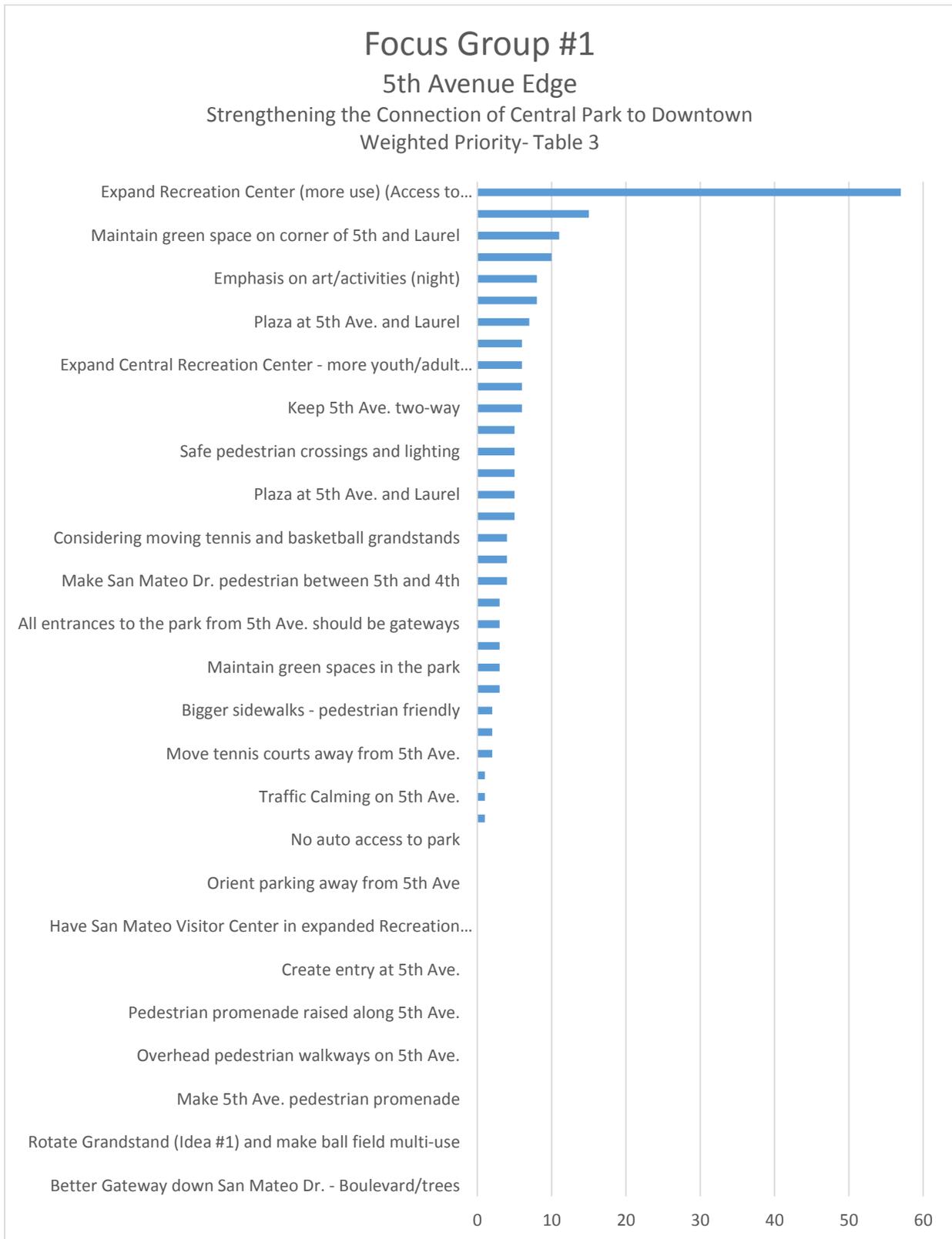
Note: Two weighted dots per person

Weighted Score



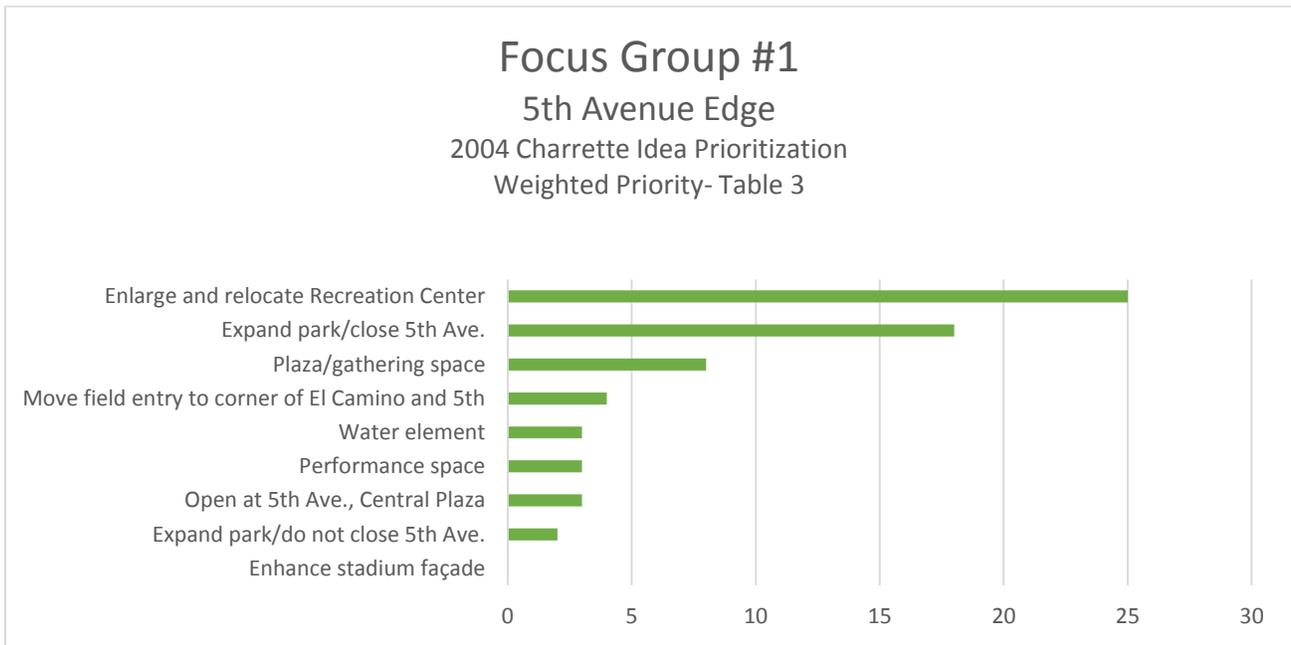
Note: Three weighted dots per person

Weighted Score



Note: Four weighted dots per person

Weighted Score



Note: Two dots per person

Non-Weighted Score

## Focus Group #2

### Laurel Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue

#### Participant Comments

#### What Do We Need to Know?

- Like close proximity of passive green space
- Improve athletic facilities
- Acquire property at El Camino and 9<sup>th</sup>
- Provide adequate parking – stop people parking in neighborhood
- Laurel and 9<sup>th</sup> are “cut-throughs” to 101 (4<sup>th</sup> Street)
- Crossing @ Laurel and 7<sup>th</sup> is dangerous
- Playground should be enclosed
- Rotating ball field would give better solar orientation
- Laurel edge is used for kids soccer/baseball practice
- Tightrope between trees
- Would not like to see a reduction in green space
- Park entry “visual” should be green
- Concern about tennis – would like it to stay
- Sink hole near giraffe
- “Less is more” – more grass, benches, open space
- Should preserve: grass on Laurel, dog
- Re-assess parking restrictions (enforcement)
- Lower tennis to ground level
- Free, green space is important
- Park is botanically amazing – could provide more education/interpretation
- Plant identification/plaques
- Historic and cultural interpretation
- Make Laurel a “complete street”
- Park is like a mini zoo (koi, ducks, squirrels, etc.) – kids love animals
- Docent tours
- Highlight the pump house

#### Comments/Other

- Volleyball on Laurel
- Maintenance along Laurel

## Downtown San Mateo Association

### Meeting Notes

May 1, 2014

- Concert crowd
- Linkages to downtown
- Bike sharing
- Make park more of a destination
- Bleachers are a visual barrier – enhance green space
- More festive @ holidays – year round
- Park for the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Plaza – user friendly, cool
- Fountain and lights – separate from plaza
- Lunch close to edge (5<sup>th</sup>) – business workers
- Art – incorporated into design features
- Need contained space for kids, hide & seek (shade)
- Laurel – families use space all day
- Flag pole breaks up space
- Pavilions – no walls, could have stage, also picnic, tennis
- El Camino – more green, safer for pedestrians, seniors
- More gateways – need hierarchy

## Focus Group #3

### Children’s Play Area

#### Favorite Play Experience Results

#### **Favorite Types of Play – Image Board Dot Exercise**

Climbing: Adults: 14 Kids: 19

Nature Play: Adults: 38 Kids: 29

Towers: Adults: 19 Kids: 20

Water Play: Adults: 27 Kids: 31

#### **Children’s Survey Results – Favorite Play Equipment** (47 total)

Slides: 23

Swings: 20

Water Play: 24

Towers: 16

Crazy Climbers: 20

Spinners: 6

Seat Spinners: 8

Climbing Rocks: 8

Net Climbers: 16

See-Saws: 11

Monkey Bars: 12

Overhead Gliders: 7

#### **Favorite Playgrounds:**

Dennis the Menace Park, Monterey

Shoreline Park, San Mateo

Burton Park, San Carlos

Delores Park, San Francisco

Mission Playground, San Francisco

Monster Park at Coyote Point

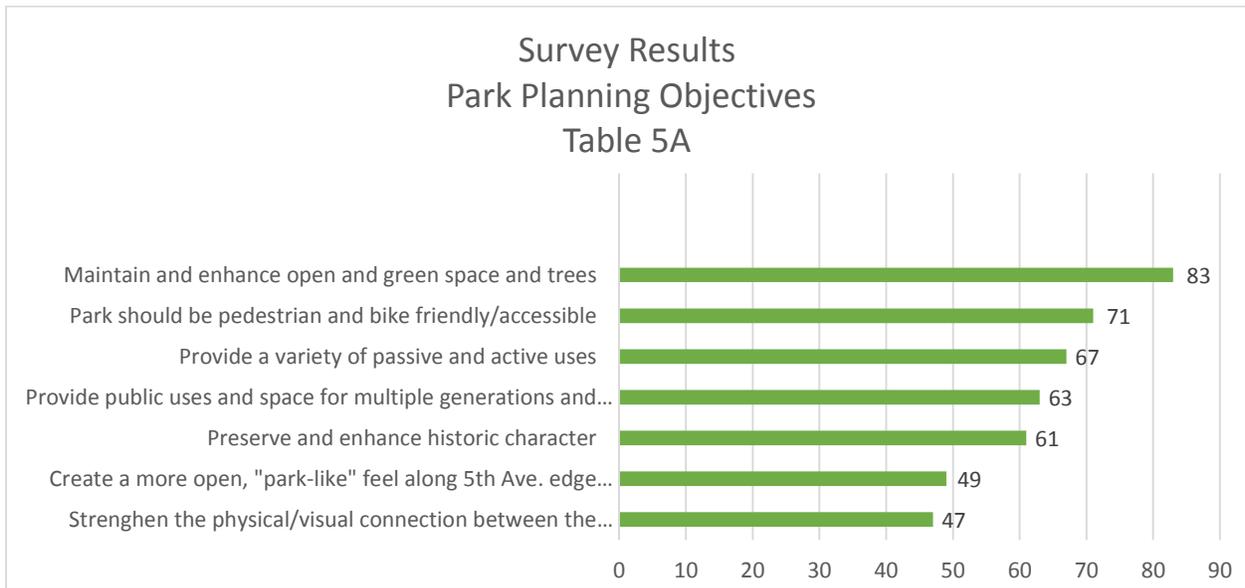
Discovery Center, Sausalito

San Francisco Zoo

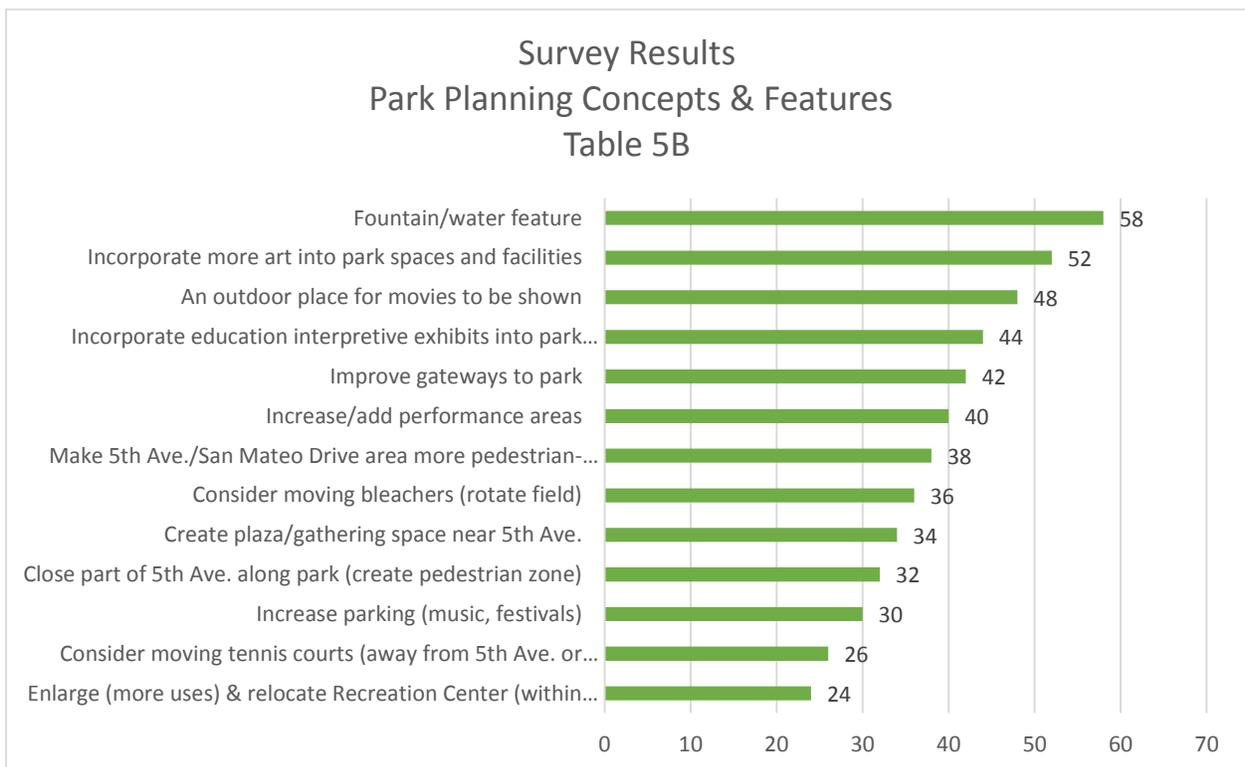
Fantastico Park, Napa

Yountville Park

Central Park



Percentage of Responses in Agreement with Objective



Percentage of Responses in Agreement with Concept or Feature

# Topic Summary Report

## A topic has closed on San Mateo Town Hall

Topic: Park Planning Concepts & Features

### Provide input on the most supported Park Planning Concepts & Features from the workshops.

Participants at the previous Central Park Master Plan workshops explored Park Planning Concepts & Features for the park. If you missed these workshops, you now have an opportunity to rate the ideas that were generated. The following list of ideas and concepts were given the highest priority by workshop attendees.

Ideas **14** Comments **34** Idea Statuses **0**

## Top Ideas

**Make 5th Ave./San Mateo Dr. area more pedestrian friendly** 73Stars  
0Comments  
Abby V | May 09, 2014

**Improve gateways to park** 70Stars  
1Comment  
Abby V | May 09, 2014

**Incorporate more art into park spaces and facilities** 66Stars  
1Comment  
Abby V | May 09, 2014

**Fountain / water feature** 62Stars  
3Comments  
Abby V | May 09, 2014

**Increase/Add performance areas (music, festivals)** 60Stars  
1Comment  
Abby V | May 09, 2014

## 9% of people participated

(50 of 542 total participants)

**108% More** than your average and **85% More** than the MindMixer average

# Topic Summary Report

## A topic has closed on San Mateo Town Hall

Topic: Park Planning Objectives

### Provide input on the most prioritized Park Planning Objectives from the workshops.

At the workshops for the Central Park Master Plan, participants brainstormed Park Planning Objectives for the future of the Park. If you missed these workshops, you now have an opportunity to provide input on ideas that were generated. The following ideas were given the highest priority by workshop attendees.

Ideas	7	Comments	29	Idea Statuses	0
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## Top Ideas

### Maintain and enhance open and green spaces and trees

80Stars  
3Comments

Abby V | May 09, 2014

### Create a more open, park-like feel along 5th Ave. edge of park

64Stars  
6Comments

Abby V | May 09, 2014

### Preserve and enhance historic character

61Stars  
4Comments

Abby V | May 09, 2014

### Park should be pedestrian and bike friendly/accessible

60Stars  
4Comments

Abby V | May 09, 2014

### Strengthen the connection between the park and downtown

51Stars  
5Comments

Abby V | May 09, 2014

## 6% of people participated

Survey from Focus Group # 3

If you missed our other public meetings, please

# TAKE OUR SURVEY!

**The Parks and Recreation Department is updating the Master Plan for Central Park.**

The master plan will guide any improvements, changes, or facility upgrades during the next 20 – 25 years. **Community input is an important component of the planning process.** To date, 1 Community Workshop and 2 Focus Group workshops have been facilitated to discuss objectives, ideas, suggestions, and issues related to the long-term vision for the Central Park, as well as potential facility improvements and additions. Today's meeting at the Central Park play area is the 3rd Focus Group meeting.

**If you missed the previous workshops, you have an opportunity to provide input on ideas that were generated.** Below and on the reverse side is a partial list of Master Plan objectives and ideas that were suggested and discussed by workshop and focus group participants. Please review the list and check (some or all) the objectives, concepts and suggestions that you support. To view the full range of exercises discussed at the other workshops, go to the Central Park Facebook page or the City's website.

## PARK PLANNING OBJECTIVES

Put a check in the box next to the statements you support

### AGREE

- Maintain and enhance open and green spaces and trees
- Preserve and enhance historic character
- Strengthen the physical/visual connection between the park and downtown
- Provide a variety of passive and active uses
- Provide uses and space for multiple generations and demographics
- Create a more open, "park-like" feel along 5th Ave. edge of park
- Park should be pedestrian and bike friendly/accessible



**CENTRAL PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

MAY 3, 2014

## **PARK PLANNING CONCEPTS & FEATURES**

**Put a check in the box next to the statements you support**

### **AGREE**

- Enlarge (more uses) & relocate Recreation Center (within park)
- An outdoor place for movies to be shown
- Create plaza/gathering space near 5th Ave.
- Increase parking (under park uses or buildings)
- Increase / Add performance areas (music, festivals)
- Make 5th Ave. /San Mateo Dr. area more pedestrian friendly
- Incorporate more art into park spaces and facilities
- Incorporate education interpretive exhibits into park (historic and nature)
- Improve gateways to park
- Consider moving bleachers (rotate field)
- Consider moving tennis courts (away from 5th Ave., or new location)
- Close part of 5th Ave. along park (create pedestrian zone)
- Fountain / water feature

### **Other Comments/Suggestions**

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