

**From:** [Ken Novak](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Don't close options on the Measure E site  
**Date:** Monday, April 3, 2023 12:43:36 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [krnovak@gmail.com](mailto:krnovak@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

I have lived in Palo Alto for 33 years and raised a family in our house near Duveneck school. I have always been proud of Palo Alto's sustainability efforts. We have always been better than average, and willing to innovate when needed.

As a result I was excited when Measure E was conceived in 2010, and passed with a solid 65% majority in 2011. It would be far better to process our own wastes locally, while cutting emissions. The site's small 10-acre footprint, which is already impacted by use as a landfill, would be the best site for this. Waste conversion technologies are evolving quickly, with Silicon Valley Clean Water in Redwood City using pyrolysis for this purpose. This has the advantage of eliminating PFAS, which will likely restrict the ways we can dispose of our wastes in future.

Instead we have a proposal from a divided Parks Commission to permanently rededicate the Measure E site as parkland. Instead we should keep our options open. At a minimum, we should not rush this decision until our Utilities and Transportation commissions are able to evaluate this.

I hope you'll give this the consideration it deserves, and keep Palo Alto's options open for its future sustainability needs.

Thanks,

Ken Novak  
[krnovak@gmail.com](mailto:krnovak@gmail.com)  
1644 Channing Ave.  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

**From:** [Lindy Austin](#)  
**To:** [Kou, Lydia](#); [Tanaka, Greg](#); [Council, City](#); [Lythcott-Haims, Julie](#); [Veenker, Vicki](#); [Lauing, Ed](#)  
**Subject:** Please keep 10 acre Baylands parcel dedicated for waste to energy facility  
**Date:** Sunday, April 2, 2023 9:26:33 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lindy@crammond.name. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear Council Members

As a resident of Palo Alto for 29 ½ years, I am sending this email as a request to the meeting on April 3, 2023. Please keep the 10-acre Baylands parcel dedicated for waste to energy facility as it was approved by voters in Measure E 10 years ago. And then please press ahead with win-win proposals to use it as a benefit not just to the Palo Alto community, but to reduce carbon emissions from trucks/driving distance/landfilling a resource at a distance, and getting an energy benefit. There is surely a beneficial effect for the flora, fauna and bird life not just in Palo Alto but en-route to and at those sites, and, globally.

Please do NOT re-dedicate it as park land. I run/walk/bike through Byxbee and the other Baylands parks on the (south end of) the Bay Trail on a regular basis. And reducing emissions, reusing resources in the 10-acre area in the context of the 126 acres which until recently was a landfill is a good thing in the local and global context.

Thank you.

Lindy K. Austin  
+1 408 839 2116

**From:** [herb](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#); [Clerk, City](#)  
**Subject:** August 3, 2023 Council Meeting, Item #12: Measure E Park Dedication Ordinance  
**Date:** Sunday, April 2, 2023 5:52:03 PM

---

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Herb Borock  
P. O. Box 632  
Palo Alto, CA 94302

August 2, 2023

Palo Alto City Council  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

**AUGUST 3, 2023 CITY COUNCIL MEETING, AGENDA ITEM #12  
MEASURE E PARK DEDICATION ORDINANCE**

Dear City Council:

I support the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Commission to dedicate as parkland the 10-acre site that was removed from park dedication when Measure E was adopted by the voters in November 2011.

Everybody who signed the initiative petition for that measure and everybody who voted for that ballot measure was responsible for the measure including the language; "Ten years from the passage of this Initiative, the City Council may rededicate any portion of the Property not utilized for the purposes of this Initiative to parkland."

Those who are opposed to the Council having the power now to rededicate the property as parkland, but who signed the initiative petition and/or voted for the ballot measure because they did not read the measure, but simply relied on the arguments of the measure's proponents, will have learned the lesson that they should read a proposed initiative or referendum petition instead of relying on the proponents arguments, especially if those proponents are one or more of the proponents of Measure E.

The park dedication provisions were added to the Palo Alto Charter by an affirmative vote of over 85% of the electorate,

The Charter permits the voters to remove a property from park dedication, and in the past the voters have approved a number of removals when presented with an actual project or an activity that existed before the park dedication Charter provisions were adopted.

Measure E was the first time parkland was removed from park dedication without a proposed project, but instead had a provision that the proponents could seek an acceptable project for ten years, at which time the Council would have the power

to rededicate the property as parkland.

Peter Drekmeier, one of the three proponents of the initiative measure, now proposes in his *Palo Alto Weekly* guest opinion of March 31, 2023, to reverse the Charter concept of park dedication by giving the opponents of park dedication of the 10-acre site the power to prevent park dedication by various means until the opponents of park dedication say the site can return to being parkland for as long as it takes the opponents of park dedication to investigate possible projects and to get their supporters on Boards and Commissions to vote differently on the issue of park dedication than the Commission that has jurisdiction to advise the Council on the issue and has already voted in favor of park dedication.

For example, another Measure E proponent Bob Wenzlau is a candidate for appointment to the Utilities Advisory Commission at the beginning of tonight's agenda.

Wenzlau's candidacy for a Commission where he is a known advocate for certain subjects in the Commission's purview is typical of some recent Board and Commission appointments where those who are seeking appointed do so because they want to vote a certain way, rather than provide unbiased advice to the Council.

Wenzlau is also the person responsible for the fact the language of Measure E in the official voters pamphlet is not the same as the language of the measure than the Council voted to place on the ballot.

After the City Attorney's impartial analysis, and the proponents and opponents arguments and rebuttals were made available for public inspection, the City Clerk sent that material to the Registrar of Voters, but the Registrar needed a computer readable graphic and asked to City Clerk to provide that graphic. The City Clerk asked the ballot proponent to provide the graphic to the Registrar.

Wenzlau sent both the graphic and also initiative language that was the same but similar to the initiative language the Council voted to place on the ballot. The Registrar then asked the City Clerk if the Registrar could use the language Wenzlau provided and the Clerk agreed. Apparently neither the Registrar nor the City Clerk made an effort to see whether the two versions of the language were the same or different.

The third initiative proponent, Walter Hays, at a meeting held at Lucie Stern Community Center in early October 2019 on the subject of Valley Water's Advanced Water Purification Facility said that the facility for transferring purified water should be placed on the Measure E site, and that proponents of Measure would circulate another initiative measure to remove the Measure E site from park dedication to house the Valley Water project site.

Apparently, Hays was not aware of Drekmeier's opposition to the Valley Water project as described in Drekmeier's *Palo Alto Weekly* guest opinion of May 13, 2019, which brings me back the March 31, 2023 guest opinion where Drekmeier advocates

pyrolysis that requires water that is then evaporated instead of being purified and sent to Valley Water.

The Council has already decided to send to Valley Water the water removed from sewage sludge, but if that sewage sludge is then used in a pyrolysis facility to produce energy, water needs to be added back to the sewage sludge from someplace.

Silicon Valley Clean Water facility removes 70% of the water before beginning the pyrolysis with 30% of the water.

Does the Council want to change its agreement with Valley Water or does the Council want to truck in the water needed for the proposed pyrolysis energy plant from someplace else?

Also, the pyrolysis facility, like an anaerobic facility, creates a smell that interferes with the peaceful enjoyment of the baylands.

I urge you to adopt the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Commission to dedicate the Measure E site to parkland.

Whenever, the Council is presented with a viable proposal to use the Measure E site for something else, rather than to just study an idea, and that proposal is subject to environmental review, then it would be appropriate to consider placing a new measure on the ballot.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Herb Borock

**From:** [hedden](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Measure E site, Agenda item 12, April 3, 2023  
**Date:** Sunday, April 2, 2023 4:33:14 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from patgaryh@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Honored Council,

I am speaking as a Los Altos resident. We send our wastewater to the Palo Alto treatment facility so we in Los Altos have an interest in the discussion about the use of the Measure E site.

As a Board member of GreenTown Los Altos, and Past President, I have a keen interest in a future where we live sustainably. Waste conversion technology will be a part of that future and as much as we love parkland, please take that into consideration as you discuss the future of the Measure E site.

Thank you,  
Gary Hedden  
Los Altos

**From:** [elizabeth weal](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Measure E site should not be returned to parkland  
**Date:** Sunday, April 2, 2023 4:06:16 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from elizabethweal@tenaya.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear City Council member,

I am writing to request that Council consider other alternatives before returning the Measure E site to parkland.

Based on my knowledge of this issue, this land could potentially help us meet our Sustainability and Climate Action goals.

Much has changed in terms of sustainability sewage treatment options since Measure E was passed. I would urge the Council to consider all of these options before making a decision.

Warmly,

Elizabeth Weal  
Palo Alto resident

**From:** [Bruce Hodge](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Hodge, Bruce](#)  
**Subject:** Measure E Site should be used for environmentally responsible processing of our sewage waste  
**Date:** Sunday, April 2, 2023 3:59:15 PM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from hodge@tenaya.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

---

Honorable Councilmembers,

The Measure E site was preserved for the environmentally responsible processing of sewage and other organic waste streams through a concerted effort by a large group of citizen activists with a progressive vision for the future. The citizens of Palo Alto agreed with their vision and voted by a significant margin to retain this small piece of land adjacent to the RWQCP plant to enable a future solution.

Although the City has improved its processing of sewage in the interim, there is significant room for improvement - by adopting technologies that generate negative greenhouse gas emissions and eliminate dangerous PFAS chemicals. Unfortunately the PFAS chemicals are currently being foisted upon the farm workers and agricultural lands of the Central Valley. This is not an environmentally or socially just outcome.

Fortunately, technology has progressed in the 10 years since the original passage of Measure E, and the best option for Palo Alto now is to process our sewage waste locally using net-zero energy- producing carbon negative emissions and biochar. This is not a fantasy - it's already being done very successfully in Redwood City. Processing our wastes by trucking them elsewhere is not the best solution.

Such a local facility can likely be built on about half of the Measure E site, and the rest left as is. The idea that somehow the site is a lynchpin for restoration of wetlands is disingenuous at best. The wetlands of the San Francisco Bay will not change in any appreciable way if this site is returned to parkland status. In fact it is highly likely that a levee will need to be constructed that protects both the RWQCP and the mound of the formerly landfill from sea level rise. The mound of the former landfill - which constitutes a significant portion of Byxbee Park, must be actively controlled and monitored. Its continued emissions of methane and other hazardous pollutants must be captured and disposed of. There's room for improvement in these processes as well - underscoring the still industrial nature of the landfill and the challenges associated with responsible disposal of our waste products.

In short, the Measure E site is the only viable option for responsible local processing of our sewage waste. We shouldn't enter into a Faustian bargain that ignores the climate crisis and allows dangerous PFAS chemicals to bioaccumulate for decades and threaten the health of citizens elsewhere in California. It's time to take responsibility and direct the City of Palo Alto to finally take steps to realize the original vision of our farsighted environmental activists.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Bruce Hodge  
Founder, Carbon Free Palo Alto



**From:** [Ed Hillard](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** There's a New Authority in the City of Palo Alto  
**Date:** Sunday, April 2, 2023 2:23:38 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from edhillard@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Members of the City Council, City of Palo Alto:

There's a new government in town. It's called the Parks and Recreation Department. They seem to be the new authority in the City.

Twice in recent days there have been alarming news accounts of actions by the Parks and Rec people, staff and commissioners, that indicate the City or part of it is being run by them and not by the citizens.

First, I have learned that the Parks & Rec people want to put a gymnasium in Greer Park. Greer Park is one of our serene spaces. You can find quiet there, space to walk, a dark night sky to view the stars and planets. Its many undisturbed acres allow for multiple soccer or baseball games at once while families converge on its picnic tables for their picnics, and others just walk in its acres. (Its gardens until recently were beautifully maintained.) Imagine a gym, open at all hours, its hulk taking up what was once picnic space or walking routes or just plain darkness and the night sky. Its users come and go, mostly by cars, their cars adding to the overall traffic in the area. Those who like to think a park offers quiet and open spaces will have to go elsewhere. The citizens of the City other than those working out in the gym will have lost a vital resource forever.

Second, it seems that Parks and Rec staff have decided on their own that ten years is enough time to give the Measure E provision, passed by 65% of City voters, setting aside ten acres to develop a responsible, properly-engineered way to deal with City waste. They have decided that what the City needs in that space adjacent to the waste processing plant is a park. \ Redwood City has managed to do what Palo Alto has failed to do, convert sewage sludge to renewable biogas and char, while Palo Alto's best effort is to ship dewatered sludge to the Central Valley. As Redwood City once claimed, they are Palo Alto without the attitude. One might add, they are the city with actual achievements for environmentally sensitive, long term waste management solutions. Meanwhile a staff committee of an unrelated City department appears to hold sway over long term, critical decisions about how the City moves into the new century. And, it seems that it was City staff who in the first place, after Measure E passed, decided it didn't pencil and perhaps they could just wait out the clock for ten years for this silly idea to pass.

A park gets designed and built and improved for use by ordinary people and you think things are going to be good. A ballot measure passes with a 65% majority and you think maybe now something will happen. Meanwhile, City staff and select citizenry have other ideas. They will sit and wait and take your park from you. They will just not do anything and the clock will run out on the ballot measure. Is this the best we in Palo Alto can expect from our City and its government?

Respectfully submitted,  
Ed Hillard  
Greer Road, Palo Alto

**From:** [David Bubenik](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Restore Byxbee Park. Do not use it to generate extremely carbon-dirty energy  
**Date:** Sunday, April 2, 2023 11:47:30 AM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from dbubenik@earthlink.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

---

Dear Mayor Kou, Vice Mayor Stone, and Palo Alto City Council Members,

You may not be aware that electric energy generated using biogas is EXTREMELY CARBON-DIRTY. "Garbage to Energy" is not green energy. Its carbon emissions are 140% of the emissions of a coal-fired generator. See [www.dirtydioxide.com](http://www.dirtydioxide.com) for the full story. I'm sure you'll agree that our Baylands are much better used as parkland than as a global warming super-contributor.

I am a Palo Alto resident who cares deeply about our treasured baylands. Please adopt the Parks and Recreation Commission's recommendation to rededicate the 10-acre Measure E site as parkland. I am grateful to city leaders who have protected our baylands for generations, maintaining beautiful natural landscapes, creating outstanding recreational opportunities and supporting critically important biodiversity to the benefit of our community.

The Measure E site is situated on the only flat land connecting the Renzel Marsh to the Baylands and provides a critical wildlife corridor for local species. Although degraded in the years since Measure E passed, the trees and vegetation on the flatlands screen the wastewater plant and provide important habitat for birds and wildlife; such plantings are not possible on the hilly portion of the site because of state landfill regulations.

As our city has grown, undeveloped land has become increasingly spare. But restoring the landfill to natural open space has been a 60 years repeatedly affirmed city goal. We've lost critical time to fulfill it.

Please rededicate the Measure E site as parkland and undertake overdue investment in the quality of this important habitat corridor and recreation linkage in our baylands.

Thank you!

David Bubenik  
420 Homer Ave  
Palo Alto

**From:** [Alice Smith](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Please preserve the Measure E site for future opportunities,  
**Date:** Saturday, April 1, 2023 9:41:48 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [alice.smith@gmail.com](mailto:alice.smith@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

To the Palo Alto City Council,

Please preserve the Measure E property so that the City can realistically protect the environment without losing the one suitable location for converting our sludge and other waste into biogas and biochar. This will help us to be carbon-neutral by 2030, a responsible goal.

Thank you,

Alice Schaffer Smith  
850 Webster Street #520  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

**Why should my Zip Code determine how I exercise my vote?  
We need one federal law that governs voting for every American.  
Pass the Freedom to Vote: John R Lewis Act now!**



[www.nationalvoter corps.org](http://www.nationalvoter corps.org)

**From:** [Gary Hedden](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Measure E site, Agenda item 12, April 3, 2023  
**Date:** Saturday, April 1, 2023 4:04:08 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from gary@greentownlosaltos.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Honored Council,

I am speaking as a Los Altos resident. We send our wastewater to the Palo Alto treatment facility so we in Los Altos have an interest in the discussion about the use of the Measure E site.

As a Board member of GreenTown Los Altos, and Past President, I have a keen interest in a future where we live sustainably. Waste conversion technology will be a part of that future and as much as we love parkland, please take that into consideration as you discuss the future of the Measure E site.

Thank you,  
Gary Hedden  
Los Altos

**From:** [Sven Thesen](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** City Council: Preserve Measure E! Please Include Haulage Criteria & GHG emissions  
**Date:** Saturday, April 1, 2023 2:40:29 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sventhesen@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Good People at City Council,

Please continue to preserve our options at the landfill/ wastewater treatment center! Please do not be hasty in your decision. At the very least take a tour with both those on the pro/ con side.

As a Palo Alto resident, chemical engineer, dad, man-of-faith and business owner, my opinion is that you on the city council should take more time to study this issue.

Everything we do has an impact. The question is the magnitude.

We are currently trucking our waste to both the central valley and Gilroy in diesel trucks. Has anyone calculated the carbon footprint of the haulage? In addition to the greenhouse gas emissions, there are low level criteria pollutants including carcinogens from the diesel exhaust that we are "dumping" on the communities along the route. And these communities have no say in this. Again, has anyone quantified these emissions?

When we compare magnitude, the above should be included.

I strongly believe that using the land to address our own wastes over additional parkland will net the least environmental impact.

Thank you for volunteering your time to serve the residents of Palo Alto,

Sven Thesen

is being that the

currently, our dewatered sewage sludge is trucked to the Central Valley, where it is applied to agricultural land as a soil amendment.

--

Sven Thesen, 415-225-7645

EV Consultant & Founder, ProjectGreenHome.org and BeniSolSolar.com; Wonder Junkie

---

[How California Is Keeping Electric Vehicles Out Of Reach For Apartment-Dwellers](#)

**From:** [Eileen McLaughlin](#)  
**To:** [Kou, Lydia](#); [Stone, Greer](#); [Burt, Patrick](#); [Lauing, Ed](#); [Lythcott-Haims, Julie](#); [Tanaka, Greg](#); [Veenker, Vicki](#)  
**Cc:** [kou.pacc@gmail.com](#); [greg@gregtanaka.org](#); [City Clerk's Office](#); [howardhigh1@comcast.net](#); [glraabe@sbcglobal.net](#); [LaRiviere, Florence](#); [cityCouncil@CityofPaloAlto.org](#)  
**Subject:** Comments, 04/03/2023, Item 12, PR&C Recommendation to dedicate the Measure E site  
**Date:** Saturday, April 1, 2023 2:00:46 PM  
**Attachments:** [CCCR Comments to PACC re 04032023 Item 12 Measure E park dedication .pdf](#)

---

You don't often get email from [wildlifestewards@aol.com](mailto:wildlifestewards@aol.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

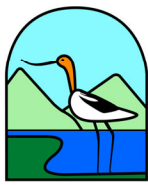
Dear Mayor Kou, Vice Mayor Stone and Members of City Council:

Please consider comments in the attached letter for consideration regarding Item 12, the Parks & Recreation Commission Recommendation to dedicate the lands of Measure E as parkland..

Thank you.

Eileen McLaughlin  
Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge.  
408-257-7599  
408-230-0054 cell





April 1, 2023

Mayor Lydia Kou  
Vice Mayor Greer Stone  
Members of City Council  
City of Palo Alto  
Submitted by email

**RE: 4/03/2023 Item 12, PR&C Recommendation, Adopt a Park Dedication Ordinance for the 10-acre Measure E site**

Dear Mayor Kou, Vice Mayor Stone and Members of Council:

Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge appreciates this opportunity to support the Parks & Recreation Commission's recommendation to dedicate the entire 10-acre Measure E site as parkland.

Volunteer, wetland and wildlife advocates of Citizens Committee have roots in the Palo Alto Baylands. Founder Florence LaRiviere, City resident and our Chair Emeritus, fondly recalls early evenings more than 50 years ago when her family would enjoy picnic dinners set amidst the wetland diversity of the Baylands. The actions of City advocates and leaders to ensure protection of the Baylands and Byxbee Park were inspiring. Conversely the wetland destruction and encroachment from the landfill, water treatment plant, golf course and airport laid out the threats. Together these factors provided impetus to citizen advocacy that produced the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

That same inspiration and decades of emerging science are the basis of this letter: **We urge the City Council to dedicate the 10 acres of Measure E, returning them to Byxbee Park.**

The location and varied elevations of the Measure E lands have unique climate change, wetland, wildlife and public access values. These values were abandoned in 2011, leaving these lands lying fallow and unmanaged once they were undedicated. We believe that now is the time to end and reverse those losses, reviving and recovering the lands' values.

1. Climate change impacts are ever more evident making the carbon capture value of vegetation, particularly wetlands, of increasing importance. Importantly, and as is now well understood, healthy salt marshes serve to reduce sea level rise risk to developed areas.

Approximately a third of the Measure E lands are lowlands, a strip that provides a corridor for passage of people and wildlife between Harbor Marsh and the Emily Renzel Wetlands. Meanwhile, beneath the corridor, a large pipeline transports salt water from the Bay, ensuring the ecological health of the Emily Renzel Wetlands and its habitat for the federally endangered salt marsh harvest mouse.

With the exception of a pump station, the balance of the Measure E lands provide a Baylands-integrated corridor for shoreline wildlife. Unfortunately, lacking Parks management since 2011,

the vegetation conditions of both lowland and slope degraded, reducing the corridor's roosting, foraging, and nesting habitat values and the carbon capture that even these lands could provide.

2. Rising groundwater produced by sea level rise will change lowlands *whether or not* they sit behind flood control levees. Groundwater impacts on development are already familiar in Palo Alto, even west of Highway 101, for projects adding basements. Emergent or near-surface groundwater is already evident in wetlands found throughout the golf course. As the seas gradually rise, the increasing weight of that water will produce forces that push more salt water into the pervious layers within alluvial plains, such as lie below the Palo Alto shoreline. Overtime, groundwater rise will alter surface conditions, coming closer to or even emergent at the surface.<sup>1</sup>

Rising groundwater can be expected to gradually and steadily change ground conditions in the ~1/3 of Measure E lands that are lowlands. This change will encourage eruption of wetlands, fitting for a location that serves as a wetlands link. Wildlife adaptive to those changes will surely benefit. At the same time rising groundwater raises major risks if any kind of development were considered there, such as: <sup>2</sup>

- Salt-water corrosion of underground infrastructure,
  - Dispersal of known or unknown buried contaminants,
  - Seepage and infiltration to structures either below ground and on the surface,
  - Saturated soils aggravating storm event flood conditions, and
  - Increased seismic liquefaction risk.
3. Speculative proposals used to undedicate the Measure E parcel in 2011, or to prevent rededication now, offer the City only the certainty that the lands will not be managed as parkland nor utilized as sustainable natural infrastructure to protect Palo Alto against sea level rise. Dedication of the lands as parkland regains those possibilities, including revitalization of habitat conditions and vegetated carbon-capture.

The “bird in hand” is dedicating these 10 acres as parkland. Consideration of “the two in the bush” can be brought forward at any future time through the standard process comprised of feasibility studies, project design, and performing an environmental review. Such actions would need to evaluate alternative sites as the Measure E site is substantially inappropriate.

Finally, we echo others who have described lessons learned from Measure E. The measure produced no composting project but had used its vague concept to entice voter support. It did include a fail-safe of a 10-year time frame to implement a project....and, if not achieved, rededicate it as parkland. The measure's clock has run out and its premise failed. We strongly urge the Council to use the fail-safe and dedicate Measure E lands, returning them to Byxbee Park and City Parks Management.

---

<sup>1</sup> E.Plane et al, A Rapid Assessment Method to Identify Potential Groundwater Flooding Hotspots as Sea Level Rises in Coastal Cities, Water/MDPI, October 25, 2019: <https://cawaterlibrary.net/document/a-rapid-assessment-method-to-identify-potential-groundwater-flooding-hotspots-as-sea-levels-rise-in-coastal-cities/>

<sup>2</sup> SFEI, ESA & PCI, Sea-Level Rise Impacts on Shallow Groundwater in Moffett Park, Prepared for the City of Sunnyvale, November 21, 2021, pp.19-20: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e38a3dd6f9db304821e8e5e/t/61a7b37743ec4b770e11ee73/1638380421678/Moffett+Park+Specific+Plan+Groundwater+Addendum.pdf>

Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge is a volunteer-run, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has its roots in the citizen committee that worked to establish the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge in 1972. Over the decades since we have worked persistently for protection and enhancement of the Refuge, Bay wetlands and wildlife along the shoreline and lower tributaries.

Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eileen McLaughlin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eileen" being more prominent than the last name "McLaughlin".

Eileen McLaughlin

Board Member

Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge.

**CC:**     Carin High, Co-Chair, CCCR  
           Gail Raabe, Co-Chair, CCCR  
           Florence LaRiviere, Board Member, CCCR

**From:** [slevy@ccsce.com](mailto:slevy@ccsce.com)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** no to parkland dedication  
**Date:** Saturday, April 1, 2023 12:26:13 PM

---

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear Mayor Kou and council members,

I support the original Measure E goals and urge you not to support the Parks and Rec recommendation to dedicate the land now as parkland.

The original goals, if met over time with new and emerging technologies, would be a major environmental improvement while 10 more acres to an already awesome open space area is a drop in the bucket compared to the Measure E goal.

Stephen Levy

**From:** [Peter Drekmeier](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Comment Letter: Item 12  
**Date:** Saturday, April 1, 2023 10:49:50 AM  
**Attachments:** [Item 12 - Measure E Site.pdf](#)

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from pdrekmeier@earthlink.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

---

Dear Mayor Kou and Council:

Thank you for considering my attached comments on Item 12 (Measure E site) on your April 3 agenda.

-Peter

-----  
Peter Drekmeier  
pdrekmeier@earthlink.net  
(650) 223-3333

April 1, 2023

**Re: Item 12: Measure E Site.**

Dear Mayor Kou and Council:

A vote on whether to convert the Measure E site to parkland is premature. Council should understand the full potential for the site to help us meet our Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP) goals before eliminating options. Taking options off the table before knowing what they are would be a huge mistake.

It's disappointing that a recommendation on the future of the Measure E site is coming to you solely from the Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission), without any input from the Utilities Advisory Commission, the Planning and Transportation Commission or the S/CAP committee.

One would have thought the Measure E proponents would have been consulted by the Commission early in the process. After all, we collected more than 6,000 signatures to qualify Measure E for the ballot, and it was approved by 65% of the voters. Yet we were never approached, despite the fact that at least one Commissioner was well aware of our interests, having served as a leader of the No on Measure E committee. We only learned about the Commission's recommendation the week before the vote, after receiving a phone call from a reporter.

The fact that the Parks and Recreation Commission was almost evenly split says a lot. The actual vote was 4-2-1 (the staff report overlooked the abstention, which was essentially a no vote; certainly not a yes vote). Only four out of seven Commissioners voted to recommend that the Measure E site be converted to parkland. Even some of the Commissioners who supported the recommendation had reservations.

Many good questions were asked, and comments made, at the Commission meeting that should be considered by Council. Following is the most comprehensive.

Commissioner Brown did not think the role of the Commission was to protect parkland at all costs but to advise on planning and policy issues related to parkland. She also felt a more recent study and more work on this issue was important and that it was premature to recommend action at this point one way or the other. She stated what was absent from the conversation is the state legislation related to SB 1383...Every other jurisdiction is trying to deal with the increase in processing of compost. It is not just a Palo Alto problem; it is a regional and statewide challenge. There were comments made that Public Works and Utilities have no plans for the site, but this has not been prioritized or budgeted for. The analysis on the benefits of the parkland conversion is equally incomplete. She felt the issue required more study but it was not the purview of this Commission and would need to be

referred to the City Council. She felt it was irresponsible to make a recommendation based on a 2014 study without looking at the technology and legislation requirements.

It was clear that the Commissioners understood they were looking at the issue through a very specific lens, and Council would likely take other issues into consideration. The minutes note:

Chair Greenfield discussed the role of the Parks and Recreation Commission in considering this action. Assessment of the technical merits of potential future plans and concerns about sea level rise are beyond the scope of the Commission. The City Council will consider things beyond Parks and Recreation's area of expertise.

Chair Greenfield asked the last time staff reviewed a potential project for the Measure E site consistent with Measure E.

Ms. North replied 2014.

Commissioner Cribbs was concerned that the ad hoc did not talk to the Utilities Commission and Committee for Sustainability.

Council Member DuBois stated there have not been any recent policy decisions from the Council on Site E. He felt the point about the scope was a good one and that ultimately the Council would have to make a decision based on the different factors.

It would be prudent for Council to receive an update on current environmental technologies, which are advancing rapidly, before deciding the fate of the Measure E site. Following are more notes from the Commission meeting.

Commissioner Oche wanted to know if a recent study had been done to weigh the pros and cons of rededication or going ahead with a future energy or compost facility.

Mr. Anderson responded that there is not a recent study weighing pros and cons of compost versus parkland.

Karin North, Assistant Public Works Director for Environmental Services Division, stated the ballot initiative gave direction to look at different technologies. The digester was very expensive, and the Council held off and then decided on a sludge dewatering and haul-out facility while technologies changed and evolved. Since that time, staff has been working to rebuild the liquid side of the wastewater treatment plant and has not been directed to do an analysis on Measure E pros and cons, mostly due to staff constraints.

Ms. North stated...In regard to solids, the timing may change based on Council and the Climate Action Plan goals. The current plan is to look at solids processing after the secondary treatment plant process is upgraded, which is a 5-year project.

Given Palo Alto's ambitious S/CAP goals, and Council's priority to address climate change, resources should be made available to undertake a thorough examination of options to convert organic waste into renewable energy and biochar, which sequesters carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Here are a few more Commission comments.

Ms. Brown agreed that there are competing demands on time and a finite amount of resources. If Council determines that biosolids and hauled food waste and yard trimmings need to be handled on site, then staff would need to reshuffle priorities to do more analysis.

Chair Greenfield stated the site has been sitting in limbo for 8 years. He questioned how long it would take to approve a new plan for the site.

Ms. North stated if the staff resources were available and it was a direction from Council, a new plan could probably be done in a year or two.

With the fate of our planet in question, please give this issue the due diligence it deserves. There's no rush to make a decision on the Measure E site. A much higher priority should be to stabilize our climate.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,



Peter Drekmeier  
pdrekmeier@earthlink.net  
650-223-3333



**From:** [John Eaton](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Please keep the Measure E site for beneficial sustainability options  
**Date:** Saturday, April 1, 2023 9:46:10 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from john@etnllc.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear Council,

In 2011, I became convinced we should not move our composting facility to San Jose and truck our green waste long distances. I walked our neighborhood, collected signatures and helped as much as I could to successfully pass Measure E. I was so thrilled my beliefs and hard work had paid off. Then, I was dismayed as the City and Council debated how to proceed and eventually sided with a small contingent of Park advocates and did not convert the site to it's intended use as suggested by Measure E.

What has happened in the 10 years since to this site? Nothing. As I often ride my bike in Byxbee park, when I leave I usually ride by through this site. What I always notice is how bad it can smell as it's right downwind of the Sewage Treatment plant. This is not ever going to be a nice place to expand the park. 65% of Palo Altans agreed that we should dedicate this small portion of the park to help our city become more sustainable.

This piece of land, in close proximity to the sewage treatment facility is the perfect location for some type of environmental facility. Please don't close our options until we have explored all possibilities for this land and hopefully to honor our citizens' wishes to utilize this area for a sustainable processing plant.

Sincerely,

John Eaton  
Guinda St.  
Palo Alto



**From:** [Lawrence Garwin](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Maintain the Measure E Site As Is for Future Use.  
**Date:** Friday, March 31, 2023 8:42:03 PM

---

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Palo Alto City Council Members,

I understand that you will meet and consider rededicating the 10-acre Measure E site as parkland. This would be a huge set back for our Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP) which calls for 80% carbon-free energy by 2030 and carbon neutrality (offsetting remaining carbon emissions through carbon credits and/or carbon sequestration).

This is a land use decision that should also be considered by the Planning and Transportation Commission and the Utilities Advisory Commission.

Palo Altans are deeply concerned about climate change and committed to sustainability. To reach many of our sustainability goals, we need land for infrastructure. The Measure E site, right next to the wastewater treatment plant, is the perfect location for organic waste conversion and possibly water recycling.

Nearly 65% of the Palo Alto electorate voted to make the Measure E site available for organic waste conversion. Voters should have a say in the future of the site.

Emerging technologies for organic waste conversion are very promising. For example, right in our backyard [Clean Water Silicon Valley is using pyrolysis](#) to convert sewage sludge into biogas and biochar. Biogas is renewable energy and biochar sequesters carbon as an extremely effective soil amendment. Palo Alto currently trucks our dried sewage sludge to the Central Valley. If we lose the Measure E site, all options for local organic waste conversion are off the table.

[https://svcw.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/SVCW\\_BFT\\_DOC.pdf](https://svcw.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/SVCW_BFT_DOC.pdf)

The Measure E site will never make for a good park. It is wedged between the wastewater treatment plant and the former dump (not great for picnicking). You can't fly kites, because the airport is right next door. People visit the former landfill site for views of the bay, not the wastewater treatment plant. The site cannot be converted to wetlands. With all of Palo Alto's other world class parks (including the 1,940-acre Baylands Nature Preserve), few people would ever chose to spend time at the Measure E site.

Thank you for considering my points and maintaining the Measure E site for future organic waste conversion or water recycling.

Lawrence Garwin  
Palo Alto

**From:** [Joe Margevicius](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Pause on Measure E decision ....  
**Date:** Friday, March 31, 2023 5:09:38 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from joe\_margevicius@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Hello wonderful council members !

I know you do such great service to our community, and I'm asking you to keep considering options for use of the land identified in Measure E, in using it to process our waste in a sustainable way. This is a long-term decision, and one that, once the land is put back into parks and rec, will be difficult to pull back for projects like Measure E identified.

I really would like to see Measure E completed - process our sewerage waste and other organics, in a modern sustainable way.

Please, at least pause in deciding on Measure E's fate.

Thank you,  
Joe Margevicius (resident since 1975)

**From:** [Pat Kinney](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Postponing a decision on the Measure E site  
**Date:** Friday, March 31, 2023 2:57:58 PM

---

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear Council Member,

I am a long-time Palo Alto resident and environmentalist and enjoy having access to our Baylands. I am concerned that Palo Alto is rushing to make a decision about rededicating the Measure E site as park land, without consulting with all the concerned groups, such as the Utilities Advisory Commission. I don't feel that there is any rush to open up new park land, especially this particular space, but there is an urgency to act on Climate Change. I urge you to study current technologies, consider effects of sea level rise, and then make an informed decision about the best use of this 10-acre parcel for our city.

Thank you,  
Patricia Kinney  
689 Wildwood Lane  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

**From:** [Dave Warner](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Measure E Parkland: Don't overturn the 65% vote  
**Date:** Friday, March 31, 2023 12:36:33 PM

---

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear City Council,

Thank you for your service!

Please don't overturn measure E and return the 10 acres to parkland. A 65% majority voting in favor of measure E is a big majority. It seems risky to overturn the will of the voters particularly when there is no urgency.

I am an avid environmentalist, nature lover and bird lover and am a member of the California Naturalist community. I've also been a Palo Alto resident for 35 years.

While the specific details for how the measure E site was going to be used have not occurred, the spirit of the measure was to improve our sustainability, which still has significance for the site. Sending our sewage sludge back into the food supply in ways that create methane and that don't address such things as PFAS, is not a great practice.

Voters decided in 2011 that setting aside a small amount of newly available parkland in order to help sustainability was the right choice. Let's not make a decision to release this small plot until our sustainability concerns are behind us.

Best regards,

Dave Warner  
754 Palo Alto Avenue

**From:** [Mike Anderson](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Measure E Site  
**Date:** Friday, March 31, 2023 11:52:30 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from andman817@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Honorable Mayor and City Council:

I have been a resident of Palo Alto for 40 years. Our citizens are very interested in protecting the environment, and the City has set climate protection goals, including becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Waste conversion technologies are evolving quickly and neighboring cities like Redwood City are using them. The Measure E site, right next to the wastewater treatment plant, is an ideal location for an environmental facility.

Land is so hard to come by in Palo Alto; to me, it only makes sense to set this site aside and save it for future use as an environmental facility. Let's keep our options open!

Thanks,  
Mike Anderson

**From:** [Sue Luttner](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** use Measure E site wisely  
**Date:** Friday, March 31, 2023 11:11:27 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sue.luttner@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Honorable Council Members,

Please do not revert the Measure E property to parkland.

Sustainability is a vital priority for our community and beyond. Please respect the commitment we voters have already made to use the land for a conversion facility that turns the city's organic waste into energy and biochar. The task is challenging, but I'm sure our city can do it.

Thank you for listening, and for your service on the council.

-Susan Luttner

-----  
Susan Luttner  
4035 Orme Street  
Palo Alto CA 94306  
650-387-4102  
[SueLuttner.com](#)



**From:** [David Coale](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#); [Shikada, Ed](#); [Eggleston, Brad](#)  
**Subject:** Keep your options open for the Measure E site.  
**Date:** Friday, March 31, 2023 10:00:40 AM

---

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear Mayor, Council members and City Manager,

I am writing to urge you to keep your options open regarding the Measure E site adjacent to the waste water treatment plant (WWTP) and to thoroughly study the options and future uses before turning this over to parkland.

The original intent of Measure E, passed by 65% of voters, was to look at a more sustainable way to deal with our organic waste and generate green energy. Since then there have been proven methods for doing just that.

Pyrolysis, used by our neighbors in Redwood City, turns organic waste into green energy and biochar, which sequesters carbon. This proven process also destroys PFAS, “forever chemicals” that will very likely be regulated soon. Palo Alto currently dumps our sludge, PFAS and all, on agricultural land in the central valley. This does not seem right to me.

Palo Alto still needs to do more to reach our SCAP goals of carbon neutrality by 2030. The Pyrolysis plant at Redwood City is carbon neutral and destroys PFASs. This is the next step for Palo Alto’s organic waste. When PFAS become regulated, what will Palo Alto do if we don’t have the land available to treat our waste appropriately?

Please have the Staff study the options for this site before returning this to “parkland”. There is no hurry to return this to parkland, which is somewhat of a misnomer as this is right next to the 24/7 operation of the WWTP, not a great place to park.

Perhaps the UAC should take up the matter and return to council with a report on what our WWT needs are and will be and how Pyrolysis is working for Redwood city.

Please get more information so as to better understand all our options before returning the Measure E site to parkland, which is not a time critical issue.

Sincerely,

David Coale

Carbon Free Palo Alto

**From:** [Virginia Tincher](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** City Council Meeting of April 3 - Comments on Agenda Item 12 - Measure E Site  
**Date:** Friday, March 31, 2023 6:30:00 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from vatincher@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Palo Alto City Council Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on Agenda Item 12 - Parks and Recreation Commission Recommend Adoption of a Park Dedication Ordinance to Dedicate the 10-acre Measure E site as Parkland.

My name is Virginia Tincher Van Kuran. I've been a resident of Palo Alto for over 60 years and lived in Los Altos before that. I've watched the Baylands evolve from a dumping ground I avoided to a thriving wetlands I enjoy visiting.

The sewage treatment plant is an important part of the area and improves over the years to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. My granddaughter and I attended the opening ceremony and tour of the Dewatering Facility and were impressed with the thoughtfulness that went into the planning and construction of the facility.

Since my retirement I've devoted my volunteer time to supporting city, state and national policy solutions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, preserve and restore our natural environment and reduce waste.

I was and remain a supporter of determining the best use of the Measure E site. The best use should be guided by what will produce the fewest or no global warming emissions. If we don't reduce our emissions now it won't matter whether we are adding 10 acres to a flyway. There will be fewer birds using it or it may no longer be considered a flyway by the birds due to the changing climate.

The latest [IPCC Report](#) warns that we must reduce emissions now to avoid the worst impacts Global Warming

Palo Alto has ambitious climate protection goals, including becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Sustainable technologies will play a critical role in enabling us to meet our goals. The Measure E site, right next to the wastewater treatment plant, is an ideal location for an environmental facility.

Waste conversion technologies are evolving quickly, yet City Council hasn't received an update in many years. Silicon Valley Clean Water in Redwood City is using pyrolysis to turn sewage sludge into green energy and biochar, which sequesters carbon dioxide.

City Council should direct the Utilities Advisory Commission and/or the Planning and Transportation Commission to weigh in on the Measure E site to get their perspectives on the best use of the land.

PFAS (Polyfluoroalkyl Substances), also known as "forever chemicals," are harmful to people and the environment. PFAS in wastewater and sewage sludge will likely be regulated soon, and Palo Alto might no longer be able to dispose of our sewage sludge on agricultural land in the Central Valley. Pyrolysis is proven to destroy PFAS.

It's important for Council to understand all options before making a critical decision on the future of the Measure E site.

Regards

Virginia Tincher Van Kuran  
879 Garland Drive  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

**From:** [Barbara Kelsey](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [James Eggers](#); [Jennifer Hetterly](#)  
**Subject:** Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter comment letter re: April 3 Agenda Item 12, Adoption of a Park Dedication Ordinance to Dedicate the 10-acre Measure E Site as Parkland - Support for PRC Recommendation  
**Date:** Thursday, March 30, 2023 10:44:09 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)  
[3 31 23 Ltr to PA re Rededication of Measure E Site.pdf](#)

---

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

March 31, 2023

City of Palo Alto Mayor Kou and Members of the City Council

Via email: [city.council@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:city.council@cityofpaloalto.org)

Dear Mayor Kou and Members of the City Council,

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter works to ensure sustainable land use while protecting wetlands, open space, wildlife habitat, and other ecological and natural resources in the Bay Area. Our Bay Alive Campaign advocates locally and regionally to preserve and enhance Bayland ecosystems and build community resilience to sea level rise. We appreciate the City of Palo Alto's enduring dedication and leadership in preserving and enhancing natural open space for the benefit of current and future generations.

We write today to urge you to support the Parks and Recreation Commission's recommendation to rededicate the 10-acre Measure E site as parkland. Please find our comment letter attached.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

James Eggers  
Executive Director  
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

Jennifer Chang Hetterly  
Campaign Lead, Bay Alive  
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

sent by:

Barbara Kelsey

she/her/hers

Chapter Coordinator

Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter

3921 E. Bayshore Rd, Suite 204

Palo Alto, CA 94303

[barbara.kelsey@sierraclub.org](mailto:barbara.kelsey@sierraclub.org)





SAN MATEO, SANTA CLARA & SAN BENITO COUNTIES

March 31, 2023

City of Palo Alto Mayor Kou and Members of the City Council

Via email: [city.council@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:city.council@cityofpaloalto.org)

Subject: April 3 Agenda Item 12, Adoption of a Park Dedication Ordinance to Dedicate the 10-acre Measure E Site as Parkland - Support for PRC Recommendation

Dear Mayor Kou and Members of the City Council,

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter works to ensure sustainable land use while protecting wetlands, open space, wildlife habitat, and other ecological and natural resources in the Bay Area. Our Bay Alive Campaign advocates locally and regionally to preserve and enhance Bayland ecosystems and build community resilience to sea level rise. We appreciate the City of Palo Alto's enduring dedication and leadership in preserving and enhancing natural open space for the benefit of current and future generations.

We write today to urge you to support the Parks and Recreation Commission's recommendation to rededicate the 10-acre Measure E site as parkland.

**Natural open space and thriving ecosystems at Byxbee Park are at the heart of Palo Alto's Baylands Master Plan**

Dedicated as parkland almost 60 years ago, the promised transformation of Byxbee Park from a landfill to natural open space has been awaited by Palo Altans for two generations. In fact, that goal was "one of the core reasons for embarking on an integrated master plan for the Baylands."<sup>1</sup>

"Seeing that the landfill ultimately becomes an environmental asset and a continuation of the natural open space is one of the most important aspects of the Baylands Master Plan." Baylands Master Plan, Landfill Area Policy 1<sup>2</sup>

This was not a passing fancy. For decades since, the policies and guidance of Palo Alto's Baylands Master Plan (BMP) have been repeatedly affirmed throughout the City's planning documents, including the City's current Comprehensive Plan.<sup>3</sup> Importantly, in the years since the original BMP, the City's conception of natural open space and its value to the community has evolved well beyond just preserving acreage or providing recreation opportunities. Comprehensive Plan Policy N-1.1 calls for preservation, protection, and enhancement of "open space and ecosystems of Palo Alto from the foothills to the Baylands" and explicitly respects the

---

<sup>1</sup> [Baylands Master Plan](#) p. 68

<sup>2</sup> [Baylands Master Plan](#) p. 88

<sup>3</sup> [Comprehensive Plan 2030](#) Policy N-1.5 explicitly incorporates the Baylands Master Plan, as periodically amended, by reference.

role that natural and landscaped areas play in a “resilient ecological continuum.”<sup>4</sup> For the Baylands specifically, Comprehensive Plan Policy N-1.5 calls for preserving and protecting open space as “functioning habitats, and elements of a larger interconnected wildlife corridor.”<sup>5</sup>

### **We’ve lost critical time to restore the important lowland wildlife corridor at the Measure E site**

The flat portion of the Measure E site (about one-third of the 10-acre site) comprises the only undeveloped lowlands that can be planted and restored to provide a vital habitat link between the Bay and the Emily Renzel Marsh and Wetlands. The trees and vegetation on the flatlands screen the wastewater plant and provide important resources for birds and wildlife. The hillside portion of the site cannot sustain deep-rooted vegetation due to state regulations to protect the cap of the landfill.

However, thriving habitat and wildlife corridors require time to establish. Eleven years of delay have degraded the landscape and habitat. We have lost precious time and opportunity to restore habitat and enhance biodiversity. We have also lost opportunities to consider and plan the integration of the site in the Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Baylands, to build resilience of Bayland ecosystems in the face of climate change. We have lost critical time, savings, and grant opportunities by failing to invest sooner in restoration of this valuable open space.

### **Feasible organic waste solutions have failed to materialize**

After an extensive process of evaluating bid proposals, City staff concluded that the energy/compost facility that prompted Measure E was prohibitively expensive. In December 2014, City Council directed staff not to pursue the project further. Meanwhile, the City has implemented solutions to the most urgent issues raised in Measure E, food and yard trimmings are now processed with economy of scale in a waste-to-energy facility in San Jose and incineration was replaced with dewatering. Two trucks per day convey the remaining biosolids to the Central Valley.

The City again evaluated alternatives for processing biosolids onsite (including pyrolysis) in a 2019 update<sup>6</sup> to the City’s Biosolids Facility Plan. Again, staff concluded that the alternatives fell short so the current solutions offer the best benefit/cost ratio.

### **Stay true to voter expectations**

The 2011 Measure E Initiative sharply divided Palo Alto’s environmental community. Although no environmental review or feasibility study had been completed, Measure E proponents asked voters to trust the vision for an energy/compost facility in that the benefits would be sufficiently high to justify relinquishing parkland that had been fiercely protected for almost 50 years. The Measure E language explicitly allowing rededication as parkland in 10 years (if the waste facility had not yet panned out) was key to garnering the votes of people who supported the idea of the

---

<sup>4</sup> [Comprehensive Plan 2030](#), Policy N-1.1, p. 110

<sup>5</sup> [Comprehensive Plan 2030](#), Policy N-1.5, p. 111

<sup>6</sup> [Regional Water Quality Control Plant Biosolids Facilities Plan Update, October 2019](#). See Table ES-4, Overall Comparison of Long Term Biosolids Management Options

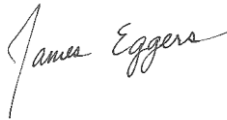
imagined project, but did NOT want the land to be banked indefinitely for uncertain future industrial development.

Now that nearly 12 years have passed without a feasible project, calls to indefinitely extend the parkland carve-out feel to many to be a breach of trust regarding Measure E. Voters understood Measure E to be a time-limited test run for a specific, promising solution. It is clear to opponents and proponents alike that there is still no near-term opportunity to realize the Measure E vision. That doesn't make it a bad vision, but while we wait for its time to come, Council mustn't continue to handicap the ecological benefits that the Measure E lowlands can provide. Council also should not risk creating a bait-and-switch mentality that could turn the community against any future project that may require a vote of the people.

The City should stay true to voter expectations by now returning the 10 acres to parkland and investing in habitat restoration on the site. If a beneficial enviro-tech solution becomes feasible and appropriate for the site in the future, the City can return to the voters with a specific project; Palo Altans have already proven they will rise to the challenge.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,



James Eggers  
Executive Director  
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter



Jennifer Chang Hetterly  
Campaign Lead, Bay Alive  
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter



**From:** [pol1@rosenblums.us](mailto:pol1@rosenblums.us)  
**To:** [Clerk, City](#)  
**Cc:** ["Janet Cox"](#)  
**Subject:** Comment for Council Meeting of April 3, 2023  
**Date:** Thursday, March 30, 2023 2:07:16 PM  
**Attachments:** [CAC PA Measure E.pdf](#)

---

You don't often get email from pol1@rosenblums.us. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear Mayor Kou and Councilmembers:

Please accept the attached comment letter regarding item 12 on the agenda of your Special Meeting on April 3, 2023. We ask that you postpone your decision on the staff recommendation to convert the site to park land.

Sincerely,

Stephen Rosenblum

Santa Rita Ave, Palo Alto

For Climate Action California



March 30, 2023

Mayor Lydia Kou  
Members of the Palo Alto City Council  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

### **Do Not Convert the Measure E Site to Parkland on April 3**

Dear Mayor Kou and Members of the City Council:

Climate Action California is a statewide organization with over 5000 supporters, many of us located in the Bay Area and Palo Alto. We are dedicated to saving our climate from global warming chaos.

We have learned that on April 3, the Council will be asked to decide whether to re-dedicate the 10 acre site (Measure E site) next to the Regional Water Quality Control Plant (RWQCP), which was previously set aside to treat the City's organic waste (sewage sludge, food scraps, and yard waste). Unfortunately, as you know, efforts to set up a program to do this were not fruitful and these wastes are now trucked out of town for treatment and disposal.

**When Measure E was passed, nearly 65% of the vote was in favor of developing an organic waste treatment facility—because Palo Altans want to be leaders in protecting our climate.**

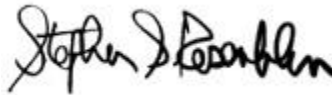
The Council should not take precipitous action to give up on this purpose without consulting the Utilities Advisory Commission and Utilities Department Staff—particularly at the RWQCP—to see if the aims of Measure E and Palo Alto's waste treatment needs could be better served by using this site for its intended purpose.

We are sure you are well aware of [Senate Bill 1383](#) (Lara, 2016) and its requirement to reduce emissions of methane 40% below 2013 levels by 2030. Anaerobic decomposition of the organic waste the Measure E site would treat is the source of [24 percent of the methane emissions in California](#). Methane is 86 times more warming than carbon dioxide over 20 years but only has an atmospheric lifetime of 12 years, compared to hundreds of years for carbon dioxide—so

methane is low hanging fruit in the climate fight. Developing the Measure E site in accordance with the vote is one way Palo Alto can contribute to the state's reaching its greenhouse gas reduction goal.

We ask the Council to honor Palo Alto citizens' demonstrated support for aggressive climate action as you carefully evaluate the use of the Measure E site as a factor in humanity's struggle to avoid climate armageddon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen J. Rosenblum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" and last name "Rosenblum" clearly legible.

Stephen Rosenblum  
Santa Rita Avenue, Palo Alto  
For Climate Action California

**From:** [Shannon Rose](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Ten Acres Can Make A Difference  
**Date:** Thursday, March 30, 2023 1:33:00 PM

---

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear Mayor Kou and Palo Alto City Council Members:

In 2011 65% of the voters approved Measure E in order to make our former landfill site available for an organic waste-to-energy conversion facility. We still need to do this.

My point in writing today is to urge the City Council to **make more time for deeper research** on what will be the best use of the 10 acres where the former landfill site was located. Waste conversion technologies have evolved and are evolving quickly, yet the City Council hasn't received an update in many years. Some of the current options may actually be cheaper and more effective than what the City looked at all those years ago. Silicon Valley Clean Water in Redwood City is using pyrolysis to turn sewage sludge into green energy and biochar, which sequesters carbon dioxide. Converting the Measure E site into parkland might not be in the City's best interest -- especially given our ambitious S/CAP goals and our overwhelming responsibility to fight climate change.

It is vitally important for Council to understand all options before making a critical decision on the future of the Measure E site. I urge you and the Council to direct the Utilities Advisory Commission and/or the Planning and Transportation Commission to weigh in on the future of the site. There is no urgency to make a decision on this so there is time to gather the latest information and make an informed decision based on today's realities. Another serious and related issue is dealing with PFAS, which will soon be regulated by the state. PFAs and how we handle them should be part of the City's discussion.

Many thanks for all you do for Palo Alto. You have my great respect.

Sincerely,

Shannon Rose McEntee  
410 Sheridan Avenue #216  
Palo Alto, CA 94306

**From:** [julianneasla@sonic.net](mailto:julianneasla@sonic.net)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Measure E  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 29, 2023 1:50:27 PM

---

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

*March 29, 2023*

*Measure E Site  
Bay Lands, Palo Alto*

*For the honorable Mayor Lydia Kou and the members of the City of Palo Alto City Council*

*I've lived in Palo Alto for 28 years, and I supported Measure E when it came up for vote 10 years ago. Please remember that in 2011 65% of our Palo Alto voters approved Measure E. We worked to set aside the land for a sustainability facility. The need for sustainable facilities to deal with our waste is as important now as it was then. Please do not act to convert this 10 acre site before learning about the latest waste conversion technologies and options that could be constructed at the Measure E site. Please direct the Utilities Advisory Commission and/or the Planning and Transportation Commission to research the Measure E site and get their perspectives on the best use of the land.*

*I love our Baylands park area. I am there often bird watching, walking my dog, enjoying the tidal marshes and the views out to the bay and east bay hills. There are many beautiful areas in the Baylands complex of spaces. The 10 acre Measure E site is heavily impacted, and cannot be reverted back to wetlands. The "greater good" usage for this land is toward helping Palo Alto attain its sustainability goals.*

*I urge the Council not to act before considering all sides of this important issue.*

*Thank you*

*Julianne Adams Frizzell / ASLA  
1175 Channing Avenue  
Palo Alto 94301*



Virus-free. [www.avg.com](http://www.avg.com)

**From:** [Cheryl Branco](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Rededication of Byxbee  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 29, 2023 12:36:43 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from brancoc@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

I encourage you to rededicate the Byxbee park's 10 acres to remain parkland.  
It is so important for our community well-being.

Thank you,  
Cheryl Branco  
St. Francis Dr

**From:** [Fred Balin](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Restore Dedication to the 10-Acres of Byxbee Park  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 28, 2023 10:03:33 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from fbalin@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Council Members,

Under a normal CEQA process, a concept such as an Energy/Compost facility begins with a feasibility study completed and evaluated by the Council in open public hearings. Then discussions proceed to a project on a specific site chosen via the feasibility study and its own public hearings. And then the city as applicant and lead agency after completing an environmental study with all required notices and public participation, puts the issue on the ballot for voters to decide on removing 10 acres from its status as dedicated parkland.

Instead, in 2011 proponents rushed to get signatures for an initiative on the ballot (at a cost to the city of \$300K, in an off year election) before the results of the feasibility study were known and before the start of any CEQA study. Three years and additional hundreds of thousands of dollars later, staff concluded that the facility was not cost effective.

Seven more years have not brought to the city council a viable alternative for consideration.

To fail to rededicate all 10 acres at this point would put the cart even further before the horse than in 2011.

Also, it is conceivable that the wording in Measure E limiting use on the site as an Energy/Compost facility may not hold up in court, i.e., it is questionable whether the public can specifically dictate the use of the land. And with a history of decades of delay in opening sections of Byxbee Park since its dedication, the allure of “free land” to rent or develop for another purpose could remain seductive.

But that specific sunset wording, which was included by proponents for the purpose of aiding the ballot measure, was an implicit promise that if the concept did not come to fruition, the land would revert to its former status.

Do not break that promise. Re-dedicate the entire 10 acres of Byxbee Park.

Thank you,  
Fred Balin  
Columbia Street



**From:** [Peter Cross](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Measure E Site Disposition  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 28, 2023 5:27:07 PM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from pcross7@earthlink.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

---

Hi,

I am a long time Palo Alto resident who is very concerned about climate and sustainability issues. The Measure E site right next to the wastewater treatment plant is an ideal and rare location for additional environmental facilities. While more parkland is an ongoing objective, this parcel would add only a negligible amount to the the existing Bybee parklands.

I respectfully request that Council at least wait to get updated on waste conversion technologies and to hear from relevant agencies (Utilities Advisory Commission, Planning and Transportation Commission before making any final determination on the disposition of the Measure E site.

Gratefully,

Peter Cross  
945 Matadero Ave  
Palo Alto

**From:** [David Page](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Byxbee Park  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 28, 2023 5:09:16 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from dalpage5@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear Council Members,

We are long time residents of Midtown.

We're writing to ask that you vote to process our sewage sludge in a corner of Byxbee Park. We've walked at the park on many occasions, and see no need to ship our our sewage sludge to agricultural land in the Central Valley.

Let's be responsible for the waste we generate, not send it to a poorer area of the state.

They already have enough to deal with.

Thank you,  
Stephanie Troyan and David Page

**From:** [Elizabeth Wolf](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Preserve Measure E Site Options.  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 28, 2023 4:32:10 PM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from wolf.elizabethb@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

---

To the City Council of Palo Alto,

I am very much in favor of having you choose to consider the important cause of accepting the plan of The Parks and Recreation Commission of converting the former 10-acre landfill site to an organic waste conversion facility. I hope you will seriously consider the issue at your City Council meeting on April 3rd. The Commission has worked hard to find the very best solution for our community.

I have lived in Palo Alto for 48 years and this plan makes a lot of sense to me at this time when we are working hard to make this city a safer place in which to live.

Thank you for taking time to seriously consider this issue.

Elizabeth B. Wolf  
895 Mockingbird Lane  
Palo Alto, CA 94306

**From:** [Emily Renzel](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Pearson, Enid](#)  
**Subject:** Please rededicate the Measure E site as parkland  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 28, 2023 4:29:37 PM  
**Attachments:** [final to CC on E.docx](#)

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from marshmama2@att.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

---

Dear Mayor Kou and Members of the City Council: Attached are our additional comments regarding the Parks & Rec Commission recommendation to rededicate the Measure E site as parkland. Enid Pearson & Emily Renzel

Dear Mayor Kou and Members of the City Council:

**Palo Alto needs more parks, not less.** It's time to return the entire Measure E site to dedicated parkland. Land in Palo Alto is scarce and expensive. The Measure E site has not been used as promoted for 12 years now. It should not be kept in limbo for some hypothetical future non-park use. **Your Parks and Recreation Commission recommends rededication.** Landscaping on the site visually screens the Sewage Plant from the Park and provides an important habitat corridor. It also completes a loop trail around Byxbee Park.

Our City has just been ordered to provide for thousands more housing units - probably representing at least a 25% population increase. Our Comprehensive Plan Policy L-8.1 says, "Facilitate creation of new parkland to serve Palo Alto's residential neighborhoods, as consistent with the Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan." **The Parks Master Plan points out that "Meeting the demands of Palo Alto's growing population without compromising the level of service will require significant investment in park and recreation facilities, ..." That suggests we will have to increase our parks and open spaces by 25% just to stay even.**

Policy L-8.6 says, "Seek potential new sites for art and cultural facilities, public spaces, open space and community gardens."

Other goals and policies adopted in the Palo Alto Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Plan are Goal: "Preserve and integrate nature, natural systems and ecological principles throughout Palo Alto" and Projects Ready in the Short term: "Improve trail connections and access."

Goal 4 states "Protect natural habitat and integrate nature, natural ecosystems and ecological principles throughout Palo Alto." Policy 4.A states, "In natural open space, ensure activities, projects and programs are compatible with the protection of nature."

The Measure E site — especially the part that has NOT been landfilled — provides trees and shrubs that are critical habitat for wildlife at Byxbee Park. (NO trees can be planted on the certified landfill.) The site also is a key part of the Byxbee Park loop trail and it also has a large diameter pipe under it to allow salt water exchange to Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse habitat in the Renzel Wetlands.

We think all of you have, at one time or another, told the public that you want to protect Palo Alto's Parks and Open Spaces. This is your chance to demonstrate that commitment. This entire site is consistent with the above Goals and Policies and should be rededicated as part of Byxbee Park as recommended by your Parks & Recreation Commission.

Please re-dedicate the entire Measure E site as parkland.

Sincerely,

Enid Pearson. Councilmember 1965-75  
1019 Forest Court  
Palo Alto, CA. 94301

Emily M. Renzel, Councilmember 1979-91  
1056 Forest Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA. 94301

**From:** [walter.sedriks](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Measure E  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 28, 2023 4:01:56 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sedriks@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear Mayor Kou and City Council:

We urge you to deliberate carefully on the future of the Measure E site. Climate change is the gravest challenge of our time. We must do everything in our power to reduce, and eventually eliminate, greenhouse gas emissions.

Please explore opportunities to utilize the Measure E site for a sustainability facility to convert sewage sludge (and perhaps other organic waste streams) into renewable energy and biochar to help preserve a livable planet.

Thank you,

Walter Sedriks

325 Waverley St, Palo Alto, Ca 94301

**From:** [Angelica Volterra](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Support for the Parks and Recreation Commission's Recommendation to Redicate the 10 Acre Measure E Site as Parkland  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 28, 2023 12:31:44 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from avolterra@batnet.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

---

Dear Mayor Kou and Members of the Palo Alto City Council:

Please support the Parks and Recreation Commission recommendation to rededicate the 10 acre Measure E site as parkland.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Angelica Volterra