

Board/Commission Process for Ranking Study Issues

The Study Issues process is designed to assist City Council with setting policy study priorities for the coming calendar year. Board and commission members have two roles in this process:

- To advise Council regarding the identification of policy issues to study (i.e., the generation of study issue ideas for Council's consideration); and
- To advise Council on those issues Council has decided to study.

All procedures must comply with Council Policies [7.2.19 Boards and Commissions](#), [7.3.26 Study Issues Process](#), and Administrative Policy [Chapter 1, Article 15 Boards and Commissions](#). All board and commission members shall adhere to those operational practices and procedures as contained in the *Board and Commission Handbook* prepared by the Office of the City Clerk.

To ensure consistency in approach and practice, all boards/commissions shall use the same ranking process as Council for all proposed Study Issues (described below and captured in Council Policy [7.3.26 Study Issues Process](#)).

Ranking Process

Step 1: Review issues

Staff provides a brief summary of each proposed Study Issue. Any Study Issue ranked by a Board/Commission, must be signed/approved by the City Manager prior to ranking. Boards and commissions shall review and take action on only those issues under their purview, as determined by the City Manager. Items not under the specific purview of a board or commission may be presented to them for "information only".

Step 2: Questions of Staff.

Staff will address questions Commissioners may have regarding each study issue.

Step 3: Public Hearing.

Chairperson opens Public Hearing for public input on any of the issues under consideration. (Note: the Commission may not take action on, or rank any new issue raised by the public for which there is not already a study issue paper developed. Those seeking to raise new issues at this point in the process should be informed that their options are to seek Council sponsorship of their issue or submit it to the Board/Commission for the following year's process.) Chairperson will close the Public Hearing.

Step 4: Determine which issues, if any, will be dropped.

Commissioners may make motions to drop issues from consideration. After the motion is seconded, discussion on each item may ensue. If the motion passes by a simple majority of those present, the Board/Commission will drop the issue. Such action suggests that there is no need to study the issue.

If the Board/Commission votes to drop an issue that was initiated by the Commission that same year, the issue will not be forwarded to City Council for the Council's consideration. If, however, the Commission votes to drop an issue that was not initiated by the Commission - meaning that it was initiated by staff, Council or another Commission - or that had been deferred or fell below the line in the previous year, the issue would be forwarded to Council with a notation that the Commission recommended it be dropped from consideration.

Step 5: Determine which issues, if any, will be deferred.

Commissioners may make motions to defer issues from consideration to a later year. After the motion is seconded, discussion on each item may ensue. If the motion passes by a simple majority of those present, the Commission will not rank the issue. Such action suggests only that the issue is not currently a priority and/or it is not the appropriate time to study the issue.

If the Commission votes to defer an issue that was initiated by the Commission that year, the issue will not be forwarded to City Council for the Council's consideration. . If the Commission votes to defer an issue

that was not initiated by the Commission - meaning that it was initiated by staff, Council or another Commission - or that had been deferred or fell below the line in the previous year, the issue would be forwarded to Council with a notation that the Commission recommended it be deferred from consideration.

Step 6: Commission discussion on issues to be ranked.

Commissioners have the opportunity to speak to the remaining issues to be ranked and to discuss merits and priorities before ranking the remaining issues. No motion is required.

Step 7: Commissioners rank issues individually.

Depending on the number of issues left to rank, the Board/Commission shall utilize one of the following ranking methods:

Simple Majority/Borda Count (for ranking ten or fewer issues) – Commissioners individually and simultaneously rank each of the remaining issues. Rankings are from 1 to the total number of issues, with “1” representing the issue with the highest priority for study. Each number can be used only once (no ties) and each issue must receive a ranking.

Choice Ranking (for ranking eleven or more issues) – the number of items to be ranked is divided by three and each Commissioner is given that many votes. Each Commissioner allocates his or her votes, one each, to different issues. Some issues will receive votes, others may not, depending on the total number of issues and the number targeted for selection. A tally is made for each issue selected. Two-way ties between issues are resolved by quick votes of the group. Multiple ties are resolved in the same manner as before: dividing by three (if four items are tied, for example, each member gets one vote to assign to one of those issues). The issues that receive the most votes are thereby prioritized. If necessary and desired, the process is repeated for the remaining issues (the ones that didn't get votes the first time).

Regardless of ranking method, all individual Commissioner ranking votes and final Board/Commission rank recommendations will become a part of the official record and shall be made available to the public.

Step 8: Combined ranking determined.

A combined Commission ranking is determined when staff totals the individual ranking from all Commissioners for each issue.

Simple Majority/Borda Count: The issue with the lowest total becomes the Commission's Priority 1 issue; the next lowest total is Priority 2, etc.

Choice Ranking: The issues that receive the most votes becomes the Commission's Priority 1 issue; the next lowest total is Priority 2, etc.

Step 9: Tie Breaks

Two-way ties should be resolved by quick hand votes of the Board/Commission.

Three-way (or more) ties should be resolved using a tie break ranking sheet (image at right). The sheet lists all tied issues and the Board/Commission ranks in order, first to last choice. The issues receiving the most votes get the higher priority. This step is repeated if there are multiple ties.

TIE BREAK RANKING SHEET Board/Commission Member: _____
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FIRST TIE BREAK

Please **print the study issue number of all that are tied**, ranked in order of first to last choice.

First Choice:	
Second Choice:	
Third Choice:	
Fourth Choice:	
Fifth Choice:	
Sixth Choice:	
Seventh Choice:	

Step 10: Acceptance of rankings.

A motion is then made to accept, reject or modify the overall Commission rankings for issues. After the motion is seconded, discussion may ensue. Simple majority is required for passage.

After the Commission Ranking:

B/C liaisons are responsible for inputting the commission's rankings in the B/C Ranking Spreadsheet provided by OCM. The completed sheet is due to OCM in early December.

Council will hold a Public Hearing on Study Issues in early January. The Chair or his/her appointee is encouraged to speak before Council and share the Board/Commission's recommended rankings.

Issues Sponsored AFTER Commission Ranking:

If a study issue is sponsored after the Commission has held its ranking meeting, the issue will identify the paper as "too late to rank" for the B/C. In this instance, Commissioners are able to attend the January Public Hearing, identify themselves as Commissioners, and testify on how they would have voted (as an individual) had this item gone before the Commission (I would have voted to [drop, defer, rank] this item).

Key Dates: Key dates for each year are available on Sunspot at <http://ocm/pams/default.aspx>

Note: There is no proxy ranking: Commissioners must be present to rank study issues.

2014 Council Study Issue

DPW 14-01 Environmental Sustainability in Sunnyvale's Parks and Open Space

Lead Department Public Works

Sponsor(s) Parks & Recreation Commission

History 1 year ago: 2 years ago:

1. Scope of the Study

a. What are the key elements of the study?

This study would examine current policy and practices regarding environmental sustainability as it relates to the design, construction and maintenance of parks and open space. The main goal is to minimize negative impacts to the environment through a variety of means including the reduction of energy, water and chemical use. It would determine the feasibility of modifying current policy and practices to improve environmental sustainability and assess how that would affect current quality standards for safety, usability and attractiveness and also evaluate related costs.

b. What precipitated this study?

This study was proposed by the Parks & Recreation Commission.

c. Is this a multiple year project? Yes Planned Completion Year 2015

2. Fiscal Impact

a. Cost to Conduct Study

i. Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost)

Major Moderate Minor

ii. Amount of funding above current budget required \$ 0

Will seek budget supplement Will seek grant funding

iii. Explanation of Cost:

The study can be completed within current staff resources.

b. Costs to Implement Study Results

No cost to implement.

Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs.

Some cost to implement. Explanation:

3. **Expected participation in the process**

- Council-approved work plan
- Council Study Session
- Board/Commission Review by Parks and Recreation Commission and Sustainability Commission.

4. **Staff Recommendation**

- a. Position: Drop
- b. Explanation: Environmental sustainability has historically and continually been a goal of the city's as evidenced by General Plan Policy LT 8.2 "Adopt management, maintenance and development practices that minimize negative impacts to the natural environment; such as supporting and enforcing the integrated pest management system; and landscaping in ways which minimize the need for water" and the Integrated Pest Management for City-Owned Facilities. Staff regularly evaluates and changes management and maintenance practices to conform to those policies while seeking to lower energy, water and chemical use while maintaining quality standards and minimizing negative impacts to the environment. There is an ongoing project in the Department of Public Works to establish design and construction standards for parks projects that would also support that goal. Although the project is not completed, many of the standards and design principles were utilized for Seven Seas Park which will be more environmentally sustainable than the rest of the parks system. It will use less energy, water and chemicals while meeting or exceeding current quality standards.

Reviewed By: <i>Kent Steffens</i>	<i>10-1-13</i>	Approved By: <i>[Signature]</i>	<i>10/8/13</i>
Department Director	Date	City Manager	Date

- i. Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost)
 - Major Moderate Minor
- ii. Amount of funding above current budget required \$ 300,000
 - Will seek budget supplement Will seek grant funding
- iii. Explanation of Cost:

Staff does not have the specific skills required in the areas of natural habitat preservation and restoration to conduct this type of study. A consultant would be utilized and the cost is significant given that each site mentioned in the study issue is unique. Habitat restoration work is complex and typically requires detailed studies of the potential affects on wildlife. Acquiring and preserving real property would require appraisals, title research, and potentially hazardous material investigations to establish cost and feasibility.

b. Costs to Implement Study Results

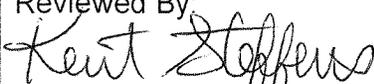
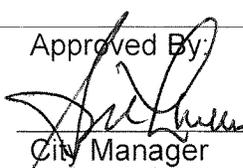
- No cost to implement.
- Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs.
- Some cost to implement. Explanation:

3. **Expected participation in the process**

- Council-approved work plan
- Council Study Session
- Board/Commission Review by Parks & Recreation Commission

4. **Staff Recommendation**

- a. Position: Drop.
- b. Explanation: The study issue as presently defined is too broad making it cost prohibitive. Several elements of the proposed study are already underway including the Stevens Creek Trail feasibility study and planning for trail improvements along the East and West channels. Completing these efforts may result in a more focused and meaningful study in the future.

Reviewed By:  Department Director	Approved By:  City Manager
10-1-13 Date	10-23-13 Date

2014 Council Study Issue

LCS 14-01 Feasibility of an Annual Musical Concert in the Park as either a Single Event or a Series

Lead Department Library and Community Services Department

Sponsor(s) Parks and Recreation Commission

History 1 year ago: n/a 2 years ago: n/a

1. **Scope of the Study**

a. What are the key elements of the study?

This study would evaluate the feasibility of a City sponsored Music in the Park Concert repeated on an annual basis. The concert could be a single event or weekly series, similar to the Sunnyvale Downtown Association's Music and Market event. The City would likely have a key role in the event, but could also explore partnerships with local organizations to share resources and expenses in order to enhance the final product. Given that several nearby cities have an event of this type, best practices data, including budgets and partnership options, is expected to be obtainable.

b. What precipitated this study?

The Study was proposed by the Vice Chair of the Parks & Recreation Commission, Craig Pasqua, and approved unanimously by the Commission on 9/11/13. Sunnyvale does not currently have a music in the park event. The Sunnyvale Downtown Association's (SDA) Summer Music and Market Series takes place on Murphy Avenue and features a line-up of musicians selected by SDA. A City-sponsored music in the park event would introduce more local residents to the City's Parks System and would feature musicians selected by the City.

c. Is this a multiple year project? No. Planned Completion Year: 2014

2. **Fiscal Impact**

a. Cost to Conduct Study

i. Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost)

Major Moderate Minor

ii. Amount of funding above current budget required \$0

Will seek budget supplement Will seek grant funding

iii. Explanation of Cost: Staff time to conduct study is estimated at 30 hours. No additional funding required in conducting study.

b. Costs to Implement Study Results

No cost to implement.

Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs.

Some cost to implement. Explanation:

1) Staff time would be used for the planning and coordination of event or series.

2) Funds would also be needed for musicians; event marketing and advertising; and for equipment and/or rentals needed in conjunction with event/series activities. If

costs were in line with similar events, such as Downtown Summer Music and Market Series, staff estimates direct expenditures of \$5,500 per weekly event and approximately \$5,000 for overall series marketing and advertising.

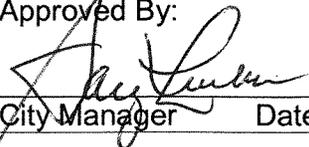
3. **Expected participation in the process**

- Council-approved work plan
- Council Study Session
- Board/Commission Review by Parks and Recreation Commission

4. **Staff Recommendation**

a. Position: Drop

b. Explanation: Staff does not believe that the proposed study issue will result in a new or revised City policy with respect to the City Ordinance, General Plan or to other existing policies. This item is operational in nature and should be characterized as a budget issue. Additionally, there is concern that it could negatively impact the existing Downtown Summer Music and Market Series.

Reviewed By:	Approved By:
	
Department Director	City Manager
Date	Date 10/8/13

2014 Council Study Issue

LCS 14-03 Various City events at Sunnyvale Parks in conjunction with the 2016 Super Bowl

Lead Department Library and Community Services Department

Sponsor(s) Parks and Recreation Commission

History 1 year ago: n/a 2 years ago: n/a

1. **Scope of the Study**

a. What are the key elements of the study?

This study would consider planning various events at Sunnyvale Park sites to coincide with the pre-Super Bowl activities in February 2016. Events may have a football theme and showcase the Sunnyvale Parks system. Community Services Division would leverage the event to promote active, healthy lifestyles, as well as the variety of programs offered by the City. There may also be an opportunity to partner with local organizations; potentially to share expenses and cross-promote programs and services.

b. What precipitated this study?

This Study was proposed by the Vice Chair of the Parks & Recreation Commission, Craig Pasqua, and approved unanimously by the Commission on 9/11/13. The 49ers stadium in Santa Clara has been selected as the site of Super Bowl L, a nationally recognized event. Given Sunnyvale's close proximity to the stadium, there is an opportunity to promote Sunnyvale to both local residents and tourists alike.

c. Is this a multiple year project?

Yes. Planning of events and coordination with Super Bowl activities may begin as early as late calendar year 2014.

Planned Completion Year: 2016

2. **Fiscal Impact**

a. Cost to Conduct Study

i. Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost)

Major Moderate Minor

ii. Amount of funding above current budget required \$

Will seek budget supplement Will seek grant funding

iii. Explanation of Cost: Staff time to conduct study is estimated at 40 hours. No additional funding required in conducting study.

b. Costs to Implement Study Results

No cost to implement.

Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs.

Some cost to implement. Explanation:

1) Staff time would be needed for the planning and coordination of events.

2) Funds would also be needed for event marketing and advertising expenses as well as for any equipment and/or rentals needed in conjunction with event activities.

3. **Expected participation in the process**

- Council-approved work plan
- Council Study Session
- Board/Commission Review by Parks and Recreation Commission

4. **Staff Recommendation**

a. Position: Drop

b. Explanation: Staff does not believe that the proposed study issue will result in a new or revised City policy with respect to the City Ordinance, General Plan or to other existing policies. This item should be characterized as a budget issue as it would require considerable staff time and financial resources to study and implement.

Reviewed By:	Approved By:
<i>Lisa S. Rosenblatt</i> 10/3/13	<i>[Signature]</i> 10/8/13
Department Director Date	City Manager Date

2014 Council Study Issue

LCS14-02 Review of Park Use Policies and Related User Fees

Lead Department: Library and Community Services

Sponsor(s) Parks and Recreation Commission

History 1 year ago: n/a 2 years ago: n/a

1. **Scope of the Study**

a. What are the key elements of the study?

This study would analyze existing City of Sunnyvale park use policies including special use permits and agreements, and related user fees. The intent of the analysis would be to determine if current policy sufficiently addresses the increasing demand for City of Sunnyvale parks and whether established priorities for issuing use permits and agreements to groups and organizations is effective. An analysis of user fees and policies would include collection of data from other municipalities for benchmarking purposes as well as compiling best practice information from professional organizations and associations.

b. What precipitated this study?

This Study was proposed by Parks & Recreation Commissioner Robert Harms, and approved unanimously by the Commission on 9/11/13. Municipal Code 9.62 (Public Parks) was last updated in 2003. Findings from the proposed study issue could determine if additional permitting requirements are needed to address the increased use of parks, and specifically for large user groups. In addition, the Parks and Recreation Commission agreed that the study of user fees would also be relevant in light of the improving economy and that an analysis of comparative user fees from other municipalities is recommended.

c. Is this a multiple year project? No Planned Completion Year: 2014

2. **Fiscal Impact**

a. Cost to Conduct Study

i. Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost)

Major Moderate Minor

ii. Amount of funding above current budget required \$

Will seek budget supplement Will seek grant funding

iii. Explanation of Cost:

Staff would conduct a comprehensive community outreach process to incorporate community input and feedback. Staff time will also be used for the collection of related benchmarking data and best practice information. The amount of staff time required to effectively address this issue will need to be balanced (and prioritized) with the existing staff workload.

b. Costs to Implement Study Results

- No cost to implement.
- Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs.
- Some cost to implement. Explanation:

3. **Expected participation in the process**

- Council-approved work plan
- Council Study Session
- Board/Commission Review by Parks and Recreation Commission

4. **Staff Recommendation**

a. Position: Support

b. Explanation: The proposed study issue could result in a new or revised City policy as well as potential changes to the City Municipal Code. In addition, it is anticipated that the City's ability to manage and maintain park sites and buildings would be improved by implementing policies that address the high demand for these facilities. Any change to existing park use policies would continue to preserve the rights of Sunnyvale resident's use of the park system. Revisions, if any, to the current fee structure would likely improve the City's fee generation and cost recovery rates. If the study issue is approved, City staff will provide Council with results of the study and related recommendations.

Reviewed By:	Approved By:
<i>Lisa G. Rosenblum</i> 10/3/13	<i>Paul Luna</i> 10/8/13
Department Director Date	City Manager Date

2014 Council Study Issue

DPW 13-12 Acquisition of Approximately 18 Acres of Land Bounded by Highway 85 and Stevens Creek

Lead Department Public Works

Sponsor(s) Councilmember Moylan and Councilmember Griffith

History 1 year ago: Deferred 2 years ago: None

1. **Scope of the Study**

a. What are the key elements of the study?

The study would examine the feasibility and costs associated with acquiring approximately 18 acres of land located within Mountain View and Sunnyvale city limits and bounded by Highway 85 and Stevens Creek, north of Fremont Avenue. The study would also evaluate potential public uses and analyze the cost benefit to the community of purchasing, developing, and managing said land.

Most of the land to be studied is located within Mountain View, owned by the City of Mountain View, and zoned for public facility. The Santa Clara County Assessor's map lists the area as part of the Stevens Creek Park Chain, which was a planning term coined for the original county park plans for the Stevens Creek Corridor in the 1960s. It is unclear whether there are any legally binding covenants to this designation, land and water conservation easements, or any other limits to the use of the property. The area is not currently used as part of the Stevens Creek Park Chain and is inaccessible to the public. Several parcels within the study issue area are owned by the City of Sunnyvale, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, and Pacific Gas and Electric.

This land will be evaluated for trail feasibility as part of the Stevens Creek Trail Joint Cities Feasibility Study. The City of Mountain View has also completed extensive environmental reporting on much of this area as part of its planning for the Stevens Creek Trail. They intend on utilizing about half their property, from the northern tip to approximately Remington Court, to construct the last reach of their trail as currently planned. The City of Sunnyvale also currently owns three parcels and a roadway easement in this area, totaling approximately 5 acres which will be considered in the trails study.

b. What precipitated this study?

This study issue was proposed by Councilmember Moylan, supported by Councilmember Griffith, and raised by members of the community for possible park and/or trail use.

c. Is this a multiple year project? No Planned Completion Year: 2014

2. **Fiscal Impact**

a. Cost to Conduct Study

i. Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost)
 Major Moderate Minor

ii. Amount of funding above current budget required \$25,000
 Will seek budget supplement Will seek grant funding

iii. Explanation of Cost:

Costs for staff can be absorbed within existing operating budgets. The study would require staff to coordinate with the City of Mountain View to evaluate the feasibility of a land acquisition. Should the purchase be possible, staff would obtain consultant services for any appraisals and environmental assessment of the land.

Funding would be required for obtaining title reports, appraisals and environmental reports. In addition, staff believes it may be helpful to obtain specialized brokerage consultant services to conduct a market analysis of public land.

b. Costs to Implement Study Results

- No cost to implement.
- Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs.
- Some cost to implement. Explanation:

If the City of Mountain View is amenable to selling their parcels to the City, the capital costs for purchasing the land could be several million. As part of the study issue analysis, staff will estimate the cost to purchase, develop, maintain, and manage the land.

3. **Expected participation in the process**

- Council-approved work plan
- Council Study Session
- Board/Commission Review by:

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission,
Park and Recreation Commission

4. **Staff Recommendation**

a. Position: Defer

b. Explanation:

Staff recommends continuing to evaluate uses for the area as part of the Stevens Creek Trail Joint Cities Feasibility Study and partner with the City of Mountain View for joint use. This study is expected to be completed in early 2014. Upon completion of the study if ownership by Sunnyvale still looks desirable, further analysis as outlined in this study issue could be conducted. The Stevens Creek Trail Joint Cities Feasibility Study is anticipated to be considered by the four partner cities in Spring, 2014.

Reviewed By:	Approved By:
<i>Kent Stephens</i> 10-31-13	<i>Ken Walker</i> 11-4-13
Department Director Date	City Manager Date

for