

Los Altos

Halsey House



March 23, 2021

Purpose of Tonight's Meeting

To obtain additional direction from the City Council regarding what process will be used to make a final decision on the future of the Halsey House, including what structural options are to be considered, what factors (historical, cost, programming, etc.) are to be considered, what additional technical information is desired, and what role should the City's commissions have in that process.



Background

- Current condition of the building
- Past public meetings
- City Council January 12, 2021 direction
- Parks and Recreation Commission meeting
- Parks and Recreation Commission information requests



Key Observations

- Redwood Grove is a treasured resource and highly valued in the community
- Past programming in the Halsey House and Redwood Grove is highly valued by members of the community
- Making a decision on the Halsey House is a difficult task due to the many competing interests and the lack of available source of funding
- There is a desire for the City to be good stewards of a limited resource both from the historical integrity and financial perspectives
- The realization there is no one answer that will address all the desires and demands expressed by the public



Areas which need to be addressed by Council

- What policy questions need to be answered?
- What options for the disposition of the Halsey House does the Council wish to consider?
- What key decision-making drivers should be considered and what relative importance should be given?
- What additional technical information is needed?
- What process will be used for determining a future direction of the Halsey House and does this include further input from the commissions and/or the community?



Options for Halsey House Structure

- Full renovation - adaptive reuse
- Partial renovation/partial demolition
- Complete demolition
- Mothball



Decision-Making Factors (Drivers)

- Historic Value/Integrity
- Programming
- Cost
- Others
 - Annual maintenance and operating costs
 - Neighborhood impacts
 - Traffic/parking impacts
 - Increase park usage



Decision-making Policy Questions

1. Does the Council agree that the key decision-making drivers identified by staff are programming, historic value, and cost?
2. Of the three identified key drivers, which is the primary driver?
3. Does the Council believe that the Halsey House either fully or partially restored is essential to providing certain desired programs at the Redwood Grove that cannot be provided outdoors or in another existing structure?
4. Can a decision on the Halsey House be made without consideration of the whole park (Redwood Grove Preserve/Shoup Park) and its programming?



Decision-making Policy Questions (cont.)

5. Does the Council feel that the historic value/integrity of the Halsey House needs to be further assessed?
6. In terms of cost/funding does the Council wish to evaluate the Halsey House in relation to other Council priorities?
7. Does the Council wish to consider individual proposals from private individuals?
8. If the Council desires the community to fund the preferred option, when would the funding need to be secured, given that the structure is rapidly deteriorating?



Decision-making Policy Questions (cont.)

9. Does the Council agree with staff's recommendation to hire a consultant to provide additional structural and site conditions and historic restoration analysis? Is there any additional information the Council feels is needed to assist in deciding the future of the Halsey House?
10. What role should the commissions have in making a final decision? What issues/questions should they be asked? Are the issues/questions policy or technical in nature, or both?
11. Does the City Council desire any additional information or community input before a determination on a course of action for the Halsey House can be made?
12. Other questions from Council?



Next Steps

- Before proceeding with a specific course of action the Council should decide:
 - What policy questions need to be answered?
 - What structural options should be considered?
 - What technical information needs to be provided?
- Schedule a study session to review information and discuss.



Recommendations

For tonight's meeting staff recommends:

1. Decide on what structural options Council wishes to consider for the Halsey House. Are there any which may be removed from consideration?
2. Identify any additional questions the Council would like answered.
3. If it is determined additional technical information is needed, appropriate an additional \$20,000 to the project to hire Architecture Resources Group to provide additional information on current cost estimates and the associated administrative processes.
4. Schedule a study session to allow Council and staff an opportunity to address the questions raised, review the additional technical information and discuss the decision process in more detail.



Discussion and Direction

