

DATE: 4/8/2025

TO: COUNCILMEMBERS

FROM: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

SUBJECT: COUNCIL Q&A FOR APRIL 8, 2025 CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Agenda Item 6 (Furniture Purchase):

- Has the city ever considered purchasing used office furnishings? Many tech companies go out of business and leave behind high quality, lightly used items, which might reduce costs and lessen environmental impacts.
<https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/better-source-cheap-bay-area-office-furniture-19897542.php>
Answer: The City considers buying used office furniture on a case-by-case basis. For this project, the goal was to have the same furniture manufacturer as the Community Center, so the cooperative purchasing agreement was the most economical method to achieve this.

Agenda Item 7 (Bird Safe Design Ordinance):

- Lighting - Without this ordinance, what restrictions currently exist on outdoor lighting? I assume a resident cannot currently aim a floodlight into their neighbor's yard.
Answer: the following language is the only applicable written regulations in the City of Los Altos, which only applies to mixed use residential, or multi-family housing developments: *"Lighting. Lighting within any lot that unnecessarily illuminates any other lot or substantially interferes with the use or enjoyment of such other lot is prohibited. Lighting shall be designed to minimize the glare and intensity of external illumination, and to respect the privacy of neighbors by avoiding direct and reflected illumination onto adjacent properties."*
- Lighting - Has this ordinance been reviewed by DarkSky International, or some comparable expert organization?
<https://darksky.org/what-we-do/advancing-responsible-outdoor-lighting/darksky-recognized-codes-and-statutes/become-darksky-recognized/>
Answer: the ordinance has not been reviewed by DarkSky International, as the Environmental Commission did not recommend pursuing a DarkSky Certification by any outside agency or organization.
- Lighting - Why is the correlated color temperature maximum set so low at 2700K? Even DarkSky International accepts CCT up to 3000K, which is more commonly available.
<https://darksky.org/what-we-do/darksky-approved/darksky-approved-luminaires-program/darksky-approved-luminaires-guidelines/>
Answer: This is the recommendation made by the Environmental Commission the standard was developed by the EC.

- Lighting - Are any funds available to create positive incentives for homeowners to upgrade their outdoor lighting in existing structures?
<https://darksky.org/what-we-do/darksky-approved/darksky-approved-luminaires-program/darksky-approved-luminaires-guidelines/>
Answer: there are no dedicated funds available currently for this. An incentive program was not discussed.
- Bird Safety - Has any data been gathered indicating the magnitude of the bird window-strike problem in Los Altos, particularly compared to other threats to birds? For example, US Fish and Wildlife Service data suggests outdoor cats are a substantially larger threat, but we have no laws against that.
Answer: this data was not provided to staff or made available at a prior Environmental Commission meeting.
- Bird Safety - Is there any data available about the relative threats to birds from different glass applications? For example, intuition suggests that a transparent ground floor picture window overlooking a fenced and hedged backyard poses a small threat compared to a mirrored wall of glass in a structure five stories tall. What is the scientific rationale for the Glass Standards in the proposed ordinance?
Answer: this data was not provided to staff or made available at a prior Environmental Commission meeting.
- Bird Safety - What are the approximate costs of the Alternative Compliance Method? What fees are charged by the “qualified biologist” and “third-party consultant” required in the proposed ordinance?
Answer: this data was not provided to staff or made available at a prior Environmental Commission meeting. City staff does have on-call environmental consultants, and after review of current hourly rates the following is for a Staff Biologist: \$250/Hourly

Agenda Item 8 (Downtown Theatre):

- The Los Altos Stage Company’s current season is on stage for 27 weekends (5 main shows for 4 weekends, 3 youth shows for 2 weekends, Follies for 1 weekend). To draw people downtown the other 25 weekends each year, how else might the stage be used?
Answer: The stage could be used for community events, business meetings, movie screenings, community forums, concerts, and similar uses that a stage would allow.
- In what ways, if any, would the capital campaign activity be subject to the California Public Records Act (CPRA)? While of course the city wants to meet all its obligations for transparency, potential donors might be reluctant to engage in preliminary exploratory discussions that would be subject to public scrutiny.
Answer: If the Steering Committee is not a City-created committee, then it will not be subject to the Brown Act or Public Records Act.
- Is the consultant who undertook the feasibility study, BuildingBlox Consulting, a candidate for the capital campaign consultant?
Answer: There are currently no candidates for this endeavor as the Steering Committee has not yet been formed and begun the process to hire a consultant.

- To protect their professional reputations, reputable capital campaign consultants will only sign on to projects they consider to have a high probability of success. What would happen to the \$300k if no such consultant is forthcoming?

Answer: The City could include a clause in the agreement with the Community Foundation that would allow the money to be returned, minus any expenses incurred, if no such consultant is forthcoming.

Administrative

- Can a link to the Q&A (also) be posted to the Packet page/tab? Currently it's only posted to the Details tab, and several residents have reported difficulty finding it, especially before the meeting.

Answer: Staff can't make the placement change with the functionality of the current website. Staff will look into placement when the new website goes live later this year.