CUBBERLEY
CO-DESIGN

MEETING 1 SUMMARY



Palo Alto Unified School District

CITY OF PALO ALTO

concordia
architecture | planning | community engagement



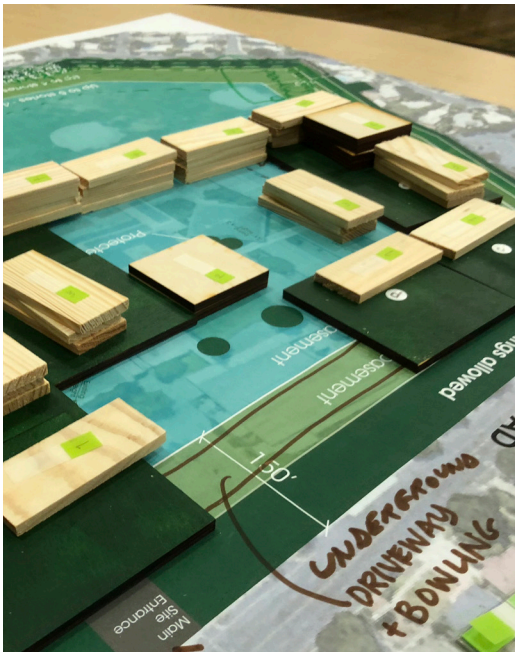
ABOUT MEETING 1

Over 240 community members participated at the first Cubberley Co-Design meeting. They informed future program needs and expressed preferences related to the balance between building heights and green space.

The Palo Alto Unified School District and the City of Palo Alto hosted the first of four Cubberley Co-Design meetings at the Cubberley Pavilion on September 27th, 2018. At the meeting, residents shared their goals and visions for the future of Cubberley that will include a new community center and create the potential for a future school on site. Community members participated in two interactive exercises to provide their ideas for the future. The first focused on what additional programs and activities the site should provide. In the second activity, residents used blocks to illustrate their preferred balance between building mass and green space on site.

This document summarizes the input gathered at the meeting. Full verbatim comments and input are available for download as a separate file on the project website at [www.pausd.org/cubberleycodesign.](www.pausd.org/cubberleycodesign)





ACTIVITY 1: Program Needs

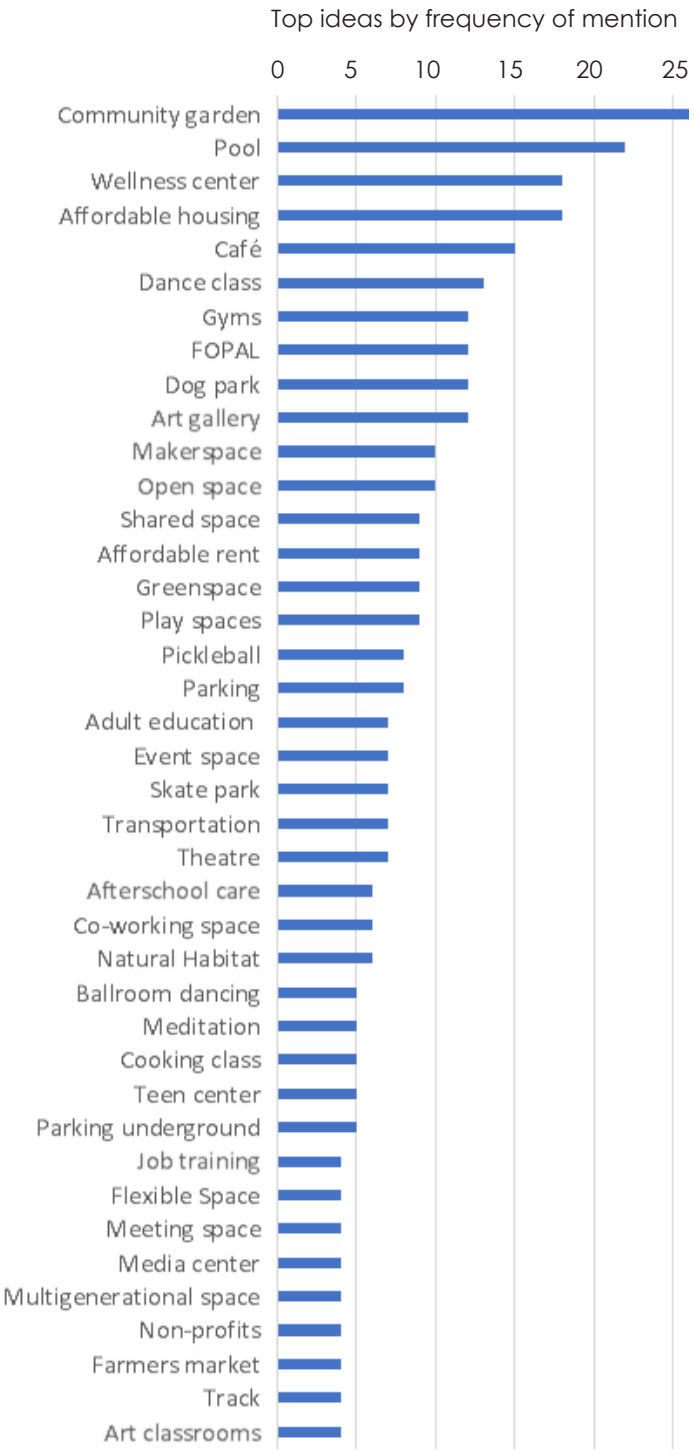
Prior to Activity 1, Concordia gave a brief presentation about the history and goals of the Cubberley Co-Design master planning project, including the needs of the School District and the City. The City's vision is to create a community center that provides a multi-cultural learning environment, that supports the visual and performing arts, and offers wellness opportunities to support the social, emotional and physical health of all people. The School District's primary need is to create the ability to house a large school on the Cubberley site in the future.

With that as the baseline, meeting participants then proposed new ideas, recommended shared uses, and prioritized their favorite ideas.

Residents proposed nearly 600 ideas in total and 219 unique ideas. The most common individual ideas for new programming included community gardens, a pool, and a café. Groups also discussed teen centers, multi-generational spaces, and more spaces to support and show art. Theaters and other large performance spaces were also requested, particularly for dance programs, as well as large flexible spaces for gatherings and programs such as ballroom dancing. Participants also requested different types of health and wellness facilities including senior services, cardiac rehab, stroke rehab, and mental health services for all ages.

Affordable housing was another popular, but contentious idea. Many thought affordable housing, particularly for teachers, would be a good use for the site, but some disagreed outright. One group proposed that the adjacent School District site at 525 San Antonio Road, which is zoned R-1, would be a more appropriate location for housing.

Meeting participants proposed modernized athletic spaces, pickleball courts, and skate parks. Among ideas related to greenspace, in addition to community gardens, participants proposed a dog park, general open space, and playgrounds. Participants also requested a variety of creative working spaces such as maker spaces, workshops, and co-working spaces. They proposed a variety of food-based services including cooking classes, food programs for those in need and seniors, and farmers markets. Participants would like to make the area more bike friendly with dedicated paths, parking, and repair facilities.



The chart above shows the most frequently mentioned ideas documented in Activity 1 across all table groups. Some tables included the same idea more than once, although this was infrequent. Duplicate ideas from the same table were not removed from the dataset.



Program Clusters

Many of the ideas residents proposed relate to one another closely. To get a better understanding of common themes and clusters of ideas, we grouped them together by similarity. The graphic shows how programs cluster together and create broader trends. The size of each wedge is proportional to the frequency of proposed ideas at the meeting.

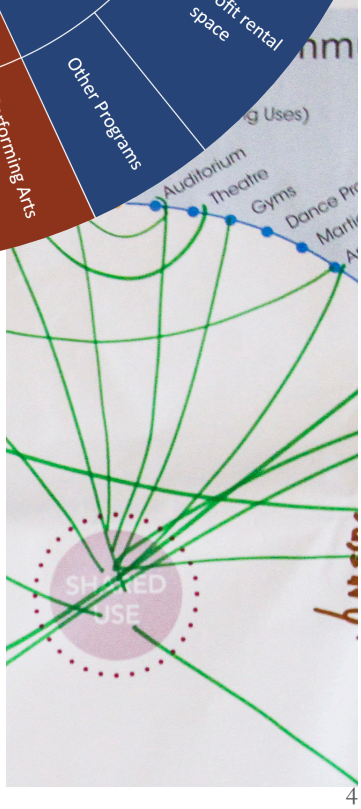
For instance, participants proposed a Tech Center, Tech lab, Fix-it Café, Robotics, STEM classrooms, Tech museum, Tech space, and Technology class. The graphic to the right groups these ideas together as "Tech Space" in the outer ring and then organizes that under "Creative Work Spaces" in the inner ring. "Collaborative/co-working spaces" and "Makerspace" also share this category. While they are distinct programs, they share some common features: in this case dynamic and flexible work spaces. These clusters can help inform program adjacencies and program stacking.



Among the most popular new ideas, or clusters of ideas, are more outdoor green spaces, community gardens, a health and wellness center, gallery space, makerspace and collaborative work space, food-related programming from a café to community kitchen, and housing.

Residents indicated which programs or spaces they believe have the potential to be shared between the community center and school. The most common ideas for shared programming include swim center (pool), all the outdoor fields and courts, auditorium, theater, and gyms. Culinary space, professional learning space, dance programs, and a library were also commonly requested to be shared use.

Residents also connected ideas directly to one another, indicating preferences related to shared uses and adjacencies. About half the groups connected the community center's gyms, auditorium, and theater to their counterparts on the school side, indicating that they could be shared and/or combined. Many tables connected school art classes to the community center's artist studios. Several groups suggested that a future school cafeteria be tied into a culinary class or culinary space and some also connected this to the community gardens. Participants also grouped community center music classes with school music and choir programming.



Prioritized Ideas

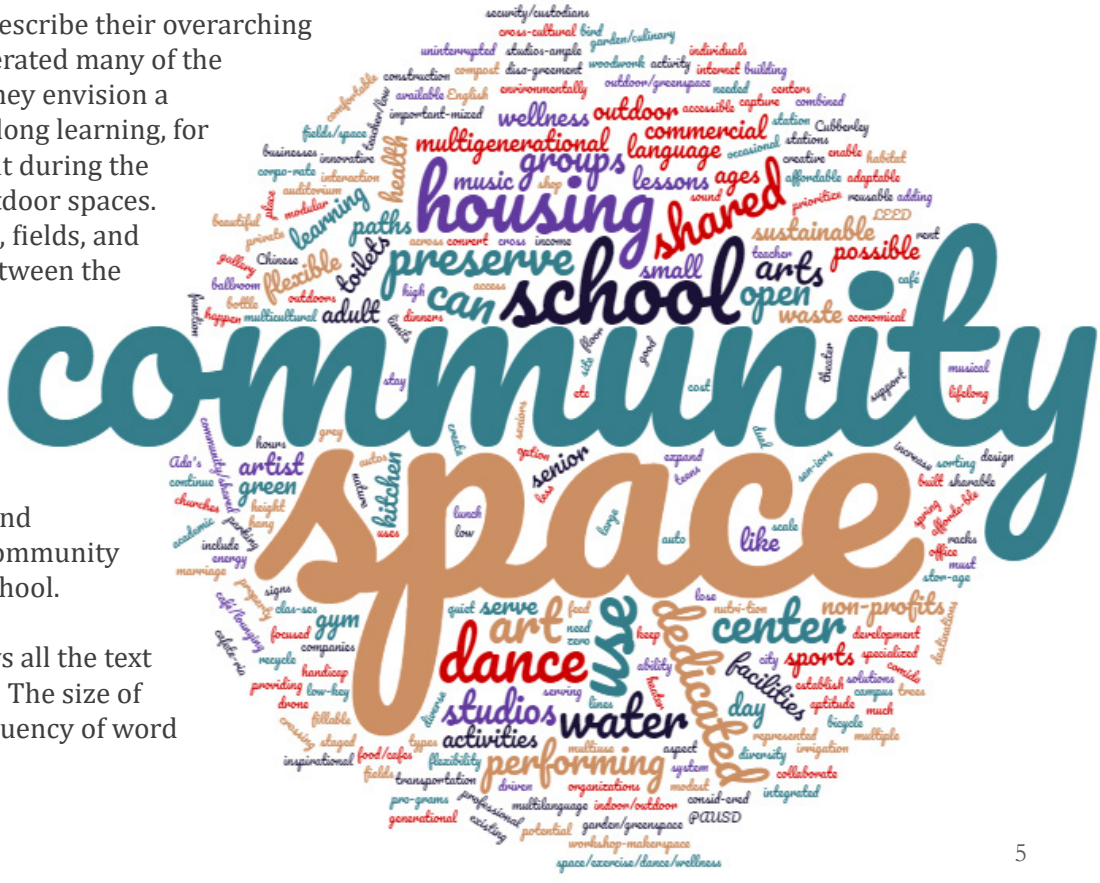
Groups were asked to add stickers to their top 5 favorite ideas to indicate a higher priority. The list below shows all the ideas that table groups prioritized with their stickers. The number in front of the first few indicate how many groups prioritized those ideas, with dance programs being prioritized by four table groups. The list of prioritized programs echoes much of what was already discussed:

5: Theatre
4: Dance programs *(specific note on one: 12,000sq ft sprung floor)*
3: Community garden
2: Auditorium
2: Food/food court
2: Housing *(1 low cost, 1 teacher housing)*
2: Senior center including mental and physical therapy.
Administration office
Affordable opportunities
After school (5-12 y/o)
All fields
Artist Studios
Ballroom dance
Community health center
Co-working space
Culinary space
Culinary & vocational arts
Event space
Fix-it café (for bike, toasters, etc.)
FOPAL
Gyms
Include Greendell and 525 San Antonio in plan
Makerspace
More classrooms
Multicultural education
Multi-use gathering space
Music classes
Music performance space
Nature spaces
Outdoor use
Preschool program
Professional learning space
Reduced rent esp. for non-profits
Separate health/wellness center
Soccer fields
State of art high school
Trade/bike workshop
Underground pool
Upholstery class
Workout room

Vision

Lastly, groups added post-its to describe their overarching vision for the site. Residents reiterated many of the same themes described above. They envision a multi-generational center for lifelong learning, for health and fitness, for hanging out during the day in beautiful, inspirational outdoor spaces. They said that the gyms, theaters, fields, and auditoriums should be shared between the school and community center. Some recommended housing for teachers. Others emphasized the need for the programs to serve the community and integrate into future school curricula, leveraging dance, art, and makerspace activities from the community center as central assets for the school.

The word cloud to the right shows all the text used in these vision descriptions. The size of each word is proportional to frequency of word usage in the vision statements.



ACTIVITY 2: Massing Exercise

In the second activity, residents shared their preferences related to building height, green space, and parking strategy. Each table group was given tiles representing 425,000 sf of buildings and the anticipated required parking. 425,000 sq ft is a preliminary estimate of size based on the assumption that the largest possible school that may be needed would be 250,000 sq ft, comparable to Paly High or Gunn High, and future community center size may increase by 20% to 225,000 sq ft of indoor space. The table sheet showed the height restrictions and setbacks that are required by zoning. Participants were asked to show their preferences about the relationship between building height and green space by stacking the blocks and arranging them on the site map. The parking tiles could be used to show parking lots on one side, or turned over with the green side up to indicate underground parking. Stacked parking tiles indicated parking garages.

Consistent with their request to increase green space expressed in Activity 1, the majority of groups proposed underground or structured parking. Of all the 238 parking tiles across the 27 tables, 67% of the tiles were used as underground parking and 24% were used as multi-level structured parking garages, with the remaining 8% used as surface parking. A quarter of the groups that proposed structured parking also indicated that the roof of the garage should be an occupiable green roof.

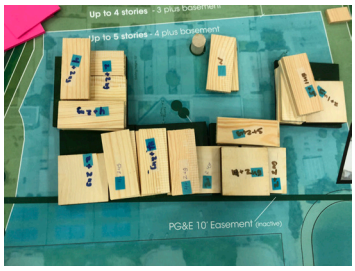
Participants stacked their blocks to an average height of 2.5 stories. Single story and 5 story buildings were infrequent. Most groups used a variety of heights between 2 and 4 stories, generally with taller buildings towards the center of the property, away from the street edge. Almost all groups preserved the field areas as they are and grouped buildings on the north half of the site.

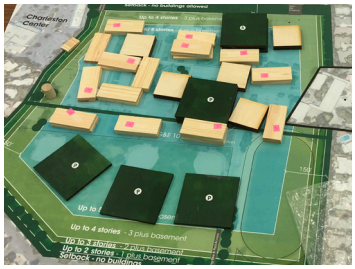


While participants used underground parking in their exercise, they also expressed concerns related to cost, feasibility, safety, and accessibility of underground parking. Some suggested surface parking for safety reasons and for easy access for less mobile users. They also want parking to be near their final destination. They are interested in expanding the main entrance to help with traffic.

Participants commonly indicated the desire for greenspace and landscaping around the perimeter of the site to make it better for surrounding residents and to cultivate a cohesive campus feel. They also added comments indicating the desire for courtyards and green occupied roofs to activate outdoor spaces on the site. Many table groups requested bike parking and safe bike/walking paths around the entire site. Some reiterated the desire to ensure the site is eco-friendly. Participants also want the age of users to be considered when programming. For instance, FOPAL is mainly run by older volunteers and would prefer to be on the ground floor.

Although this activity did not focus on programs, some participants suggested housing on site. Some participants said the top floor(s) of multi-storied buildings could be reserved for teacher housing. Participants also suggested leaving enough greenspace between buildings (perhaps with covered walkways) to have an amphitheater.







Next Steps

Concordia is using the recommendations collected at Meeting 1 to inform bubble diagrams that show different program arrangements and adjacencies. These will be a central part of the activity at Meeting 2.

Meeting 2 will be November 1st at the Cubberley Pavilion, from 7-9p.m.
All are welcome, whether they came to Meeting 1 or not! Meeting 2 will build on the work done at Meeting 1 and move the project towards a final program.

You can RSVP for Meeting 2 now at eventbrite here: https://goo.gl/LKByri
For more information about Cubberley Co-Design, visit the web page at:
www.pausd.org/cubberleycodesign

