

# Appendix E

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Response to Comments on the Draft IS-MND

# Responses to Comments on the Draft IS-MND

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This section includes comments received during the circulation of the Draft Initial Study – Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS-MND) prepared for the Stow Grove Park Master Plan Project (Project).

The Draft IS-MND was circulated for a 30-day public review period that began on August 1, 2023 and ended on August 31, 2023. The City of Goleta received 16 comment letters during the Draft IS-MND review period. The 16 letters are included, and responded to, as Letters 1-16 and the page number on which each commenter’s letter appear are listed below.

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The comment letters and responses follow. The comment letters have been numbered sequentially and each separate issue raised by the commenter, if more than one, has been assigned a number. The responses to each comment identify first the number of the comment letter, and then the number assigned to each issue (Response 1.1, for example, indicates that the response is for the first issue raised in comment Letter 1). Changes to the Draft IS-MND text are signified by ~~strikeout font~~ where text was removed and by underlined font where text was added.

Letter 1



*Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians  
Tribal Elders' Council*

*P.O. Box 517 ♦ Santa Ynez ♦ CA ♦ 93460  
Phone: (805)688-7997 ♦ Fax: (805)688-9578*

August 15, 2023

City of Goleta  
Department of Neighborhood Services  
130 Cremona Drive, Suite B  
Goleta, CA 93117

Att.: JoAnne Plummer, Parks and Recreation Manager

Re: Stow Grove Park Master Plan Project Notice of Draft MND

Dear Ms. Plummer:

Thank you for contacting the Tribal Elders' Council for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians with the update on the above-mentioned project.

If supplementary literature reveals additional information, or if the scope of the work changes, we kindly ask to be notified.

If you decide to have the presence of a Native American monitor in place during ground disturbance to assure that any cultural items unearthed be identified as quickly as possible, please contact our office.

Thank you for remembering that at one time our ancestors walked this sacred land.

Sincerely Yours,

*Crystal Mendoza*

Crystal Mendoza  
Administrative Assistant | Cultural Resources  
Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians | Tribal Hall  
(805) 325-5537  
cmendoza@chumash.gov

1.1

## Letter 1

**COMMENTER:** Crystal Mendoza, Administrative Assistant, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians

**DATE:** August 16, 2023

The commenter states that they would like to be notified if supplemental literature is produced or if the scope of the work changes. Additionally, the commenter requests to be contacted if a Native American monitor is retained during ground disturbing activities.

The City will notify the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians if supplemental literature is prepared, if the scope of the project changes, and when excavation related activities occur. As discussed in Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources*, of the Draft IS-MND, Mitigation Measure CR-2 requires the City to retain a Native American monitor for excavation related activities.

## Letter 2

**From:** [Scot Pipkin](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on IS-MND for Stow Grove  
**Date:** Thursday, August 31, 2023 4:53:11 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Greetings JoAnne,

My name is Scot Pipkin and I'm the Director of Education and Engagement for the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. Earlier today, a couple documents regarding work in progress to enhance Stow Grove Park in Goleta were brought to my attention. As the Garden is an institution committed to the conservation of native plants and habitats for future generations, I wanted to applaud your efforts to incorporate both nature play elements and native plants in the proposed planting design. I also wanted to extend an invitation to connect with the Garden on these elements as you move forward with your plan. For instance, in 2022, the Garden installed the Backcountry, a 4.5 acre natural play area for families to explore the natural world. We may have a number of interventions and strategies in place which might serve as inspiration or guidance for any efforts you may be undergoing to create similar amenities. I'd be happy to walk you through our Backcountry to show you how we mitigate risk, encourage exploration, and ensure play elements are engaging for a variety of ages.

Additionally, I've looked through some of the suggested planting lists for the park and had some thoughts on ways to broaden native plant diversity, particularly to support pollinators. I really like the list you've put together for nectar plants under the BIO-3 heading and had a couple additional thoughts that may be worth considering. Moreover, I encourage you to think about the entire life history of organisms like butterflies and moths, which need specific larval host plants in addition to nectar plants. Some plants to consider:

Palmer's Mallow (*Abutilon palmeri*) [https://calscape.org/Abutilon-palmeri-\(Palmer's-Indian-Mallow\)?srchcr=sc64f1243b6ae40](https://calscape.org/Abutilon-palmeri-(Palmer's-Indian-Mallow)?srchcr=sc64f1243b6ae40)

Coffeeberry (*Frangula californica*) [https://calscape.org/Frangula-californica-\(Coffeeberry\)?srchcr=sc64f124b9a345d](https://calscape.org/Frangula-californica-(Coffeeberry)?srchcr=sc64f124b9a345d)

Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) [https://calscape.org/Heteromeles-arbutifolia-\(Toyon\)?srchcr=sc64f124dd54bf6](https://calscape.org/Heteromeles-arbutifolia-(Toyon)?srchcr=sc64f124dd54bf6)

Additional *Salvia* species, including 'Amethyst Bluff', 'Allen Chickering', and 'Pacific Blue'  
[https://calscape.org/Salvia-leucophylla-'Amethyst-Bluff'-\(Amethyst-Bluff-Sage\)?srchcr=sc64f1254430925](https://calscape.org/Salvia-leucophylla-'Amethyst-Bluff'-(Amethyst-Bluff-Sage)?srchcr=sc64f1254430925), [https://calscape.org/Salvia-'Allen-Chickering'-\(Allen-Chickering-Sage\)?srchcr=sc64f1255e2eade](https://calscape.org/Salvia-'Allen-Chickering'-(Allen-Chickering-Sage)?srchcr=sc64f1255e2eade)

'La Luna' desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea 'la luna'*) [https://calscape.org/Sphaeralcea-fulva-'La-Luna'-\(La-Luna-Desert-Mallow\)?srchcr=sc64f1258c9ef0e](https://calscape.org/Sphaeralcea-fulva-'La-Luna'-(La-Luna-Desert-Mallow)?srchcr=sc64f1258c9ef0e)

Verbena 'De la Mina' [https://calscape.org/Verbena-lilacina-'De-La-Mina'-\(De-La-Mina-Verbena\)?srchcr=sc64f125b4a288d](https://calscape.org/Verbena-lilacina-'De-La-Mina'-(De-La-Mina-Verbena)?srchcr=sc64f125b4a288d)

I also know that you are looking to enhance plantings under the redwoods. If it helps, I have some suggestions:

Creeping Snowberry *Symphoricarpos mollis*

Santa Catalina Island Currant- *Ribes viburnifolium*

Flowering Currant- *Ribes sanguineum* (can be drought deciduous- depends on watering regime)

2.1

All of those are evergreen and provide good habitat for birds (structure, food)

Others to consider:

Spicebush- *Calycanthus occidentalis*- deciduous, but provides good structure. Gets pretty big (4'X4') and has some interesting sensory aspects

Cream bush- *Holodiscus discolor*- good host plant for several species of butterfly and moth. Needs good drainage.

Wood mint/Hedgenettle- *Stachys bullata*- small, but a variety of pollinators are attracted to the flowers

For a more dry condition, consider:

Hummingbird sage- *Salvia spathacea*- as the name suggests, hummingbirds love this

Red-flowered buckwheat- *Eriogonum grande* ssp. *rubescens*- Great for butterflies

The above two can be used in a successional gardening scheme, where they get established in dryer conditions and if canopy fills in, the planting plan can change. These are relative short-lived and if conditions are right, will self-seed or propagate vegetatively.

Bush anemone- *Carpinteria californica*- Evergreen with showy flowers that pollinators like

For a wetter condition, consider:

Wild ginger -*Asarum caudatum*- spreads readily by rhizome when conditions are right. Not a terribly good wildlife plant, but it has an interesting smell and the flowers are cool (though inconspicuous)

Sword fern- *Polystichium minutum*- Also not a particularly strong wildlife plant, but does well in a wet condition. Also found extensively under redwoods in the wild

Giant chain fern- *Woodwardia fimbriata*- similar to above

Brown dogwood- *Cornus glabrata*- good habitat for birds and pollinators, but deciduous

Western azalea- *Rhododendron occidentale*- a great accent plant. Very showy.

Finally, as an amateur birdwatcher, I wanted to say that the bird list presented by the report is a bit appalling. I think it would be useful for you to take a look at the ebird hotspot list for that site, which lists over 100 species of birds, including Yellow Warbler, a state species of concern:

<https://ebird.org/barchart?r=L367310&yr=all&m=>

Thank you again for your efforts to enhance this fantastic community amenity. If we can help you in your efforts to increase native plants and habitat value in this space, please keep the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden in mind as a resource.

Kind regards,

Scot

**Scot Pipkin**

Director, Education & Engagement  
Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

## Letter 2

**COMMENTER:** Scot Pipkin, Director, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

**DATE:** August 31, 2023

### Response 2.1

The commenter extends an invitation to connect with the Botanic Garden regarding the City's plan to incorporate both nature play elements and native plants in the proposed planting design. The commenter provides a list of suggested native plants to include in the planting plan and broaden native plant diversity, in addition to the nectar plants recommended under Mitigation Measure BIO-3. The commenter also encourages consideration of the entire life history of organisms like butterflies and moths, which need specific larval host plants.

The pollinator plant list under Mitigation Measure BIO-3 is a recommendation based on nectar availability for monarch butterflies and other pollinators and includes a diverse selection of plants native to the region, as well as common landscaping plants suitable to the landscaped park. Additional plant diversity may be added through the design process; the species provided by the commenter have been forwarded to City decision makers for consideration.

### Response 2.2

The commenter questions the bird list presented by the Biological Resource Assessment (BRA) technical report. The commenter suggests including the eBird hotspot list in the BRA, which lists over 100 species of birds including the yellow warbler, a state species of concern.

The BRA compendium list does not attempt to present a comprehensive list of avian species that could be observed at the site. The technical report's species compendium lists the avian species actually observed on the day of the survey. The eBird list provides avian observations at the park from 1900 to present. The commenter specifically highlights the yellow warbler. This species is not anticipated to breed on site due to lack of suitable breeding habitat, as yellow warblers generally occupy riparian vegetation in close proximity to water along streams and in wet meadows. This habitat is lacking at Stow Grove Park. However, with observations of singing and one historic (2009) observation of breeding activity at the site, Section 4, *Biological Resources*, of the Draft IS-MND has been revised to include the yellow warbler, as shown below.

#### Page 30

Based on database and literature review, 554 special status wildlife species are known or have the potential to occur in the vicinity of the project site (Appendix B). Of these 554 species, ~~three~~four have a moderate or higher potential to occur, the monarch butterfly, yellow warbler, and two raptors, (Cooper's hawk and white-tailed kite). No special status wildlife species were observed during the field survey and no designated critical habitat for threatened or endangered species is designated within the project site (Appendix B).

#### Pages 31-32

The project site contains suitable habitat to support regulated nesting birds protected under the CFGC Section 3503 and the MBTA (16 United States Code §§ 703–712). Potential nesting locations for raptors were observed throughout the project site during the field survey, with the most suitable locations being mature native and non-native trees (e.g., eucalyptus, sycamore,

cottonwood, coast live oak). An inactive historic nest was observed in the redwood trees within the project site during the tree survey. The Santa Barbara Audubon Society's Breeding Bird portal shows observations of great horned owls tending young owls as recently as 2019, ~~and~~ yellow warbler and Cooper's hawk doing the same in 2009; and a white-tailed kite nest that did not advance to nestling stage. Although white-tailed kites are fully protected species that could be indirectly impacted by construction disturbance within its 0.5-mile foraging range during breeding season, foraging habitat for the kite is poor and no changes to the open foraging areas would occur (Appendix B).

Raptors and nesting birds (including special status species Cooper's hawk, yellow warbler, and white-tailed kite) may be directly impacted if individuals and/or active nests are present in the work area through direct mortality from, physical impacts to individuals and/or active nests or causing abandonment of nests.

The IS-MND, as supported by the BRA, analyzes the potential for the proposed Master Plan to impact any/all avian species based on site surveying and recent database/literature research. Mitigation Measure BIO-5 in the Draft IS-MND requires the City to conduct a pre-construction nesting bird survey to identify presence of potential nesting birds if vegetation removal, ground disturbance, construction, or demolition activities occur in the nesting season. The survey would be required to be conducted by a biologist familiar with the identification of bird species known to occur in southern California communities. If nesting bird species are found to be present, avoidance measures would be implemented under the supervision of a qualified biologist, including but not limited to, halting of work and establishment of adequate buffers (in consultation with CDFW for white-tailed kite) and preparing a nesting bird management plan as needed.



# Letter 3

**From:** [Jessie Altstatt](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** comments on Stow Grove Park IS-NMD  
**Date:** Thursday, August 31, 2023 4:58:32 PM

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Dear JoAnne,

I am writing with some short comments on the Mitigated Negative Declaration for Stow Grove Park. I enjoyed participating as a Steering Committee member and I am thankful that some of my input was incorporated into the final documents.

I applaud the plan to incorporate native and pollinating plants at the Park. I would urge staff to have grounds people and contractors trained in native plant care to ensure the success of these new habitats. I am also in favor of the various improvements to park trails, including interpretative signage, as long as they stay within the existing character of this park. I am also thankful for the proposed misting within the redwood grove. My family in the Bay Area recently lost two gorgeous redwoods to the redwood bark beetle, whose population surged during the drought. Please plan to care for our mature trees so that they may continue to provide environmental and social benefit to our community.

3.1

In light of the proposed bird watching amenities, I ask that you remember why people flock to Stow Grove to see birds in the first place- and that is because the rich and diverse riparian canopy provides habitat for a long list of species.

In Appendix B of the MND, the Biological Resources Assessment bird list on May 16 2023 shows only 13 species. I recognize that this is a single snapshot in time, but 135 species have been observed and reported at Stow Grove year-round by eBird users. To include a table with only 13 species grossly misrepresents the rich bird fauna that can occur at this location. There are dozens of breeding records within Santa Barbara Audubon Society's Bird Breeding Study database (some are even referred to within the MND), and there are more recorded in eBird. Summer breeders at this location could also include such birds as band-tailed pigeon, warbling vireos, spotted towhee and black-headed grosbeak (all documented singing during breeding season this year).

3.2

In regards to Mitigation Measure BIO-5, Pre-construction Nesting Bird Surveys, I urge you to use (with appropriate site modifications) what has been developed for Ellwood Mesa- the Ellwood Mesa Nesting Bird Management Plan. The purpose of this Plan is to avoid impacts to nesting birds and will be far more protective than as proposed in the MND (one single survey within the week prior to vegetation management).

During my review, I did not see Yellow warbler included in Appendix D Special Status Species Evaluation Tables. To the best of my knowledge, Yellow warbler (nesting season) is currently on the list of California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern. I did a quick search of eBird and found numerous reports of Yellow Warbler at Stow Grove in May and June 2023. It is reasonable to expect that this bird could breed here, especially as an eBird list of May 24 documented yellow warbler singing, a breeding behavior, at this location, during nesting season for this species. I also heard singing yellow warblers at the park in June. And, this warbler has had breeding activity documented at the park even though there is no 'riparian' vegetation there.

3.3

For the other listed species, I see that a common rationale for probable non-occurrence is "Project site is predominantly developed/disturbed". Special status species aside, I would

3.4

argue that for many birds (and small mammals), Stow Grove is one of the best areas that we have left within the Goleta Valley and it is a sad day for all if this park is considered “predominantly developed/disturbed”.

↑ 3.4  
Cont.

Finally, I remained concerned with modifications to the Environmentally Sensitive Habitat designation that must occur for some of the proposed improvements to take place, as this could set a bad precedent for future work around the City. Specifically, I refer you to section 4 Biological Resources, section e.

3.5

I argue that changing ESH designations is in direct conflict with the intent of local environmental policy. I urge you to refer to the letters sent by Santa Barbara Audubon Society August 16 2022 and November 1 2022, and to reconsider adding additional mitigation and protective measures.

In closing, I ask that as you move forward with plans to update and augment amenities at the park, that you consider the other plants and animals that live among us here in Goleta. They are in large part the reason why so many of us choose to go to Stow Grove. That the park can serve to connect people to nature in this way, while providing for nature that which is becoming increasingly scarce- a safe place to nest, feed, and roost- is far more valuable than building a second bathroom or grand entrance modification.

3.6

Thanks for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely, Jessie

--

Jessica Altstatt

## Letter 3

**COMMENTER:** Jessica Altstatt

**DATE:** August 31, 2023

### Response 3.1

The commenter praises the Master Plan for including native and pollinating plants in the proposed design and the various improvements to park trails, including interpretative signage, as long as they stay within the existing character of this park. The commenter requests the City to have grounds people and contractors trained in native plant care and to plan to care for mature trees so that they may continue to provide environmental and social benefit to the community.

This comment is noted and has been forwarded to City decision makers for consideration. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

### Response 3.2

The commenter states the BRA list of birds misrepresents the bird fauna that can occur at the Park. Additionally, the commenter urges the city to use (with appropriate site modifications) what has been developed for Ellwood Mesa- the Ellwood Mesa Nesting Bird Management Plan versus the mitigation identified in the BRA.

Please refer to Response 2.2 regarding the list of birds evaluated at the project site. Regarding the use of the Ellwood Mesa Nesting Bird Management Plan, planned improvements of the Master Plan would be phased over the next 10-15 years and Stow Grove Park is more developed than the Ellwood Mesa open space. In addition, construction impacts at Stow Grove Park are anticipated to be lower risk than at Ellwood Mesa. Although a nesting bird management plan is not typically needed for this level of activity, the option to prepare a nesting bird management plan as recommended by a qualified avian biologist has been included in Mitigation Measure BIO-5 due to the high level of bird activity and presence of special status avian species at Stow Grove Park. Mitigation Measure BIO-5 in Section 4, *Biological Resources*, of the Draft IS-MND has been revised as shown below.

#### Page 30

#### *BIO-5 Pre-Construction Nesting Bird Surveys*

- To avoid disturbance of nesting and special-status birds, including raptor species protected by the MBTA and CFGC, project activities including vegetation removal, ground disturbance, construction, and demolition shall occur outside of the bird breeding season (February 1 through August 31), if feasible.
- If work must begin during the breeding season, a pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be conducted no more than seven days prior to initiation of project activities. The nesting bird survey shall be conducted inside the project footprint plus a 500-foot for raptors and special-status species and a 300-foot buffer for all other birds. Inaccessible parts of the survey area shall be scanned using binoculars. The survey shall be conducted by a City-approved biologist familiar with the identification of bird species known to occur in southern California communities.

- If active nests (those containing eggs, nestlings, or associated with dependent fledglings) are found on-site, an avoidance buffer shall be implemented around each nest and demarcated with fencing or flagging. The size of the buffers shall be determined by the biologist based upon the species, the proposed work activity, and existing disturbances associated with land uses outside of the site. No project activity shall occur inside a nest buffer until the biologist determines that the nest is no longer active. If recommended by the avian biologist, a Nesting Bird Management Plan shall be prepared, which would assist in maintaining status and avoidance of multiple active nests. The Nesting Bird Management Plan would include the requirements of this measure (ex. timing of surveys, buffer size, and avoidance efforts/techniques).
- If no nesting birds are observed during pre-construction surveys, no further actions would be necessary.

**Plan Requirements and Timing:** This condition shall be noted on any plans. The name and contact information for the avian biologist and a Nesting Bird Management Plan, if recommended by the avian biologist, shall be submitted to the City for approval prior to commencement of construction. **Monitoring:** If a nesting bird survey is required (construction occurs during the nesting bird season), the survey shall be conducted no more than seven days prior to initiation of project activities. A summary memo shall be submitted to the City for approval within 14 days of the survey. If white-tailed kite nests are observed, avoidance buffers will be determined in consultation with CDFW.

### Response 3.3

The commenter states the yellow warbler is not included in Appendix D Special Status Species Evaluation Tables. The commenter states it is reasonable to expect that this species could breed at the Park.

Please refer to Response 2.2.

### Response 3.4

The commenter notes that Stow Grove Park provides habitat for many birds and small mammals and expresses disagreement with the “predominantly developed/disturbed” characterization of the park.

The term “developed/disturbed” originates from the Vegetation and Other Land Cover section. This land cover type is regularly maintained by people and does not constitute a vegetation community as described in MCV2 (Sawyer et al. 2009, CNPS2021). Table 5 in the BRA shows the vegetation and other land cover of the park, with 3.56 acres of developed cover within the 11.44-acre park. Appendix D provides a table of special status species with a potential to occur and rationale for each species and their habitat requirements. The maintained and landscaped park does not provide habitat conditions suitable for most special status species and the table notes the disturbed and developed nature of the land cover. The BRA states that the project site contains suitable habitat to support other regulated nesting birds and therefore includes Mitigation Measure BIO-5 to minimize potential impacts.

### Response 3.5

The commenter expresses concern with modifications to the Environmentally Sensitive Habitat designation, as this could set a precedent for future work around the City. The commenter states that

changing ESHA designations is in direct conflict with the intent of local environmental policy and references letters sent by Santa Barbara Audubon Society August 16 2022 and November 1 2022, in reference to reconsidering adding additional mitigation and protective measures.

No ESHA designations are being modified for the project. On Page 27 of the BRA, the discussion states that no reduction in the GP/CLUP CE-FIGURE 4-1 ESHA mapping are proposed. In addition, any area not designated on the City's ESHA map that meets the ESHA criteria shall be granted the same protections as if the area was shown on the map, consistent with the GP/CLUP. Therefore, the areas considered ESHA in this report include the GP/CLUP CE Figure 4-1 mapping and the additional 2022 Rincon-mapped habitat.

### **Response 3.6**

The commenter requests the City consider the other plants and animals in Goleta. The commenter states the plants and animals are in large part the reason why so many choose to go to Stow Grove, that the park can serve to connect people to nature.

This comment is noted and has been forwarded to City decision makers for consideration. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

Letter 4

**From:** [joanna.tang@lifesci.ucsb.edu](mailto:joanna.tang@lifesci.ucsb.edu)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment on Stow Grove Park Master Plan Project Environmental Document  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 29, 2023 8:47:55 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear JoAnne Plummer,

I am a Goleta resident and I'd like to provide my comment on the Stow Grove Park Master Plan IS-MND. I applaud the City's thorough efforts in compiling this document. I especially applaud the project's efforts to improve the natural ecosystem by creating new native gardens and trails. Adding native habitat would greatly increase the benefits for native wildlife and humans (aesthetic improvements, pollinator services, educational opportunities, air and water quality improvements). I would like to challenge the project to utilize native plants in all the landscaping (including landscaping around parking lots, sports fields, picnic areas, caretaker cottage, entrance, plaza, and activities area). Using native plants would not only allow for more habitat connectivity (thereby enhancing the benefits of the existing nature areas) but also help mitigate the less than significant adverse impacts to air quality, biological resources, energy and greenhouse gas emissions (can plant drought-tolerant natives that require low maintenance), hydrology and water quality, and public services and wildfire (can plant fire-adapted natives). I urge project managers to capitalize upon the myriad benefits of using native species in all the project landscaping.

4.1

Thank you,  
Joanna Tang  
52 Rip Curl Place  
Goleta, CA

## Letter 4

**COMMENTER:** Joanna Tang

**DATE:** August 29, 2023

### **Response 4.1**

The commenter states that adding native habitat would greatly increase the benefits for native wildlife and humans and states that using native plants would not only allow for more habitat connectivity. The commenter states that use of native plants would also help mitigate the less than significant adverse impacts to air quality, biological resources, energy and greenhouse gas emissions, hydrology and water quality, public services and wildfire.

This comment is noted and has been forwarded to City decision makers for consideration. As discussed on Page 5 of the Draft IS-MND, the City will be removing non-native plants and planting native plant species in the park. The City concurs that planting native plants provides benefits acknowledged by the commenter.

**Letter 5**

**From:** [Fermina Murray](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Cc:** [Lisa Prasse](#)  
**Subject:** Stow Grove Park Draft Master Plan Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, August 31, 2023 2:59:46 PM

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Dear Ms. Plummer,

I finally got a chance to read the Draft Master Plan Document and wanted to send you my comments as today is the deadline to submit comments from the public.

As a local historian and also the Chair of the City's Historic Preservation Commission, I would like to be sure the Master Plan Document has a Section on the history of the park. Please note that I am not speaking for or representing the Historic Preservation Commission in my comments below.

5.1

The Stow Grove Park is a historic park established by Edgar Stow in 1925, and was later donated by the Stow family to Santa Barbara County and acquired when Goleta became a City. Stow Grove Park is or should be listed in the Goleta City Inventory of Historic Resources. Please check with Lisa Prasse. I know the Rincon Consultants have a historian in their team and could provide a brief research to introduce Senator Edgar Stow who was the manager of La Patera Ranch and who planted the grove of Redwood Trees in the park.

5.2

The important Barbareno Chumash archeological background of the Park along with development history of Park by the Stow Family will make a terrific Interpretive Signage for the public to learn and appreciate the unique origins and preservation of this very special redwoods park. Visitors to the Park will learn the contextuality of the Stie to the Chumash, to the 150-year-old La Patera Rancho to the north side, Lake Los Carneros, the Stow House and the grounds of Rancho La Patera to the west side.

5.3

Thank you for your consideration.

Fermina Murray  
442 Danbury Court  
Goleta, CA 93117  
Phone: 805-967-7189



## Letter 5

**COMMENTER:** Fermina Murray

**DATE:** August 31, 2023

### Response 5.1

The commenter requests that the Master Plan Document include a section on the history of the park.

The Master Plan identifies future development of Stow Grove Park with educational amenities and interpretive signage detailing local tribal history and the Channel Islands. While the Plan itself does not include a history of the park, interpretive signage will. In addition, the Cultural Resources Technical Report (Rincon 2023) and Section 5, *Cultural Resources*, of the Draft IS-MND describe the history of the park. Refer also to Response 5.2, below.

As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

### Response 5.2

The commenter states Stow Grove Park is or should be listed in the Goleta City Inventory of Historic Resources and states that Rincon should provide brief research to introduce Senator Edgar Stow.

Rincon prepared a Cultural Resources Technical Report (Report) in July 2023, which included an evaluation of Stow Grove Park for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and for designation as a City of Goleta Landmark and Point of Historical Interest. As noted on Page 39 of the Draft IS-MND, this report is confidential and was therefore not included for public distribution.

Page 43 of the Cultural Resources Technical Report includes an extensive description of Edgar Stow and the property history, consistent the comments provided by the commenter and Pages 39-40 of the Draft IS-MND includes a brief description of the indigenous, ethnographic, and local history of Stow Grove Park. Additional details regarding Edgar Stow and the Stow House have been added to the Cultural Resources Technical Report. Section 5, *Cultural Resources*, of the Draft IS-MND has also been revised, as shown below.

#### Page 40

The earliest agricultural pioneers in the area included the Hollister Ranch, Cooper Ranch, and Stow Ranch, ~~where within which~~ the project site was ~~originally~~ historically located. ~~What is currently Stow Grove Park was part of Stow Ranch.~~ During this period, ~~it~~ the project site was used as an unofficial gathering ~~spot~~ place for members of the Stow family and locals alike, who referred to the present redwood grove as Stow's Grove. The grove was surrounded by lemon orchards owned by the Stow fFamily. Members of the Stow Family ~~who lived in~~ on the property, in what is referred to today as the Stow House (Santa Barbara County Landmark #6; designated Goleta Landmark, NRHP and CRHR listed), located southwest of the current day park at 304 North Carneros Road.

The City's process in evaluating Stow Grove Park, using state, federal, and local criteria and guidelines, is similar to the process the City utilized when reviewing and establishing other historical locations in Goleta. In the Cultural Resources Technical Report, Stow Grove Park was previously recommended as

ineligible for listing as a Goleta Point of Historical Interest (POI). The City has reevaluated the eligibility of Stow Grove Park as a POI and has determined that due to the recognition of the Park's historical associations with the institutional development of Goleta and with Edgar Stow, Stow Grove Park is now recommended eligible for designation as a Goleta POI under Criterion A1. The Cultural Resources Technical Report has been revised. Consistent with these revisions, Section 5, *Cultural Resources*, of the Draft IS-MND has been revised as shown below.

**Page 40**

Field survey and background research resulted in the identification of one historic-age property within the project site, Stow Grove Park. The property was recorded and evaluated on DPR forms for listing in the NRHP, CRHR, and local designation as a Goleta Landmark and was recommended ineligible for listing for all three under all criteria (Rincon 2023). Although Stow Grove Park is recommended eligible for designation as a Goleta Point of Historical Interest, according to the City of Goleta Municipal Code Section 17.33.070, Points of Historical Interest are not considered ~~Since Stow Grove Park is ineligible for listing in the NRHP, CRHR, and local designation, it is not considered~~ a historical resource pursuant to the CEQA. Because there are no historical resources on the site, the project would not result in adverse change to the significance of a historical resource. There would be no impact.

The revisions provided on Page 40 do not change the significance determination of No Impact and do not increase the severity of the impact presented in the Draft IS-MND. Recirculation of the Draft IS-MND is not required, and no further response is necessary.

**Response 5.3**

The commenter expresses support for including Barbareno Chumash and Stow Family history on Interpretive Signage.

This comment is noted and has been forwarded to City decision makers for consideration. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

## Letter 6

**From:** [Paulette Ley](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Balancing logs?  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 02, 2023 1:13:20 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Joanne, How do the new proposed balancing beams differ from my DP hand crafted flat top balance beam that the county removed?

Is the new parking lot extension & entrance going to impact what is left of my Tot Lot and are they going to remove one of the 2 sycamore trees?

Why is another entrance needed? Is it just another escape route for vandals? Trucks should fit in the current entrance.

Paulette Ley

6.1

## Letter 6

**COMMENTER:** Paulette Ley

**DATE:** August 2, 2023

### **Response 6.1**

The commenter requests further information on the type of balancing logs, whether the parking lot and entrance work would impact the tot lot, whether the City will be removing one of the two sycamore trees, and questions why another entrance is needed.

Implementation of the Master Plan would not require work on privately owned properties and one coast live oak tree would be removed. The secondary service vehicle entrance is necessary to provide continued access to the maintenance facility as well as for use by emergency response. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

## Letter 7

**From:** [George Relles](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Stow Grove Master Plan  
**Date:** Monday, August 14, 2023 10:19:39 AM

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This looks like great work by keeping the essential character of the Park as you make necessary improvements and enhancements. Thank you.

7.1

## Letter 7

**COMMENTER:** George Relles

**DATE:** August 14, 2023

### **Response 7.1**

The commenter states their support for the project.

This comment is noted. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

## Letter 8

**From:** [rickworth@gmail.com](mailto:rickworth@gmail.com)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Stow Park master plan  
**Date:** Friday, August 18, 2023 9:08:18 AM

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Concerns from residents

I am all for maintaining Stowe Park. It's a nice mellow, beautiful park that one can lose themselves in very quickly. My concern with this master plan, and I will admittedly tell you I have not read it, is that I would not like to see major events held there simply because of the proximity to peoples residences, which are literally one chain-link fence away. I would like to see no amplification allowed for events. Although I am about three blocks away, I am speaking on behalf of the people who border the park.. admittedly, I have not read the master plan. But I have raised my son in this area, and that Park has a lot of memories and special vibration to the residence around here. It is low-key and beautiful and I would like to make sure the city keeps it that way overall.

Richard Worth  
Marlborough Dr., Goleta

Sent from my iPhone

8.1

## Letter 8

**COMMENTER:** Richard Worth

**DATE:** August 18, 2023

### **Response 8.1**

The commenter states they have not reviewed the Master Plan, provides positive comments regarding the park itself, and requests to see no amplification for special events.

The Master Plan does not include any amplified music or special events. As discussed in Section 13, *Noise*, of the Draft IS-MND, additional park improvements would improve existing facilities and would not constitute new sources of operational noise. This comment is noted and has been forwarded to City decision makers for consideration. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.



## Letter 9

**From:** [Julie Gilmore](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Stow Grove Master Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 02, 2023 7:05:52 AM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear JoAnne,  
Thank you for the opportunity to review the Master Plan. I have one question and one comment:

- 1) Rarely do I see people use "fitness" pathways in most parts where they are installed. Although nice at first, they quickly get dirty and become eyesores. I recommend NOT installing one. People do not go to the park for that purpose.
- 2) With the removal of one of the sand volleyball courts, will a new court be created elsewhere? Perhaps Girsh park? There are no publicly accessible courts in Goleta besides at Stow, and while perhaps you aren't aware, the net height for one of the courts is set to women's height and the other to men's height -- thus allowing younger/shorter players to equally enjoy playing the game. Also, during 3-day weekends both courts are usually heavily used, so removal of one means reduced enjoyment of the park. I don't recommend seating around the remaining court as volleyball players need a very wide berth around the court to safely play, but I DO recommend upgrading the BBQ.

9.1

## Letter 9

**COMMENTER:** Julie Gilmore

**DATE:** August 2, 2023

### **Response 9.1**

The commenter recommends not installing fitness pathways and questions where a new sand volleyball court will be installed.

This comment is noted and has been forwarded to City decision makers for consideration. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

# Letter 10

**From:** [Maggie Friedlander](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Stow Grove Master Plan  
**Date:** Monday, August 28, 2023 5:07:03 PM

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Why doesn't Goleta have a public swimming pool?

10.1

## Letter 10

**COMMENTER:** Maggie Friedlander

**DATE:** August 28, 2023

### **Response 10.1**

The commenter questions why the City does not have a public swimming pool.

This comment is noted and has been forwarded to City decision makers for consideration. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

## Letter 11

**From:** [Alexandra Hamill](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Stow Grove Park - any stop signs around the new design?  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 29, 2023 8:51:03 AM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning,

I have two young kids and live 4 houses away from Stow Grove so have a real vested interest in the park. I wonder if any plans have been put in place to add a stop sign along any of the roads that lead to the park?

There is no stop sign on Windsor to the east of the park, or La Patera to the west of the park and of course Cathedral Oaks does not have one. There are children using this park daily, and I imagine with a bigger, better design that will only increase.

Just today a car came very close to hitting us as we crossed into the park using the crosswalk at Windsor and Muirfield. That entrance into the park is heavily trafficked when school is in session. Two years ago a 4 year old was hit on his bike in that crosswalk as he rode out of the park.

Please consider a stop sign somewhere along the entrance to the park.

Alexandra Hamill

11.1

## Letter 11

**COMMENTER:** Alexandra Hamill

**DATE:** August 29, 2023

### **Response 11.1**

The commenter notes that increased use of the park will increase traffic hazards in the area and questions whether the City will add stop signs on the streets adjacent to the park.

The Department of Neighborhood Services will continue to coordinate with the Public Works Department with respect to the viability of installing traffic signs in the area, as well as general safety concerns related to park accessibility and roadway/traffic circulation. This comment is noted and has been forwarded to City decision makers for consideration. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

## Letter 12

**From:** [roman.baratiak](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Stow Grove Park recommendation  
**Date:** Thursday, August 31, 2023 4:24:24 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi JoAnne,

Thank you for your hard work on this project at Stow Grove Park and the ongoing care and maintenance of the other parks and open spaces in the City of Goleta.

As a long-time Goleta resident who visits Stow Grove Park on a regular basis throughout the year I strongly encourage maintaining passive and low impact use of this community jewel. The park has served the community exceedingly well as a place for quiet walks, pleasant picnics and low informal athletic activities. Stow Grove Park is blessed with lovely trees, abundant bird life and a peaceful meandering footpath. It is a unique and rare refuge where seniors and families can enjoy a quiet weekday respite from the noise and frenzy that plagues many other public spaces. A large and underutilized sports field is available at La Patera School for soccer and other games. Let's protect and keep Stow Grove Park for passive nature oriented uses.

I do support the renovation of the caretaker's cottage as a low-key nature center and to have a small rustic circular area nearby for educational nature talks. Providing the nature center as a home for a local environmental group such as the Santa Barbara Audubon Society would be especially appropriate given the many birding opportunities at Stow Grove Park and nearby Lake Los Carneros.

Thank you again. All the best, Roman Baratiak, Goleta resident

12.1

## Letter 12

**COMMENTER:** Roman Baratiak

**DATE:** August 31, 2023

### **Response 12.1**

The commenter encourages the City to maintain passive and low impact use of the Park and to protect and keep Stow Grove Park for passive nature oriented uses. The commenter states their support for the renovation of the caretaker's cottage as a low-key nature center and to have a small rustic circular area nearby for educational nature talks.

This comment is noted. The Master Plan is designed to include passive/nature based amenities, such as upgrading the native tree grove and caretaker cottage, and creation of interpretive/bird watching trails, a botanical garden, a butterfly/pollinator garden. The commenter's preferences are noted and have been forwarded to City decision makers for consideration. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.



## Letter 13

**From:** [Mariko Tabar](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Stow grove park  
**Date:** Sunday, August 13, 2023 8:31:22 AM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi, JoAnne

This is Mariko. It's been a long time since I've seen you last. Hope all is going well with you. Today, I'm emailing you regarding Stow Grove park.

We have lived a block away from this beautiful park for close to 30 years. Our children loved playing there and now our grandchildren love to go over to the park whenever they visit us.

We (my husband and I) love the idea of all inclusive playground, updated bathroom/s (maybe a bathroom near playground, too), updated picnic tables etc, and other suggested items. However, we strongly feel that overall looks of the park shouldn't change drastically. We love each section of the park.

One big concern we have right now is those tall eucalyptus trees along the walkway. They are too tall and leaning heavily. Many eucalyptus trees fell in the city with heavy rain and winds this year. We are very concerned for safety of anyone who walks or picnic along and near these trees. Maybe it's time to replace them with other trees?

Thank you for all you do for Goleta

***Mariko Tabar***

Art Commissioner

Santa Barbara County

Second District

Artist

Art Educator

Curator

(805)407-8764

[www.marikotabar.com](http://www.marikotabar.com)

13.1

## Letter 13

**COMMENTER:** Mariko Tabar

**DATE:** August 13, 2023

### **Response 13.1**

The commenter expresses support for the proposed improvements but states the opinion that the overall look of the park should not change drastically. The commenter also expresses concern regarding eucalyptus trees in the park walkway.

This comment is noted. The City will continue to monitor tree health and conduct tree maintenance as needed. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

## Letter 14

**From:** [Whitney Detar](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Stow Grove plan comments  
**Date:** Monday, August 21, 2023 1:22:31 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi!

Emailing regarding the Stow Grove plan! We live right around the corner. A few things we think would be great are:

- workout equipment for adults (e.g. pull up bars, etc.)
- better ground for playground than sand (e.g. rubber)
- deeper sand on sand volleyball court and lines
- regular cleaning and safety patrols (there are often homeless people squatting there and the tables and benches are very dirty)
- more benches and play equipment next to the multi-use grass area

Thanks for your consideration!

Whitney J Detar, Ph.D., BCBA-D

14.1

## Letter 14

**COMMENTER:** Whitney Detar

**DATE:** August 21, 2023

### **Response 14.1**

The commenter requests that the park include workout equipment, better ground on playgrounds, deeper sand volleyball courts, regular cleaning and safety patrols, more benches and play equipment.

The project includes a new fitness trail loop, an all abilities playground and play equipment, and new benches. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

## Letter 15

**From:** Kelsey Perry  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Stow Grove renovation feedback  
**Date:** Thursday, August 10, 2023 11:47:35 AM

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I live in the neighborhood near Stow Grove Park and love this plan! I'm especially excited about the playground upgrade for my kids, improved trash receptacles (always see them overflowing after holidays and graduations), and most importantly to me, the inclusion of native plantings and educational signage along paths. These will be beautiful and connect many people in the neighborhood to the land.

Great to read that drainage will be improved and swales included. Makes sense to harvest any water we can!

Thanks for your hard work.

Kelsey Perry

15.1

## Letter 15

**COMMENTER:** Kelsey Perry

**DATE:** August 10, 2023

### **Response 15.1**

The commenter states their support for the project.

This comment is noted. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.

## Letter 16

**From:** [Lee Ann Palmer](#)  
**To:** [JoAnne Plummer](#)  
**Subject:** Stow Park Master Plan comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 22, 2023 3:00:23 PM

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Dear Sir or Madam,

Though some of the changes were discussed at the last meeting at La Patera school, many of these were not

I see the following happening at our very special park

1. Too much stuff, many, many people voted for *minimal* changes - not what you are proposing
2. Nothing mentioned about the status of the caretaker which is required by the covenants on the deed from the Stow family's generous donation to the community. The city of Goleta has now been out of compliance on this issue for years. When is the city resolving this issue????? The Stow family has been very generous to allow the city to skip this. Why is this so very hard to resolve? Bring in a caretaker in a nice RV like they do at Tucker's Grove. *Have people on the property as it always was when the County was in charge.*
3. We have no other shady area for families to gather in Goleta when it is hot, lets not put more walking trails, etc that take away from this very important function..
4. Top priorities were redwoods, walking paths, trees/plantings, play equipment and bathrooms. Yet we have improvements for horseshoes, etc in the plans for improvement. Seems like the survey was not taken into account. If people wanted minimal changes, why do all this stuff.
5. Yes, please make the bathrooms more user friendly, fun playground equipment for our kids but please keep this park as the cool, shady place it is. That was the overwhelming message I heard at both meetings.
6. Every time it goes back to the planners it costs taxpayers money to rethink and redesign, Less is More!!

Thank you,

Lee Ann Palmer

16.1

## Letter 16

**COMMENTER:** Lee Ann Palmer

**DATE:** August 29, 2023

### **Response 16.1**

The commenter questions the design of the Master Plan and states there are too many amenities proposed. The commenter states that nothing is mentioned about the status of the caretaker cottage and that more trails would take away from shady areas.

This comment is noted and has been forwarded to City decision makers for consideration. The Master Plan does not include any tree removals or amenities which would take away from shady areas at the Park. In addition, as discussed on Page 4 and Page 6 of the Draft IS-MND, the Master Plan includes rehabilitation of the cottage to provide shared use as a classroom, education, or nature center. While the project includes operational improvements to the cottage for public use, the City may look to occupy the cottage by a City staff member again in the future. As this comment does not pertain to the adequacy of the Draft IS-MND or CEQA process, further response is not required.