

# Pleasant Hills Vision: Community Workshop 1 Input Summary

## Introduction

The City of San José Department of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement hosted its first round of community workshops for the Pleasant Hills Golf Course (PHGC) Guiding Principles process on the evenings of February 15, 2024 and February 21, 2024. The two workshops – one in-person and one virtual – were the same in their content and activities. Participants got to know other community members that are invested in the future of the PHGC site and expressed their vision, ideas, and concerns about its potential development. Across both workshops, input was received from over 180 individuals.

This document includes an overview of workshop participation, workshop content and activities, and a synthesis of key insights from both the in-person and virtual meetings.

## I. Workshop Participation

### Timing and Location

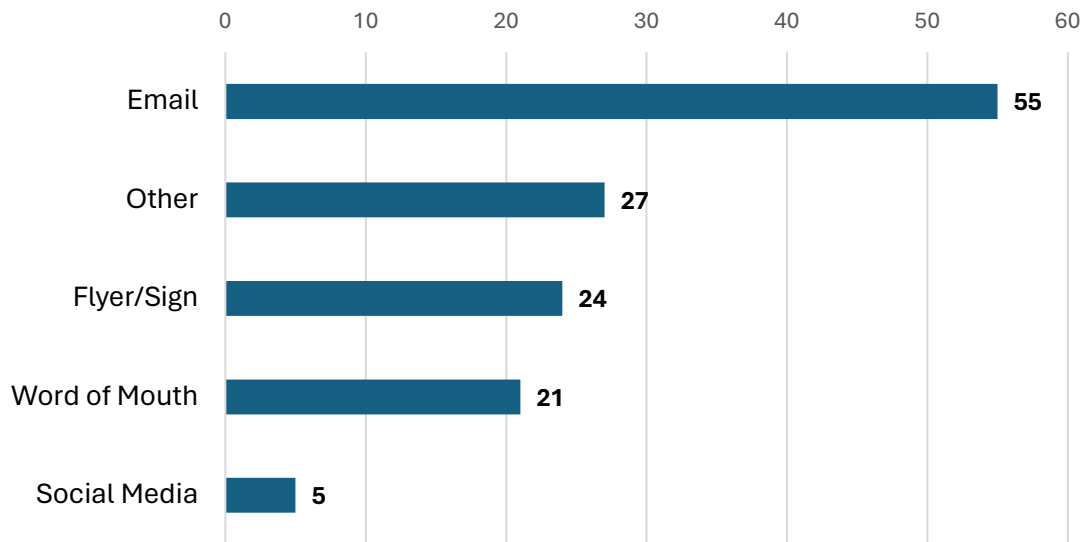
The in-person workshop was hosted in the August Boeger Middle School cafeteria on February 15, 2024 from 6pm to 8pm. The virtual workshop took place on Zoom on February 21, 2024 from 6pm to 8pm.

### Outreach Methods

Workshops were advertised to the public through several channels. Event registration pages were shared in digital City of San José mailers and a multi-lingual banner was hung on the fence at the PHGC site. Council offices for District 5 and 8 also promoted the workshops to their constituents.

**Figure 1** provides a summary of information about how attendees heard about the workshops, as reported in surveys completed at each of them. As shown on the chart, more than half of participants heard about the workshops via email, with flyers and signs, and word of mouth, also important sources of information.

**Figure 1: How did you hear about this event?**



Community-based organization partners Latina Coalition of Silicon Valley (LCSV) and Vietnamese American Roundtable (VAR) promoted the workshops to their networks by distributing multi-lingual flyers at local businesses, during in-person and virtual programming, and at community events and digitally sharing the project website and event registration pages.

## Registration and Attendance

Beginning January 19, 2024, the public was able to register for both workshops via Eventbrite. Both Eventbrite webpages included information on the workshop dates, times, locations, and a brief description of the PHGC Vision process and workshop agenda. When registering, participants completed a form with their name, email address, and requests for translation or any other accommodations.

Leading up to the event, reminder emails were sent to registrants. In the case of the virtual workshop, reminder emails also included credentials for accessing the Zoom meeting. A reminder email was sent two days before the in-person workshop. Reminder emails were sent one week, two days, two hours, and 15 minutes before the virtual workshop.

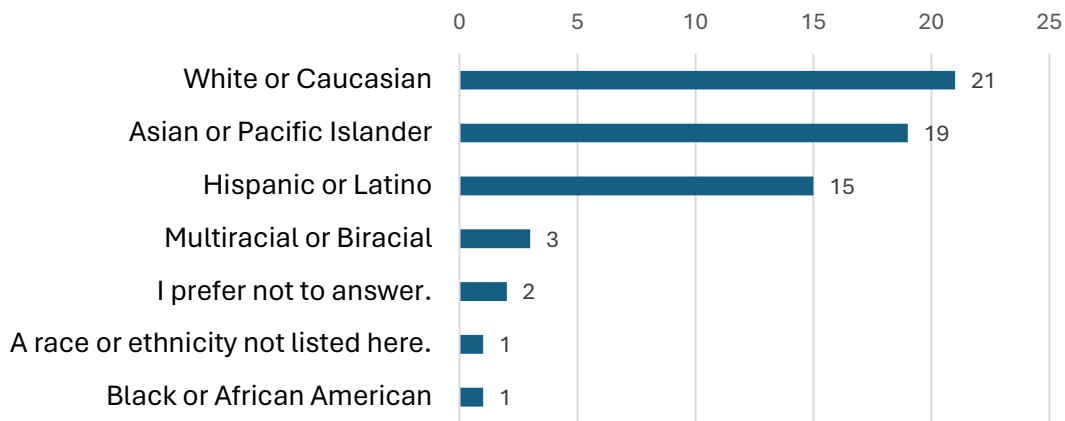
The Eventbrite for the in-person workshop received 31 RSVPs. Actual attendance was approximately 105 people. The Eventbrite for the virtual workshop received 104 RSVPs. Actual attendance was approximately 75 people.

## Participant Demographics

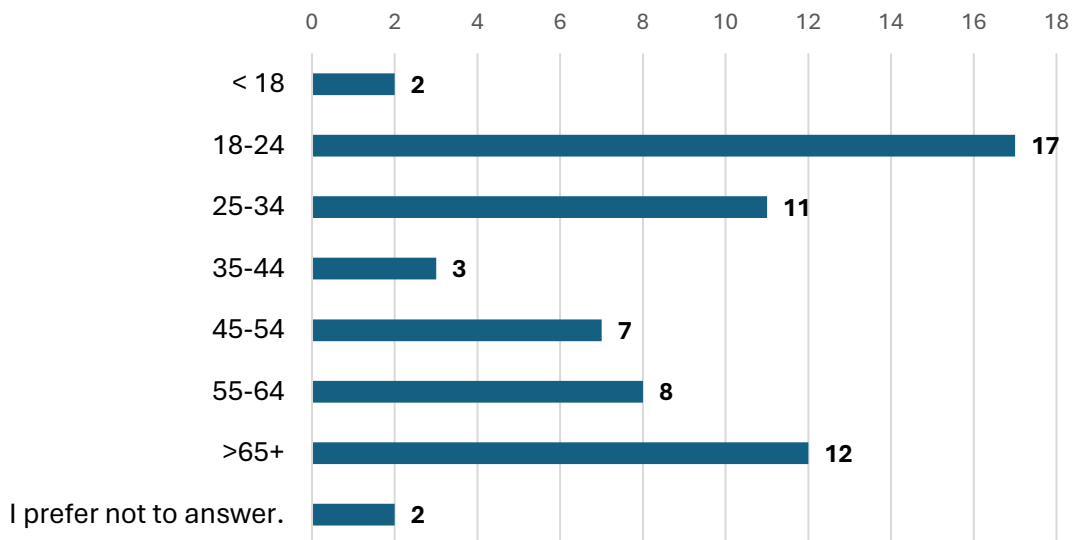
Representation at the workshops was generally reflective of the East San José community in terms of age, race and income. A poll conducted during the virtual meeting collected

demographic information about participants.<sup>1</sup> **Figure 2** demonstrates diversity of attendees in terms of race/ethnicity with about 33% identifying as White or Caucasian, 30% as Asian or Pacific Islander, and 24% as Hispanic or Latino. **Figure 3** indicates that virtual workshop attendees represented all ages, with notable participation from younger adults aged 18 to 34. **Figure 4** illustrates participation from community members of all income levels.

**Figure 2: Virtual Workshop Poll - Which of the following best describes you?**

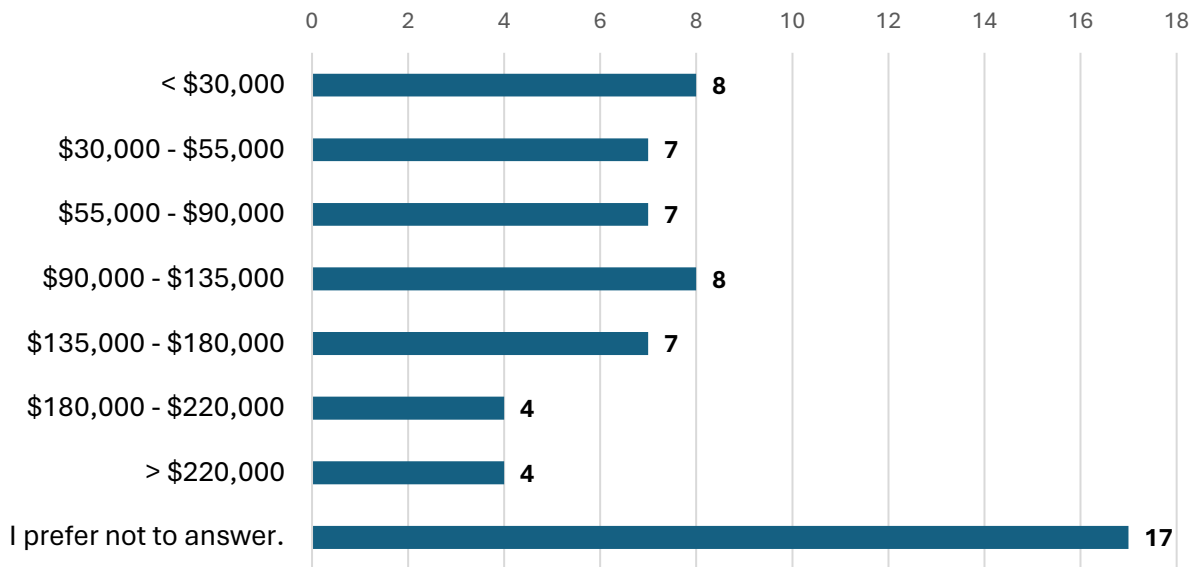


**Figure 3: Virtual Workshop Poll - What is your age?**



<sup>1</sup> No such information was collected at the in-person meeting, but a visual assessment of in-person attendees appeared to confirm similar attendance patterns at that meeting.

**Figure 4: Virtual Workshop Poll - Which of the following best describes your total household income last year?**



## II. Workshop Overview

### Purpose

The goals of Community Workshop 1 were to:

- Explain the intent of the Pleasant Hills Vision effort,
- Address questions about the process,
- Explain planning issues and considerations about the site,
- Understand the profile of those interested in the Pleasant Hills Vision process and future development at PHGC, and
- Hear and document participants' insights about the area surrounding the site and their priorities and concerns regarding future development.

### Agenda

#### Welcome

The workshops began with an announcement about availability of live translation services in Spanish and Vietnamese. This was followed by a welcome from lead facilitator David Early (PlaceWorks) and opening remarks from councilmembers Domingo Candelas (District 8) and Peter Ortiz (District 5), Michael Brilliot (City of San José Department of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement), Santa Clara County Supervisor Sylvia Arenas, and Mount Pleasant Elementary School District Board of Trustees President Derek Grasty.

## *Presentation*

David Early then led a presentation explaining the agenda of the workshop, background information about the PHGC site, engagement opportunities, the elements of a guiding principles document, the structure of the workshop breakout discussions, and the development considerations that participants might address in their discussion groups. The presentation was followed by a brief Question & Answer session.

## *Breakout Discussions*

Following the presentation, attendees participated in facilitated breakout discussions in small, randomly assigned groups of five to eight people. (This same format was followed at both the in-person and virtual workshops.)

Breakout discussions lasted approximately 60 minutes. The sessions consisted of three activities and were led by one or two staff members from the City of San Jose and/or PlaceWorks:

### **Activity 1: COMMUNITY MEMBER SNAPSHOT**

Participants introduced themselves, sharing their name and identifying on a map where they live, work, and/or own a business in relation to PHGC.

### **Activity 2: COMMUNITY ASSETS**

Participants identified community assets, destinations, and services on a map. Then, participants discussed the assets, destinations, and services they feel are missing in the area.

### **Activity 3: DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

This activity focused on potential development at PHGC, allowing participants to share their priorities and concerns across six categories: Housing, Economic Development, Parks and Public Space, Transportation, and Sustainability and Environmental Justice, and Other.

At the in-person workshop, activity materials included table maps, sticky notes, stickers, markers, and pens. These materials were digitally replicated in Google JamBoard for the virtual workshop.

## *Shareback*

After the breakout sessions, workshop participants came back together and groups were randomly selected to share highlights from their conversations, which are summarized in section IV. Highlights were presented by spokespeople that were chosen within their breakout groups. After several reports in each meeting, several subsequent spokespeople commented that their groups had come to conclusions similar to those already reported,

suggesting that the groups presenting reports were typical of all groups, including those that were not selected for reports back.

### Closing

The meeting concluded with an announcement of the launch of Online Survey 1 and a reminder to participants to stay tuned to the project website ([www.PleasantHillsVision.org](http://www.PleasantHillsVision.org)) for the date, time, and location of Community Workshop 2.

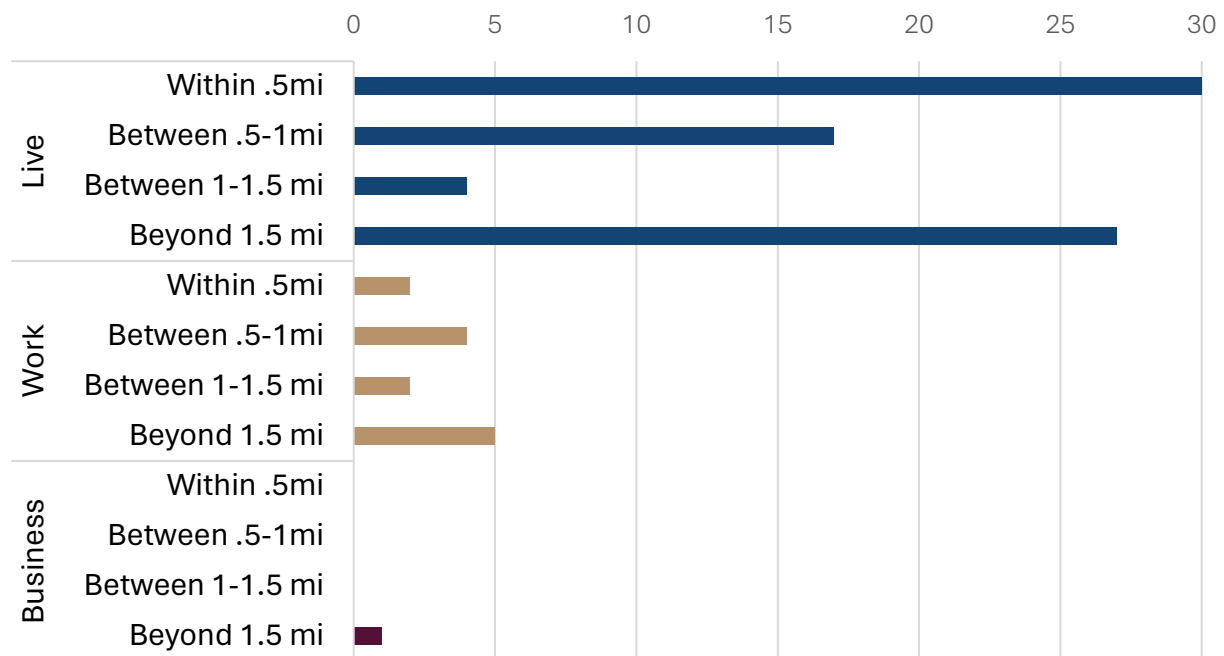
## III. Key Insights

This section summarizes findings from both the in-person and virtual workshops. The results below were compiled through the transcription and coding of workshop activity boards which were populated by color-coded stickers and sticky notes. The results were synthesized into meaningful categories and summary graphics and text.

### Community Member Snapshot (Activity 1)

Figure 5 shows the largest percentage of workshop participants lived within a half mile radius of the site, with a similarly sized group living more than 1.5-miles from the PHGC site.

**Figure 5: Participants' Geographic Relationship to PHGC**



A much smaller number of participants worked near the site, with only about 10 people reporting that they worked within 1.5 miles of the site.

Very few participants owned a business. No one reported owning a business within 1.5 miles of the site, and only two people reported owning a business located more than 1.5 miles from PHGC.

## **Community Assets, Destinations and Services (Activity 2)**

### *Existing Assets*

Many participants shared a fondness for area parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities such as **Lake Cunningham Regional Park, Groesbeck Hill Park, Fernish Park, Raging Waters, The Plex athletic complex, Coyote Creek Trail, and Hank Lopez Community Center.**

Several commercial retail destinations were also important to many workshop participants, including **Safeway, Costco, Eastridge Mall,** and several shopping centers.

Other destinations and services that were mentioned by participants were:

- **Libraries** (Evergreen, Village Square, and Tully)
- **Schools** (Evergreen Valley College,, Evergreen Valley High School, St. Frances School, August Boeger Middle School, Mt. Pleasant High School, Valley Vista Elementary)
- **San Jose Job Corps Center**
- **San Jose Fire Department Station 21,** and
- **Bus route 71**

Some workshop attendees pointed to **Evergreen Village Square** as an example of what potential development at PHGC should look like.

### *Missing Assets*

Participants were asked to identify potential community assets that are missing from the community.

A community or senior center was identified by participants as a need in the area around PHGC.

In terms of retail experiences, participants expressed a desire for **independent restaurants, bookstores, farmer's markets, and grocery stores** such as Trader Joe's and Whole Foods.

There were several mentions of **emergency services and medical facilities,** including hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies.

Several participants identified needs for **parks, sports fields, community gardens, swimming pools, playgrounds,** and **covered outdoor spaces.**

In terms of entertainment, participants mentioned miniature **golf, wineries, a science center, and a walkable shopping district or promenade.** Spaces and design elements that **celebrate and serve the diversity of East San José's Vietnamese, Indian, and Latino populations** were mentioned as well.

## Development Priorities and Concerns (Activity 3)

Participants were asked to work through five separate topics to identify their priorities and concerns regarding new development on the PHGC site. Comments on each of these given topics (and their subtopics) are summarized below.

### Housing

- **HOUSING TYPES AND AFFORDABILITY.** Participants spoke in favor of a range of affordability levels and housing types. Most participants emphasized senior housing and low- and mixed-income housing, with some participants identifying priority populations for housing at the site like teachers, social workers, essential and service workers, undocumented persons, students, and existing East San Jose residents. A smaller portion of participants expressed a desire for market-rate housing and owner-occupied homes only, in some cases stating that they believed that affordable housing units would decrease surrounding market-rate values.
- **NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER.** Cohesion with the existing neighborhood's character and architecture that is welcoming and aesthetically appealing were important to many participants. The incorporation of green space was also a priority. Most agreed that buildings should generally be mid- to low-rise. Participants also expressed that building types should vary – no cookie-cutter or “shoebox” design. Some participants suggested that housing closest to existing single-family homes should mimic that development.
- **DENSITY.** Opinions varied on the topic of density at PHGC, ranging from a desire for low-density with as little housing and development as possible on the site to calls for medium and high density. Some participants expressed that a high-density area would be incompatible with the existing neighborhood's character and that only single-family homes should be built. Those in favor of medium and high density shared an interest in a mix of single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums, and apartments. Several participants also expressed a desire for mixed-use buildings at the site and the incorporation of retail space and community services.
- **DISPLACEMENT.** A small portion of participants weighed in on the topic of displacement avoidance, sharing concerns about the impact of new housing on affordability for existing residents and whether it will be affordable enough to support diverse communities.



- **INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY.** Some participants expressed concerns about the ability of existing infrastructure to support new housing at PHGC, with specific concerns about utilities, schools, grocery stores, parking, transit, and internet infrastructure. There were also concerns about increases in traffic and environmental impacts. A few participants shared a desire for the creation of a homeowner association responsible for maintenance and upkeep.

## Economic Development

- **RETAIL.** Most participants agreed that new development should include minimal retail space. There was general agreement that there should not be any big box stores, that there are enough existing commercial areas nearby, and that commercial retail at the site might not be sustainable. However, many participants also expressed a desire for businesses offering neighborhood and essential services like childcare or a small supermarket. Many participants requested an increase in options for healthy food shopping, particularly farmers markets and quality grocery stores such as Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, and Sprouts. Several participants also included medical clinics and services.
- **LOCAL BUSINESSES.** Most participants agreed that small businesses and “mom-and-pop shops” would be appropriate and desirable at the PHGC site. Some participants suggested that small businesses would need resources and external support (e.g. small business incubator).
- **DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT.** Some participants expressed interest in independent restaurants, outdoor dining opportunities, and some forms of entertainment such as miniature golf and performance and makerspaces.
- **JOBS.** Most participants did not emphasize employment creation in their thinking about the site. However, some participants were supportive of job creation. Among those participants, there were differing opinions regarding job types. Some expressed interest in jobs accessible for youth. Others wanted high-paying jobs in technology and clean energy. Several participants stated that employment in the area would be beneficial, keeping people in the area during the day and creating opportunities for people to live close to where they work.

## Parks and Public Space

- **CONNECTION TO LAKE CUNNINGHAM PARK.** Participants' biggest priority in regard to parks and public space was connecting the site to Lake Cunningham Regional Park. Recommendations included crosswalks, bike paths and trails, and/or a pedestrian bridge.
- **RECREATION.** Participants were generally interested in recreation facilities on the site, with greater interest in active recreation opportunities compared to passive opportunities. Participants specified activities and facilities such as sports fields,

playgrounds, skate parks, public swimming pools, tennis courts, outdoor exercise equipment, dog parks, and more. Those in favor of more passive recreation desired flexible open spaces and amenities allowing for relaxation and socializing (benches, picnic areas, plazas, etc.).

- **MAINTENANCE.** Several workshop participants expressed concern about the maintenance of parks, open space, and landscaping at the potential PHGC development.
- **RESOURCE PRESERVATION.** Many participants were interested in resource preservation and wildlife protection at PHGC. Participants expressed a desire for new and preserved tree canopy, native and drought-tolerant vegetation, integrating the natural landscape in development areas, creation of wildlife habitat, and building with and around nature.
- **COMMUNITY AMMENITIES.** Many participants expressed support for the inclusion of community amenities at the site like community, senior, or cultural centers, community gardens, spaces for events and festivals, spaces and activities for youth, and more.

## Transportation

- **BIKE FACILITIES.** Many workshop participants spoke in favor of improved bicycle infrastructure, both on- and off-site, including bike lanes, bike paths and trails, bike lockers, and bike-share stations.
- **PARKING.** Participants expressed considerable concern about parking, with particular concerns about parking spill-over into adjacent neighborhoods. These participants suggested that parking should adequately accommodate all future development. Some participants stated that locating parking underground could be a good strategy.
- **PEDESTRIAN SAFETY.** Pedestrian infrastructure and safety improvements also emerged as a priority for workshop participants. Installation of sidewalks and lighting, speed limit adjustments, and crosswalk improvements were important to some participants, along with better pedestrian connections to destinations such as Lake Cunningham Regional Park and the Eastridge Mall and Transit Center.
- **TRANSIT.** Workshop participants were supportive of public transit considerations in conjunction with future development at PHGC, expressing interest in added bus stops and routes, shortened headways, and shuttles to popular destinations and community amenities. Very few participants expressed concerns about public transit but did voice that there are limited east to west transit connections in the area. Several participants suggested that the project should include shuttle service to the new VTA extension coming to Capitol Expressway.
- **TRAFFIC CONGESTION.** Many participants were concerned about the effect of future development on traffic congestion, especially given current traffic patterns and the potential for added housing and amenities in the area. White Road, Tully Road, and

Capitol Expressway were named as routes that would be heavily impacted. Nearby residents were also worried about increased through traffic in their neighborhoods.

## Environmental Justice and Sustainability

- **CONSTRUCTION-PERIOD IMPACTS.** Some participants expressed concerns about traffic impacts, street cleaning, dust and air pollution during construction at the PHGC site.
- **SUSTAINABLE BUILDING PRACTICES.** Many participants expressed support for green construction techniques and green buildings that are compliant with or exceed sustainability standards such as LEED. Solar power was the renewable energy strategy mentioned most frequently by participants. Other strategies included geothermal water heating and EV charging stations.
- **LANDSCAPE DESIGN.** Native vegetation was cited as a priority by some participants, along with drought tolerant plants, tree canopy, and wildlife-friendly design. Some participants expressed concern about the preservation of trees, wetlands, and greenery.
- **WATER.** Participants were supportive of stormwater management and water conservation techniques, especially rainwater capture and greywater/wastewater recycling and reuse.