



OPEN SPACE ELEMENT



“To sit in the shade on a fine day and look upon verdure is the most perfect refreshment.”

—Jane Austen

- Introduction 146
- Changes Since 1988 147
- Definitions..... 148
- Open Space Purposes..... 148
- Open Space Types 149
- Easements (Open Space, Conservation, and Scenic) 152
- Open Space Inventory 154
- Goal OS1, Policies, and Strategies 168

INTRODUCTION

Woodside is blessed to have an abundance of open space. This open space includes forests, meadows, hillsides, and ravines, present in both public and private land. The quality of life for Woodside residents and visitors is enhanced by the presence of this open space. Preserving and expanding Woodside's open space, where possible, is the objective of this Element.

Throughout the Bay Region, dense urbanization has concentrated along the flat lands and extended substantially onto the hillsides. Such urbanization has limited the opportunities in the Bay Area for living in a rural atmosphere. Intense urban development diminishes contact with the natural environment and creates impacts such as heavy traffic, noise, and a degraded air quality. Grading and construction may cause accelerated erosion and increased flooding and siltation. Removal of vegetation impairs reoxygenation needed to maintain air quality and provide wildlife habitat. It is essential that Woodside continue to conserve open space resources which provide a transitional area between the more densely populated Bay plain and the coastal mountains. If the natural character of Woodside is to be preserved, both public and private efforts are necessary.

The Woodside Planning Area contains significant open space areas important not only to local residents but to the larger population of the Midpeninsula and the Bay Region. The Woodside Planning Area has a natural quality because of the combination of large areas of open space lands, large institutional sites with significant open spaces, and primarily low density residential development. Open spaces in Woodside range from large parks to undeveloped portions of individual private properties.

The largest open space areas in the Woodside Planning Area are held by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and San Mateo County Parks. The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District manages a regional greenbelt system in the San Francisco Bay Area comprised of nearly 60,000 acres of land in 26 open space preserves. Within the Woodside Planning Area, its lands total 867 acres (comprised of Thornwood/Schilling Lake: 243 acres, and Teague Hill: 624 acres). Its purpose is to acquire, permanently protect, and restore lands forming a regional open space greenbelt, preserve unspoiled wilderness, wildlife habitat, watershed, viewshed, and fragile ecosystems, and provide opportunities for low-intensity recreation and environmental education.



Woodside provides a transition between the more urbanized communities to the east and the open space areas to the west.

San Mateo County Department of Parks also protects and enhances the natural resources of the County by maintaining and operating 17 parks, three regional trails, and numerous other county and local trails encompassing 15,680 acres. Within the Woodside Planning Area, Huddart and Wunderlich Park total 1,916 acres.

The Town protects open space through land use review and municipal codes which regulate site development and building mass, limit built area lot coverage and paved coverage, and require a portion of the steeper parcels to be maintained in open space. The Town protects open space by securing open space easements and promotes specific conservation efforts. Private property owners in Town have recorded scenic, conservation, and open space easements to protect scenic vistas, important open space habitats, and riparian areas. These easements specify the level to which the land must be kept undisturbed.

The Town promotes open space protection through the Backyard Habitat Program. This program encourages property owners to maintain lands in natural state, utilize native plants for landscaping, remove invasive nonnative vegetation, reduce chemical fertilizers, create wildlife friendly fencing, and work with neighbors to create contiguous open space. To recognize and showcase good examples of natural open spaces, the Town provides non-monetary awards to property owners with exceptional backyard habitats.

CHANGES SINCE 1988

The 1988 Woodside General Plan described 33 open space areas located within the Woodside Planning Area. This Plan updates the status of each open space area and is supplemented by a graphic depiction of these areas (Map OS2, Open Space Inventory Map). Since 1988, three open space areas (identified in the 1988 General Plan as Area 10: Dennis Martin Creek, Area 19: Redwood Park, and Area 21: Sandstone Caves) totaling more than 600 acres were acquired by the Midpeninsula Regional

Open Space District and combined with larger tracts of adjacent open space. In 2007, the Town acquired a new, six acre public recreational open space, with the completion of Barkley Fields and Park. One private recreational open space area (identified in the 1988 General Plan as Area 31: Los Altos Hunt Pony Club) was lost to development of a private residence.

In 2002, the Town's Open Space Committee was formed. The Open Space Committee advises and assists the Council and staff in implementing the policies and goals of the Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan, specifically with respect to acquisition, preservation, and maintenance of conservation and open space easements. Committee responsibilities include dissemination of information to the community that enhances awareness of the benefits of open space conservation and publicizes options for protecting open space that provide benefits to property owners. The Committee acts as a liaison between property owners and Town staff regarding easement options and provisions. The Committee collaborates with Town governing bodies and committees on goals and projects of mutual interest, and with neighboring towns and regional entities in efforts to preserve scenic vistas, tracts of open space and wildlife habitat. Since its formation, this Committee has reviewed Town Environmental Impact Reports and County Master Plans, advised as to the desirability of new conservation easements, prepared a 2008 report on the status of Town conservation easements to the Town Council, participated in the development of criteria for accepting conservation easements, held public education sessions and symposia on conservation easements, and developed the Backyard Habitat Program.

In 2004, the Town Council adopted selection criteria for conservation easements or land acquisitions. These guidelines set forth minimum eligibility for public benefit and natural resource criteria, and outline the procedure for the donation of conservation easements.

DEFINITIONS

Open space means many things to many people and can vary in type and size. It can be wooded mountainside, rolling grass covered oak studded hills, streamside areas, a local park, a scenic road, or the intimate open spaces of one's backyard. Unobstructed vistas of the wooded hillsides and valley floor are a unique amenity of Woodside.

Backyard Habitat Program: A program administered by the Town of Woodside Open Space Committee recognizing and promoting backyard open spaces that can serve as natural habitat for indigenous flora and fauna.

Easement: A right held by a property owner to make use of the land of another for a limited purpose (e.g., right of passage).

- **Conservation:** A set aside of land area which restricts development to protect biological resources and habitat and/or natural features through a recorded legal agreement between a land owner and a government agency.
- **Open Space:** A set aside of land area which restricts development to protect open space through a recorded legal agreement between a land owner and a government agency.
- **Scenic:** A set aside of land area which restricts development to protect a scenic resources (e.g., views from a scenic road; or views of natural features, such as wooded hills or a valley floor) through a recorded legal agreement between a land owner and a government agency.

Outdoor Recreation, Low and Medium Intensity:

Open space uses involving outdoor activities ranging from the visual enjoyment of the open space environment to the physical use of the land for sporting or other recreational purposes. The distinction between medium and low intensity recreational use is that medium intensity recreational uses have a sustained and regular or frequent level of activity, including traffic generation, that is related to the normal functioning of the given land use, whereas low

intensity recreational uses generally have a more limited level of activity associated with the normal functioning of the land use. Low intensity recreational uses may have medium levels of activity for no more than six special events per year, providing those events are associated with the normal functioning of the land use.

Open space: An area of land or water that is free of structures and improvements, or upon which structures or improvements are minimal, and do not detract from an essentially natural state.

Williamson Act: The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, enables local governments to enter into ten-year term contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments which are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. Local governments receive an annual subvention (subsidy) of forgone property tax revenues from the State via the Open Space Subvention Act of 1971.

OPEN SPACE PURPOSES

In the Town of Woodside, open space is set aside for public health and safety, natural resource conservation, aesthetics, recreation, and managed production of resources.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

There are numerous open spaces areas within Woodside that serve as protection for public safety. These areas are subject to hazards, or other limitations on development, such as landslides, debris flow, slopes in excess of 35%, fire hazards, and other geologic hazards. Also several open space areas in and around Woodside protect public health by safeguarding our watersheds and reservoirs.

NATURAL AREA CONSERVATION

A number of valuable natural areas and resources exist within the Woodside Planning Area. In addition to a variety

of open spaces, including preserves, riparian areas, and watersheds, there is also a wide variety of flora and fauna (also reference the Conservation Element). Preservation of these resources is important to maintain this natural heritage for future generations.

AESTHETICS

The Woodside Municipal Code requires increased setbacks for State scenic corridors, including Skyline Boulevard and Interstate 280. Additionally, the Woodside Municipal Code requires review by the Architectural and Site Review Board (ASRB) of proposed development located within 1,000 feet from all State- and locally-designated scenic corridors (including Kings Mountain, Mountain Home, Woodside, Whiskey Hill, La Honda, Portola, Cañada, and Sand Hill Roads), all proposed development in the Western Hills (defined as all lands west of Kings Mountain, Woodside, and Portola Roads), and buildings located on ridge lines visible from scenic roads. Reference Circulation Element, Map CL2, Scenic Corridors and Western Hills.

RECREATION, PUBLIC

Lands of primary importance for outdoor recreation include areas ranging from very large to quite small. These recreational lands are important for the less intensive, non-organized, recreational functions which are characteristic of a rural community. Some of the spaces are scenic corridors which connect major open space areas.

RECREATION, PRIVATE

Several private open space areas currently being used for outdoor recreation are important for the maintenance of a quality open space system for Woodside (e.g., grounds of the Mounted Patrol, Menlo Golf and Country Club, and The Family Farm).

MANAGED PRODUCTION OF RESOURCES

Managed production of resources in Woodside is limited to small scale agricultural uses, such as: grazing, small orchards and vineyards, and animal husbandry.

OPEN SPACE TYPES

Natural habitats are comprised of areas of open space lands, including blocks of undeveloped habitat or natural landscape, which are connected by linear open spaces, including wildlife corridors. The quality and adequacy of open space lands and the connectivity between these areas directly impacts the health of flora and fauna. The availability of open spaces for natural habitat is lost when open spaces are developed, and when wildlife corridors are impeded or blocked by such things as non-wildlife friendly fencing, or new road and bridge construction. Impediments to open space corridors not only eliminate wildlife passage between habitat areas, but also force wildlife onto roadways, resulting in wildlife fatalities. Recognizing the State-wide importance of habitat connectivity, the California Department of Transportation and the

Table OS1: Relationship Between General Plan and Zoning Open Space Designations

General Plan Land Use Designation:	Zoning Designation:
"OS", Open Space	"OSH", Open Space for Health
	"OSN", Open Space for Preservation of Natural Resources
	"OSM", Open Space for Managed Production of Natural Resources*
	"OSRL", Open Space for Low Intensity Outdoor Recreation
	"OSRM", Open Space for Medium Intensity Outdoor Recreation*
"OS-ESA", Open Space / Environmentally Sensitive	"OSN""OSRL""SCP-10"

* Zoning designations not in use as of 2010

California Department of Fish & Game completed and published the “Essential Habitat Connectivity Project: a Strategy for Conserving a Connected California” in February 2010. This project produced a Statewide assessment of essential habitat connectivity and a Statewide Habitat Connectivity Map and Model, and ranked the biological value of connectivity areas. Three major types of open space exist in the Woodside Planning Area: open space preserves, open space corridors (e.g., riparian corridors and wildlife corridors), and general open spaces. All of these open spaces together assist in creating a linked network of open spaces.

OPEN SPACE PRESERVES

Major open spaces in the Planning Area include the watershed lands of the City and County of San Francisco and the Phleger Estate to the northwest; the large expanse of wooded open space lands on the southwestern hillsides leading to the scenic corridor along Skyline Boulevard; Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve including Searsville Lake and other presently open lands of Stanford University to the southeast. The major open spaces and other smaller areas of open space lands are indicated on Map OS2, Open Space Inventory Map. The open space areas (Areas 1-34) depicted on Map OS2 totals 37,471 acres, of which 8,287 acres are located within the Woodside Planning Area. Except for relatively small areas of commercial, institutional, and suburban residential uses, the balance of the Planning Area is designated for rural residential uses on three acre or larger parcels.



This scenic road serves as a link to larger open spaces.

OPEN SPACE CORRIDORS

The scenic roads, the trail system, the earthquake fault system, and the stream corridors comprise very important linear open spaces linking the larger open space lands and the open spaces on residential, institutional and commercial properties.

The streams and streamsides are part of the system of general open spaces. In some cases streams flow through areas defined in this Element as open space lands; in other cases they flow through residential, institutional or commercial lands. The streams and streamsides comprise an interconnecting riparian habitat and provide corridors for the movement of wildlife. They also provide visual links because of the riparian growth along most of the streams. Some streamsides provide space for trails and paths. The streams in the Planning Area are quite varied in character. Some riparian areas are in steep gulches; others flow through relatively flat terrain.



Stream corridors provide linear open spaces.

Significant streams in Woodside are protected by Town regulations from development along their banks to retain their natural qualities and to maintain the region’s network of waterways. Appropriate land use and control of development on hillsides and stream banks are essential to prevent widespread damage in the lower reaches of the creeks through siltation (from upstream erosion), and flooding. Special care must be taken not to develop in minor drainage ways. Effects of inappropriate use and

development in the steep portions of the watershed would be immediate. Noticeable impact on downstream areas might be delayed but would be inevitable. For these reasons, the municipal code provides development standards which protect the natural drainage system.

GENERAL OPEN SPACES

Included under this category are the open spaces within the areas designated for residential, commercial, and public/quasi-public uses.

Residential Open Spaces

In residential areas, open space is conserved by yards, courts, other undeveloped areas and by scenic and conservation easements. Limits on overall building coverage and required separation between structures also create open spaces.

Most of the land with few constraints to development are now in residential use. Much of the remaining undeveloped land has significant constraints to development. Lots within Environmentally Sensitive Areas (Figure NH5) have a variety of identified natural hazards including: active and potential landslides, active fault traces, and areas subject to flooding. Additionally, heavy vegetative cover, steep canyons, stream channels, and other physical topographical conditions limit development and ensure the conservation of natural resources areas and retention of visual quality. Restrictions on development on steep lots and within riparian setbacks, and the prohibition of development within high hazard areas, contribute to the expanse of open space.

Commercial Areas Open Spaces

Open spaces in commercial areas buffer residential areas from commercial uses, and reflect Woodside’s rural character.

Public/Quasi-Public Open Spaces

In addition to the open space associated with residential and commercial uses, most public/quasi-public uses, including the school, the library, and the commercial stables provide space for various forms of active recreation, such as play fields, native plant demonstration gardens, and riding arenas.



Open space in residential areas.



Open space surrounding the Town Center commercial area.



Commercial Stable (aerial view).



The open space field behind Woodside Elementary School.

EASEMENTS (OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION, AND SCENIC)

Cities and counties may accept or purchase easements from private landowners for open space and resource conservation purposes. Open space and conservation easements are, in effect, transfers of development rights. The deed transferring an easement to a local government must restrict the transferred property's use to open space or resource conservation activities.

Cities and counties may acquire open space easements pursuant to the Open Space Easement Act of 1974 (California Government Code section 51070 et seq.). Land must remain within an easement in perpetuity or, alternatively, for at least ten years. An easement's term is automatically extended each year by an additional twelve months. Under certain circumstances, open space easements may be abandoned. The Williamson Act has traditionally been used for agricultural properties. The Town has held informational seminars regarding the property tax benefits of open space easements.

A city or county must have an adopted Open Space Plan Element as a prerequisite to acquiring an open space easement. Furthermore, the preserving of easement land in open space must be consistent with the local jurisdiction's General Plan.

The Conservation Easement Act of 1979 (California Civil Code sections 815-816) enables a city, county, district, or nonprofit organization to acquire perpetual easements for the conservation of agricultural land and open space, or for historic preservation. Unlike open space easements, there is no procedure for non-renewal of conservation easements and there is no expiration date.

In establishing an easement, a landowner and local agency agree upon the permitted land uses within the conservation area. The easement is binding upon successive owners of the land.

Recent State legislation has expanded opportunities for cities and counties to protect viable agricultural lands. The Department of Conservation's Agricultural Land Stewardship Program (ALSP) was enacted in 1995 as SB 275. The Program provides cities, counties, and non-profit land trusts with funding for the purchase of conservation easements from agricultural landowners. The Program complements the Williamson Act by providing permanent protection of agricultural land, targeting protection of most threatened agricultural land, placing ownership of development rights with a third party, usually a local land trust, and providing one-time payments allowing farmers to re-invest in their agricultural operations to improve profitability. Sources of revenue for funding include gifts, donations, legislative appropriations, general obligation bonds, federal grants or loans, and other sources. (See Land Use and Community Design, Natural Hazards and Safety, and Conservation Elements for related policies and standards).

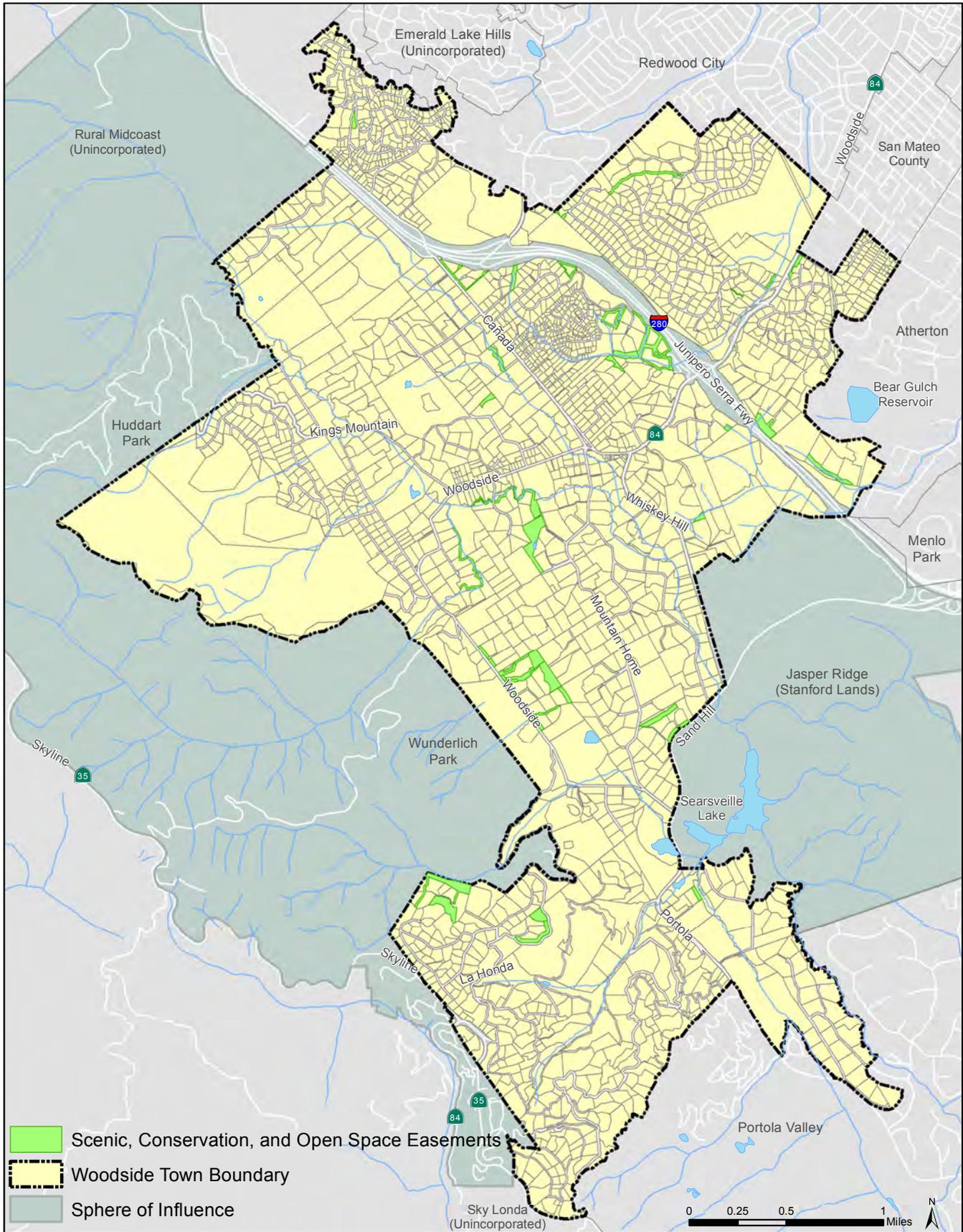
INCENTIVES

Property tax relief may be available for preserving open space. Property owners may apply to the San Mateo County Tax Assessor for reclassification of land to lesser intensive land use type, thereby reducing the property taxes.

Other programs include the Williamson Act, a program which contractually restricts land to agricultural or open space use in exchange for reduced property taxation. In 2010, there were two parcels in the Town of Woodside held under the Williamson Act (for the purpose of open space). There are over 500 parcels held under the Williamson Act in the unincorporated area of San Mateo County.

Lands subject to open space or conservation easements are "enforceably restricted." In other words, their value for property tax purposes is established on the basis of the easement restrictions rather than potential development uses. For properties which would otherwise have been subject to rising property taxes, this is a form of tax relief. It provides landowners with an incentive to grant easements.

Map OS1: Easements



OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

Table OS2 and Figure OS2 describe the open space areas located within, and immediately adjacent to, the Town's Planning Area. The numbering of these areas remains consistent with the 1988 General Plan, with the following changes (as further described below): Areas 10 and 21 were modified, Area 31 was lost to private development, and Area 34 was added to the inventory. These open spaces are under the jurisdiction of the Town of Woodside, the Town of Atherton, San Mateo County, and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

Map OS2: Open Space Inventory

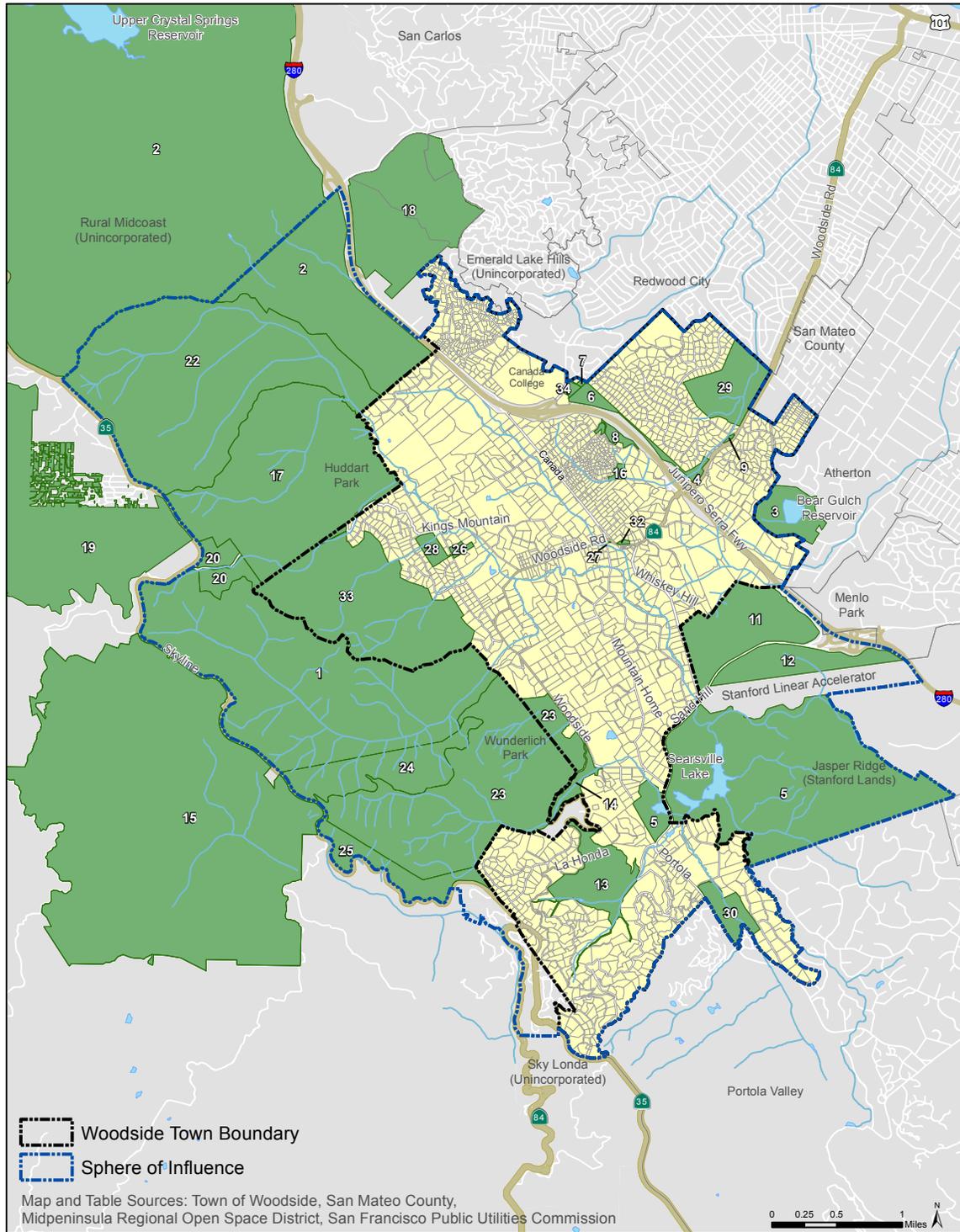


Table OS2: Open Space Inventory in Woodside Planning Area

No.	Area Name	Approximate Acreage	State Primary Open Space Category	Location	Jurisdiction
1	Bear Gulch Creek Riparian Area	1,348	H+S	Woodside	Woodside and San Mateo County
2	San Francisco Watershed Lands	23,000	H+S	Sphere of Influence and San Mateo County	San Mateo County (560 Acres are within the Woodside Planning Area)
3	Bear Gulch Reservoir	100	H+S	Atherton	Atherton
4	PG&E Lands, Woodside Road, and I-280	18	H+S	Woodside	Woodside
5	Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve and Searsville Lake Marshlands	1,189	PNR	Woodside and Sphere of Influence	Woodside and San Mateo County
6	Serpentine Landscape Province, East of I-280	22	PNR	Woodside	Woodside
7	Farm Hill Site	1.1	PNR	Woodside	Woodside
8	Native Plant Preserve (Kite Hill)	14	PNR / OR-Low	Woodside	State of California
9	High Road Site	2	--	Woodside	Woodside
11	Guernsey Field	272	PNR / OR-Low	Sphere of Influence	San Mateo County
12	Sand Hill / SLAC Tree Farm	147	PNR	Sphere of influence	San Mateo County
13	Thornewood / Schilling Lake	167	PNR	Woodside	Woodside and Midpeninsula Open Space District
14	Alambique Creek	27	PNR	Woodside	Woodside
15	El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve	2,817	H+S; PNR	San Mateo County	San Mateo County and Midpeninsula Open Space District
16	Joan Olson Natural Preserve	6.2	PNR / OR-Low	Woodside	Woodside
17	Huddart Park	974	OR-Med.	Sphere of Influence	San Mateo County
18	Edgewood County Park	467	OR-Low	San Mateo County	San Mateo County
19	Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve	3,360	OR-Low	San Mateo County	San Mateo County
20	Southwest Huddart Park Extension	79	OR-Low	Sphere of Influence	San Mateo County
22	Phleger Estate	1,280	OR-Low	Sphere of Influence	Golden Gate National Recreation Area
23	Wunderlich Park	942	OR-Low	Woodside and Sphere of Influence	Woodside and San Mateo County
24	Bear Gulch Road Area	241	OR-Low	Sphere of Influence	San Mateo County
25	Skyline Corridor / Wunderlich Park	131	OR-Low	Sphere of Influence	San Mateo County
26	Tripp Road Site	8	OR-Low	Woodside	Woodside
27	Alexander Donald Park	0.06	OR-Low	Woodside	Woodside
28	Grounds of the Mounted Patrol	23	OR-Low	Woodside	Woodside
29	Menlo Country Club and Golf Course	141	OR-Med.	Woodside	Woodside
30	The Family Farm	63	OR-Low	Woodside	Woodside
32	Village Hill	1.65	PNR	Woodside	Woodside
33	Teague Hill	624	PNR	Woodside	Woodside and Midpeninsula Open Space District
34	Barkley Fields and Park	6	OR-Med.	Woodside	Woodside
Total		37,471*			

* The total acreage includes open space areas outside of, but adjacent to the Woodside Planning Area. 8,287 acres are within the Woodside Planning Area.

H+S: Health and Safety

PNR: Preservation of Natural Resources

OR-Med: Outdoor Recreation - Medium Intensity**

OR-Low: Outdoor Recreation - Low Intensity**

** See the Open Space Element Definitions section for the distinction between low and medium recreational use.

OPEN SPACE AREA CATEGORIES

Table OS3: Open Space Area Categories, is intended to illustrate the uses of land designated as Open Space in the General Plan. These categories act as a guide to the placement of open space areas into their proper zoning districts, but are not equivalent to zoning districts.

In Table OS3, the distinction between medium and low intensity recreational use is that medium intensity recreational uses have a sustained medium level of activity, including traffic generation, that is important to the normal functioning of the given land use whereas low intensity recreational uses generally have low weekly level of activity associated with the normal functioning of the land use. Low intensity recreational uses may have medium levels of activity for special events that may occur no more than six times per year, providing those events are associated with the normal function of the land use.

Table OS3: Open Space Area Categories

No.	Area Name	Health and Safety	Preservation of Natural Resources	Outdoor Recreation	Managed Production of Resources
1	Bear Gulch Creek Riparian Area	X	S	V-L	
2	San Francisco Watershed Lands	X	S	S-L	
3	Bear Gulch Reservoir	X			
4	PG&E Lands, Woodside Road, and I-280	X		S-L	
5	Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve and Searsville Lake Marshlands	S	X	V-L	
		S	X	S-L	
6	Serpentine Landscape Province, East of I-280		X	S-L	
7	Farm Hill Site		X	S-L	
8	Native Plant Preserve (Kite Hill)		X	X-L	
9	High Road Site		V		
10	Dennis Martin Creek ¹		X		
11	Guernsey Field		X	X-L	S
12	Sand Hill / SLAC Tree Farm		V		S
13	Thornewood / Schilling Lake		X		
14	Alambique Creek	S	X	S-L	
15	El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve	X	X	X	
16	Joan Olson Natural Preserve		X	X-L	
17	Huddart Park	S	S	X-Med.	
18	Edgewood County Park	S	S	X-L	
19	Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve	S	S	X	
20	Southwest Huddart Park Extension	S	S	X	
21	Sandstone Caves ²			X	
22	Phleger Estate	S	S	X-L	S
23	Wunderlich Park	S	S	X-L	
24	Bear Gulch Road Area				
25	Skyline Corridor / Wunderlich Park			X	
26	Tripp Road Site			X	
27	Alexander Donald Park			V-L	
28	Grounds of the Mounted Patrol			X-L	
29	Menlo Country Club and Golf Course			X-Med.	
30	The Family Farm			X-L	
31	Los Altos Hunt and Pony Club ³			X-L	
32	Village Hill		X		
33	Teague Hill		X		
34	Barkley Fields and Park			X-Med.	

X = Primary Open Space Use

L = Low Intensity

S = Secondary Open Space Use

Med. = Medium Intensity

V = Visual Enjoyment

¹ A portion of Area 10 was purchased by Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and incorporated into Area 13, Thornewood/Shilling Lake.² Area 21 was combined with Area 15: El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve.³ Area 31 has been privately developed.



Area 1: Bear Gulch Watershed.

The following areas are preserved as open space lands under one or more of the categories of open space use defined in Open Space Purposes. Many of these areas serve more than one open space function.

AREA 1: THE BEAR GULCH WATERSHED AREA

The primary use of this area is watershed protection for health and safety. It is the main local source of water for the California Water Service Company, which supplies water to most of the Woodside and Portola Valley planning areas and communities to the east and south. Other characteristics support preservation of this area for health and safety: presence of geologic hazards, including identified landslides, debris flow areas, slopes in excess of 35% in parts of the area and high fire hazard. In addition, these lands are important for their natural beauty which provides substantial visual enhancement to Woodside and the Midpeninsula. This area also serves as an important wildlife habitat for all major local biotic communities. Bear Gulch Creek is the only creek within Woodside to support a trout population.



Area 2: San Francisco Watershed Lands.

AREA 2: SAN FRANCISCO WATERSHED LANDS

The City and County of San Francisco hold approximately 23,000 acres of watershed lands lying to the north of town limits, of which approximately 560 acres are within the Planning Area. The Crystal Springs Lakes reservoirs of the San Francisco water system are located within this area. Uses other than watershed protection and water storage include wildlife sanctuary (State Fish and Game Preserve), riding and hiking on established trails (subject to permit from the San Francisco Water Department), and routes for electrical power transmission lines. Land uses may not be changed without agreement from San Mateo County, City of San Francisco and the federal government. These lands represent the largest single tract of open space within San Mateo County, and the preservation of their ecological and scenic values is of great importance to all the residents of the County.

AREA 3: BEAR GULCH RESERVOIR

The Bear Gulch Reservoir is a 100 acre property, which lies entirely within the Town of Atherton, serves as a vital part of the local water distribution system of the California Water Service Company (Cal Water.) The portion of the property above the dam serves as a small watershed for the reservoir, and should not have development on it that could degrade the quality of water in the reservoir. The portion of the property below the dam serves as a work area for Cal Water. Because of the low intensity of use, this property enhances the rural residential qualities of adjoining lands in Woodside, providing increased privacy and protecting the view.



Area 3: Bear Gulch Reservoir.

AREA 4: PG&E LANDS, WOODSIDE ROAD, AND I-280

The Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) owns a narrow strip of land lying between Interstate 280 (I-280) and the Woodside Hills subdivision, and a parcel of land immediately north of Woodside Road, on which the Woodside substation is located. The land adjacent to I-280 is used for a natural gas transmission line. The property is in an area with a high noise level, and much of it is in scenic corridors visible from both Woodside Road and I-280. The lowest sections of the area are subject to occasional flooding from Redwood Creek. The size, shape, location, and present use of the property make it unsuitable for residential use, but appropriate as permanent open space for the protection of public health and safety.



Area 4: PG&E Lands, Woodside Road, and I-280.

AREA 5: JASPER RIDGE BIOLOGICAL PRESERVE AND SEARSVILLE LAKE MARSHLANDS

The Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve is a 1,189 acre scientific study area that consists of a diverse upland area, Searsville Lake, and the marshland east of Portola Road. It is part of Stanford University's lands and is maintained by the University as a highly restricted nature preserve for biological field research. This area is designated as Academic in Stanford's Land Use Plan. Parts of the area in any event are unsuitable for development because of terrain and geologic conditions. The steep north and west facing slopes are striking visual features.

The man-made marsh in this Stanford area is unusual because it is part of one of the largest fresh water marshes in the Bay Area. The area also includes some dry land presently used for a commercial stable and riding ring. The marshlands support a diverse population of birds, insects and amphibians. Many organisms found in the marshlands cannot survive elsewhere. Therefore, the inclusion of marshlands in an ecosystem significantly increases the diversity of species in the area. A large variety of animals rely upon the marsh for sustenance. It provides food for many varieties of organisms, from the frog-loving raccoon to the seed-eating blackbird. A variety of birds utilize the marshlands as nesting sites. The marsh provides water and green plant material for animals during the dry summer season. For these reasons the marshlands should be retained as open space lands for natural resource preservation.

The area is also important for outdoor recreation as it is part of the scenic corridor along Portola Road and provides equestrian facilities. Because of the prevailing high water and soft ground conditions, a major part of the area is unsuitable for development and should be preserved as open space for health and safety as well as for its natural resource and recreation values.



Area 5: Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve and Searsville Lake Marshlands.



Area 6: Serpentine Landscape Province.

AREA 6: SERPENTINE LANDSCAPE PROVINCE, EAST OF JUNIPERO SERRA FREEWAY (I-280)

The Serpentine Landscape Province is a 22-acre area, owned by the State of California, located southeast of Cañada College on the eastern side of I-280, is important because it is one of the few large areas of serpentine rock landscape (an area of special plant adaptation) remaining which is relatively undisturbed. It is an open grassy field known for its abundance of wildflowers, including at least two rare species. One of these, *Fritillaria filifolia*, (White Fritillary) is high on the California Native Plant Society's list of endangered rarities of northern California. The other, *Lewisia rediviva*, (Bitterroot) is rare in the coast ranges, although more abundant in other parts of the United States. The property has been secured by the State and is not available for public access, in an effort to protect its natural resources. The preservation of this area is of at least regional importance because of its unique characteristics.



Area 7: Farm Hill Site.

AREA 7: FARM HILL SITE

The Town owns a 1.1-acre site, located off Farm Hill Road, which provides additional protection for the adjacent Serpentine Landscape Province. It is contiguous with the Town's Barkley Fields and Park (Area 34). In 2009, the Town recorded a deed restriction on the property's title, limiting its development to the existing water line, pathway, and vegetation.



Area 8: Native Plant Reserve.

AREA 8: NATIVE PLANT RESERVE AND LANDSCAPE BUFFER (KITE HILL)

The Native Plant Reserve and Kite Hill is a 14-acre site that is part of the Meadow Vista Subdivision, located between I-280 and Jane Drive. It was transferred to the ownership of the Town in order to assure the preservation of the natural landscape, which generally consists of serpentine grassland. This area is unique in that it contains rare serpentine endemic plant specimens such as Marin Dwarf Flax, Bitterroot and Bowl Clover.

A landscape buffer is located adjacent to the south side of Jane Drive. The area provides a buffer and landscape screening between Alta Mesa Drive and the fragile native plant preserve to the north.



Area 9: High Road Site.

AREA 9: HIGH ROAD SITE

The High Road Site is a two-acre parcel between Woodside Road and Todo El Mundo, owned by the Town of Woodside. It is preserved as open space as a visual entry to the Town and is partially maintained by a homeowner's association.

AREA 10: DENNIS MARTIN CREEK (AREA MODIFIED)

Refer to Area 13. Approximately 19 acres of Area 10 was purchased by Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, and incorporated into Area 13, Thornewood/Shilling Lake. The balance of Open Space Area 10, as described in the 1988 General Plan, is individual parcels, privately owned and developed with residences.

AREA 11: GUERNSEY FIELD (THE HORSE PARK AT WOODSIDE)

Guernsey Field is a 272-acre site owned by Stanford University, located at the I-280-Sand Hill Road intersection. The site is part of a transition area between the highly urban lands east of Menlo Park and the central Stanford campus and the sparsely developed lands to the west. It has high visual and open space values, containing significant natural features and constraints, such as streams, ridges and steep slopes.



Area 11: Guernsey Field.

AREA 12: SAND HILL / STANFORD LINEAR ACCELERATOR CENTER (SLAC)

The SLAC is a 147-acre parcel is owned by Stanford University between Sand Hill Road and the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center. It is of primary importance as a visual and open space area between the urban lands east of I-280 and the open space lands to the west.



Area 12: Sand Hill / SLAC Tree Farm.

AREA 13: THORNEWOOD / SCHILLING LAKE

Thornewood is a 167-acre property on La Honda Road (the former Thorne Estate) held by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District as the Thornewood Open Space Preserve. This area includes the original Open Space Area 13 and an acquired portion of Area 10 from the 1988 General Plan (approximately 148 acres and 19 acres respectively). The lake is a manmade pond about two acres in size. It is surrounded by Douglas Fir, madrone, and oaks. A large number of animal species are dependent upon the lake. In the 1920's, the area along Dennis Martin Creek was planted with many exotic species of plants, some of which still survive. Native plant communities are also found here, including broadleaf evergreen, conifer, and chaparral. Redwoods tend to be dominant along the creek. The area is important as a watershed feeding the Searsville Lake Marshlands. The terrain is very steep and susceptible to landslides. The preserve provides non-intensive recreational uses, including hiking and equestrian trails.



Area 13: Thornewood / Schilling Lake.

AREA 14: ALAMBIQUE CREEK

The 27-acre area along Alambique Creek between Portola Road and La Honda Road is a redwood forest with a park-like appearance. It is a singularly beautiful area in the La Honda Road Scenic Corridor. In addition to its scenic qualities, the area has significant development problems: opportunities for vehicular access are extremely limited; terrain is steep and unstable; and fire risk is classed as high. Thus, the area should be kept as Open Space for Health and Safety as well as for Natural Resource Preservation and its contribution to scenic enjoyment. The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District owns a conservation easement along the Creek for half of the distance between Portola and La Honda Roads.



Area 14: Alambique Creek.



Area 15: El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve.

AREA 15: EL CORTE DE MADERA CREEK OPEN SPACE PRESERVE

El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve includes former 1988 Woodside General Plan Open Space Areas 15 (“West of Skyline Lands”) and 21 (“Sandstone Caves”). The preserve encompasses 2,817 acres in San Mateo County, and is located on the west side of Skyline Boulevard (Highway 35), 4 miles north of Highway 84. The Preserve, with its steep and heavily forested terrain, has many special features, including rare and fragile sandstone formations, notable logging history, redwood canyons, and creek headwaters. The tafoni sandstone formation is located in the northern part of the Preserve. The large sandstone boulders have naturally eroded over thousands of years to create cave-like indentations in the rock, resembling a stone honeycomb, and “tree trunks” which have the appearance of being petrified.



Area 16: Joan Olson Natural Preserve.

AREA 16: JOAN OLSON NATURAL PRESERVE

The Joan Olson Natural Preserve, a Town-owned parcel named in memory of a former Town Clerk, is a 6.2-acre woodland preserve located at the end of Otis Avenue adjacent to the southerly portion of the Meadow Vista subdivision. The preserve is part of the network of environmentally sensitive areas set aside in order to protect the unique native plants and open space associated with the easterly portion of the Woodside Glens Community. The Preserve consists of rugged, steep and wooded terrain and a deeply incised stream corridor affording opportunities for exercise on trails and enjoyment of the vistas and native vegetation.

AREA 17: HUDDART PARK

The 974-acre Huddart Park is situated just adjacent to the Town’s northern boundary, and is an important part of the San Mateo County Park system. It provides for family and group recreational activities for people from all parts of San Mateo County. The park is part of the eastern facing mountainside readily visible from the more urbanized portions of the Bay plain; it adds to the daily visual experiences of those who live in that urbanized area. Parts of the park are in the scenic corridors of Kings Mountain Road and Skyline Boulevard.

Most of the area now in Huddart Park supports a second growth coniferous forest with redwood predominating. It also includes large areas of mixed evergreen and chaparral with some exotics introduced as a part of the park development. With this mix of vegetation and the important water courses running through or bordering the park, it provides habitat for a wide variety of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians. It is thus important for natural resource preservation in addition to its primary function for outdoor recreation. Steep slopes and large areas classed as “moderately susceptible to landslide” dictate that care be exercised in development and use of lands within the park in order to protect health and safety.



Area 17: Huddart Park.

AREA 18: EDGEWOOD COUNTY PARK

San Mateo County's Edgewood County park consists of 467 acres bisected by a north-south ridge. Dense oak woodland and steep terrain characterize the eastern half of the park. The western exposure of the ridge is characterized by grasslands, oak woodland and gentler slopes. Approximately half of the Park area consists of serpentine rock, which hosts the Bay Checkerspot butterfly, listed as a "threatened species" by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. The park is highly visible from the I-280 scenic corridor, particularly during the wildflower season. Park uses include picnic areas, a day camp, and hiking and riding trails.



Area 18: Edgewood County Park.

AREA 19: PURISIMA CREEK REDWOODS OPEN SPACE PRESERVE

The Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve is owned by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. This 3,360-acre preserve is located on the western slopes of the Santa Cruz Mountains overlooking Half Moon Bay. Its eastern boundary abuts State Highway 35, across from the Huddart park boundary. The preserve was established with a gift of \$2 million from the Save-the-Redwoods League. It includes the area previously known in the 1988 Woodside General Plan as Open Space Area 19 ("Redwood Park"), which is a 623-acre portion of this current preserve. The preserve boasts towering redwoods, rushing creeks, and understories of ferns, berries, and wildflowers. Coastal scrub and hardwood forests of tanoak, madrone, and Douglas fir thrive in the preserve.



Area 19: Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve.

AREA 20: SOUTHWEST HUDDART PARK EXTENSION

This privately owned, 79-acre area would be a useful addition to Huddart Park. The meadow on the north side of Kings Mountain Road near its intersection with Skyline Boulevard would be particularly valuable for public enjoyment and would rationalize the park's boundaries. The area south of Kings Mountain Road is of great beauty and an important part of the Kings Mountain Road Scenic Corridor.

AREA 21: SANDSTONE CAVES (AREA MODIFIED)

Now combined into Area 15: El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve, this area includes an unusual geologic formation.



Area 20: Southwest Huddart Park Extension.



Area 22: Phleger Property.

AREA 22: PHLEGER ESTATE

The Phleger Estate is a park located outside the Town of Woodside and adjacent to Huddart County Park. The park was acquired in 1991 by the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) for \$25 million, and is now part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) which is under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. There are several hiking trails through the park, and access is limited to hikers and equestrians (on some trails). The trails are marked with unique trail signs and pass through a mix of second growth redwood forests and oak woodlands. In the lower elevations of the park, the Miramontes Trail follows West Union Creek. The Lonely Trail climbs steeply from the valley to Skyline Boulevard. Wildlife in the park includes a variety of birds, Banana slugs, and the Coast Range Newt. The park is bounded to the north by San Francisco watershed land, to the west by Skyline Boulevard (Highway 35), and to the south by Huddart County Park. The area east of the park is private property and is off limits to hikers. Access to the trails is from the parking area in Huddart Park (off Kings Mountain Rd), or from a trailhead on Skyline Boulevard.

The three unnamed gulches within this area comprise the headwaters of West Union Creek and make it important for watershed protection. The area is rugged and an undisturbed wildlife habitat, the value of which is increased by its location next to county park and protected watershed lands of the City and County of San Francisco. Vegetation is mixed second growth coniferous forest, broadleaved evergreens and chaparral. The conifers are primarily redwood in the canyons and along the creeks. The upper portion is an important part of the subregional view and a portion is within the Skyline Boulevard Scenic Corridor. The steeper lands along the creeks are moderately susceptible to landslide. Soil erosion potential is high.

AREA 23: WUNDERLICH PARK

This area comprises the 942-acre San Mateo County Park. Wunderlich Park is suitable for low intensity uses, such as horseback riding, hiking, family or other small group picnicking, nature study, and scenic enjoyment. Vehicular access to the park, parking, and other development require careful control to avoid degradation of the natural resources and adverse impact on the community. Except for the canyon of Alambique Creek, almost the entire park is in view from a major portion of the Midpeninsula and adds to the daily visual enjoyment of thousands of people. Parts of the park are in the scenic corridors along Woodside Road and La Honda Road.



Area 23: Wunderlich Park.

Vegetation includes coniferous forest, mixed evergreen woodlands with some woodlands merging into grasslands (three significant areas), and areas of chaparral. Exotic plants are mixed with native materials in the lower eastern portion of the park. An unusual configuration of large second growth redwoods forms a distinct "Fairy Ring" approximately three hundred feet in diameter; it is located approximately one-quarter mile west of the Woodside Town limits and just south of Bear Gulch Road.

The Alambique Creek Canyon, the Fairy Ring, and the middle and upper meadows require special protection to preserve these valuable natural resource areas.

Several large landslides have been mapped within the park boundaries; some other smaller areas have been identified as highly susceptible to landsliding. The terrain for the most part is very steep. Most of Wunderlich Park is classified as a high fire risk area. These hazardous conditions would be severe constraints on development and open space preservation for health and safety is warranted.

AREA 24: BEAR GULCH ROAD

This area comprises the privately-held lands between Bear Gulch Road and the Bear Gulch watershed lands of the California Water Service Company. These lands are dependent upon Bear Gulch Road, a private road, for access. Because of ownership patterns, steepness of terrain, and slope stability problems, private development is difficult.

These lands are suitable for low intensity recreational use and watershed protection; all surface drainage from this area flows into Bear Gulch Creek above the intake for the public water supply. In addition, because of geologic hazards, the lands should be preserved as open space for health and safety.

AREA 25: SKYLINE CORRIDOR / WUNDERLICH PARK LANDS

This area includes the lands between Skyline Boulevard and the westerly boundary of Wunderlich Park. Most of the area is within the Skyline Scenic Corridor. It is appropriate for low intensity recreation uses and forms an important part of the scenic corridor. While largely developed, this area may still provide recreational opportunities.

AREA 26: TRIPP ROAD SITE

This is a Town-owned site. It is an irregularly shaped, flat 8-acre parcel. Vegetation consists of many large walnut, live oak, white oak, walnut and apple trees. Grasses, chaparral and chamise are found on the site. Youth equestrian activities occur on the site, and several site improvements exist to support them. Surrounding uses are residential.. The Town currently (2010) leases this site to three private, non-profit equestrian organizations: the Woodside Vaulters, the Woodside Junior Riders, and the Woodside Pony Club.

AREA 27: ALEXANDER DONALD TRIANGLE

This approximately 2,500 square foot triangular median is at the intersection of Woodside, Cañada and Mountain Home Roads in the Town Center. It is landscaped, with a path for pedestrian traffic, as a focal point for the Town Center.



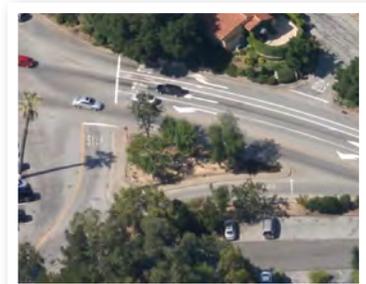
Area 24: Bear Gulch Road.



Area 25: Skyline Corridor / Wunderlich Park Lands.



Area 26: Tripp Road Site.



Area 27: Alexander Donald Park.



Area 28: Grounds of the Mounted Patrol.

AREA 28: GROUNDS OF THE MOUNTED PATROL

This 23-acre area is designed for equestrian activity and includes an arena, grandstand, separate warm-up arena, clubhouse, and 20 stall barn.

AREA 29: MENLO COUNTRY CLUB AND GOLF COURSE

Established in 1917, this 141-acre site is developed with a private country club, and an 18-hole golf course.



Area 29: Menlo Country Club and Golf Course.

AREA 30: THE FAMILY FARM

Established in 1909, the Family Farm is a 63-acre site with a private club with camp facilities and rustic buildings serving as a rural retreat used by club members for recreation.

AREA 31: LOS ALTOS HUNT PONY CLUB LANDS (AREA MODIFIED)

This property has been privately developed.



Area 30: The Family Farm.



Area 31: Dearborn Stables.

AREA 32: VILLAGE HILL

Village Hill is a Town-owned parcel on Woodside Road which overlooks the center of Town. Consisting of 1.65 acres, it is an area viewed by many people as they travel through the Town Center. It contributes to the rural character of the Town by providing a hillside of natural grasses which contrast with the commercial development across Woodside Road. In 1988, the Town Council adopted an Ordinance No. 1988-371 to prohibit the sale, lease or development of Village Hill unless a majority of the voters take other action. A trail transverses the site and an equestrian sculpture (“Spring and Sprite”) was installed in 2010, a gift from the Woodside Landscape Committee.



Area 32: Village Hill.

AREA 33: TEAGUE HILL

Teague Hill is a 624-acre expanse of hillside above the Summit Springs-Woodside Oaks area and is an important part of the Western Hills that are visible from many places in Woodside. It constitutes a significant visual resource as a natural, tree-covered backdrop to the Town and is an essential part of the community’s identity. The area, considered to be extremely valuable watershed, has three deep ravines that run toward West Union Creek: Squealer Gulch, Tripp Gulch and Appletree Gulch. Densely wooded forests and deep lush ravines characterize the majority of the site and serve as valuable wildlife habitat. Much of the area has slopes over 35% and slope stability is extremely poor throughout most of the property. Purchased in 1988 by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, the land is a prominent hillside that together with the neighboring Huddart County Park, Wunderlich County Park, and California Water Service Lands, represent one of the most impressive stretches of open space on the Peninsula. Some trails exist and more are planned on the land.



Area 33: Teague Hill.

AREA 34: BARKLEY FIELDS AND PARK

Barkley Fields and Park is owned by the Town of Woodside. The 6-acre park, which is located off Farm Hill Boulevard across from Cañada College, opened in October of 2007. It is the Town’s only formal park and is dedicated to youth organized sports, primarily soccer and baseball. The land was donated to the Town by a local family and about half of the funds needed for the park’s construction were raised from private donations. The area was undeveloped at the time it was donated, but had been considered for development on several occasions during the decade prior to its donation. The agreement that governed the gift of the land stipulates that the land must remain in open space and used to provide youth sports fields.



Area 34: Barkley Fields and Park.

GOAL OS1

Conserve, protect, and enhance open space system.

The goal of the Open Space Element is to conserve, protect and enhance the open space system by minimizing disturbance of the natural terrain and vegetation, conserving wildlife habitat and other areas of major or unique ecological significance, and ultimately ensuring the health and quality of the natural environment and the broader ecosystem.

POLICY OS1.1 - REVIEW ALL DEVELOPMENT TO ENSURE PRESERVATION OF OPEN SPACE

Preservation of open space resources in the Woodside Planning Area should be given the highest priority. Any development should be in harmony with the rural character of the Town and optimize opportunities to preserve open space.

1. Review Developments to Conserve Open Space

Review all development applications to ensure the preservation of open space for health and safety in high hazard areas, natural resource protection for things such as water bodies, riparian corridors, other significant stands of native vegetation, and other areas of special ecological significance, and other open space uses, such as scenic trails, and wildlife corridors. Where appropriate, impose conditions designed to conserve open spaces in conformity with the General Plan, and/or acquire dedications of open space, scenic and/or conservation easements.

2. Mitigation

Review and mitigate environmental impacts from proposed development, such as: fencing, landscaping, lighting, riparian encroachment, tree removal and drainage impacts, etc., as appropriate.

3. Ensure Harmony with Natural Setting

Ensure that the scale of building, the siting of structures, and the design and materials of construction is harmonious with the natural setting so that the visual quality of open spaces is not unreasonably impaired.

4. Subordinate Structures to the Environment

Structures should be subordinate to the site so that the dominant feature of the Town is the natural environment.

Strategies:

a. Update and Prepare Guidelines and Regulations

1. Update the Residential Design Guidelines, and update and prepare regulations, to provide clear direction on designing projects which are responsive to site-specific environmental conditions and conserve open space resources, addressing issues such as: site planning strategies, natural state requirements, fencing, lighting, landscaping, riparian setbacks, and drainage.
2. Prepare Town California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines to assist property owners in preparing applications for environmentally sensitive areas to comply with State law.

b. Conserve Wildlife Corridors

During the review of development proposals, ensure that impacts are minimized by:

1. Ensuring that fencing is wildlife friendly and that it does not impact or impede wildlife corridors;
2. Lighting is sensitive to wildlife and that it does not negatively impact nocturnal activities; and,
3. Riparian setbacks are adequate and that protection of vegetative, hydrologic, and geomorphic site conditions are taken into account to minimize impacts to wildlife corridors.

c. Protect Conservation Easements

Require that conservation, scenic, and open space easements be shown and clearly described on all site plans submitted for development permits.

POLICY OS1.2 – ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN OPEN SPACE AREAS

Identify and act upon opportunities to enhance connectivity of the open spaces in the review of new development applications.

1. Conserve, Protect and Enhance Wildlife Corridors

Give specific attention to preserving, protecting and enhancing wildlife corridors in the review of all applications for development, with special attention to riparian corridors and physically linking individual open spaces to form a network of open space.

2. Open Space Easements

Encourage, and require as appropriate, the dedication of open space easements as lands are developed to connect open spaces.

3. Protect Existing Open Space Areas

Encourage voluntary maintenance and expansion of existing open space areas to enhance connectivity with adjacent open space areas on properties where no new development is planned.

4. Promote Open Space Conservation

Promote Open Space programs, such as the Backyard Habitat Program, early in the site planning process for development permits, and on properties where no new development is planned, to encourage locating and conserving open spaces in a manner which increases connectivity with open spaces on adjacent properties.

Strategies:

a. Update Guidelines

Revise the Residential Design Guidelines to provide clear direction on site planning which increases the connectivity of open spaces by giving specific consideration to the preservation of wildlife habitats and corridors, the conservation and enhancement of riparian areas, and the predominate use of native plants in landscaping in favor of non-native ornamental plants.

b. Open Space Easements

During the review of development proposals and Town outreach and education efforts, encourage the dedication of open space which can increase connectivity between open space areas. Provide sample documents to assist in the preparation of the required material for dedication and County recordation.

POLICY OS1.3 - EXPAND THE OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Identify, encourage and support opportunities to expand the open space system.

Strategies:

a. Open Space Easements

Accept open space easements or development rights granted to the Town by land owners which meet Town-established criteria.

b. Rezoning to Open Space and Lot Mergers

Facilitate and coordinate property owners' requests for rezoning to open space uses and lot mergers which enhance open space.

c. Encourage, Develop, and Support Open Space Programs

Provide information on, and encourage, programs that expand open space (e.g., the Backyard Habitat Program).

POLICY OS1.4 – PRESERVE OPEN SPACE FOR THE PROTECTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Preserve lands subject to hazards as open space, where appropriate, for the protection of public health and safety. Leave areas subject to public health and safety hazards undeveloped, or predominantly undeveloped. (also reference the Natural Hazards and Safety Element). This category includes:

1. Fault zones (bands on each side of known active fault traces wide enough to include lands subject to probable ground rupture or ground failure);
2. Areas subject to landslide, or with severe slope instability problems;
3. Areas of high noise exposure.

Strategies:

a. Refine Town Environmental Constraint Maps and Data

To aid in identifying lands inappropriate for development, refine Town environmental constraint maps and data pertaining to:

1. Fault zones, including geologic hazards and seismic safety regulations;
2. Hillside development and slope stability, including geotechnical and geologic review and associated mitigation, open space requirement, and grading regulations; and,
3. High noise exposure areas, including acoustical review and mitigation regulations.

b. Submittal Requirements for New Development

Require and ensure that all submittals for new development accurately show and disclose site environmental constraints.

c. Encourage Dedication of High Hazard Areas as Open Space

During the review of development proposals and Town outreach and education efforts, encourage the dedication of high hazard areas as open space. Provide sample documents to assist in the preparation of the required material for dedication and County recordation.

POLICY OS1.5 - PROTECT SCENIC RESOURCES

Conserve open space as a means to protect scenic resources.

1. Design Review

Design review shall strive to protect scenic roads and corridors, the Western Hills, and other vistas. Also reference the Circulation Element.

2. Landscaping

Design landscaping along scenic roads and corridors in informal patterns to avoid linear patterns, or green “walls” or fences along rights-of-way.

3. Preserve Natural Vegetation

Preserve natural vegetation along scenic roads, corridors, vistas, and in the Western Hills.

Strategies:

a. Design Guidelines

Update the Design Guidelines to ensure that buildings on ridges will not be silhouetted by the sky, development on steep slopes will be avoided, grading will minimize site disturbance and contour alteration, building materials and colors will be in harmony with the adjacent land forms and native vegetation, and adequate setbacks from scenic resources will be maintained.

POLICY OS1.6 - PROVIDE OPEN SPACE FOR RECREATION

Provide open space for appropriate recreational needs.

1. Recreation Area Design

Encourage new recreational areas to be designed and developed in a manner which embodies the principles set forth in this Element and design fencing, landscaping and lighting to be sensitive to the natural habitat and wildlife, and to increase connectivity by linking with adjacent open spaces.

2. Review of Changes to Recreational Uses

Proposals for changes to existing areas designated Open Space for Outdoor Recreation, either through modification of operational aspects or physical layout or change in activities, shall be reviewed to ensure that any potential impact upon the environment, adjacent properties, and/or the neighboring community is preferably avoided, or at least minimized as much as possible, and that the proposals embody the goals and policies of this Element.

3. Educational Opportunities

Encourage the use of recreational areas for educational opportunities.

Strategies:

a. Project Review

During the review of proposals for new or modified recreational areas, ensure that open space is conserved, fencing design is wildlife friendly, landscaping is compatible with the environmental and aesthetic setting, lighting is minimized and sensitive to the natural habitat and wildlife, and connectivity is increased by linking adjacent open spaces.

b. Education

During the review of plans for new or modified recreational areas, encourage the inclusion of educational areas, such as signage to highlight native plants and animals.

POLICY OS1.7 - ESTABLISH EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Establish an open space education program.

Strategies:

a. Open Space Outreach

Develop and conduct an open space education program for Town staff and residents which is periodically updated to address current open space issues, including, but not limited to, topics such as:

1. Fence choices and design, and its resulting impact on habitats;
2. Balancing natural state preservation (habitat protection) with vegetative fuel source management (fire safety);
3. Native/drought tolerant/fire resistant landscaping;
4. Eradication of invasive species;
5. Alternatives to pesticide use;
6. Erosion control;
7. Manure management; and,
8. Risks of loss, or degradation of, open space.

b. Backyard Habitat Program

During the review of development proposals and Town outreach and education efforts, encourage participation in the Backyard Habitat Program. Provide information on the program and steps toward creating backyard habitat, and promote the program by giving non-monetary awards and recognition for outstanding natural site conditions.

POLICY OS1.8 - UTILIZE INCENTIVES FOR OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

Utilize incentives for the preservation of open space to increase the retention of open space lands.

Strategies:

a. Economic Incentives

Identify and provide land owners with information on the benefits of dedicating or gifting lands for open space uses.

b. Financial Incentives

Consider incentives in the form of tax relief, or some other form of financial rebate, such as property tax reductions for conservation or open space easements or income tax deductions for land gifts. New forms of tax relief may require State and federal legislation to enable flexibility at the local level. Specific consideration should be given to the impact on local property tax revenues, with costs and benefits evaluated so that appropriate policy can be adopted by the Town.

c. Funding

Study and determine the feasibility of utilizing private and/or public funds for purposes of open space conservation and/or preservation when the Town Council deems it to be in the public interest.

d. Recognition

Provide public recognition of good land stewardship, such as, the Backyard Habitat Program.

e. Other Incentives

Keep abreast of, and explore, new incentives for the open space preservation.

POLICY OS1.9 – PARTNER TO ACQUIRE RESOURCES

Partner to acquire resources for open space preservation.

Strategies:

a. Open Space Partnerships

Partner with nonprofit groups and governmental agencies for assistance, information, and technical support with open space preservation efforts.

b. Open Space Grants

Seek grant monies for programs which support open space preservation and conservation efforts.