8. Parks, Open Space and Conservation

Overview

Safe, accessible, and well-maintained parks and open spaces are essential to an urban city like East Palo Alto. Additionally, some of East Palo Alto's most valuable assets are its shoreline, the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Cooley Landing, and San Francisquito Creek. This chapter contains the goals and policies for protecting and enhancing these public parks, and open spaces. The chapter addresses the conservation of biological, cultural, and natural resources, and also includes direction on climate change and adaptation.

Statutory Requirements

The East Palo Alto Parks and Open Space Element meets state requirements for the Conservation and Open Space Elements as defined in Sections 65302(d) and 65302(e) of the Government Code. State law requires all general plans to contain a conservation element, which addresses the "conservation, development and utilization of natural resources." An Open Space Element must contain goals and policies to protect and maintain state natural resources such as water, forests, soils, wildlife and minerals, and prevent wasteful resource exploitation, degradation and destruction. It must also contain goals and policies for managing open space areas, including undeveloped lands and outdoor recreation areas. Over and above the State requirements for an open space element, this chapter includes policy guidance about recreation services and facilities in the City. The provisions of this Element are closely related to those of the Land Use, Transportation, and Safety Elements.

Issues and Opportunities

Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreational facilities provide a critical benefit to the City. They provide space for active and passive recreation, enhance the visual appearance of the City and contribute to increased residential and commercial property values.

Since the 1999 Conservation and Open Space Element was released, the City has continued to expand its parks and open space network. Joel Davis Park was completed in University Square, a pocket park was constructed at the intersection of Newbridge and Bay Roads, gaps in the Bay Trail have been completed, and a new field adjacent to Cesar Chavez School is under construction. Most significantly, the Cooley Landing project was finished, giving the City's residents unprecedented access to the Bay and the surrounding wetlands. Yet the City still has important steps to take in order to ensure high-quality parks and open spaces are available to all.

As shown in Table 8-1, there are currently five public parks and 225 acres of the Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge (hereafter Wildlife Refuge) in the City, accounting for approximately 33 total acres of usable parks and open space. A map of existing City parks and open space can be found in Figure 8-1. This equates to one acre of parkland per 1,000 residents. The Quimby Act (Government Code 6647) allows local agencies to establish standards for open space, at a maximum of five acres per 1,000 residents, and to require residential developers to provide land or in lieu fees for developing new or rehabilitating existing parks or recreational facilities to serve new residents. The City currently maintains a parkland dedication in/lieu fee standard of 3 acres per 1,000 residents (Ordinance 145).

With a projected increase in population of 7,515 by the 2035 buildout, 79 acres of new parkland will be needed to meet the 3 acre standard. East Palo Alto's demographics – with more children and larger household size than the County average – highlight the high demand for parks in comparison to neighboring communities.

Certain areas of the City are better served by parks than others. For instance, University Village, University Corridor and the Gardens have a higher level of park access than other neighborhoods in the City, as shown in Figure 8-2. The Weeks, Kavanaugh, and Westside neighborhoods have no public parks. The population in the Westside – often young families living in multi-family housing without backyards – creates an even higher need for park spaces there than in other areas of the City. Even in neighborhoods with existing parks, many residents are located further away from a park than the commonly accepted standard of access of ¼-mile walking distance, also known as the "walkshed."

Improving park access throughout the City is critical, and upgrading pedestrian connections to existing parks is the primary means to achieve this goal (apart from adding new parks). Many of the parks in East Palo Alto are not highly visible because they were constructed after much of the City was built out. This exacerbates the lack of visible parks in the City and makes it more difficult for the parks to be the focus, hub or connector of neighborhoods. Furthermore, residents who live far from city parks use the play structures or fields at local schools – however, when school is out (summer/winter breaks), entrances are locked up and fields cannot be accessed. Many school fields are closed to the public during all non-school hours, eliminating potential locations for play and recreation.

Connections to the Bay Trail could also be improved, as many of the trail access points are informal and located at the end of cul-de-sacs at Garden, Beech and Cypress (roughly four or five total). Similarly, the Wildlife Refuge, which is commonly known as the Faber-Laumeister Tract, and Cooley Landing are tremendous City assets, but they are underutilized by residents because there are a limited number of formalized entry points. Few people use the trails, and the entry points that do exist lack features that enhance public safety. Additionally, most of the Faber-Laumeister Tract is in an intertidal zone that is above water at low tide and under water at high tide. Consequently, the usable area for passive or active recreation is less than 6 acres.

Overall, the many parks and trails in the City improve the attractiveness of East Palo Alto as a place to work, and increases the value of commercial activities citywide.

Park Facilities and Character

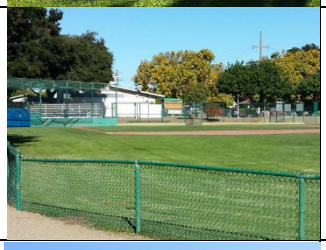
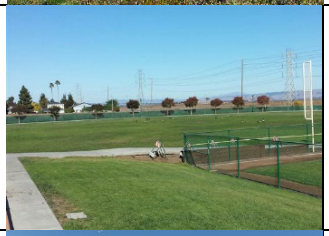
Although few in number, East Palo Alto's parks are well appointed, of high quality, and equipped with amenities. Martin Luther King Jr. Park has sports fields with bleachers, restrooms, a play structure, barbeque and seating. Jack Farrell Park has sports fields, a restroom (open only during special events) and concession building, a play structure, and seating. Joel Davis Park has a play structure, barbeque and seating. The Pocket Park and Bell Street Park are landscaped open spaces.

In general, the City's parks could benefit from implementing the principles of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). While Joel Davis Park is designed so that nearby homes and City offices have a direct line of sight, illustrating the concept of "natural surveillance," most other parks do not. Most notably, Jack Farrell Park is visually blocked by fences on several sides and a sloping berm that impedes visibility. MLK Park and Cooley Landing also have limited access and visibility. Conversely, Bell Street Park does have good access and visibility.

The nine-acre Cooley Landing Nature Preserve, located in the Baylands on the eastern side of the City, provides access to the Bay Trail and San Francisco Bay. In the near future, it will include an education center with environmental interpretation and programs.

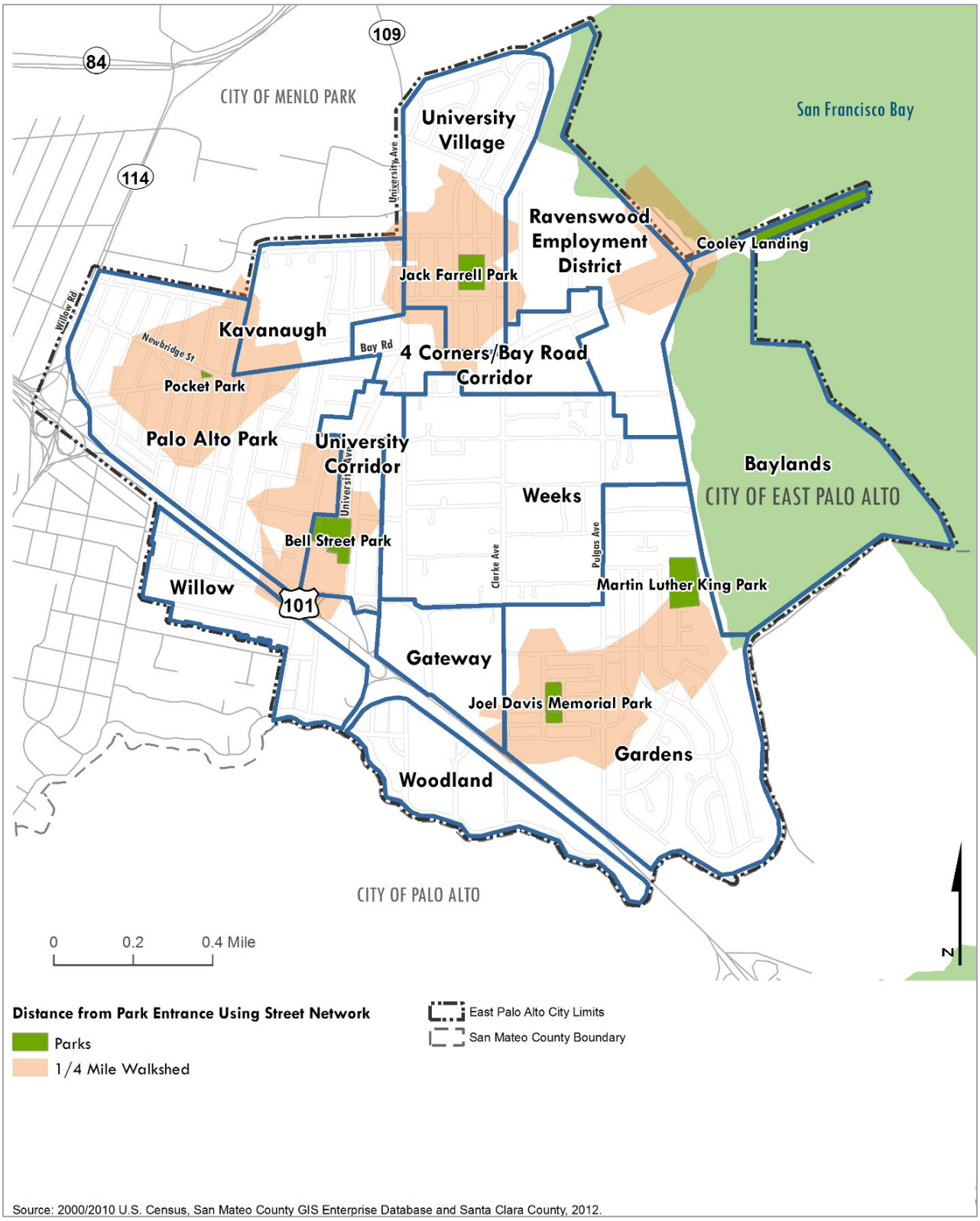
The City also has several planned or potential expansions to its inventory of existing open space, the most significant of which is the approximately 30 acres of new parks included in the Ravenswood TOD Specific Plan. New parks would be located at the termini of Demeter Street and Purdue Avenue, and at the entry to Cooley Landing. Another major opportunity site is the vacant Right of Way owned by the SFPUC adjacent to Costano Elementary School. There are other disused alleys and passages that could be converted into usable space, such as the greenbelt behind Kavanaugh or Holland Streets.

Figure 8-1: Existing City Parks and Open Space

Table 8-1: Park Inventory			
Park Name	**Description**	**Location**	**Acres**
Mini Parks			
Pocket Park	The pocket park provides landscaping and trees, benches and lights in a residential neighborhood. 	Bay Road and Newbridge St	0.15
Neighborhood Parks			
Bell Street Park	Bell Street Park features mature landscaping and a skateboard park and children's play area with playground and benefits from its close proximity to the local YMCA and Senior Center. 	2159 University Avenue	5
Jack Farrell Park	Jack Farrell Park is located in the northeastern part of the City. The park features a baseball diamond, and play structures. 	2509 Fordham Street	5.5
Joel Davis Park (old University Square Park)	Joel Davis Park includes play structure, barbeque grills, and lush grass and is located adjacent to the Community and E.D. Department. Planned improvements include new bathrooms and play equipment. 	1960 Tate Street	2.8
Martin Luther King Park	The park features a soccer field and baseball field with an electronic scoreboard, bleachers and concession stand. The park also has a jungle gym, picnic tables, and barbeque grills. 	435 Daisy Lane	5.7
Cooley Landing Nature Preserve	Opened in July 2012, Cooley Landing is the City's first nature park and bay front park. It will eventually include a fully staffed Education Center. 	2100 Bay Road	9
Regional Parks			
Don Edwards San Francisco Wildlife Preserve/Baylands Nature Preserve	The Bay Trail, a pedestrian/bicycle trail that links to other open spaces around the Bay Area, runs the length of the Baylands Nature Preserve (Note: for the purposes of this inventory, the usable area of the Preserve was calculated).	Eastern side of City	5.5
		Total Acres:	**33.65**

Source: City of East Palo Alto

Figure 8-2: Park Level of Service by Neighborhood



Source: 2000/2010 U.S. Census, San Mateo County GIS Enterprise Database and Santa Clara County, 2012.

Habitat and Natural Resources

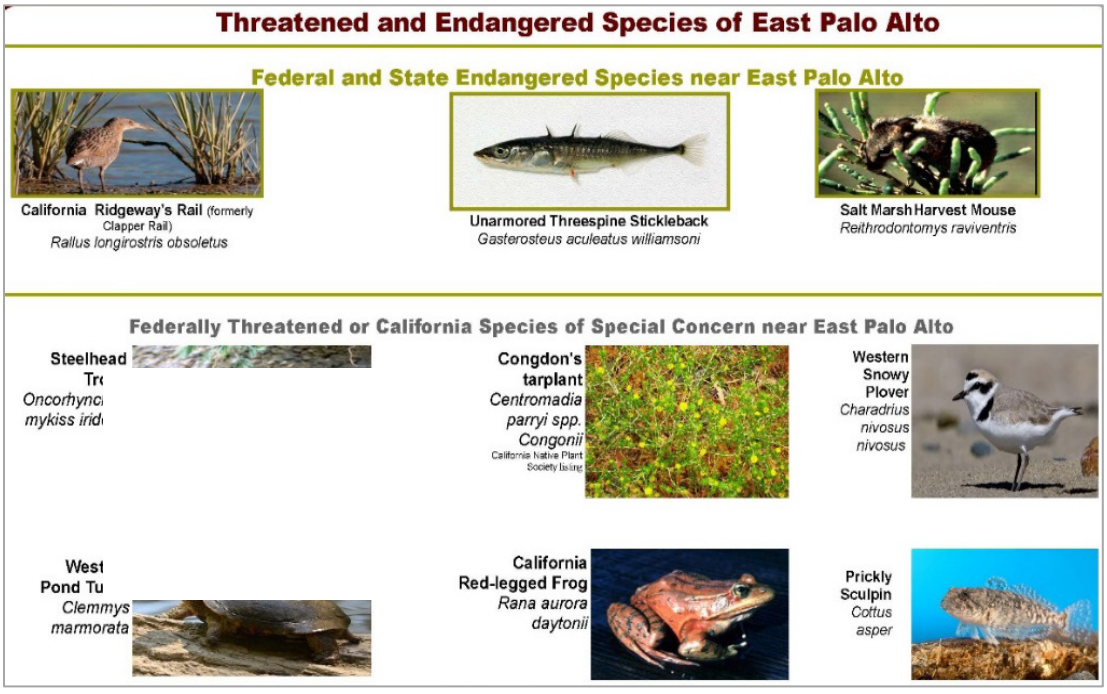
The City and its surrounding area includes many important natural features, such as the Baylands, San Francisquito Creek, and the shoreline of the Bay. These natural features act as landmarks establishing a strong sense of place and location within the community.

Access to and public recreational use of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge is an important issue for this Plan to address. The City's proximity to the Shoreline is a key part of the City's identity, and efforts will need to be made in order to enable residents to easily access the network of trails that runs through the Baylands area. Surmounting the barriers to properly utilizing the City's Bayfront open space (which include perceptions of an unsafe environment, rudimentary access points and facilities, and the physical separation created by the levees) will be critical.

The Faber-Laumeister Tract, located south of Cooley Landing, is one of the oldest wetland restoration projects in the San Francisco Bay. The City of Palo Alto purchased the area in 1944 for industrial purposes (even though it was outside the city limits), and then dedicated the site as parkland in 1965. Wetlands restoration projects began in 1971. The area provides food and shelter for thousands of native plants and animals every year, including the endangered California Ridgway's Rail. The Baylands population is the world's largest concentration of the chicken-sized marsh waders.

East Palo Alto is bordered on three sides by open space areas that provide habitat for sensitive plant and animal species. San Francisquito Creek, the Baylands Nature Preserve, Cooley Landing, and the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge all provide recreational and ecosystem benefits to East Palo Alto, but also need to be protected from impacts from development and human use.

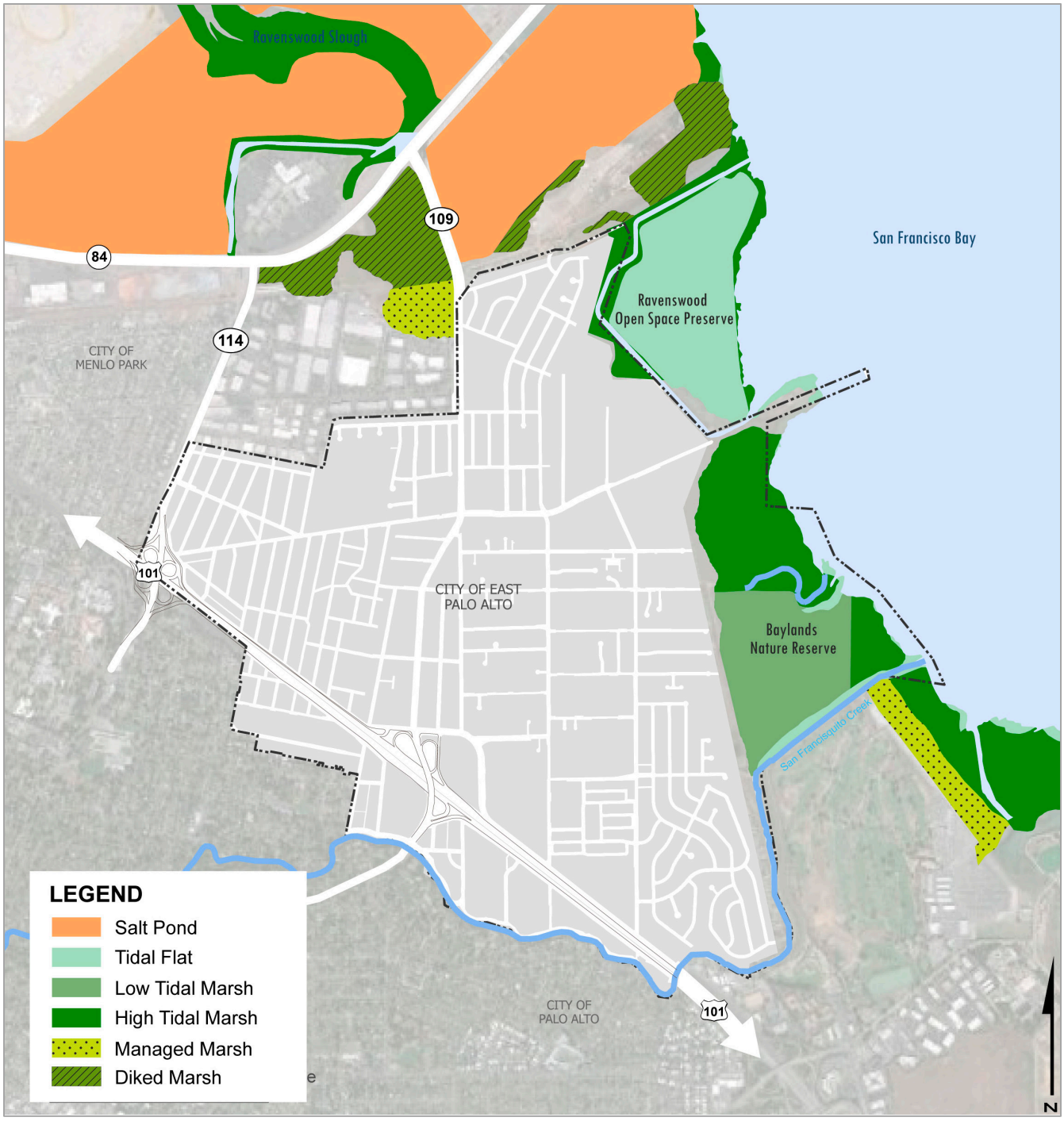
In particular, the areas adjacent to the Bay contain important tidal marsh and tidal mudflats vital to the survival of several endangered and threatened species. Specifically, the following species are on the federal or state endangered list: California Ridgeway's Rail, Unarmored Threespine Stickleback, and Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse (see Figure below). Other threatened or species of concern are also present in the wetlands and rivers of the City. Special policies are needed to ensure their survival. A balance is key to ensuring that the open space and natural resources in and around East Palo Alto remain healthy and viable for future generations to enjoy and benefit from. The negative impact of low-flying aircraft on wildlife populations should be examined and minimized if possible.



Source: City of East Palo Alto

San Francisquito Creek is one of the few remaining natural creeks in the South Bay, and also supports one of the last runs of endangered steelhead trout. The riparian woodland along the creek corridor protects the water quality of the creek and the wildlife in it, guards against erosion and bank collapse, provides habitat for numerous wildlife species, and provides environmental and public health benefits for City residents.

Figure 8-3: Natural Resources & Wetlands



Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

Climate change is a threat to the health and safety of East Palo Alto residents, as well as those in other parts of the region, the state, and the globe. Concerned about the impact of climate change, California has adopted a wide variety of legislation policies aimed at reducing the state's greenhouse gas emissions. These include the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32), which requires statewide climate planning; SB 375, which requires and encourages sustainable land use and transportation patterns at the regional and local level; and various actions by the State Attorney General's Office. Concern about climate change also resulted in a June 4, 2015 San Mateo County Grand Jury report entitled, "Flooding Ahead: Planning for Sea Level Rise". The report states that "of all the counties in California, San Mateo County is by far the most exposed to Sea level Rise (SLR), in terms of both the resident and economic value at risk".

The City completed a Climate Action Plan in 2010, outlining strategies at both the municipal and community-wide level to mitigate and adapt to climate change. In addition to energy-related topics like energy efficiency and use of renewable energy, the climate action plan also points to material re-use and recycling, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, urban green spaces, and compact development patterns as important strategies in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Mitigation topics such as reducing flooding and sea surges, particularly in low-lying areas of East Palo Alto, will continue to be important over the time horizon of the general plan.

Mineral Resources

The California Geological Survey has classified lands within the San Francisco-Monterey Bay Region into Aggregate and Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs) based on guidelines adopted by the California State Mining and Geology Board. East Palo Alto is mapped as MRZ-1, an area where no significant mineral or aggregate deposits are present.

Soils

The City of East Palo Alto is located on a mostly alluvial plain adjacent to the San Francisco Bay and east of the Santa Cruz Mountain foothills in the Coast Ranch Geomorphic Province of Central California. Regional geology includes Quaternary Alluvium, which are near-surface sediments consisting of gravels, sands, silts, and clay. Bedrock is over 1,600 feet below the surface and consists of igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rock.

Urban Forest

The City has an extensive diversity of trees planted in public spaces such as streets, medians, and parks. This urban forest has a number of benefits including increasing property values, absorbing carbon dioxide, and improving storm water runoff.

According to an inventory conducted in 2013, there are 5,475 total City-owned trees and 255 different tree species. Around half of trees examined are shorter than 15 feet and less than six inches DBH (diameter at breast height), indicating a relatively young stock of trees. Based on the study and as shown in Figure 8-4, 88 percent of trees surveyed were given a rating of "fair" or better, which is indicative of a fairly healthy urban forest. However, that still means there are nearly 600 trees in poor or critical health. This is partially a result of a successful tree planting effort started in 2006, which added approximately 1,200 new trees to East Palo Alto's urban forest. These new trees account for approximately 22 percent of the City's tree inventory. Nevertheless, there are many opportunities to plant more trees in the City - 1,480 vacant tree locations have been identified, as shown in Figure 8-5.

Figure 8-4: Tree Condition

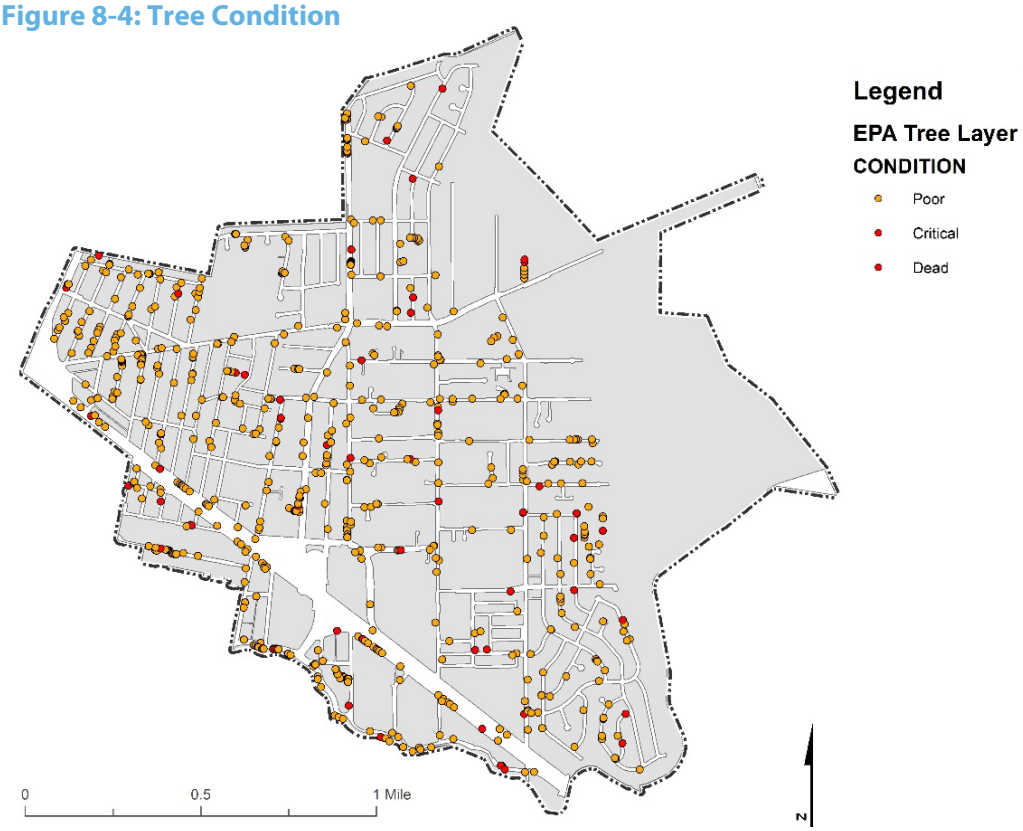
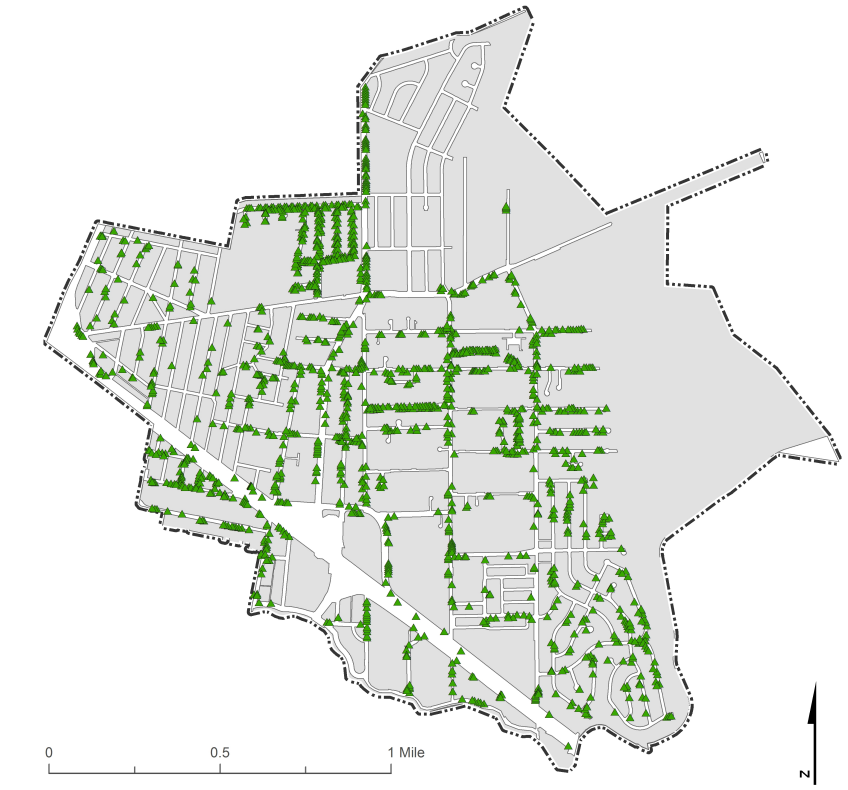


Figure 8-5: Vacant Tree Sites



Historic Resouces

In 2015, the City Council adopted the inventory of resources in a 1994 Historic Resources Report as the 'Local Register of Historic Resources.' The public interest in preserving historic resources dates back to the adoption of the City's first General Plan in 1986, which includes a Historic Element as Chapter 9 in the Table of Contents that was not completed. Later, in 1994, East Palo Alto residents, historians, and members of the East Palo Alto Historical and Agricultural Society (the "Historical Society") worked with the San Mateo County Historical Association ("SMCHA") to identify historic resources within the City of East Palo Alto. Funded by a grant from the Peninsula Community Foundation, the SMCHA completed a Historic Resources Report that identified 52 historic resources, some of which include multiple buildings, and details why the inventory of properties qualify as historic.

The inventory contained in the 1994 Historic Resources Report was included in the 1997 Weeks Neighborhood Plan (Neighborhood Plan), which was an effort by Historical Society and other community members to craft a unique vision for the Weeks Neighborhood. Among other things, the Neighborhood Plan calls for the City to adopt the inventory contained in the 1994 Historic Resources Report and to impose less restrictive building regulations on historic properties. Although the Neighborhood Plan was never adopted, the 1999 General Plan included goals, policies, and an implementation program that articulates the community's interest in the preservation of historic resources.

Of 52 resources included in the 1994 Historic Resources Report, seven were classified as "3," meaning they had potential to be listed on the National Register of Historic Properties. Eight of the properties were classified as "4," meaning that they might be eligible for listing. The other 37 properties were classified as "5," signifying that they are likely ineligible for listing but still have local interest. Figure 8-6 shows the City's four remaining heritage resources.

Figure 8-6: Potential Historic Resources

Goals and Policies

Goal POC-1. **Create new parks and open spaces throughout the City.**

Intent: To increase the availability of park space for all City residents, and to promote physical activity. See Figure 8-6 for a complete illustration of proposed/planned additions to the City's open space network.

Policies:

1.1 **New parks and open space.** Maintain a park standard of 3 acres per 1,000 residents. Undertake a program to add 79 acres of new formalized park spaces, prioritizing the areas of the City currently underserved by parks (Weeks, Kavanaugh, Willow, and Woodland).

1.2 **Bay Access Master Plan.** Implement the park and trail improvements and expansions called for in the EPA Bay Access Master Plan.

1.3 **Ravenswood Plan.** Implement the parks and trails identified in the Ravenswood TOD Specific Plan.

1.4 **General Plan Implementation.** Develop the other trails and parks listed in the General Plan Implementation Chapter (Table 11-9).

1.5 **Park access.** To increase resident access to open space, strive to locate park facilities within ¼ mile walking distance of all residences in East Palo Alto.

1.6 **Park variety.** Seek to maintain a diversity of park spaces throughout the City, including recreation areas and sports fields, pools, hardscaped plazas; children's play areas, and linear greenways.

1.7 **Community involvement.** Encourage public involvement in every aspect of park and open space acquisition, design, construction, and programming.

1.8 **Parks and open space.** Establish a range of parks and open spaces, including tot lots, neighborhood parks, community parks, plazas/greens and/or greenways/parkways within all new Neighborhoods, Centers and Districts.

1.9 **Measure AA projects.** With the financial and administrative support of Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space[1], build new Bayfront trails and City-to-Bay trails. Support wetland restoration and science education exhibits.

1.10 **New trails and paths.** Construct new trails or multi-use paths, particularly along the San Francisquito Creek or in the Baylands.

1.11 **Gap closure.** Work to fill critical gaps in the City's trail network, particularly completing the Bay Trail and other planned connections in the Ravenswood Employment District, and along San Francisquito Creek between O'Connor and University Avenue.

1.12 **Opportunistic conversions**. Work to convert unused utility rights-of-way (including the Hetch Hetchy ROW), railroad rights-of-way (including the UP Spur) and alleys into attractive open space corridors.

1.13 **Property acquisition**. Allow the City to purchase land, including single-family parcels, to construct new parks, particularly in areas of the City most underserved by parks.

1.14 **Connections to Bay Trail.** Explore new and improved connections to the Bay Trail in key locations.

[1] Measure AA is a $300 million general obligation bond approved in June 2014 by over two-thirds of Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District voters. Proceeds from bonds, which will be sold over the next 20-30 years, will be used for a series of key open space enhancements and access improvements throughout the District.

Figure 8-7: Existing and Proposed Open Space Network

This figure displays both the existing parks and trails, as well as the full future parks network that the City anticipates to complete over the lifetime of this General Plan.

Goal POC-2. **Improve and enhance existing parks and trails.**

Intent: To ensure that the community is provided with excellent parks and recreation facilities that meet its diverse needs and interests.

Policies:

2.1 **Create reciprocal agreements**. Work with the Ravenswood City School District and private schools to develop and maintain shared-use arrangements to share school facilities with outside organizations to expand recreation opportunities in the City.

2.2 **Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).** Utilize CPTED to improve safety in new and existing parks. Some suggested techniques include:

- Appropriate lighting and visibility in park facilities.
- Activate parks with programs/community gardens/community events.
- Increase 'natural surveillance' by trimming surrounding vegetation and allowing views in and out of park spaces.
- Removing graffiti and maintaining parks

2.3 **Access to parks**. Improve bike and pedestrian access to existing parks and schools.

2.4 **Perimeter paths.** Consider perimeter paths around parks, where feasible, to improve safety and to improve how the parks interface with the sidewalk and surrounding neighborhoods.

2.5 **Park improvements.** Maintain, improve, and renovate existing parks with new equipment and features (especially drinking fountains, lighting, fitness equipment, and restrooms) to ensure continued use, accessibility and quality facilities.

2.6 **Special events.** Continue to produce and/or provide support for community-related special events

2.7 **Baylands use**. Encourage public recreational use and access to the Baylands, South Bay Salt Pond, and other nearby open space, in coordination with the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge and other partners and in a manner that does not adversely impact the natural environment.

2.8 **Trash and litter**. Continue to implement and support regular trash clean-up events throughout the City, especially in and around San Francisquito Creek, entrances to the Bay Trail, Ravenswood Open Space Preserve, and Cooley Landing.

2.9 **Community gardens**. Support new community gardens in City-owned public spaces and parks.

Goal POC-3. **Expand funding for park improvements and maintenance.**

Intent: To ensure that the City's parks will provide safe and attractive recreational opportunities for many generations to come.

Policies:

3.1 **Commercial and residential park impact fees.** Adopt a Nexus Study Impact Fee so that commercial and residential development contributes its fair share towards capital improvements, operations, and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities.

3.2 **Park incentives.**. Encourage developers to include open space and recreational amenities such as outdoor play areas, rooftop gardens, and family gathering spaces, in new multifamily developments

3.3 **Recreation facilities.** Encourage the creation of private/non-profit recreation facilities (e.g., gyms, yoga or dance studios, martial arts, children's play programs, etc.).

3.4 **Baylands PCA.** Leverage the Priority Conservation Area (PCA) designation for the Ravenswood Open Space Preserve and Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge areas to obtain new revenue streams and grant funding from regional authorities.

3.5 **Volunteering.** Encourage public-private partnerships to develop and maintain public playing fields and other open spaces and recreational facilities. This

could include creating a City-wide Adopt a Park Program or similar stewardship/volunteer programs.

3.6 **Corporate and non-profit funding.** Pursue local corporate contributions and other donations, especially from nearby technology firms or other major employers. Explore innovative funding and development concepts with non-profit groups.

Goal POC-4. **Protect and preserve the City's natural habitat and wildlife.**

Intent: To preserve the aesthetic and ecological quality of the City's nearby urban natural resources.

Policies:

4.1 **Public access.** Ensure that public access to the Bay is designed, developed, and maintained in a manner that protects the existing natural resources and habitats.

4.2 **Human activities.** Protect wildlife from adverse impacts caused by human activities.

4.3 **Don Edwards NWR management.** Coordinate with federal agencies and neighboring cities to manage the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge in a manner consistent with the Conservation Plan, including:

- Increased survey efforts on native fauna/flora
- Additional improvements to tidal marsh areas
- Enhanced visitor service and expanding the volunteer program
- Adopt '15 Comprehensive Conservation Plan'

4.4 **Light pollution.** Require that new buildings located adjacent to Baylands Nature Preserve or Ravenswood Open Space Preserve shield any site lighting from the Bay.

4.5 **Light and glare.** Review major public and private development projects to ensure that the spillover effects of light and glare from new exterior lighting is minimized. Where feasible, require lighting fixtures to be directed downward and equipped with cut-off lenses. For development near sensitive sites, particularly undeveloped Bayfront areas, require submittal of photometric studies to demonstrate minimization of light spill-over. Ensure that all implemented lighting measures adhere to the regulations outlined in Title 24.

4.6 **Predation**. Ensure that new development and landscaping adjacent to tidal marshes and other Bayfront areas avoids tall perches for raptors or other predatory birds. Protect the salt-marsh harvest mouse from feral cat predation.

4.7 **Native species.** Encourage or require the use of native and/or non-invasive plants in privately built landscaping or new open spaces near natural open space areas, in order to provide foraging, nesting, breeding and migratory habitat for wildlife. Discourage herbicides and fertilizers.

4.8 **Inter-agency coordination**. Coordinate with other public agencies such as the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority, Army Corps of Engineers, National Fish and Wildlife Service, and other similar entities on construction or development activity occurring within or adjacent to the City.

4.9 **Riparian and flood buffer.** Do not allow new development within a 100-foot buffer zone from the top of the San Francisquito creek bank.

Goal POC-5. **Expand use of the Cooley Landing Nature Preserve.**

Intent: To inspire the community to celebrate its rich history and contributions to the Bay Area maritime legacy. To activate the area around Cooley Landing during both day and night.

Policies:

5.1 **Education Center.** Operate and maintain a state-of-the-art community accessible education and interpretive center in an economically sound and environmentally sensitive manner. Work with public, private, and non-profit partners to develop financial, operations, maintenance and

management plans to ensure the center's long-term viability and activation.

5.2 **Interpretative programs.** Establish programs that celebrate East Palo Alto's rich history and utilize resources to provide youth, families and visitors alike with exceptional natural experiences that inspire a lifelong commitment to environmental stewardship and preservation

5.3 **Other site amenities.** Provide amenities that welcome the East Palo Alto community and the broader public and promote enjoyment of Cooley Landing.

5.4 **Security.** Monitor the effectiveness of security measures to ensure long-term use of Cooley Landing.

Goal POC-6. **Preserve and expand the urban forest on both public and private property.**

Intent: To maximize the benefits of a healthy urban forest, especially to counteract the impacts of highways and other sources of air pollution.

Policies:

6.1 **Urban forestry.** Expand the urban forest in East Palo Alto by adding street trees and landscaping throughout the City.

6.2 **New tree planting.** Prioritize the planting of new trees on sites designated as sensitive receptors (e.g. schools, health centers) or that are in close proximity to sources of air pollution such as freeways and heavily traveled road corridors.

6.3 **Fruit trees.** Encourage planting of fruit trees and other edible landscaping in private development for food sources for residents and foraging opportunities for wildlife. Plant fruit trees when feasible on public property.

6.4 **Urban forestry programs.** Support education and outreach programs to inform community members about the benefits of urban trees, including shade, improved air quality, filtration of stormwater, and wildlife habitat. Educate the community about proper tree maintenance.

Goal POC-7. **Promote a sustainable energy system.**

Intent: To enable citywide access to energy in a way that meets community needs while positioning the community for a sustainable energy future.

Policies:

7.1 **Citywide building energy efficiency.** Promote and encourage citywide building energy efficiency through strategies that may include the following:

- Retrofits of buildings with energy-efficient technology
- High energy performance in new buildings, in excess of CALgreen when possible.

7.2 **Municipal building energy efficiency.** Strive for high levels of energy efficiency in municipal facilities.

7.3 **Energy-efficient infrastructure.** Whenever possible, use energy-efficient models and technology when replacing or providing new city infrastructure such as streetlights, traffic signals, water conveyance pumps, or other public infrastructure.

7.4 **Renewable energy.** Encourage the use of renewable energy in the City, including solar and wind in new and existing development.

Goal POC-8. **Adapt to and mitigate climate change impacts.**

Intent: To become a resilient community that is prepared for the health and safety impacts of and minimizes the risks of climate change.

Policies:

8.1 **Climate Action Plan.** Implement and regularly update the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP). Update the City's Greenhouse Gas Inventory and associated

implementation actions matrix every 2 to 3 years, and the overall CAP framework document every 5 to 10 years.

8.2 **Heat island reductions.** Require heat island reduction strategies in new developments such as light-colored cool roofs, light-colored paving, permeable paving, right-sized parking requirements, vegetative cover and planting, substantial tree canopy coverage, and south and west side tree planting.

8.3 **Public realm shading.** Strive to improve shading in public spaces such as bus stops, sidewalks and public parks and plazas through the use of trees, shelters, awnings, gazebos, fabric shading and other creative cooling strategies.

8.4 **Reducing GHG emissions.** In consulting with applicants and designing new facilities, prioritize the selection of green building design features that enhance the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

8.5 **Communications and outreach.** Continue to work with the San Mateo County Public Health Department to establish social networks and website updates to distribute information on climate change impacts to vulnerable populations including actions they can take to reduce exposure to unhealthy conditions.

8.6 **Climate change and health.** Acknowledge the on-going and future impacts of climate change and extreme events on East Palo Alto's residents, taking action to minimize the effects among vulnerable populations and help implement California's executive order (EO) S-13-08 and the 2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy.

8.7 **Adaptation strategy.** Proactively develop strategies to reduce the community's vulnerability to climate change impacts. This could include providing emergency heating or cooling stations for residents.

8.8 **Efficiency incentives.** Provide incentives for households to improve resource efficiency, such as rebate programs and giveaways for items such as low-flow showerheads and electrical outlet insulation.

8.9 **Sustainable building code.** Encourage changes in building code to reflect emphasis on health, sustainability, and energy efficiency. Look to the codes of other cities who are leaders.

8.10 **Green building credentialing and incentives.** Provide incentives for contractors to obtain Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) professional credentials as well as LEED certification for their buildings.

8.11 **Green building certification.** Require that new residential, commercial, or mixed-use buildings over 20,000 square feet earn LEED Silver certification (or equivalent) including meeting the minimum CALGreen code requirements.

8.12 **Green waste management practices.** Support on-going green waste recycling efforts and facilitate composting opportunities for residents and businesses in order to reduce surface ozone pollution and offset greenhouse gas emissions and provide soil nutrients.

Goal POC-9. **Protect historic, natural, mineral, and cultural resources.**

Intent: Maintain the community's connection to the past and promote the City's unique identity and character.

Policies:

9.1 **Archeology, paleontology and natural resources.** Protect areas of important archaeological paleontological and natural resources.

9.2 **Historic buildings and sites.** Protect and conserve buildings or sites of historic or cultural significance to contribute to the character of the community.

9.3 **Cooley Landing.** Preserve and promote Cooley Landing as an important historical site in the development of the City.

9.4 **City history.** Work with partners to document, educate the public about the history of the City and memorialize significant people, places and events in the history of the City through plaques & public art.

9.5 **City resources.** Maintain an internal resource center containing a collection of relevant historic documents.

9.6 **Adaptive reuse.** Allow for the adaptive reuse of historic buildings and cultural resources.

9.7 **Construction impacts.** Suspend development activity when archaeological resources are discovered during construction. The project sponsor will be required to retain a qualified archaeologist to oversee the handling of resources in coordination with appropriate local and State agencies and organization and local Native American representatives, as appropriate.

9.8 **Soil quality.** Require soil testing for contaminants on sites that have historically, or currently, been exposed to chemical releases. If contamination does exist, require a remediation strategy to reduce or eliminate contamination on site.

9.9 **Agricultural soils.** Preserve the excellent soil in the City by protecting against soil erosion due to construction activity, wind, and water. Require new development to follow BMPs for erosion and sedimentation control.

9.10 **Mining operations.** Do not permit the extraction of mineral resources within the City.

9.11 **Recycling.** Encourage the reuse and recycling of existing aggregate, concrete and asphalt materials for new residential, commercial, and industrial developments.