

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT

DATE: October 12, 2022

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Planning Staff

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Consideration of a request by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD), pursuant to Government Code Section 65402, that the County determine whether the proposed purchase in fee and undivided interests of 6,300 acres of the 6,700-acre Cloverdale Ranch Property conforms to the County General Plan.

County File Number: PLN 2022-00256 Midpeninsula Regional Open
Space District

PROPOSAL

Consideration of a request by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD), pursuant to Government Code Section 65402, that the County determine whether the proposed purchase in fee and undivided interests of 6,300 acres of the 6,700-acre Cloverdale Ranch Property conforms to the County General Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Commission find that Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's proposed purchase in fee and undivided interests of 6,300 acres of the 6,700-acre Cloverdale Ranch Property conforms to the County General Plan.

SUMMARY

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) is proposing to purchase 6,300 acres in fee and undivided interests of the 6,700-acre Cloverdale Ranch property from the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST). POST will retain an undivided interest in approximately 400 acres of the property for future sale to private farmers. The property is located south of Pescadero in unincorporated San Mateo County. Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District will manage purchased areas for conservation grazing, open space, habitat preservation, watershed protection, and future low intensity recreation (trails).

Per California Government Code Section 65402, prior to acquisition of property, MROSD must request a report on the proposed acquisition's conformity with the General Plan. The proposed acquisition potentially implicates the following categories of General Plan policies and Local Coastal Program components:

- General Plan Vegetative, Water, Fish and Wildlife Resources Policies
- General Plan Soil Resources Policies
- General Plan Visual Quality Policies
- General Plan Park and Recreation Resources Policies
- General Plan Rural Land Use Policies
- General Plan Water Supply Policies
- General Plan Natural Hazards Policies
- Local Coastal Program Locating and Planning New Development Component
- Local Coastal Program Recreation and Shoreline Access Component
- Local Coastal Program Visual Resources Component
- Local Coastal Program Sensitive Habitats Component
- Local Coastal Program Agriculture Component

The proposed acquisition does not conflict with any of the relevant policies in the sections cited above. Any specific developments, future improvements, or changes, including any land division, proposed on the property would require permits and would be reviewed by the County at the time of project submittal. The anticipated uses are generally compatible with relevant General Plan and Local Coastal Program policies.

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BACKGROUND

Report Prepared By: Chanda Singh, Senior Transportation Planner,
csingh@smcgov.org

Applicant: Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Owner: Peninsula Open Space Trust

Public Notification: Ten (10) day advanced notification for the hearing was mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the project parcel and a notice for the hearing was posted in the San Mateo Times and Half Moon Bay Review for general public circulation.

Location: The Cloverdale Ranch property is located at the southern end of the unincorporated San Mateo County community of Pescadero. The property is surrounded by over 31,000-acres of open space and park land including Butano State Park to the east, Big Basin to the east and south, Ano Nuevo and Cascade Ranch to the south, Pigeon Point Light House and Bean Hollow State Beach to the west and Pescadero Marsh to the north. The property is bounded by Pescadero Road to the north, Cloverdale Road to the east, Gazos Creek Road to the south, Cabrillo Highway (Route 1) and Bean Hollow Road to the west.

APN(s): 086-050-030, 086-080-020, 086-300-200, 086-300-210, 087-190-080, and 087-220-050, portions of 086-080-030, 086-080-040, 086-080-050, 086-270-010, 086-270-020, 086-280-030, 086-290-010, 086-290-090, 086-310-010, 086-320-040, 086-340-010, 020, 030, 040, 050, 070, 080, 090, 100, 110, 120, 130, 140, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 230, 240, 280, 300 and 320

Size: Approximately 6,300 acres

Existing Zoning: Planned Agriculture District / Coastal Development District (PAD/CD)

General Plan Designation: Agriculture

Local Coastal Plan Designation: Categorical Exclusion-South Coast AG: Agricultural

Existing Land Use: Rural residential, grazing, framing, and private open space.

Flood Zone: A (Special Flood Hazard Area), AE (Special Flood Hazard Area), D (Areas with possible but undetermined flood hazards), and X (Area of Minimal Flood Hazard); FEMA Firm Panels 06081C0431F (Effective Date: 08-02-2017), 06081C0432E (Effective date: 10/16/2012), 06081C0451E (Effective date: 10/16/2012), 06081C0434F (Effective Date: 08-02-2017), 06081C0455E (Effective Date: 10-16-2012), 06081C0442F (Effective Date: 08-02-2017), 06081C0461F (Effective Date: 08-02-2017)

Environmental Evaluation: A determination that the potential acquisition of property conforms to the County General Plan is exempt from environmental review under the "common sense exemption" that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3)). Any future action on the subject properties would be subject to applicable CEQA requirements.

Setting: Cloverdale Ranch encompasses a series of terraced ecosystems from the coastal bluffs to a western ridge of the Coastal Range and connects to more than 31,000 acres of surrounding open space and park land. Elevation ranges from 41 feet above sea-level along Pescadero Creek Road on the northern boundary to over 623 feet on the ridge top near the southern boundary above Gazos Creek Road. Topography ranges from gently rolling hills to extremely steep slopes and canyonlands. The level rolling hills and ridgetops support annual grasslands and coastal scrub habitat. The steeper canyon areas and riparian corridors are comprised of dense brush and woody vegetation. The eastern edge of the property meets the forested mountains characteristic of Butano State Park.

DISCUSSION

A. KEY ISSUES

1. Project Description

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is proposing to purchase 6,300 acres in fee and undivided interests of the 6,700-acre Cloverdale Ranch property from the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST). The property is located at 3393 Cloverdale Road, and 10436 Cabrillo Highway south of Pescadero in unincorporated San Mateo County. Peninsula Open Space Trust will retain an undivided interest in approximately 400 acres of the property for future sale to private farmers. The General Plan designation for various APN's is Agriculture Rural. The property is located entirely within the MROSD's boundary (Attachment C). Existing uses of the property include rural residential, private open space, grazing by local ranchers on the eastern half of the property of approximately 2,750 acres of rangeland, and farming (leased) on approximately 400 acres of irrigated and dry-farmed land.

When the property interests are purchased by MROSD, the areas shown in yellow on Attachment B will be managed by MROSD for conservation grazing, open space, habitat preservation, watershed protection, and future low intensity recreation (trails). The 400 acres of farm areas shown in purple on Attachment B will continue to be farmed by local farmers and retained by Peninsula Open Space Trust.

Per California Government Code Section 65402, prior to acquisition of property, MROSD must request a report on the proposed acquisition's conformity with the General Plan. Any specific developments, future improvements, or changes, including any land division, proposed on the property would require permits and would be reviewed by the County at the time of project submittal.

2. General Plan and Local Coastal Program Analysis

The proposed property acquisition potentially implicates the following General Plan policies and Local Coastal Program components:

a. General Plan Vegetative, Water, Fish and Wildlife Resources Policies and Local Coastal Program Sensitive Habitats Component

- (1) General Plan Policy 1.23.a requires that the County regulate land uses and development activities to prevent and, if infeasible, mitigate to the extent possible, significant adverse impacts on vegetative, water, fish and wildlife resources.
- (2) General Plan Policy 1.24 requires the County to regulate the location, density and design of development to minimize significant adverse impacts and encourage enhancement of vegetative, water, fish and wildlife resources.
- (3) General Plan Policy 1.30 requires that in sensitive habitats, the County permit only those land uses and development activities that are compatible with the protection of sensitive habitats, such as nature education and research, trails and scenic overlooks, and necessary public service and private infrastructure.
- (4) General Plan Policy 1.42 requires the County to encourage public agencies and private groups to acquire significant sensitive habitats.
- (5) Local Coastal Program Policy 7.3b. requires development in areas adjacent to sensitive habitats to be sited and designed to prevent impacts that could significantly degrade the sensitive habitats.
- (6) Local Coastal Program Policy 7.4 permits only resource dependent uses in sensitive habitats, and specifically Policy 7.9 permits trails and scenic overlooks in riparian corridors and Policy 7.16 permits nature education and research, fishing, and fish and wildlife management in wetlands.

Discussion: The property contains various vegetative, water, fish and wildlife resources. Vegetative resources include grasslands, coastal scrub habitat, wooded drainages and stream-side riparian vegetation. Sensitive habitat vegetation, fish, and wildlife on the property include Choris' popcornflower, coastal marsh milk-vetch, Steelhead Trout, Scouler's catchfly, San Francisco gartersnake, and California red-legged frog. Water resources include Butano Creek, Little Butano Creek,

Lake Lucerne, Arroyo de los Frijoles, and Bean Hollow North and South Reservoirs.

The proposed acquisition will preserve coastal open space, protect grazing and existing lands used for farming, improve future public access to surrounding District lands and State open spaces, and create the opportunity for future public access to the subject property. The purchase of the property complies with and furthers the mission of MROSD's Service Plan¹, which is "to acquire and preserve in perpetuity open space land and agricultural land of regional significance, protect and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character, encourage viable agricultural use of land resources, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education." When the property interest is purchased, the existing land uses will continue, and purchased portions of the property will be more actively managed by the MROSD for conservation grazing, open space, habitat preservation, watershed protection, and future low intensity public recreation (trails).

The proposed purchase itself conforms to the General Plan Vegetative, Water, Fish and Wildlife Resources Policies and Local Coastal Program Sensitive Habitats Component, because MROSD's mission and the requirements of its Service Plan include the long-term protection of natural resources on properties acquired by Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. Any proposed changes or improvements to the property are regulated by applicable Zoning Regulations, Subdivision Regulations, tree removal and grading ordinances.

b. General Plan Soil Resources Policies and Local Coastal Program Agriculture Component

- (1) General Plan Policy 2.17 regulates development to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation; including, but not limited to, measures which consider the effects of slope, minimize removal of vegetative cover, ensure stabilization of disturbed areas.
- (2) General Plan Policy 2.18 encourages the continuance and expansion of soil protective uses in rural areas, specifically agriculture, for their ability to protect soil as an available resource, as well as produce beneficial food, fiber, and decorative crops.

¹ MROSD Service Plan for the San Mateo Coastal Annexation Area. Available at: https://www.openspace.org/sites/default/files/Coastal_Service_Plan_0.pdf (Accessed 9/9/2022)

- (3) General Plan Policy 2.19 gives preference to soil protective land uses in areas with productive soil resources, and allows other land uses which are compatible with soil protective uses.
- (4) General Plan Policy 2.23 regulates excavation, grading, filling, and land clearing activities to protect against accelerated soil erosion and sedimentation.
- (5) LCP Policy 5.5a. permits agricultural and agriculturally related development on prime agricultural lands including (1) agriculture, such as grazing, growing, or pasturing of livestock; and conditionally permits (1) single-family residences, (2) farm labor housing, (3) public recreation and shoreline access trails, and others.
- (6) LCP Policy 5.8b. in the case of a recreational facility on prime agricultural land, requires the agency to execute a recordable agreement with the County that all prime agricultural and other land suitable for agriculture which is not needed for recreational development or for the protection and vital functioning of a sensitive habitat will be permanently protected for agriculture, and (2) whenever legally feasible, to agree to lease the maximum amount of agricultural land to active farm operators on terms compatible with the primary recreational and habitat use.

Discussion:

The property contains land capability classification (LCC) Class 2 Prime Agricultural Land and LCC Class 3 Land capable of growing artichokes and brussels sprouts in the proposed acquisition area by Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. Approximately 2,750-acres of rangeland is grazed by two local ranchers on the eastern half of the property to be acquired by Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. The property also contains four farms, leasing 400-acres to be retained by POST (see purple areas in Attachment B):

- R&R Farm: Along Pescadero Road at the north end of the property is R&R Farms with “you pick” berries and herbs and a produce market.
- Fifth Crow Farms: Along Butano Creek and Cloverdale Road growing a variety of vegetables for sale a farmer’s markets and CSA boxes.

- Root Down Farms: Located along Cloverdale Road west of Butano State Park is Root Down Farm which pasture raised meat.
- Marchi Farms: Located at the southern end of the Cloverdale property along the Cabrillo Highway, which dry-farmed the property; however, the farm has been fallow the last 3 years.

The proposed acquisition itself does not conflict with the General Plan Soil Resources Policies or Local Coastal Program Agriculture Component. Any proposed future development would be subject to the County Grading Ordinance, which incorporates measures to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation, and subject to the guidelines and policies of MROSD’s Service Plan, which requires MROSD to adopt measures that minimize and mitigate any erosion-creating activities. The County would have the opportunity to review any proposed development at the time of application. Such review would include protection of agricultural soils, and any improvements proposed to make the properties suitable for recreational use. Existing agricultural uses will be retained through ownership by POST and MROSD will continue conservation grazing. MROSD’s Service Plan also includes measures to ensure minimization of any impact due to increased intensity of uses on properties acquired by MROSD and intended recreational use would also require approval of relevant Coastal Development Permit (CDP) and Planned Agricultural District (PAD) Permits.

c. General Plan Visual Quality Policies and Local Coastal Program Visual Resources Component

- (1) General Plan Policy 4.15a regulates development to promote and enhance good design, site relationships and other aesthetic considerations.
- (2) General Plan Policy 4.17 regulates coastal development to protect and enhance natural landscape features and visual quality through measures that ensure the basic integrity of sand dunes, cliffs, bluffs and wetlands.
- (3) General Plan Policy 4.20 requires the use appropriate landscaping wherever necessary and feasible to mitigate the negative impacts of large agricultural structures from public view.

- (4) General Plan Policy 4.47 institutes special controls to regulate both site and architectural design of structures located within rural scenic corridors.
- (5) LCP Policy 8.5a. requires that new development be located on a portion of a parcel where the development: (1) is least visible from State and County Scenic Roads; (2) is least likely to significantly impact views from public viewpoints; and (3) is consistent with all other LCP requirements. Public viewpoints include, but are not limited to, coastal roads, roadside rests and vista points, recreation areas, trails, coastal accessways, and beaches.
- (6) LCP Policy 8.6a. requires development set back from the edge of streams and other natural waterways a sufficient distance to preserve the visual character of the waterway.

Discussion: State Route 1 from the southern limits of Half Moon Bay to Santa Cruz County is a State-designated scenic road. The proposed acquisition contains parcels that abut State Route 1. As noted above, the property also includes natural waterways. The proposed purchase itself does not impact the visual quality of the property and conforms to the General Plan Visual Quality Policies and Local Coastal Program Visual Resources Component. Any future development is subject to review by the County at time of application and would be regulated through the cited policies and Section 6325.1 of the Zoning Regulations, "Primary Scenic Resources Areas Criteria."

d. General Plan Park and Recreation Resources Policies and Local Coastal Program Recreation and Shoreline Access Component

- (1) General Plan Policy 6.3a. requires all park and recreation systems to be designed on the strengths and potentials of existing facilities and develop programs for meeting current and future needs, and b. to consider the feasibility of redesigning and/or expanding existing park and recreation facilities to meet future needs while developing new acquisition and development programs.

- (2) General Plan Policy 6.10 encourages providers to locate passive park and recreation facilities in rural areas to protect and preserve environmentally sensitive and open space lands, and considers activities like hiking, to be generally compatible with passive park and recreation facilities.
- (3) General Plan Policy 6.12 states to preserve the best agricultural land for agricultural uses, and permits the location of park and recreation facilities when efforts are made to lease land not needed to farm operations and clearly define buffer areas between uses to minimize land use conflicts.
- (4) General Plan Policy 6.39a. supports the development of a system of trails that link existing and proposed park and recreation facilities within the County.
- (5) General Plan Policy 6.48 encourages MROSD to acquire, protect, and make available for public use open space lands in rural areas.
- (6) LCP Policy 10.9a. states to provide safe access to shoreline destinations which are large enough to accommodate public safety improvements and public use, including (1) beaches which are large enough to provide space for easy retreat from normal tidal action, (2) bluffs which are large enough to accommodate safety improvements and which provide room for public use as a vista point, and (3) beaches and bluffs designated for public use in the Site Specific Recommendations for Shoreline Destinations (LCP Table 10.6).
- (7) LCP Policy 10.23 gives preference to providing access trails in level, safe areas, and defines trail improvements where no such areas exist.
- (8) LCP Policy 11.9 protects suitable oceanfront land for public recreation, visitor-serving and commercial recreation facilities, and considers them suitable when (1) not on prime agricultural

land or other lands suitable for agriculture unless they comply with the conversion policies of the Agriculture Component.

- (9) LCP Policy 11.11a. permits public recreation, visitor-serving, and commercial recreation facilities on prime agricultural land and other lands suitable for agriculture when in compliance with the conversion policies of the Agriculture Component.

Discussion: The proposed property is surrounded by 31,000 acres of existing open space and park land and adjacent to Butano State Park, Big Basin, Ano Nuevo, Cascade Ranch, Pigeon Point Light House Bean Hollow State Beach, and Pescadero Marsh. Local Coastal Program Table 10.6 includes site specific recommendations for locations in and adjacent to the project area, including Bean Hollow/Pebble Beach State Beaches, Beaches along Pigeon Point Road, Beaches and Bluffs South of Pigeon Point Road, and Gazos Creek.

The proposed property acquisition furthers and does not conflict with the General Plan Park and Recreation Resources Policies and Local Coastal Program Recreation and Shoreline Access Component. After acquisition, MROSD intends to maintain existing uses, including conservation grazing, open space, habitat preservation, and watershed protection, and will pursue future low intensity public recreation. The future low intensity recreation (trails) use is generally compatible with passive park and recreation facilities. The proposed purchase has the potential to create opportunities for local and regional trail connections with adjacent open spaces, and further site-specific recommendations.

Any future recreational development on the property will require conformance with the development review criteria of Chapter 20.A.2 of the Zoning Regulations and issuance of Coastal Development, Resource Management and Planned Agricultural District permits approved by the relevant decision-making bodies. Any required permits will address impacts to the natural environment, agriculture and adjoining properties, as will MROSD's policies and management planning, in accordance with MROSD's Service Plan.

e. General Plan Rural Land Use Policies

- (1) General Plan Policy 9.28 encourages the continuance of existing agricultural and agriculturally-related activities, especially on soils with agricultural capability which are not in production, and to consider open space designations for agricultural parcels that are no longer capable of agricultural activities during future reviews of area plans.
- (2) General Plan Policy 9.30 intends to minimize land use conflicts with agriculture, by avoiding to the greatest extent possible locating non-agricultural activities on soils with agricultural capability or lands in agricultural production, locating non-agricultural activities in areas of agricultural parcels which cause the least disturbance to feasible agricultural activities, and to buffer any non-agricultural activities from agricultural activities.
- (3) General Plan Policy 9.35 encourages the continuation and expansion of existing public recreation on non-agricultural lands and encourages the continuation and expansion of agricultural activities within the boundaries of public recreation lands that are not in recreational use.

Discussion: The proposed purchase is consistent with the General Plan Rural Land Use Policies. The purchase will continue the agricultural uses on the property, such as conservation grazing, and further compatible activities such as open space, habitat preservation, watershed protection, and future low intensity recreation (trails). These uses will also protect the unique scenic quality and character of the rural lands and provide outdoor recreational opportunities. Existing farming agricultural activities will continue on the 400-acres under maintained ownership by Peninsula Open Space Trust.

f. General Plan Water Supply Policies and Local Coastal Program Locating and Planning New Development and Agriculture Components.

- (1) General Plan Policy 10.21 protects downstream agricultural surface water sources by discouraging the creation of new non-

agricultural parcels which would use nearby streams as a source for water supplies.

- (2) General Plan Policy 10.22 encourages the construction of small off-stream impoundments that draw water from peak winter streamflow for agricultural irrigation.
- (3) LCP Policy 1.35 states that all new land use development and activities shall protect coastal water quality by implementing appropriate site design and source control best management practices (BMPs), implementing treatment BMPs as needed, using multi-benefit, natural feature, and stormwater treatment systems, minimizing the amount of impervious surfaces, and limiting disturbances of natural bodies of water.
- (4) LCP Policy 5.22 protects agricultural water supplies by requiring that before approval of conversion of prime agricultural land or other land suitable for agriculture that: the existing availability of an adequate and potable well water source be demonstrated for all non-agricultural uses according to various criteria.
- (5) LCP Policy 5.23 recommends to the California State Water Resources Control Board that when issuing permits for appropriate water rights they prioritize new and existing agricultural operations, public recreation and visitor-serving facilities, and others.
- (6) LCP Policy 5.23 recommends to the California State Water Resources Control Board that when issuing permits for appropriate water rights they prioritize new and existing agricultural operations, public recreation and visitor-serving facilities, and others.

Discussion: Peninsula Open Space Trust has addressed water supply throughout the property including:

- Improving livestock water system fed by improved ponds, agricultural wells and springs with water tank storage, water troughs and livestock fencing on the property across 2,750-acres of rangeland.

- Working with San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (RCD) to build a reservoir serving R&R's farming operation and the cattle grazing operation on the northern grazing lease area of the property.
- Intending to work RCD on reservoir improvements and flood restoration for Fifth Crow Farms.

The proposed acquisition itself does not conflict with the General Plan Water Supply Policies and Local Coastal Program Locating and Planning New Development and Agriculture Components' policies. Any future development on the property will require conformance with the development review criteria of Chapter 20.A.2 of the Zoning Regulations and issuance of Coastal Development, Resource Management and Planned Agricultural District permits approved by the relevant decision-making bodies.

g. General Plan Natural Hazards Policies

- (1) General Plan Policy 15.46 states that agriculture, private recreation and general open space, among others, are the most appropriate for flooding hazard areas.
- (2) General Plan Policy 15.47 defines review criteria for location development in areas of special flood hazard, including wherever possible, retain natural floodplains and guide development to areas outside of areas of special flood hazard.

Discussion: Sections of the proposed acquisition area are in flooding hazard areas (A (Special Flood Hazard Area), AE (Special Flood Hazard Area), D (Areas with possible but undetermined flood hazards), and X (Area of Minimal Flood Hazard)). The proposed acquisition will continue existing uses that are compatible with the General Plan Natural Hazards Policies, including agriculture, open space, and recreation.

B. ALTERNATIVES

The alternative to a finding of conformity with the General Plan is for the Planning Commission to find that the proposed acquisition does not conform to the policies of the County General Plan.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A determination that the proposed acquisition of property conforms to the County General Plan is exempt from environmental review under the “common sense exemption” that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3)). Any future action on the subject property would be subject to applicable CEQA requirements.

D. REVIEWING AGENCIES

County Attorney’s Office

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Recommended Finding
- B. Location and Site Map
- C. MROSD District Boundary

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County of San Mateo
Planning and Building Department

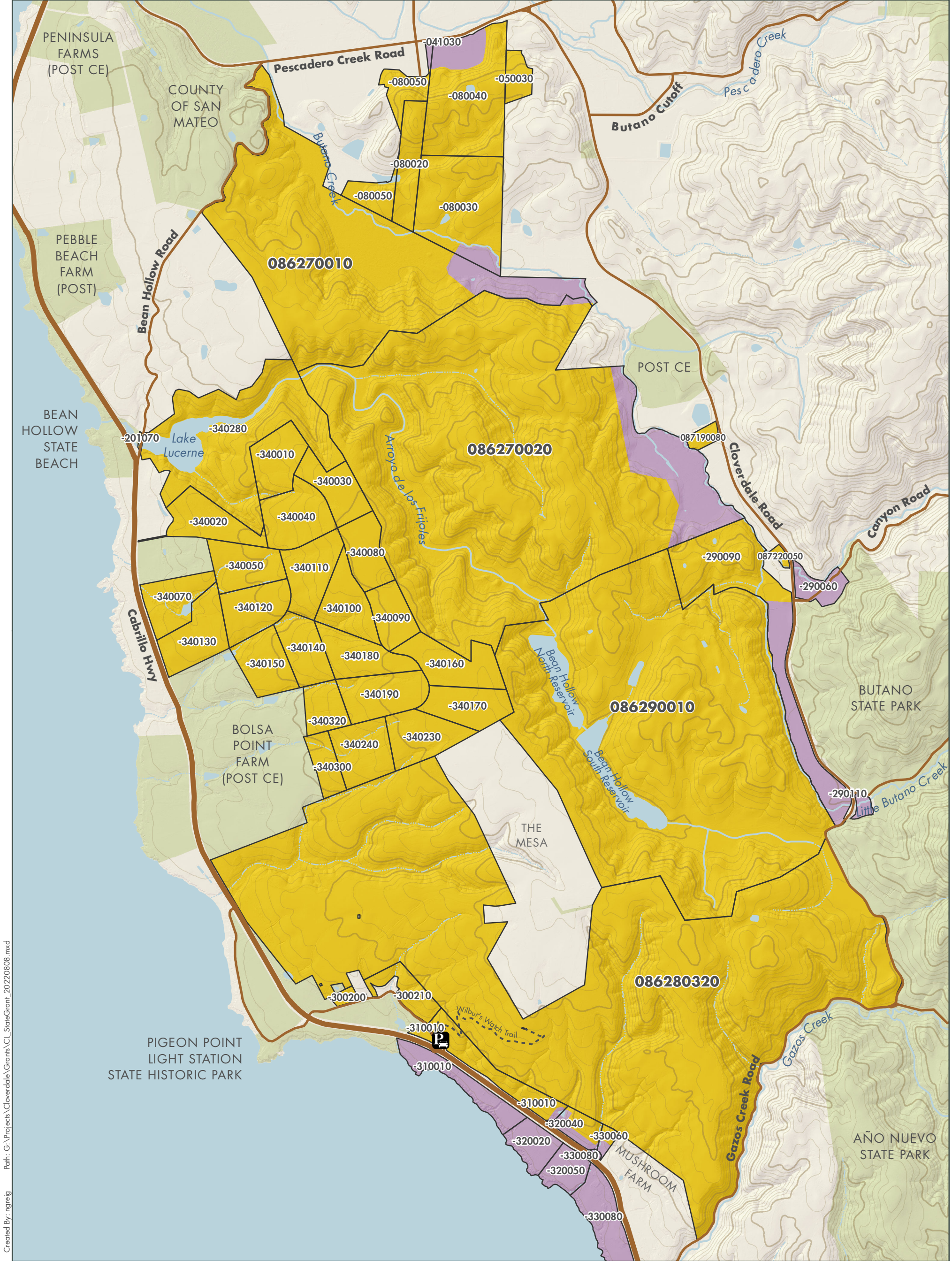
RECOMMENDED FINDING

Permit or Project File Number: PLN 2022-00256 Hearing Date: October 12, 2022

Prepared By: Chanda Singh, Project Planner For Adoption By: Planning Commission







RECOMMENDED FINDING

That the Planning Commission find that Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's proposed purchase in fee and undivided interests of 6,300 acres of the 6,700-acre Cloverdale Ranch Property conforms to the County General Plan.





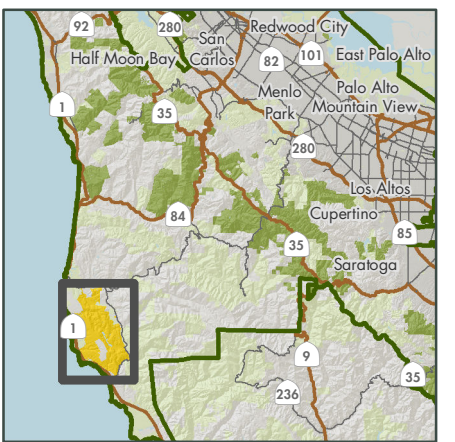
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POST Cloverdale Coastal Ranches Existing Parcel Configuration

-  Cloverdale parcel (APN 086- unless noted)
-  Proposed lands to be transferred to Midpen
-  Proposed agricultural lands to be retained by POST
-  Other protected land
-  Private property
-  Wilbur's Watch parking area

Midpeninsula Regional
 Open Space District
 (Midpen)
 8/8/2022



Welcome to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District



Long Ridge Open Space Preserve

Matthew Findling

Created in 1972, Midpen is an independent special district that helps plants, animals and people thrive throughout the greater Santa Cruz Mountains region by preserving a connected greenbelt of more than 65,000 acres of public open space. These diverse and scenic landscapes, from bay wetlands to redwood forests and coastal grasslands, host an incredible diversity of life, making our region one of the world's biodiversity hotspots.

Midpen actively manages the land and waterways to restore their health and function, helping our local ecosystem become more resilient in a time of climate change. By caring for the land, the land in turn takes care of us, providing tangible and intangible benefits like clean air and water, flood protection and the opportunity for restorative experiences in nature.

Many areas of Midpen preserves are open daily to the public, free of charge, providing nearly 250 miles of trails for low-impact recreation. Our programming connects people to nature through enriched experiences including environmental interpretation, docent-led activities and volunteer opportunities. Learn more at openspace.org.

History

The late 1960s was a time of rapid growth in the Bay Area. Through a determined and heartfelt grassroots effort by local conservationists, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District was created in 1972, when the Measure R "Room to Breathe" initiative was passed by Santa Clara County voters. Local residents voted to expand Midpen's boundary into southern San Mateo County in 1976, and in 1992 to a small portion of Santa Cruz County. In the late 1990s, development pressure increased on the San Mateo County Coast, threatening sensitive habitat and the area's rural heritage. This led to the 2004 Coastside Protection Area, an extension of District boundaries to the Pacific Ocean in San Mateo County, and the addition of preserving rural character and encouraging viable agricultural use of land resources to our mission.



Jack Gescheidt

Governance

Midpen is governed by a seven-member publicly elected board of directors. Board members serve a four-year term and represent a geographic ward of approximately equal populations. The board holds its regular public meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7 p.m., at the Midpen administrative office: 330 Distel Circle, Los Altos, CA.

Staffing

The staff currently includes over 180 employees in 11 departments: budget and analysis, engineering and construction, finance, human resources, information systems and technology, land and facilities services, natural resources, planning, public affairs, real property and visitor services.

Funding

Midpen's primary source of revenue is property taxes, which are levied on all taxable property within the District's boundaries covering portions of Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. Additionally, in June 2014, voters approved Measure AA, a \$300 million general obligation bond to protect natural open space lands; open preserves or areas of preserves that are currently closed; construct public access improvements such as new trails and staging areas; and restore and enhance open space land, which includes forests, streams, watersheds and coastal ranch areas.



Karl Gohl

Volunteer Opportunities

Each year, nearly 1,000 Midpen and partner volunteers contribute more than 20,000 hours preserving and protecting open space lands by educating and inspiring visitors, constructing and maintaining trails and removing invasive, nonnative vegetation.



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

330 Distel Circle

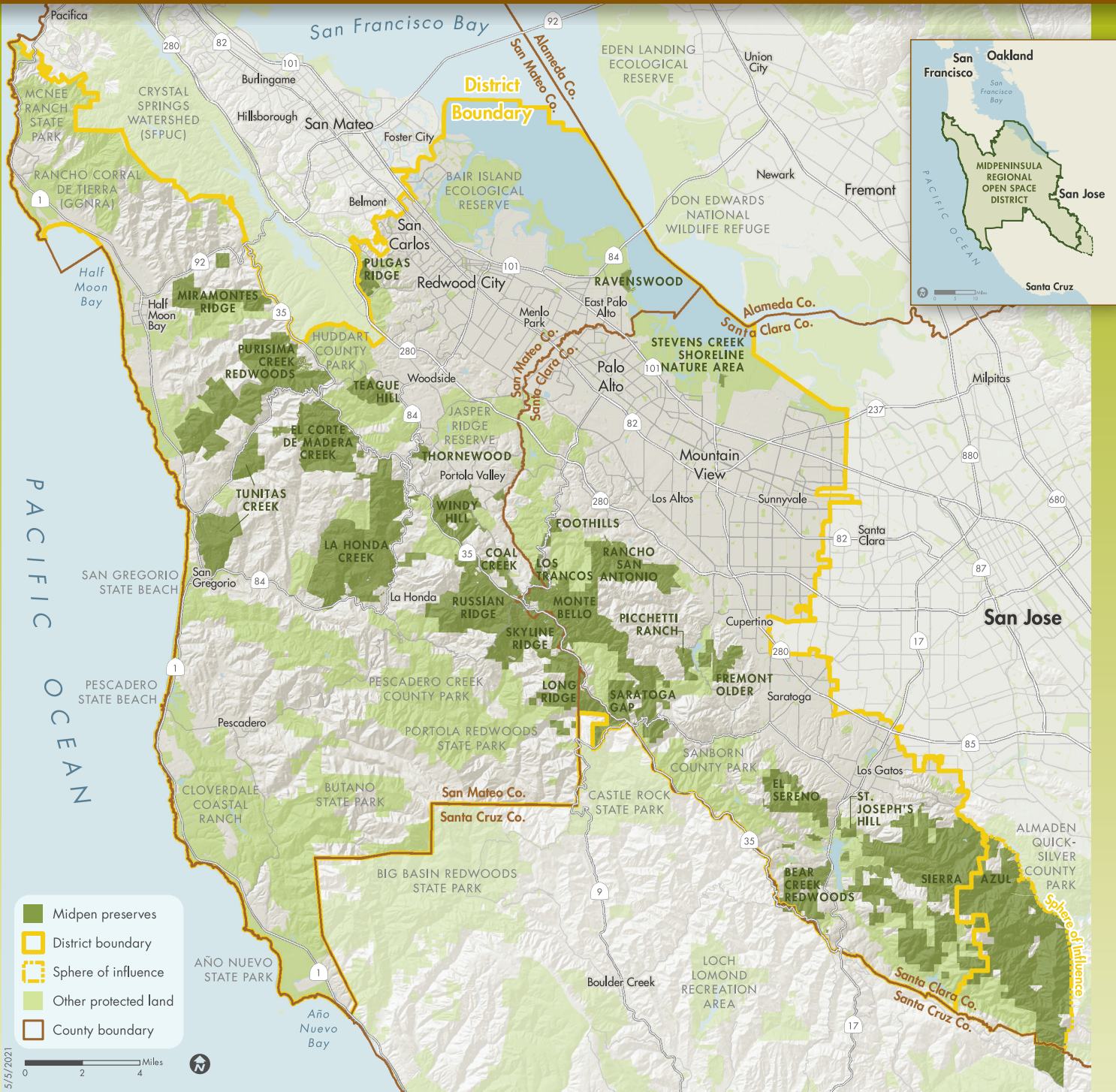
Los Altos, California 94022-1404

650-691-1200 • info@openspace.org

openspace.org



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District



5/15/2021
0 2 4 Miles



openspace.org

Legend

- Hiking
- Equestrian
- Cycling
- Dog walking
- Easy-access trails
- All trails
- Designated trails only

Preserves	Acres					
Bear Creek Redwoods	1,437	●	●	●	●	●
Coal Creek	508	●	●	●	●	●
El Corte de Madera Creek	2,908	●	●	●	●	●
El Sereno	1,614	●	●	●	●	●
Foothills	212	●	●	●	●	●
Fremont Older	739	●	●	●	●	●
La Honda Creek	6,334	●	●	●	●	●
Long Ridge	2,226	●	●	●	●	●
Los Trancos	274	●	●	●	●	●
Miramontes Ridge	1,716	●	●	●	●	●
Monte Bello	3,535	●	●	●	●	●
Picchetti Ranch	308	●	●	●	●	●
Pulgas Ridge	366	●	●	●	●	●

Preserves	Acres					
Purisima Creek Redwoods	5,412	●	●	●	●	●
Rancho San Antonio	3,997	●	●	●	●	●
Ravenswood	374	●	●	●	●	●
Russian Ridge	3,491	●	●	●	●	●
Saratoga Gap	1,613	●	●	●	●	●
Sierra Azul	19,301	●	●	●	●	●
Skyline Ridge	2,144	●	●	●	●	●
St. Joseph's Hill	273	●	●	●	●	●
Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Study Area	55	●	●	●	●	●
Teague Hill	626	●	●	●	●	●
Thornewood	167	●	●	●	●	●
Tunitas Creek	2,200	●	●	●	●	●
Windy Hill	1,414	●	●	●	●	●