

Mayor
Carolyn Wysinger
Mayor Pro Tem
Gabe Quinto



AGENDA

Councilmembers
William Ktsanes
Lisa Motoyama
Rebecca Saltzman

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TUESDAY, JUNE 3, 2025

CONCURRENT PUBLIC FINANCING AUTHORITY SPECIAL MEETING AND REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING (6:00 PM)

Council Chambers - 10890 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito

Closed Captions available via zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87851494523?pwd=pZ08akKm7voNZLnwiICRMYYVD3pEnix.1>

Meeting ID: 878 5149 4523 **Passcode:** 018498 **Dial in:** 1-408-638-0968

View:

1. Cable T.V. Broadcast on KCRT Channel 28
2. Livestream Online at www.el-cerrito.org/CouncilMeetingMaterials

Accommodations: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at 510-215-4305. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable accommodations. Closed Captions available via zoom.

Conduct: This meeting shall be conducted pursuant to the El Cerrito [City Council Rules of Order and Procedure](#), including adjourning by 11:00 PM unless extended to a specific time determined by a majority of the Council.

Public Comments:

1. *In-person* by submitting a request to speak to the City Clerk.
2. *By Email* to cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us identified in the subject line as **Public Comments – Agenda Item #.**

Written comments received by **2:00 p.m. the day of the meeting** will be provided to the City Council and posted [online](#) in advance of the meeting. Comments received after the deadline will be provided to the City Council and will be posted **after the meeting**.

6:00 PM ROLL CALL – CONVENE CONCURRENT PUBLIC FINANCING AUTHORITY SPECIAL MEETING AND REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

1. **CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON ANY REQUEST FROM A COUNCILMEMBER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING REMOTELY DUE TO EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES PURSUANT TO AB 2449**

Mayor
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2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OR OBSERVATION OF A MOMENT OF SILENCE

3. TELECONFERENCE AND PUBLIC COMMENT INSTRUCTIONS

4. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Reports of closed session, commission appointments and informational reports on matters of general interest which are announced by the City Council and staff.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Remarks are typically limited to 3 minutes per person. The Mayor may reduce the time limit per speaker depending upon the number of speakers and may limit the total time for public comment to facilitate the completion of business on the agenda. Comments regarding non-agenda, presentation and consent calendar items will be heard first. Comments related to items appearing on the Public Hearing or Policy Matter portions of the Agenda will be heard prior to the City Council taking action on each item.

6. PRESENTATIONS

7. ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT CALENDAR

All items on the consent calendar shall be acted upon in one motion, unless a member of the City Council or staff request separate consideration.

A. Environmental Quality Committee Recommendation

Action Proposed: Receive and file recommendations from the Environmental Quality Committee.

Contact: Fred Bialy, Chair, Environmental Quality Committee; Christina Leard, Management Analyst III/Staff Liaison, Public Works Department

B. Loving Day Proclamation

Action Proposed: Approve a proclamation declaring June 12, 2025 as Loving Day in the City of El Cerrito, and encourage people to reflect on the Loving family and all of the pioneers who have and will continue to fight for the civil right to love.

Contact: Shannon Bassi, Human Resources Manager, City Management

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C. National Night Out Proclamation

Action Proposed: Approve a proclamation calling upon all residents of the City of El Cerrito to participate in “National Night Out” on Tuesday, August 5, 2025.

Contact: Emily Graham, Executive Assistant, Police Department

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

NOTICE OF RESCHEDULING: The public hearing on an Ordinance regarding Defensible Space Inspections within the Fire Hazard Severity Zones as Designated by CalFire and Designating Fire Hazard Severity Zones has been rescheduled from June 3, 2025 to June 17, 2025

A. Approval of the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan

Notice Published 5/24/2025. CEQA Determination: The City has prepared an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Action Proposed: Conduct a public hearing and, upon conclusion 1) Adopt a resolution approving the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) and 2) Adopt a resolution approving the Hillside Natural Area (HNA) Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan.

Contact: Stephen Prée, Environmental Programs Manager; Karineh Samkian, Senior Program Manager; Amelia Timbers, Operations and Environmental Services Division Manager, Public Works Department; Chase Beckman, Battalion Chief, Fire Department

9. POLICY MATTERS

**A. CITY COUNCIL/PUBLIC FINANCING AUTHORITY ITEM
Fiscal Year 2025-26 Budget - Midcycle Summary and Addendum**

Action Proposed: Receive and file a presentation on the draft Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Midcycle Summary and Addendum

Contact: Karen Pinkos, City Manager; Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer, Finance Department

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B. Approval of Fiscal Year 2024-25 One-Time Uses of General Fund Balance

Action Proposed: Adopt a resolution approving one-time expenditures and transfers from General Fund balance in Fiscal Year 2024-25.

Contact: Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer, Finance Department

C. Adopt resolution modifying the Salary, Benefits, and Terms of Employment for Management and Confidential Employees

Action Proposed: Adopt a resolution modifying salaries, benefits, and conditions of employment for Management and Confidential Employees.

Contact: Shannon Bassi, Human Resources Manager, City Management

10. CITY COUNCIL LOCAL & REGIONAL LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

Mayor and City Council communications regarding local and regional liaison assignments, committee reports, and any required reporting under AB 1234 for meetings (as defined by the Brown Act) attended at the public's expense.

11. ADJOURN CONCURRENT PUBLIC FINANCING AUTHORITY SPECIAL MEETING AND REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting is Tuesday, June 17, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

The City of El Cerrito serves our diverse community by providing exceptional services that create a safe and resilient future for all.



Date: June 3, 2025
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Environmental Quality Committee
Subject: Receive and file Advisory Body Recommendation(s)

ACTION PROPOSED

Receive and file a recommendation from the Environmental Quality Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

On May 13, 2025 the Environmental Quality Committee made the following recommendation to City Council:

For the City Council to support climate education in the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) by sending a letter endorsing a commitment to expansion of environmental literacy programs.

Moved/Second: Goudey / O'Connor **Ayes:** Austin, Bialy, Goudey, Hayashi, O'Connor
Youth Member Chappelle: Aye **Noes:** None **Absent:** Dhoot, Pavel, Tarbet

ASSOCIATED WORKPLAN GOAL(S)/AREA(S) OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. To promote environmental education, action, engagement, equity, and justice
2. To involve learners of all ages
3. Expand outreach to youth in the city's schools

Attachment(s):

1. Cover Letter from EQC Chair
2. Letter to WCCUSD Board of Education
3. Draft Resolution

May 14, 2025

Mayor Carolyn Wysinger
Mayor Pro Tem Gabe Quinto
Councilmember William Ktsanes
Councilmember Lisa Motoyama
Councilmember Rebecca Saltzman

RE: West Contra Costa County Unified School District Commitment to Robust Climate Education
Resolution: "Educational Response to the Climate Emergency"

Dear Mayor Wysinger, Mayor Pro Tem Quinto and Councilmembers Ktsanes, Motoyama and Saltzman,

Eleanor Pilling Chapple, the Environmental Quality Committee's Youth Member, has this past year been advocating with the West Contra Costa County Unified School District for it to commit to developing and initiating a robust climate education curriculum within the district's K through 12 schools. The need and arguments for establishing such a curriculum are delineated cogently in the attached letter drafted by Eleanor and draft Resolution, "Educational Response to the Climate Emergency" that Eleanor has submitted to the School Board for review, revision (as deemed necessary) and adoption.

The Environmental Quality Committee unanimously supports Eleanor's efforts and the goal for the WCCUSD to develop a robust climate education curriculum.

We urge the El Cerrito City Council to sign-on to Eleanor's letter as a means to expedite the process of review, revision and adoption of the Resolution. Then the process of developing a climate education curriculum, as outlined in the resolution, can finally be implemented.

Sincerely,

Fred Bialy
Chairperson, Environmental Quality Committee

To: WCCUSD Board of Education

From: El Cerrito City Council

Dear West Contra Costa Unified School District Board of Education,

Contra Costa County Resolution No. 2020/256 has declared a “climate emergency that threatens the long-term economic and social well-being, health, safety, and security of the County.” Our actions in addressing the climate crisis today will have a profound effect on the futures of today’s students. And on our current trajectory, children in kindergarten today will still be in elementary school when we surpass the 1.5 degree Celsius target outlined in the Paris Agreement (Zero Hour). Yet students in WCCUSD today are growing up and graduating without the tools or understanding to address the climate crisis and cope with the anxiety that comes with it. WCCUSD’s mission is to “provide the highest quality education to enable all students to make positive life choices, strengthen our community, and successfully participate in a diverse and global society.” We urge you to hold true to this mission by committing to robust climate education for K through 12 students by expediting the review, revision and adoption of the attached Resolution: “Educational Response to the Climate Emergency.”

Climate education is important to preparing students for the jobs of the future--not just environmental scientists, but engineers, journalists, educators, policymakers, construction workers, welders, and electricians. Transitioning to a greener economy is going to be one of the most significant economic and physical transformations in US history. Millions of workers will be needed in the US to facilitate this transition including 5 million clean energy jobs, 900,000 clean manufacturing jobs, 400,000 clean transportation jobs, 900,000 efficient building jobs 150,000 environmental justice jobs, and 600,000 natural infrastructure jobs. Today's students will be graduating and making decisions about future career paths in the midst of this transition, and being climate literate will help them immensely in doing this.

74 percent of people in Contra Costa County report being worried about global warming (YPCCC). Rates of climate anxiety in young people are even higher. But less than half of people in Contra Costa County discuss climate change even occasionally, leaving many students alone in their anxieties. Teaching about climate change gives students a space to talk about anxiety and helps students feel less alone in their fears. Additionally, giving students a stronger understanding of the climate crisis can help them see climate change not as a sort of vague impending doom that will inevitably destroy the world, but as a real issue that can be tackled and that they can tackle. Informed WCCUSD students are already taking action as part of environmental clubs and activism organizations, and that

will only grow as more students understand the climate crisis as it has in school districts such as LAUSD, BUSD, FUSD, and OUSD that have passed similar resolutions.

Climate education is encouraged in California schools and under state law enacted in 2018, and starting in the 2024/25 school year it will be part of the state science standard. Nearly 80 percent of teachers, principals, and district leaders across the nation and 85 percent of people in Contra Costa County support the teaching of climate change in schools (YPCCC). It is imperative that the WCCUSD commits to educating nearly 30,000 students on climate change, thereby equipping them with the understanding to interact and deal with a present and future world in a climate crisis.

Sincerely,

El Cerrito City Council:

Mayor Carolyn Wysinger

Mayor Pro Tem Gabe Quinto

Councilmember William Ktsanes

Councilmember Lisa Motoyama

Councilmember Rebecca Saltzman

cc: Eleanor Pilling Chappelle

Resolution

Educational Response to the Climate Emergency

WHEREAS, “The warming trend observed over the past century can only be explained by the effects that human activities, especially emissions of greenhouse gases, have had on the climate”;¹

WHEREAS, damage to the environment is evident at the current 1.4°C worldwide average increase above pre-industrial levels, portending much worse effects as temperatures rise further, including cascading changes if tipping points are exceeded;²

WHEREAS, CO₂ and other greenhouse gases (GHGs) remain in the atmosphere for decades and centuries, thus committing humankind to future warming from prior emissions and adverse economic and societal impacts that today’s children will have to address as adults;²

WHEREAS, state law mandates the development of Environmental Principles and Concepts for use in elementary and secondary education, which include the concepts of climate change, sustainability, and environmental justice;³

WHEREAS, GHG emissions, particulates, and co-pollutants exacerbate existing inequities, especially for those Californians living near port and warehousing sites, transportation corridors, fossil fuel extraction and refining facilities, industrial sites, and agriculturally intensive regions;⁴

WHEREAS, life expectancy is declining, and basic needs such as clean air, clean water, healthy food, and adequate health care, housing, and transportation are inaccessible to a third of the United States population;⁵

WHEREAS, climate change, pollution, and environmental destruction have intensified systemic racial, regional, social, environmental, and economic injustices by disproportionately affecting indigenous peoples, communities of color, migrant communities, deindustrialized communities, depopulated rural communities, the poor, low-income workers, women, the elderly, the unhoused, people with disabilities, and youth;⁶

WHEREAS, Contra Costa County Resolution No. 2020/256 has declared a “climate emergency that threatens the long-term economic and social well-being, health, safety, and security of the County”;

WHEREAS, Contra Costa County is deeply committed to sustainability and addressing climate change, implementing the Climate Action Plan adopted in 2015 and taking steps to reduce GHG emissions by 50% of 1990 levels by 2035;⁷

¹ Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II (2018), IPCC, <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/1/>

² The Effects of Climate Change, NASA, <https://science.nasa.gov/climate-change/effects/>

³ Public Resources Code, Section 71301,

http://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=PRC§ionNum=71301.&highlight=true&keyWord=environmental%20principles%20and%20concepts

⁴ Christopher W. Tessum et al. “PM2.5 polluters disproportionately and systemically affect people of color in the United States.” *Sci. Adv.* 7, eabf4491 (2021). DOI:10.1126/sciadv.abf4491

⁵ Brandeis University <https://nypost.com/2022/09/07/third-of-working-families-cant-afford-basic-needs-study/>

⁶ Berberian, Alique G et al. “Racial Disparities in Climate Change-Related Health Effects in the United States.” *Current environmental health reports* vol. 9,3 (2022): 451-464. doi:10.1007/s40572-022-00360-w

⁷ Contra Costa County Climate Action and Adaptation Plan 2024 Update

<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/84967/Contra-Costa-County-2024-Climate-Action-and-Adaptation-Plan-PDF?bidId=>

WHEREAS, 84% of people in Contra Costa County support the teaching of climate change in schools, as of 2023;⁸

WHEREAS, the Governing Board of WCCUSD recognizes in Board Policy 6142.5, passed June 6, 2007, that the schools play a crucial role in educating students on environmental issues and preparing them to be the stewards of their natural resources, and that the quality of life in future generations will depend upon our students' willingness and ability to solve today's environmental problems;⁹

WHEREAS, the uncertainty of future climate impact exacerbates the youth mental health crisis, with a 2016 survey finding that 75% of young people reporting that they find the future frightening, and over 45% reporting that their feelings about climate change negatively affected their daily life and functioning,¹⁰ combating this false perception of helplessness through education about the role of government, civic engagement, and decision-making will minimize eco-anxiety;

WHEREAS, the Climate Psychiatry Alliance supports all initiatives to make students and schools better able to understand and educate about global warming, mitigate its impacts, and adapt to the impact of global warming;¹¹

WHEREAS, local and noteworthy sustainable organizations Contra Costa Resource Conservation District, Sustainable Contra Costa, Contra Costa County Climate Leaders, Healthy Contra Costa, and more, all support a comprehensive K-12 climate curriculum;

WHEREAS, The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration recognizes that “people who understand the processes, causes, and effects of climate change are better able to assess evidence and claims about evidence, discuss options to manage risks, and take well-informed actions.”¹²

WHEREAS, empowering students with climate education influences important and life-changing decisions of choosing a higher education and career path, and voting for candidates and policies that address issues such as transportation, energy, agriculture, materials, banking, food systems, water, wildland restoration, and wildfire management issues;

WHEREAS, informed WCCUSD students are already leading initiatives that focus on climate literacy and justice through programs including environmental clubs, Earth Team, Sustainable Leaders in Action, YouthEJ, Fridays for Future, and independent projects;

WHEREAS, student-centered projects that utilize a hands-on approach and focus on climate impact mitigation and adaptation methods will provide students with the experience and motivation to become leaders in activism, research, and innovations as adults, and to pursue careers in the burgeoning green energy sector; and

⁸ “Contra Costa County, California Public Opinion on Climate Change, 2023,” *Yale Climate Opinion Maps*, Yale Center for Climate Change Communications <https://tinyurl.com/2ycp37p7>

⁹ Board Policy 6142.5: Environmental Education (2007) <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Policy/ViewPolicy.aspx?S=36030499&revid=mNADE2n1lW8x3kHTdZ5Rdg==&ptid=amIgTZiB9plushNj16WXhfIOQ==&secid=ruE8yj8gaZHBkLjNHwMkZw==&PG=6&IRP=0&isPndg=false>

¹⁰ “Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: a global survey” Vol. 5, Issue 12 (2021), *Lancet Planetary Health* [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196\(21\)00278-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(21)00278-3/fulltext)

¹¹ Resolution Supporting Efforts to Reduce the Harmful Effects of Climate Change on Children and Youth, (2021) *National Association of School Psychologists*

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/13PgU5CHgc9l2NN9wqle86f1PdMPPNM6b3mEcbXKnOv0/edit?usp=sharing>

¹² 2024 Climate Literacy Guide, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, <https://www.climate.gov/teaching/climate>

WHEREAS, time is of the essence and the actions taken in the next few years will have profound repercussions for today's children as adults and for future generations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the West Contra Costa Unified School District

1. Agrees it is time to define what it means to educate students for a present, past, and future with human-induced climate change;
2. Agrees that Board Policy 6142.5 is still a worthy goal that needs to be strengthened to address the climate challenges of today;
3. Commits to graduating students who are well versed in climate change, defined as understanding:
 - a. the causes of climate change
 - b. the harm it can cause
 - c. the harm it has caused already
 - d. the steps/actions required to avoid significant climate destabilization
 - e. the key people and institutions involved in implementing those actions
 - f. that climate change doesn't impact all people equally
 - g. the governmental actions necessary to achieve climate goals
 - h. how to sustain and improve a sustainable and equitable global environment
4. Establishes a WCCUSD Environmental Literacy Working Group: The Superintendent will create a funded coalition composed of teachers, administrators, parents or community members and students that will:
 - a. Develop a comprehensive climate literacy curriculum plan that outlines goals for student learning by grade level bands in targeted areas such as science, history, and language arts. The Environmental Literacy working group will further define those targeted subject areas and identify or create curricular resources to achieve these learning goals;
 - b. develop a comprehensive climate change literacy program that includes professional development opportunities for educators, access to an interdisciplinary curriculum, and creates an implementation plan, the goal of which is to detail the progressive development of the climate literacy program and assess its results;
 - c. review any existing or planned environmental education initiatives, sustainability programs, climate action plans, or other activities within the district or community for possible synergy and opportunity to coordinate with the environmental literacy working group.
5. Commits to establishing the following oversight and measurement to ensure implementation by the 2026/27 school year:
 - a. Ensuring adequate support and oversight from the Associate Superintendent of Ed Services for the efforts of the Working Group. This support and oversight will include the development of the milestones for the creation of the curriculum and professional development plan, monitoring those milestones, and ensuring adequate fiscal resources are identified and recommended to the Board of Education.
 - b. Providing regular updates to the Board of Education: Working group representatives will

provide updates twice per year to the Board of Education during the period of developing and implementing the curriculum, and ongoing as requested by the Board of Ed.

- 6. Recognizes that climate change disproportionately affects marginalized communities and seeks to engage, center and elevate voices and existing work of the most vulnerable communities to climate change - Black, Brown, Indigenous and low income communities;
- 7. Recognizes the district is joining a group of California educators through California’s Educational Department’s Regional Environmental Education Community Network who pledge to share ideas, resources, successes, and challenges in order to promote climate change literacy; and
- 8. Assists in mobilizing the education community to address the climate emergency by sending copies of this signed resolution to the following: California State Superintendent of Public Instruction, California School Boards Association, California County Boards of Education, and the National School Boards Association.

Adopted and approved by the Board of Education of the West Contra Costa Unified School District at a regular meeting held on

_____ .

President

Vice President

Member

Member

Member

Superintendent

EL CERRITO CITY COUNCIL PROCLAMATION
Recognizing June 12, 2025 as Loving Day in the City of El Cerrito

WHEREAS, Mildred and Richard Loving were arrested in 1958 for violating Virginia's felony law prohibiting interracial marriage; and

WHEREAS, the Loving family was convicted of violating the law and given a suspended sentence provided that they did not return to their home in the Commonwealth of Virginia as a couple for 25 years; and

WHEREAS, the Loving family did not back down but took their case to the United States Supreme Court and won, overturning their conviction and creating a landmark civil rights victory; and

WHEREAS, their case *Loving v Virginia* (1967) ended all laws prohibiting interracial marriage nationwide, paving the way for all consenting adults to marry the one they love; and

WHEREAS, our country, state and region are moving forward in the 21st Century as a multiracial and multicultural society; and

WHEREAS, an annual celebration known as Loving Day is held on June 12 in communities throughout the nation to commemorate and celebrate the anniversary of the 1967 Supreme Court decision; and

WHEREAS, the El Cerrito Human Relations Commission in partnership with WCCUSD will host a free movie screening of The Loving Story documentary to celebrate Loving Day on June 12, 7:00 p.m., at El Cerrito High School Theatre; and

WHEREAS, the City of El Cerrito joins other communities to find a common vision from our interwoven past to build a society free of racism for the benefit of our collective future.

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of El Cerrito does hereby declare June 12, 2025 as Loving Day in the City of El Cerrito and invites everyone to recognize this day as a celebration of multiculturalism, and to reflect on the Loving family and all the pioneers who have and will continue to fight for the civil right to love.

Dated: June 3, 2025

Carolyn Wysinger, Mayor

EL CERRITO CITY COUNCIL PROCLAMATION
Recognizing National Night Out in El Cerrito on August 5, 2025

WHEREAS, the National Association of Town Watch (NATW) is sponsoring a unique, nationwide crime, drug and violence prevention program on August 5, 2025 entitled “National Night Out”; and

WHEREAS, “National Night Out” has become an annual event in El Cerrito for the past twenty-eight years and provides a unique opportunity for the City of El Cerrito to join forces with thousands of other communities across the country in promoting cooperative police-community crime prevention efforts; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that all residents of the City of El Cerrito be aware of the importance of crime prevention programs and recognize the impact that their participation can have on reducing crime, drugs and violence in El Cerrito; and

WHEREAS, the City of El Cerrito and the El Cerrito Police Department are committed to protecting our community, pursuing justice, and solving crime through partnerships with the residents they serve through programs like National Night Out; and

WHEREAS, police-community partnerships, neighborhood safety, awareness and cooperation are important themes of the “National Night Out” program.

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of El Cerrito does hereby call upon all residents of the City of El Cerrito to participate in “National Night Out” on Tuesday, August 5, 2025 in the City of El Cerrito.

Dated: June 3, 2025

Carolyn Wysinger, Mayor



AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 8.A.

Date: June 3, 2025
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Stephen Prée, Environmental Programs Manager; Karineh Samkian, Senior Program Manager; Amelia Timbers, Operations and Environmental Services Division Manager, Public Works Department; Chase Beckman, Battalion Chief, Fire Department
Subject: Approval of the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan

ACTION PROPOSED

Conduct a public hearing and, upon conclusion 1) Adopt a resolution approving the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) and 2) Adopt a resolution approving the Hillside Natural Area (HNA) Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan.

BACKGROUND

Over several years, concerns regarding fire risk in the City of El Cerrito's Hillside Natural Area (HNA) and surrounding residential communities have significantly increased. The City has responded with ongoing and increased vegetation maintenance activities in the approximately 107-acre open space area by completing work largely based on planning efforts that were completed many years ago, notably the 1994 City of El Cerrito HNA Fire Hazard Reduction Plan and Initial Study/Negative Declaration.

The need for more robust, comprehensive, and current vegetation management practices that balance fuel reduction with native forest conservation has become increasingly evident and was recognized in the City's [2015 Urban Greening Plan](#). Additionally, in 2019, the [El Cerrito Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan](#) specifically called for action to "support the [El Cerrito-Kensington Wildfire Action Plan](#) goals and policies by creating defensible spaces, increasing weed abatement, and managing dead or diseased trees and other vegetation, especially in the HNA".

In 2019, El Cerrito voters passed Measure H to further fund park maintenance activities, and with these funds the City has increased its fire-fuel reduction activities. Given recent and recurring drought, rising global temperatures, and community concerns regarding the risk of wildfire, an updated plan with a comprehensive environmental analysis is needed to guide the City in the most effective, sustainable, and cost-efficient fuel reduction and forest conservation activities.

In December 2021, Urban Forest Committee (UFC) members informed City staff of a State of California Coastal Conservancy Wildfire Resilience Capacity Building Grant opportunity that had the potential to support needed planning work for the HNA.

Working across City departments, staff and UFC members applied for the grant, proposing to use the funding to hire a consultant to develop a HNA Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (Plan) that is consistent with the City Council-adopted Urban Greening Plan and Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.

The City was awarded a grant of \$145,000 to prepare the Plan. The City Council approved the award of grant funds on November 3, 2022 ([Resolution 2022-83](#)).

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the project as outlined in the grant application was to establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and vegetation management plan for the HNA. This Plan:

- identifies critical resource areas,
- guides the City's fire fuel reduction, native forest conservation, and maintenance activities, and
- evaluates fire road and trail network access.

The project also included California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review and determination. The Final Plan and CEQA documents will be used to guide future fire fuel and forest conservation management activities and seek grant funding for phased implementation.

Consultant Selection

City staff issued a Request for Proposals from qualified consultants to assist the City in developing the Plan and CEQA documents on March 30, 2023. After evaluating the proposals, LSA Associates, Inc. (LSA) emerged as the top-ranked consultant and the City entered into an agreement with LSA to develop the Plan ([Resolution 2023-40](#)).

ANALYSIS

Plan Development

Developing the Plan (Attachment 5) involved review of existing City plans and policies, interdepartmental coordination, technical assessments, and extensive community engagement. The Plan summarizes the assessments and includes eight priorities for the City's HNA management activities. City staff presented the draft prioritized actions to the City Council at its [June 4, 2024 meeting](#), and minor changes were made after the full public process. For ease of review, an [Executive Summary](#) is included in the Plan.

Studies and Assessments

In order to develop a science-based Plan, LSA (and their subconsultants) started by assessing the conditions and constraints of the HNA. The findings are summarized in four reports contained as Appendices to the Plan. The reports include:

- Biological Resources Report: Based on field investigations, literature review, and database searches, the report provides a CEQA-compliant identification of special-status species that could potentially occur on the project site based on the habitat types present. The report also recommends mitigation measures to minimize and address potential impacts on biological resources.

- Cultural Resources Evaluation: The report summarizes the background research, Native American community outreach, and an archaeological field survey. Although the study did not document indications of prehistoric activities in the project area, the Confederated Villages of Lisjan met with City staff and requested notification if any of the projects would include excavation and land disturbance.
- Fuel and Fire Hazard Assessment: The report summarizes two scenarios of fire ignition and spread based on a review of the terrain, weather, fuels, and fire history in the area.
- Hillside Natural Area Trails Report: The report evaluates the existing conditions of fire roads and trails and provides recommendations of areas for access improvements, maintenance, or avoidance due to biological resources.

Community Engagement

The City solicited input from the community on the general goals and priorities for the HNA and received specific comments on the recommended management activities. The community engagement included:

- Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG): City staff formed the SAG comprised of representatives from the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC), Environmental Quality Committee (EQC), UFC, El Cerrito Trail Trekkers, Friends of 5 Creeks, Make El Cerrito Fire Safe, and Diablo Fire Safe Council.

The City hosted SAG meetings in person on October 16, 2023, and virtually on April 24, 2024. At the request of the SAG representatives, City staff provided an update and received comments during the January and August 2024 EQC and UFC meetings and at the February and July 2024 PRC meetings.

- Consultation with Tribe: City staff met with the tribal chair and representatives of the Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation on October 18, 2023 to discuss the projects.
- Public Workshop: The City hosted two Public Workshops at Hana Gardens Senior Center on November 15, 2023 (33 participants) and on August 3, 2024 (24 participants).
- Online Survey: The project team created an online public survey from November 15, 2023, through January 5, 2024, which yielded 358 responses. The survey, which was also available in Spanish and simple Chinese, was promoted on the City's website, in the City Manager's newsletter, and sent to various community groups such as the Rotary Club of El Cerrito and local Parent Teacher Associations. A sign with a QR code linked to the survey was posted at the various entrances to the HNA and staff attended two senior citizen events where participants had the opportunity to fill out a hard copy survey.

- Public Comment Period: The Public Draft Plan was released for a 45-day comment period from July 12 to August 25, 2024. It was advertised similarly as the online survey. A total of 108 comments were received from 25 individuals/organizations. After careful review of the comments, the project team updated the Plan as applicable and posted the Response to Comments (Attachment 6) on the project website. The following is a summary of the major themes from the comments received and the associated Plan changes:
 - Allow public involvement when implementing the Plan.
 - *The Plan was amended to add that an update would be provided to the City Council and the Park and Recreation Commission at least every 2 years.*
 - Revise the Plan every 5 years as opposed to the 10 years proposed in the Draft Plan.
 - *The Plan was amended to state that the Plan will be reviewed every 5 years and updated if necessary.*
 - Provide adequate, ongoing post-project maintenance funding.
 - *The Plan was amended to stress the importance of maintenance while acknowledging that resources will need to be evaluated per project.*
 - Protect native biological communities during all actions.
 - *The Plan was amended to add many of the proposed biodiversity language.*
 - Emphasize the individual homeowner's responsibility and provide outreach by the City.
 - *The El Cerrito Fire Department is actively engaged in this.*
 - Concern that invasive plants will not be removed and allowed to flourish.
 - *This is a medium priority, but City staff understand the importance of persistent invasive removal.*
- Commission/Committees Recommendations: After the Public Comment Period, the Draft Final Plan was presented to a joint UFC/EQC meeting and a PRC meeting in December of 2024 **and all three organizations recommended the Plan for City Council adoption** with minor additional changes.

The PRC, UFC, and EQC wanted the Plan to include additional wording provided by the California Native Plant Society's Conservation Committee Chair at both meetings. The Plan was amended to incorporate all the wording with refinements. In addition, the PRC requested that City staff provide annual updates to the PRC instead of every 2 years. The Plan was amended to add "at least" before every 2 years.

Additional updates may be provided as individual projects arise.

Plan Actions

LSA's review of previous City plans, grant-conducted studies, site analyses, and community engagement, all informed the prioritization of actions to minimize wildfire threats while at the same time protecting the ecological value of the HNA.

- *Highest Priority:*

- Create a defensible space within 100-feet of dwelling structures immediately adjacent to the HNA

Defensible space is defined as maintenance of the vegetation around a structure in a manner to minimize fire pathways to the structure. Property owners would manage the portion of their properties within 100 feet or fewer from a structure while the City would manage the portions of the HNA within this distance.

- *High Priority:*

- Establish shaded fuel breaks

A fuel break is a strip of land where the vegetation has been maintained in a manner to reduce the spread of fire crossing the strip. It is recommended that a 100-foot shaded fuel break be maintained along the perimeter of the HNA beginning at the property line, where feasible.

- *High-Medium Priority:*

- Remove eucalyptus and non-native conifer The following areas are recommended for removal:

- a. the eucalyptus stands at Motorcycle Hill
- b. the extensive eucalyptus stand at Quarry Hill
- c. eucalyptus and non-native trees between Kent Court and Buckingham Drive
- d. non-native invasive trees in the Madera property
- e. the Ken Smith eucalyptus grove

Removal may include felling of standing trees, stump treatments with targeted herbicide or tarping, and chip, burn, or removal of material.

- Manage a sustainable system of fire roads and trails

It is recommended that improvements be made to fire road access at Potrero Avenue and King Court, service access be added to Motorcycle Hill, conversion of Ken Smith trail into a fire road with a turnaround, and existing roads be improved to enhance emergency equipment response. The Plan also includes some considerations for recreational trail improvements.

- Actively manage threats to native oak species Although Sudden Oak Death is present in the HNA, it has not reached a high level of infection; continued monitoring and selective removal is recommended as critical.

- *Medium Priority:*

- Remove invasive shrubs and herbaceous species
Single infestations are recommended to be targeted first, followed by spot treatments, and follow-up monitoring and maintenance. The invasive species recommended to be prioritized first are those present in native plant community areas.
- Restore and re-establish native species
It is recommended that native vegetation restoration be focused in areas where initial invasive species removals are complete.
- Monitor key performance indicators
Fire dynamics, biodiversity, fire-adapted communities, forest disease monitoring, and trail monitoring are recommended to be conducted at various frequencies. The plan should be reviewed every 5 years and, if necessary, updated with public input.

Environmental Review

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires preparation of an Initial Study (IS) to identify whether a plan or project will have a significant effect on the environment, unless an exemption or exception applies. Based on the information in the Initial Study, the Lead Agency determines the appropriate type of CEQA document to prepare for the project.

The City prepared an Initial Study (IS) and subsequently a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) (Attachment 2) for the HNA Plan to evaluate the impacts of the proposed Plan and to facilitate streamlined implementation in the future. (Future projects and actions which are consistent with the HNA Plan and the analysis in the IS/MND will not require additional CEQA review.) The HNA Plan did not require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) as the City determined that based on substantial evidence, in light of the whole record the Plan would not have a significant effect on the environment. An IS/MND may be prepared for projects or plans with potentially significant impacts where mitigations included as part of the project reduce the impacts to a less-than-significant level and there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record, that the project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment. A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) (Attachment 3) has been prepared that summarizes the mitigations required during implementation of this HNA Plan, identifying the responsible parties, and enforcement mechanisms for each mitigation.

The Draft IS/MND was filed with the State Clearinghouse for a public review period of March 13 to April 14, 2025. The Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration was filed with the Contra Costa County Clerk on March 13, 2025 and posted on the City's website, at each HNA entrance, and at City offices.

The City received three comments and changes were incorporated into the IS/MND and the MMRP as necessary. A response to CEQA comments is included in Attachment 3.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

This item supports the [City's Strategic Plan Goal\(s\)](#) of:

- *Community Safety* by strategizing effective fire resilience work; and
- *Livability and Belonging* by providing guidance for the long-term planning and conservation of one of the City's most treasured and unique natural assets; and
- *Environmental Sustainability* by conducting environmental analyses (CEQA) and planning for the protection and management of native tree and plant communities with their associated environmental benefits.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

In accordance with CEQA, as described above, the City prepared an IS/MND for the HNA Plan to evaluate the impacts of the proposed Plan to allow for streamlined implementation in the future. An IS/MND may be prepared for projects or plans with potentially significant impacts where mitigations included as part of the project reduce the impacts to a less-than-significant level and there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record, that the project or plan as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.

The HNA Plan did not require an Environmental Impact Report because the City determined that based on substantial evidence, in light of the whole record, the Plan would not have a significant effect on the environment. All future projects and actions that are consistent with the HNA Plan and the analysis in the IS/MND will not require additional CEQA review. The CEQA actions before the City Council include adopting the IS/MND and Mitigation and Reporting Program for the HNA Plan.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no immediate costs associated with the recommended action. HNA Plan projects will largely need to be funded by grants and the HNA Plan increases the City's eligibility and competitiveness for receiving grants. City staff have already applied for the following grants/funding opportunities and are tracking future Proposition 4 and Cal Fire grants:

- a US Forest Service Community Wildfire Defense Grant to remove eucalyptus on Motorcycle Hill, Quarry Hill, and the Kent Drive Ravine,
- a separate California Coastal Conservancy Grant to remove eucalyptus and restore native plants to the area on the west side of Quarry Hill, east of Park Vista, and
- State and Federal earmarks for the HNA.

Ongoing maintenance costs after each project is completed will need to be considered as part of the City's annual budget process.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The City Attorney has reviewed the HNA Plan and the IS/MND and found that legal considerations have been addressed.

Reviewed by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Karen Pinkos", is positioned above the printed name.

Karen Pinkos, City Manager

Attachments:

1. Resolution Adopting the IS/MND & MMRP
2. Exhibit A to the Resolution: IS/MND
3. Exhibit B to the Resolution: MMRP
4. Resolution Adopting the HNA Plan
5. Exhibit A to the Resolution: HNA Plan
6. Response to Comments on the HNA Plan
7. Presentation

RESOLUTION 2025 - XX

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL CERRITO APPROVING THE INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM FOR THE HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

WHEREAS, the Hillside Natural Area (HNA) Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (Plan) was developed with extensive community input to guide fire fuel and forest conservation management activities in the HNA; and

WHEREAS, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires preparation of an Initial Study (IS) to identify whether a plan or project will have a significant effect on the environment and based on that information, the Lead Agency, determines the appropriate type of CEQA document to prepare; and

WHEREAS, for projects with potentially significant impacts where mitigations included as part of the project reduce the impacts to a less-than-significant level and there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record, that the project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) may be prepared; and

WHEREAS, the City prepared an IS/MND for the HNA Plan to evaluate the impacts of the proposed Plan, and future projects and actions which are consistent with the HNA Plan and the analysis in the IS/MND will not require additional CEQA review; and

WHEREAS, the HNA Plan did not require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) as the City determined that based on substantial evidence, in light of the whole record, the Plan would not have a significant effect on the environment; and

WHEREAS, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) was prepared that summarizes the mitigations required during implementation of the HNA Plan, identifying the responsible parties, and enforcement mechanisms for each mitigation; and

WHEREAS, the Draft IS/MND was filed with the State Clearinghouse for a public review period of March 13 to April 14, 2025. The Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration was filed with the Contra Costa County Clerk on March 13, 2025 and posted on the City's website, at each HNA entrance, and at City offices; and

WHEREAS, comments received during the public review period were reviewed and incorporated in the IS/MND and the MMRP as necessary.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of El Cerrito that the foregoing recitals are true and correct and made part of this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the record before the City Council in adopting this Resolution includes all written comments received; all reports, documents, minutes, and written and oral public testimony submitted as part of the City Council's duly noticed meeting on June 3, 2025; and any other evidence received and considered by the City Council at its June 3, 2025 meeting. The documents and other material constituting the record for these proceedings are located at El Cerrito City Hall, 10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530, and in the custody of The Public Works Director.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the IS/MND and MMRP are attached as Exhibits A and B and incorporated as though fully set forth herein.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council hereby finds that there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record before the City supporting a fair argument that the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan, as planned and mitigated in the IS/MND and MMRP, will have a significant effect on the environment, and that the IS/MND reflects the City's independent judgment and analysis as to the potential environmental effects of the HNA Plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of El Cerrito adopts the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage and adoption.

I CERTIFY that at a regular meeting on June 3, 2025, the City Council of the City of El Cerrito passed this Resolution by the following vote:

AYES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
NOES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSTAIN:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSENT:	COUNCILMEMBERS:

IN WITNESS of this action, I sign this document and affix the corporate seal of the City of El Cerrito on June 3, 2025.

Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk

APPROVED:

Carolyn Wysinger, Mayor

**INITIAL STUDY/
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

**HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND
FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA**



May 2025

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INITIAL STUDY/ MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA

Submitted to:

City of El Cerrito
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, California 94530

Prepared by:

LSA
157 Park Place
Pt. Richmond, California 94801
(510) 236-6810

Project No. 20231296



May 2025

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

µg/m ³	micrograms per cubic meter
AB	Assembly Bill
ABAG	Association of Bay Area Governments
ACTC	Alameda County Transportation Commission
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
BAAQMD	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
Basin Plan	Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay Basin
BMP	Best Management Practice
Cal/EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDPR	California Department of Pesticide Regulation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
City	City of El Cerrito
Clean Air Plan	BAAQMD 2017 Clean Air Plan
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	community noise equivalent level
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	carbon monoxide
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CRPR	California Rare Plant Rank
dB	decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibel
DOC	California Department of Conservation
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EBMUD	East Bay Municipal Utility District
EFZ	Earthquake Fault Zones
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan

EQ Zapp	California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application
ESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
GHG	greenhouse gas
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
HNA	Hillside Natural Area
I-80	Interstate 80
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IS/MND	Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
L _{dn}	day-night average level
L _{eq}	equivalent continuous sound level
Lisjan Nation	Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MMI	Modified Mercalli Intensity
mpg	miles per gallon
MTC	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NO ₂	nitrogen dioxide
NO _x	nitrogen oxide
NOD	Notice of Determination
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NWIC	Northwest Information Center
OHP	State of California Office of Historic Preservation
OS-N	Open Space and Open Space Natural (OS-N),
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PM	particulate matter
PM ₁₀	particulate matter less than 10 microns in size
PM _{2.5}	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in size
POTWs	publicly owned treatment works
PR	Parks and Recreation
PRC	Public Resources Code

project, or Plan	Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan
PS	Public and Semi Public
ROG	reactive organic gases
RS-5	Single-family Residential with a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet
RS-10	Single-family Residential with a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SLF	Sacred Lands File
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TAC	toxic air contaminant
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USGS	United States Geological Survey
VdB	vibration velocity decibels
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE INITIAL STUDY

The City of El Cerrito (City) as the Lead Agency, has prepared this Initial Study for the proposed Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (“project” or “Plan”) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the *State CEQA Guidelines* (California Code of Regulations Section 15000-et. seq.) and the regulations and policies of the City of El Cerrito, California. This Initial Study evaluates the environmental impacts that might reasonably be anticipated to result from implementation of the proposed project.

1.2 PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

Publication of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) marks the beginning of a 30-day public review and comment period. During this period, the IS/MND will be available to local, State, and federal agencies and to interested organizations and individuals for review. Written comments concerning the environmental review contained in this Initial Study during the 30-day public review period should be sent to:

Karineh Samkian, Senior Program Manager
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530
KSamkian@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

1.3 CONSIDERATION OF THE INITIAL STUDY AND PROJECT

Following the conclusion of the public review period, the City of El Cerrito will consider adoption of the IS/MND for the proposed project at a regularly scheduled meeting. The City shall consider the IS/MND together with any comments received during the public review process. Upon adoption of the IS/MND, the City may proceed with project approval actions.

1.4 NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

If the proposed project is approved, the City of El Cerrito will file a Notice of Determination (NOD), which will be available for public inspection and posted within 24 hours of receipt at the Contra Costa County Clerk’s Office for 30 days. The filing of the NOD starts a 30-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval under CEQA (*State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15075(g)).

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2.0 PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Title:

Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan

2. Lead Agency Name and Address:

City of El Cerrito
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, California 94530

3. Contact Person and Phone Number:

Karineh Samkian, Senior Program Manager
(510) 525-7603

4. Project Location:

The project site consists of the Hillside Natural Area (HNA), located within the City of El Cerrito, California, near the Northern Berkeley and Oakland Hills.

5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:

City of El Cerrito
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, California 94530

6. General Plan Designation:

Parks and Open Space, Very Low Density Residential

7. Zoning:

Open Space Natural (OS-N), Single-Family Residential (RS-10)

8. Description of Project:

The City of El Cerrito (City) proposes to establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that will guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the City's HNA. A more detailed description of the proposed project is provided in Section 3.0, Project Description.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The HNA is generally surrounded by single-family residential uses.

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required (e.g., permits, financial approval, or participation agreements):

Please see Section 3.3, Project Approvals.

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resource Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

Native American consultation was conducted in compliance with Assembly Bill (AB) 52. A letter and map depicting the project site and surrounding area was sent to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) requesting a search of the Sacred Lands File (SLF) and list of tribes eligible to consult with the City, pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 21080.1, 21080.3.1, and 21080.3.2, on August 15, 2023. On August 24, 2023, the NAHC responded in a letter with a list of tribal contacts and stated that the search of the SLF was positive, indicating that a culturally sensitive property had been identified within or near the project site. Letters to the list of tribal contacts were sent on August 30, 2023, informing them of the proposed project and inquiring if they had any knowledge of cultural properties within or near the project site. A summary of tribal consultation efforts is provided in Section 5.8, Tribal Cultural Resources, of this IS/MND.

3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The following describes the proposed Hillside Natural Area (HNA) Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (“project” or “Plan”) that is the subject of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The proposed project is a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that will guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the City of El Cerrito’s (City) HNA. The City is the lead agency for review of the proposed project under CEQA.

3.1 PROJECT SITE AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The following describes the geographic context of the project site and provides a brief overview of the existing land uses within and in the vicinity of the project site.

3.1.1 Project Location

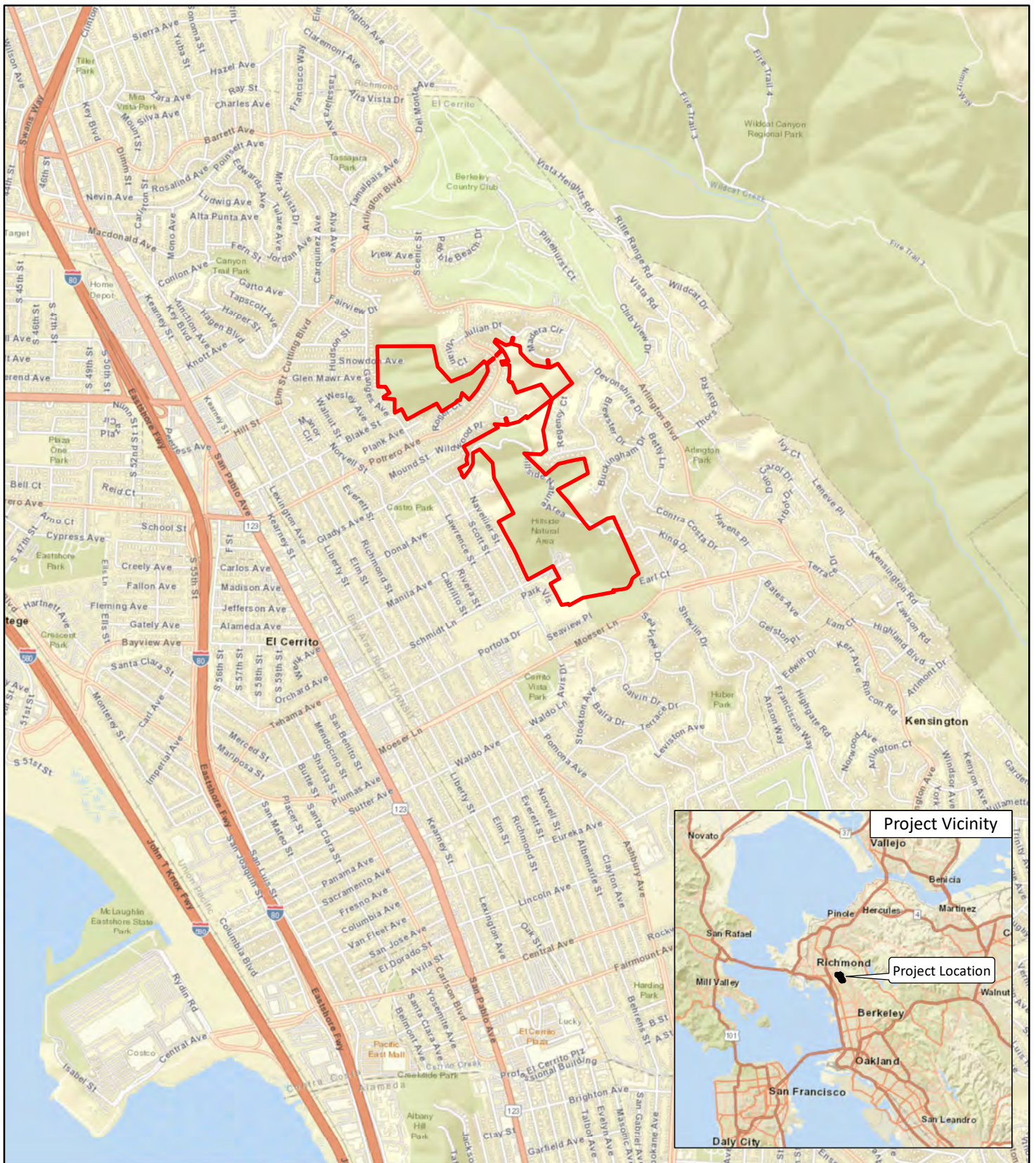
The project site consists of the HNA, located within El Cerrito, California, near the Northern Berkeley and Oakland Hills. The HNA is generally surrounded by single-family residential uses. Interstate 80 (I-80) provides regional access to the HNA, and direct vehicle access is provided via Schmidt Lane, King Court, Regency Court, Snowden Avenue, Navellier Street and Potrero Avenue. Figure 3-1 depicts the regional and local context of the project site.

3.1.2 Existing Conditions

The approximately 107.18-acre HNA is the City's largest community-serving recreation facility and is divided into three management units: HNA North (24.22 acres), Madera Property (9.53 acres), and HNA South (73.43 acres). The three management units are discussed below, and Table 3.A provides the APNs and lot sizes for each management unit. Figure 3-2 depicts an aerial view of the HNA and the three management units.

- **HNA North:** The HNA North Management Unit lies at the end of Snowden Avenue and is often referred to as Motorcycle Hill, due to its historic use as a motorcycle hill racing area in the early 1900s. The management unit is approximately 24.22 acres. This area slopes south with steep slopes prevailing throughout the management unit. The management unit surrounds a former water storage tank site, previously operated by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), which is now a flat, circular gravel area and is directly adjacent to an undeveloped 14.9-acre privately-owned parcel. Due to the existence of an extensive stand of eucalyptus trees on the slopes and top of Motorcycle Hill, grassland, and smaller stands of native shrubs and oak trees, this parcel could pose a fire risk to adjacent properties. There is currently no fire break between the HNA North Management Unit and the large adjacent undeveloped private parcel. This 14.9-acre private parcel is a largely unmanaged area which includes a creek, steep terrain, and a mixture of densely populated native and invasive trees and shrubs.

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LSA

LEGEND

Project Site



0 1000 2000
FEET

SOURCE: Contra Costa County (05/2024); Esri (2024).

I:\2023\20231296\GIS\MXD\Bio Report\Figure 1_Hillside Natural Area, El Cerrito.mxd (7/5/2024)

FIGURE 3-1

*Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California
Regional Location*

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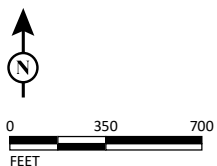


FIGURE 3-2

LSA

LEGEND

Project Site



SOURCE: Contra Costa County (05/2024); Google (2024)

I:\2023\20231296\GIS\MXD\CEQA\ProjectSite_ManagementAreas.mxd (12/17/2024)

*Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California
Project Site and Management Areas*

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- Madera Property:** The Madera Property Management Unit is the smallest management unit (9.53 acres) and is located at the north-east corner of the HNA, east of the HNA North Management Unit and north of the HNA South Management Unit. The Madera Property Management Unit is connected to the HNA South Management Unit at the southern end and is separated from the HNA North Management Unit by Potrero Avenue. The unit can be accessed via Madera Circle in the north, Potrero Avenue to the west, and Regency Court from the southeast. The Madera Management Unit contains small stands of non-native pines, a 2-acre oak woodland, extensive shrub, and grasslands (including purple needle grass patches).
- HNA South:** The HNA South Management Unit is the largest management unit, comprising 73.43 acres, and is located south of the HNA North and Madera Property Management Units. The unit extends from Gladys Avenue in the north (south of Potrero Avenue) to just north of Moeser Lane in the south. Adjacent streets also include Navellier Street to the west and Regency Court, Kent Drive, and King Drive to the east. This unit contains several large stands of native oak, a former quarry with steep slopes and exposed bedrock, and a large stand of non-native eucalyptus in the south-east corner. The Quarry Hill, Ken Smith, and Wildwood eucalyptus groves are also located in this management unit. The unit also has two major drainages with riparian forest corridors and is the centerpiece of the trail system. The City of El Cerrito Recycling and Environmental Resource Center (Recycling Center) is located near the quarry.

**Table 3.A: Parcel Sizes and APNs for the Management Units
of the Hillside Natural Area**

HNA North		Madera Property		HNA South	
APN	Size (acres)	APN	Size (acres)	APN	Size (acres)
505-040-004	11.16	505-421-020	1.45	505-403-018	0.85
505-040-005	4.36	505-142-012	0.42	505-130-002	6.35
502-154-014	0.35	505-142-013	0.06	505-070-035	8.03
505-050-004	4.15	505-142-014	7.61	505-080-013	2.91
505-061-024	0.18			505-080-015	3.17
505-061-025	0.17			505-080-010	3.38
505-061-026	0.17			505-122-025	3.54
505-061-027	0.16			505-080-004	2.33
505-061-028	0.16			505-080-005	2.38
505-061-029	0.22			505-090-017	4.93
505-401-014	3.15			505-090-016	5.07
				505-090-015	11.09
				503-160-029	7.66
				503-170-001	6.45
				505-110-003	5.30
Total	24.22	Total	9.53	Total	73.43
				Total HNA	107.18

Source: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (LSA 2024).

APN = Assessor's Parcel Number

HNA = Hillside Natural Area

Elevations within the HNA range from approximately 150 to 650 feet above sea level. The topography of the HNA is characterized by west-facing slopes that receive full afternoon sun when it is the hottest. The slopes are generally steep, with two very steep slopes (45-90 degrees), including an exposed rock face in HNA South that rises up from the area near the Recycling Center on Schmidt Lane (formerly a quarry) and at Motorcycle Hill in HNA North at the end of Snowden Avenue.

Several stream/drainage channels are present in the HNA and flow in the southwest direction into culverts beneath the adjacent residential area to the southwest. Some of the drainages occur within concrete v-ditches and become natural stream channels further downstream within the HNA. Streams/drainages are likely to be considered jurisdictional features by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and subject to regulation under Sections 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act and/or the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.

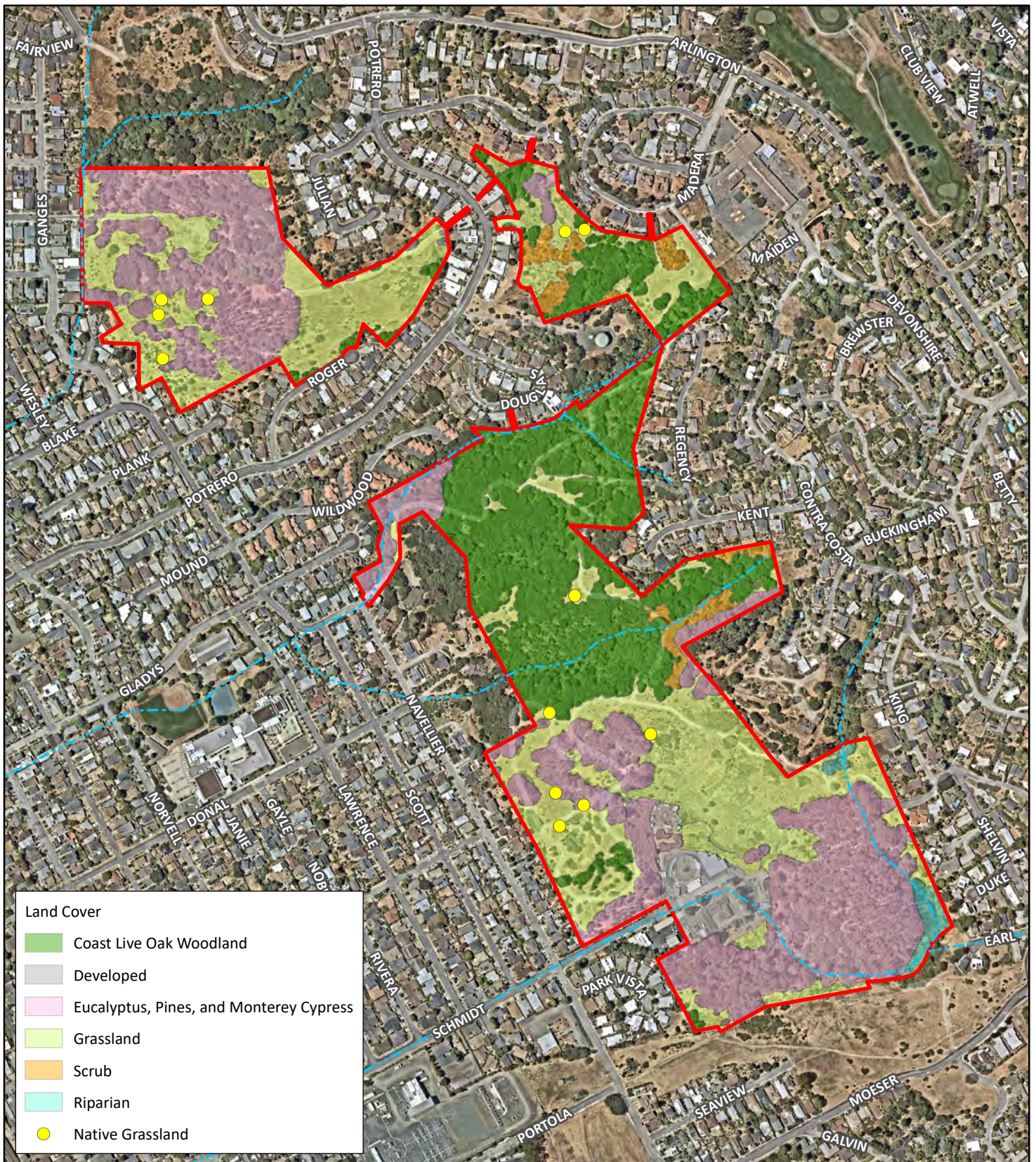
3.1.2.1 Land Cover Types

Vegetation in the HNA is characterized by native and non-native grassland, riparian scrub and woodland, oak woodland, and other scrub and “soft” chaparral, in addition to extensive introduced landscaping and naturalized non-native species such as acacia, eucalyptus, pine and pittosporum. There are 6 major vegetation cover types within the HNA, as described below and depicted in Figure 3-3.

- **Eucalyptus and Pine Groves** are the most prevalent vegetation types within the HNA, totaling over 36.2 acres (33.8 percent of the HNA). Eucalyptus groves are present in four locations. The largest grove is located above and along the southeast rim of the quarry (Quarry Hill grove). The Ken Smith grove is located northwest of the quarry. A linear grove of eucalyptus follows the drainage south of Wildwood Place. Finally, a large stand of eucalyptus is located southwest of Julian Court adjacent to the former EBMUD reservoir site at Snowden Avenue, north of Motorcycle Hill.

The Quarry Hill eucalyptus grove was planted around 1910 by the quarry operator to minimize slippage of quarry overburden. In 1972, uncommonly cold weather resulted in the death of eucalyptus tree crowns over hundreds of acres throughout the East Bay hills. Although the crowns of many trees were damaged at the HNA, few trees actually died, and resprouting from the trunk and branches occurred. Sprouting also occurred from the stumps of the trees, which were cut. The result was an increased density of eucalyptus stands at the HNA.

- **Ruderal/Non-Native Grassland** comprises approximately 33.47 acres (31.2 percent of the HNA) and consists of primarily non-native annual grassland species with patches of perennial grassland and ruderal plant species.
 - **Forest Brown Fire Road** is an approximately 0.34-mile trail that starts at Schmidt Lane and climbs to Ridge Fire Road.



LSA

LEGEND

- Project Site
- Stream/Drainage



0 300 600
FEET

FIGURE 3-3

*Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California*
Land Cover Types

SOURCE: LSA (2023, 2024); Contra Costa County (05/2024); Nearmap (07/2023).

I:\2023\20231296\GIS\MXD\Bio Report\Figure 6_Land Cover Types.mxd (7/6/2024)

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- **Native Grasslands** in the HNA consist of small, dispersed patches of native graminoids,¹ including perennial bunchgrasses. These are generally rare, but fairly common in certain areas, such as El Cerrito Memorial Grove and the Julian Fuel Break, which supports a healthy stand of purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*). The presence and relative abundance of native annual and perennial herbs is influenced by the level of historic and recent disturbance at a particular site. Most native grasslands are considered sensitive natural communities.
- **Coast Live Oak Woodland** comprises approximately 28.7 acres (26.8 percent of the HNA) and is dominated by coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) with California bay (*Umbellularia californica*) and California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) in the overstory and native shrubs, vines, and grasses in the understory. Dense stands of oak woodland are located in the drainages and on north facing slopes. Stands of native oaks at the HNA appear to be of roughly the same age, with a uniform, dense canopy and in places, little understory. As in many coast live oak forests in California, the HNA has relatively low numbers of coast live oak (seedlings and saplings) and the sapling size class is particularly underrepresented.
- **North Franciscan Coastal Scrub** comprises approximately 2.6 acres (2.4 percent of the HNA) and is found throughout the HNA, but mainly occupies the steeper portions of the south and west facing slopes along the eastern boundary of the HNA. This vegetation community is characterized by a mix of shrubs, herbaceous species, and grasses that are adapted to the cool, moist coastal climate, and is dominated by coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*). California sage (*Artemisia californica*), coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*), poison oak, and bush monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) can also be found intermixed within the coastal scrub habitat.
- **Riparian Woodland** occurs along the streams and drainages and occupies a relatively small acreage within the HNA. Riparian woodland occurs in the drainages northwest of Earl Court, southwest of Kent Court, north of Buckingham Drive, east of Gladys Avenue, and in the upper portion of the Wildwood drainage. Tree species observed include willows (*Salix* spp.), cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), alder (*Alnus* spp.), California bay, California buckeye, and coast live oak. Riparian woodland occurs in the drainages northwest of Earl Court, southwest of Kent Court, north of Buckingham Drive, east of Gladys Avenue, and in the upper portion of the Wildwood drainage. Other species occurring in the riparian woodland include arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), and non-native Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*). These species present within the riparian woodland indicate the presence of water in the moist canyon bottom environment. Riparian woodland is characteristically wet and is considered a sensitive plant community.
- **Rock Outcrops** are present in small areas throughout the HNA. The disturbed quarry walls have proven to be a hostile environment for the development of vegetative cover. Pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*) has sparsely covered the walls with a density of approximately 25 percent.

¹ In botany and ecology, a graminoid refers to a herbaceous plant with a grass-like morphology.

3.1.2.2 Existing Trails

The HNA has a network of existing service roads and trails that support a variety of uses, including emergency access, hiking, dog walking, running, mountain biking,² birdwatching, etc. Several trails are fire access roads are maintained by the City. The existing trails and fire roads within each management area are discussed below and depicted in Figure 3-4.

- **HNA North**

- **Motorcycle Hill Trail** is an approximately 0.57-mile trail that starts at Blake Street and ends at Potrero Avenue. The narrow trail includes steep switchbacks. The top of Motorcycle Hill, also accessible from Potrero Avenue using a relatively flat trail, provides scenic views of the East Bay cities and coast. The Motorcycle Hill Trail is very steep and likely challenging for the average hiker.
- **Castro Trail, a.k.a. Lower Snowden Trail** is an approximately 0.14-mile one-way trail that starts at Snowden Avenue and connects to the Motorcycle Hill Trail.
- **Peralta Trail** is an approximately 0.10-mile, one-way trail that is relatively unmaintained. The trail starts at the former EBMUD tank site at the end of a 15-foot-wide paved fire road and connects to the Motorcycle Hill Trail.

- **Madera Property**

- **Madera-Julian Trail** is an approximately 0.21-mile one-way trail that starts at the concrete steps at 1625 Julian Drive and ends at Ridge Fire Road below Madera Circle. This trail is also accessible via a 0.1-mile trail starting at 1556 Madera Circle.

- **HNA South**

- **Ridge Fire Road** is an approximately 0.75-mile, one-way trail that starts at King Court and ends at Regency Court.
- **Navellier Fire Road** is an approximately 0.35-mile, one-way trail that connects Navellier Street to Regency Court and overlaps with Ridge Fire Road. The trailhead is a paved road between 1432 and 1440 Navellier Street, which turns into a fire road. The trail crosses Ridge Fire Road and Live Oak Trail and ends near the mouth of Regency Court.
- **Ken Smith Trail** is an approximately 0.19-mile, trail that starts near Ridge Fire Road and dissipates to the south into a narrow, steep foot trail leading to the Moeser Lane electrical transmission corridor.

² While signage is currently inconsistent, mountain biking is allowed in the HNA as long as it is not motorized. Future plans may evaluate bicycle use on trails.



LSA

LEGEND

- Project Site
- Vehicle Accessible Trail
- Foot+Bike or Foot-only Trail
- Recommended to be Modified for Improved Vehicular Access



0 300 600
FEET

SOURCE: LSA (2024); Contra Costa County (05/2024); USGS The National Map (04/2023).

I:\2023\20231296\GIS\MXD\Bio Report\Figure 10_Hillside Natural Area Trails and Fire Roads.mxd (7/9/2024)

FIGURE 3-4

*Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California
Trail Map*

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- **Wildwood Creek Trail** is an approximately 265-foot, trail that branches off from the Navellier Fire Road alongside the partially channelized Wildwood Creek. The trailhead is at Navellier Fire Road right after the first big turn going uphill and connects with Douglas Drive trailhead.
- **The Lower Trail** is approximately 0.16 mile that connects Forest Brown Fire Road to Live Oak Trail and to Little Hill Trail. The northern section past the Little Hill Trail splits the trail into one well-maintained segment and another segment that is not maintained as a public trail and ends at a fenced off area.
- **The Little Hill Trail** is an approximately 265-foot, one-way trail that connects the Lower Trail to the Live Oak Trail.
- **Church Trail** is an approximately 0.14-mile, one-way trail that connects Navellier Fire Road to Live Oak Trail. An eroded segment is located near the Live Oak Trail.
- **Live Oak Trail** is an approximately 0.41-mile, one-way trail that connects Douglas Drive to the Forest Brown Fire Road. The trailhead is at 1524 Douglas Drive, and the trail crosses the Navellier Fire Road, runs south, roughly parallel to the Ridge Fire Road, to Forest Brown Fire Road. Portion of the trail includes the sign-posted Rotary Interpretive Trail and erosion of the trail occurs towards Douglas Drive.

3.1.3 Surrounding Land Uses

As shown on Figure 3-2, the HNA is generally surrounded by single-family residential uses. Other uses, including an assisted living home, the Stege Sanitary District administrative offices, the Recycling Center, City and government offices, churches, schools, parks, and various commercial businesses, are also located in the surrounding area (up to 0.5-mile radius from the HNA boundaries). South of the HNA, the area is bordered by a 10.8-acre stretch of grassland, where a Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) transmission line corridor is located near Moeser Lane.

Schools in the surrounding area include Madera Elementary School, located immediately northeast of the HNA, and Fred T. Korematsu Middle School, located approximately 0.2 mile west of the HNA. Other parks in the surrounding area include Cerrito Vista Park, located 0.2 feet southwest, Huber Park, located 0.4 mile south, Arlington Park, located 0.2 mile east, and Canyon Trail Park, located 0.2-mile northwest of the project site. The Berkeley Country Club and the El Cerrito Fire Department Station 52 are also located 0.1-mile northeast of the HNA.

3.1.4 Regulatory Setting

The City of El Cerrito General Plan Land Use Map³ and City of El Cerrito Zoning Map⁴ designates the majority of the HNA as Parks and Open Space and Open Space Natural (OS-N), respectively. However, the Madera property is designated as Very Low Density residential and zoned Single-

³ City of El Cerrito. 2012. General Plan Land Use Map.

⁴ City of El Cerrito. Zoning Map. Website: <https://maps.digitalmapcentral.com/production/VECommunityView/cities/ElCerrito/index.aspx> (accessed December 2024).

family Residential with a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet (RS-10). This designation is the result of the property being privately owned until it was acquired by the City in 2014.

The purpose of the open space and parks districts is to create, preserve and enhance land for permanent open space, including environmentally sensitive lands and habitats, creeks, and city parks and recreation facilities that meet community needs for both active recreational use and passive visual enjoyment and provide appropriately located areas for public and privately owned lands to be used for low-intensity, open space activities, such as hiking, walking or picnicking and to meet the active and passive recreational needs of the city's residents. Specifically, the OS-N land use designation serves to preserve publicly owned parklands, environmentally sensitive lands and habitats, and creeks in their natural state. Uses permitted in the OS-N zoning district are to be limited to those that maintain the property in its natural state such as passive recreation.

The RS-10 zoning district serves to promote and protect single-family neighborhoods at a base density of up to 10 dwelling units per net acre; and to minimize the out-of-scale appearance of large homes and development relative to their lot size and slope, and relative to adjacent homes in the neighborhood. Certain areas of the RS district areas are intended to: protect sensitive hillside areas from extensive development; protect against hazards related to earthquakes, unstable terrain, and wildfires; protect sensitive environmental areas and features; and provide sites for larger, distinctive residences.

Properties located north of the HNA are zoned as RS-10, Single-family Residential with a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet (RS-5), Parks and Recreation (PR), and Public and Semi Public (PS); properties located west of the HNA are zoned as RS-5 and PS; properties located south of the HNA are zoned as OS-N and RS-5; and properties located west of the HNA are zoned as RS-10 and RS-5.

3.2 PROPOSED PROJECT

The City proposes to establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that will guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the City's HNA. The proposed Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (Plan) aims to:

1. Identify and protect critical resource areas, such as sensitive natural communities, wetlands and riparian zones, and special-status species that may occur in the HNA.
2. Guide the City's fire fuel reduction, native forest conservation, and fire prevention activities, by providing specific, measurable, achievable, reasonable, and time-sensitive prescriptions for forest management. Some of these activities will be conducted within the City's current scope and budget for fire risk reduction, others will require additional funding.
3. Provide compliance with CEQA that will identify potential environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the recommended treatments within the HNA to ensure compliance with state and federal grant guidelines.
4. Evaluate fire road and trail network conditions.

3.2.1 Project Background

Rising global temperatures and community concerns regarding the risk of fire make the development of an updated Plan necessary. The primary purpose of the Plan is to guide the City in performing the most effective, sustainable, and cost-efficient fuel reduction and forest conservation activities.

The HNA is a valuable open space asset within the City that is popular with residents and visitors for its recreational opportunities, scenic vistas, biodiversity and the beauty of its natural landscape. The HNA is heavily vegetated and can present a fire hazard to the surrounding residential areas and to the City as a whole. There is a strong consensus in the science community that climate change extends the periods of fire risk and enhances the likelihood of fires throughout the Bay Area. Over the last few years, community concerns regarding fire risk in the HNA and surrounding communities have significantly increased. The City has responded with ongoing and increased vegetation maintenance activities, completing work largely based on past planning efforts. A new Plan is needed to guide more robust, comprehensive, and balanced management of the HNA. The present Plan is intended to further guide the City's management and aid in securing grant funding for high priority management activities.

The Plan provides a science-based framework and strategy to improve fire resilience and forest health in the HNA and the surrounding neighborhoods and residential areas. It represents a locally driven solution in partnership with community groups from the City. It draws upon a site-specific assessment of conditions and constraints and formulates goals and objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and prioritized for implementation. The Plan also aids in securing grant funding for priority management activities.

Building the HNA's resilience to fires means also restoring the health of the native plant communities. Native vegetation that is properly managed to avoid fuel accumulation and invasion by flammable non-native plants is key to reducing the risk to residential neighborhoods and livelihoods. This Plan represents a focus on forest conservation, fuel reduction, and proper vegetation management of the City-owned open space for the purposes of fire prevention. However, it is also important to recognize that addressing growing fire risks must also include actions residents take in their homes and neighborhoods such as home hardening by making structures less prone to ignition and creating defensible space around structures to prevent a fire from reaching the structure. The City embraces its leadership role in bringing diverse interests together to align and integrate fire prevention activities, coordinate investments in future resilience, and educate and engage community members.

3.2.2 Key Considerations of the Plan

Natural areas provide essential habitats for wildlife, protect water resources, and offer opportunities for recreation and education. Effective management of these areas requires strategic planning to ensure their long-term preservation and to balance multiple uses. It also lays out a step-by-step Plan that can be followed over time. Key considerations for the Plan include:

- **A Science-Based Framework:** At the fundamental level, it is important to understand the natural resources in the area, including vegetation, wildlife, water resources, topography, weather, and

geological features. This information can help guide decisions about how to best protect and manage these resources. The Plan relies on scientifically collected data, peer reviewed literature, and proven ecological knowledge, including Traditional Ecological Knowledge (i.e., the on-going accumulation of knowledge about a specific ecosystem that is derived by Indigenous people through their direct contact and manipulation of the environment). The science-based framework not only relies on data on species and ecological processes, but also acknowledges the human dimensions of conservation and forest management (i.e., human health, relationship with nature, and ecosystem services).

- **Stakeholder Involvement and Recognition:** Engaging stakeholders, including local communities, land managers, elected officials, neighbors, and conservation organizations, is critical to the success of natural areas management. Stakeholders provide valuable insights and perspectives on the resources and challenges in the area and can help identify potential conflicts and solutions. The Plan was developed with extensive stakeholder input and its success largely depends on continued community engagement.
- **Balancing Multiple Uses/Values:** Natural areas in urban settings often have multiple uses, including recreation and wildlife habitat, but can also impose significant burdens for risk mitigation, especially fire. Strategic planning must balance these uses to ensure that the natural resources are protected while still providing benefits to the community.
- **Ecologically Sound Practices:** Fuel reduction projects can affect the biological diversity of the HNA. The Plan approves and promotes only methods and approaches that maintain, enhance, and restore native plant community structure and ecological function. The Plan provides a list of Avoidance and Minimization Measures designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts during or following implementation of the Plan's Actions.
- **Defensible Space:** Defensible space, coupled with ignition-resistant construction, is essential to reduce fire risk to neighborhoods. Defensible space is the buffer around a building in which vegetation is managed for fire. Currently, 100 feet of defensible space are required by law (see also Assembly Bill 3074, passed into law in 2020, pertaining to the new ember-resistant zone within 0 to 5 feet of a home). While defensible space is primarily a concern for homeowners on their property, the Plan recognizes the importance of a managed vegetation beyond their property boundary to reduce flame length, fire progression and embers before they reach the property line.
- **Invasive Species Management:** Invasive species can have a negative impact on natural areas by outcompeting native species and altering ecosystems. Effective strategic planning should include strategies for managing and controlling invasive species, such as early detection and rapid response, biological control, and education and outreach.
- **Climate Change Adaptation:** Climate change is having a significant impact on natural areas, affecting temperature, precipitation patterns, and the distribution of wildlife and vegetation. Strategic planning must consider the effects of climate change and incorporate strategies for adapting to these changes, such as restoring habitats and improving the resilience of ecosystems.

- **Future Funding and Resources:** Implementing a strategic Plan for natural areas management requires funding and resources, including staff, equipment, and materials. Strategic planning should identify potential sources of funding and resources and prioritize the allocation of these resources to ensure effective implementation. The Plan provides a framework for grant applications and strategic allocation of resources. The City continues funding important maintenance activities in the HNA. However, many of the actions listed in the Plan will be dependent on future grants. A major purpose of the Plan is to support the City's applications for grant funding in the future.

3.2.3 Goals and Actions of the Plan

The Plan includes the following goals and actions.

3.2.3.1 Goal 1: Protect Residential Areas Surrounding the HNA From Wildfire

The HNA is surrounded by residential neighborhoods. Because of the steep slopes and abundant fuel, along with occasional strong winds during warm and dry conditions driving a potential fire uphill, threats to hillside residences are similar to Berkeley, Oakland, and other west-facing hillsides in the East Bay. Goal 1 includes the following objectives:

- Objective 1.1: Establish Defensible Space on the HNA within 100 feet of residential dwelling structures⁵
- Objective 1.2: Establish Fuel Breaks
- Objective 1.3: Reduce Abundance of High-Risk Invasive Trees
- Objective 1.4. Develop a Fire Roads and Trails Network

3.2.3.2 Goal 2: Increase Forest Health

Aside from Wildfire Resilience, an additional goal of the Plan is to improve the ecological health of the HNA. While ecosystem health can have multiple definitions, for the purposes of the Plan, a healthy HNA would include woodlands, grasslands, shrublands, and related vegetation types that yield both ecological and community benefits. Healthy vegetation improves climate resilience, reduces the risk of fire, safeguards water and air quality, protects fish and wildlife habitat, enhances biodiversity, sequesters carbon, improves recreational opportunities, and avoids economic losses. Goal 2 includes the following objectives:

- Objective 2.1 Actively Manage Threats to Native Oak Species
- Objective 2.2 Remove Invasive Species
- Objective 2.3 Restore and Re-Establish Native Species

⁵ This objective pertains only to the portion of HNA land that is within a 100-foot perimeter of an existing dwelling structure. Where the 100-foot perimeter around the structure is fully contained within privately owned parcels, the establishment and maintenance of defensible space is the responsibility of the homeowner as legally mandated.

3.2.3.3 Goal 3: Measure Progress

It is recommended that the City continues to engage in inventory and monitoring programs within the limits imposed by available funds and resources. Monitoring results would be used to understand the status of and trends within the natural communities within the HNA.

- Objective 3.1: Measure Progress towards Vegetation Management Goals
- Objective 3.2: Review the Plan Every 5 Years
- Objective 3.3: Maintain Community Engagement and Stakeholder Involvement

3.2.3.4 Action Plan

The Plan presents a prioritized list of actions to reduce the risks and impacts of increasingly severe fire events in the HNA, as summarized in Table 3.B. All Actions are directly linked to the Goals and Objectives of the Plan. Management actions would decrease damage from fire by creating shaded fuel breaks, expanding defensible space into the HNA altering forest structure or species composition, and removing highly flammable invasive species. The removal of highly flammable invasive species, such as eucalyptus trees, may include the use of mechanical equipment, such as woodchippers and trucks to remove felled trees. In addition, helicopters may be used to remove felled trees from areas that are not accessible by road, such as felled eucalyptus trees from Motorcycle Hill.

The recommended actions are designed to minimize fire threats and vulnerabilities, while at the same time protecting the recreational and ecological values that the HNA offers. The recommended actions are based on current fire management standards and best practices to protect and improve ecosystem function, minimize soil erosion, and enhance recreational possibilities. The success of these actions would be enhanced with ongoing maintenance activities after each project is completed. In order to adequately plan for maintenance funding, it is recommended that the City develop a maintenance program which includes the relative costs of each action (e.g. per acre cost to maintain a fuel break).

While the Plan has considered the surrounding area as it relates to threat and vulnerability, recommendations of the Action Plan only pertain to City-owned parcels within the HNA, and its recommendations pertain solely to responsibilities of the various departments of the City of El Cerrito. Homeowners, volunteers, citizen scientists, and other local experts would have the opportunity to interact and engage with the City through the public relations, partnerships, and education component of the Plan.

3.3 PROJECT APPROVALS

While the City is both the proponent and the CEQA Lead Agency for adoption of the Plan and its implementation, other agencies also have discretionary authority related to the project or serve as a responsible and/or trustee agency in connection to the proposed project. A list of these agencies and potential permits and approvals that may be required is provided in Table 3.C.

Table 3.C: Potential Permits and Approvals

Lead Agency	Permits/Approvals
City of El Cerrito	• Environmental Review • Plan Approval
Other Agencies/Entities	
Bay Area Air Quality Management District	• Approval of Smoke Management Plan
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	• Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement
San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board	• Applicable stormwater permits (i.e., NPDES permits) • Water Quality Certification
United States Army Corps of Engineers	• Nationwide Permit or Individual Permit (depending on impacts to waters of the United States)

Source: Compiled by LSA (2025).

Table 3.B: Summary of Management Actions, Priority, Location, and Prescriptions

Action	Priority	Location	Prescription	Lead Department
1: Create Defensible Space (Objective 1.1)	Highest	Within 100 feet of dwelling structures immediately adjacent to the HNA.	Where dwelling structures are closer than 100 feet from the HNA, the City will manage portions of the HNA within this distance to create a defensible space by maintaining vegetation. The City will promote Contra Costa County Measure X as a funding source for private property owners to manage the portions of their properties within this distance.	El Cerrito Fire Department
2: Establish Shaded Fuel Breaks (Objective 1.2)	High	A 100 feet wide shaded fuel break along the entire perimeter of the HNA, beginning at the property boundary (where feasible i.e. the presence of a drainage or other topographic features may prohibit full 100 feet.)	Establish and maintain a shaded fuel break by removing or pruning trees, shrubs, brush, and other vegetative growth. A canopy of large native trees will be maintained where possible. All work will be accomplished by use of hand crews or mechanical equipment; supported by chippers and/or burning as determined appropriate on a case-by-case basis, while conserving native vegetation.	El Cerrito Fire Department El Cerrito Public Works Department
3: Remove Eucalyptus And Non-Native Conifers (Objective 1.3)	High-medium, depending on location and cost	1. The eucalyptus stand at Motorcycle Hill 2. The extensive eucalyptus stand at Quarry Hill 3. Eucalyptus and other non-native trees between Kent Court and Buckingham Drive 4. Non-native invasive trees in the Madera property 5. The Ken Smith eucalyptus grove and potentially along riparian corridors (likely requires permit from CDFW)	Stand removal involves the felling of all standing trees and prevention of resprouting from the stump. Landings are typically needed to sort, store, and chip cut trees into mulch and spread or remove the material. Stump treatments may include herbicides and tarping. Small logs and branches may be burned or chipped. Include follow-up treatments for latent seedling and weed management.	El Cerrito Public Works Department El Cerrito Fire Department

Table 3.B: Summary of Management Actions, Priority, Location, and Prescriptions

Action	Priority	Location	Prescription	Lead Department
4: Manage A Sustainable System Of Fire Roads & Trails (Objective 1.4)	High-medium, depending on location	Improvements to the fire road access at Potrero Avenue and King Court, addition of service access to Motorcycle Hill, conversion of Ken Smith trail into a fire road with turnaround, and improvement of existing roads to enhance emergency equipment response.	Improved fire roads and trails are needed to facilitate implementation of vegetation treatment projects and provide firefighting equipment and personnel access to various parts of the HNA. Existing unimproved surface fire trails will be widened and recontoured where necessary to provide vehicle access to treatment areas as well as for emergency vehicle and maintenance access while preserving native vegetation and preventing weed spread where practicable.	El Cerrito Public Works Department El Cerrito Fire Department
5: Actively Manage Threats To Native Oak Species (Objective 2.1)	High-Medium	Throughout the existing oak woodlands at the HNA.	Sudden oak death (SOD) is present in the HNA but has not reached a high level of infection. Disease monitoring and selective removals is a critical component of this Plan. Conduct complete inventory of all mature oak and bay laurel trees for monitoring the progression of SOD within the HNA. Best management practices include limiting the movement of host material or infested soil.	El Cerrito Public Works Department
6: Remove Invasives (Objective 2.2)	Medium	Throughout the HNA, wherever they are found. Single infestations are targeted first, followed by spot treatments and follow-up maintenance projects.	Remove invasive plants mostly by hand and prevent re-invasion where practicable. Mechanical treatments (grinding, shredding, chipping, mulching, or mowing) of understory shrubs or small trees in some places. Prioritize invasive species removal in healthy native plant communities	El Cerrito Public Works Department

Table 3.B: Summary of Management Actions, Priority, Location, and Prescriptions

Action	Priority	Location	Prescription	Lead Department
7: Restore And Re-Establish Native Species (Objective 2.3)	Medium	Prioritize areas where invasive species removals are complete. This includes the removal of eucalyptus and conifer stands at Motorcycle Hill and Quarry Hill, but also shrub and grassland patches throughout the HNA where invasive species have been removed.	Promote passive restoration of plants from the existing native seedbank wherever possible. In some cases, active restoration of native plants is necessary following invasive plant control. Active restoration includes the initial reintroduction of the native, site-adapted species (grasses and shrubs). Conserving native grasslands and other Sensitive Natural Communities, enhancing, and expanding them is an important part of achieving this goal.	El Cerrito Public Works Department
8: Monitor Key Performance Indicators (Objectives 3.1 – 3.3)	Medium	Monitoring at the HNA will include the key indicators resiliency, recreation, plan review, and public relations.	Use monitoring to adapt management practices for each of these key indicators: ● <u>Fire Behavior</u>: Inspect fuel breaks at the HNA annually. Inspections of defensible space is another metric of the neighborhood's resilience. ● <u>Biodiversity</u>: Regularly monitor the HNA for the abundance and presence of key special status species, including monarch butterfly, and monitor native plant communities, weed cover, and wildlife populations as funding allows. ● <u>Fire-Adapted Communities</u>: Conduct FlamMap (or equivalent) analysis of fire risk and behavior every 5–10 years as a means to pinpoint areas of deficiencies and target vegetation treatments.	El Cerrito Public Works Department El Cerrito Fire Department

Table 3.B: Summary of Management Actions, Priority, Location, and Prescriptions

Action	Priority	Location	Prescription	Lead Department
			• <u>Trail Monitoring</u>: Inspect all trails at least once per year to evaluate surface conditions. • <u>Plan Review</u>: Provide a review and, if necessary, update to the Plan every 5 years. • <u>Public Relations</u>: Provide multiple avenues for a community engagement and feedback process that allows the community and stakeholders to support and be informed of the City's management of the HNA.	

Source: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (LSA, December 2024).



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4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” as indicated by the checklist in Chapter 5.0.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| ☐ Aesthetics | ☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources | ☐ Air Quality |
| ☐ Biological Resources | ☐ Cultural Resources | ☐ Energy |
| ☐ Geology/Soils | ☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions | ☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials |
| ☐ Hydrology/Water Quality | ☐ Land Use/Planning | ☐ Mineral Resources |
| ☐ Noise | ☐ Population/Housing | ☐ Public Services |
| ☐ Recreation | ☐ Transportation | ☐ Tribal Cultural Resources |
| ☐ Wildfire | ☐ Utilities/Service Systems | ☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance |

4.1 DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☐ I find that the proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the Project have been made by or agreed to by the Project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that the proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- ☐ I find that the proposed Project MAY have a “Potentially Significant Impact” or “Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed Project, nothing further is required.



Sean Moss, AICP
Zoning Administrator/Planning Manager

May 22, 2025

Date

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5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

This Environmental Checklist provides an evaluation of the following environmental issue topics according to the thresholds provided in Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines*: air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, and tribal cultural resources. Due to the project location and nature of the proposed implementation actions of the Plan, these topics have the potential to result in environmental impacts and are therefore fully addressed in this section. As discussed below, all impacts would either be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation.

5.1 AESTHETICS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The proposed project would establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that would guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the HNA. Implementation of the proposed Plan would include some modifications to the HNA, including creating defensible space within 100 feet of residences; establishing shaded fuel breaks; the removal of eucalyptus, non-native conifers and invasive species; and the restoration and re-establishment of native species. However, the HNA would be generally maintained similar to existing conditions. Therefore, the overall views of the HNA would not be substantially affected with implementation of the proposed Plan. In addition, the restoration and re-establishment of native species would improve and enhance the visual character of the HNA and the removal of eucalyptus and non-native conifers (i.e., mature trees) would likely improve views of and from the HNA. Further, no officially designated or eligible State Scenic Highways are located near the HNA.⁶

⁶ California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). California State Scenic Highway System Map. Website: <https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacaa> (accessed December 2024).

Therefore, the proposed Plan does not have the potential to damage resources within a State-designated scenic highway.

Therefore, the proposed project would have **no impact**, either individually or cumulatively, related to aesthetics.

5.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The HNA and vicinity are located within an urban area of the City that does not currently support agricultural uses. In addition, the California Department of Conservation identifies the HNA as grazing land.⁷ Therefore, the project site does not contain prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of Statewide importance; forest land; or land under a Williamson Act contract.⁸ In addition, the area is not zoned for any agricultural uses.

Therefore, the proposed project would have **no impact**, either individually or cumulatively, on agricultural or forest resources.

⁷ California Department of Conservation. 2022. California Important Farmland Finder (map). Website: maps.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/ciff (accessed December 2024).

⁸ California Department of Conservation. 2023. *California Williamson Act Enrollment Finder*. Website: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/WilliamsonAct/> (accessed December 2024).

5.3 AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
f. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
h. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
i. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The project site is within the jurisdiction of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), which regulates air quality in the San Francisco Bay Area. Air quality conditions in the San Francisco Bay Area have improved significantly since the BAAQMD was created in 1955. Ambient concentrations of air pollutants and the number of days during which the region exceeds air quality standards have fallen substantially. In Berkeley, and the rest of the air basin, exceedances of air quality standards occur primarily during meteorological conditions conducive to high pollution levels, such as cold, windless winter nights or hot, sunny summer afternoons.

Within the BAAQMD, ambient air quality standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), particulate matter (particulate matter less than 10 microns in size [PM₁₀], and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in size [PM_{2.5}]), and lead (Pb) have been set by both the State of California and the federal government. The State has also set standards for sulfate and visibility. The BAAQMD is under State non-attainment status for ozone and particulate matter (both PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) standards. The BAAQMD is classified as non-attainment for the federal ozone 8-hour standard and non-attainment for the federal PM_{2.5} 24-hour standard.

a. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? (Less Than Significant Impact)

The applicable air quality plan is the BAAQMD 2017 Clean Air Plan (Clean Air Plan),⁹ which was adopted on April 19, 2017. The Clean Air Plan is a comprehensive plan to improve Bay Area air quality and protect public health. The Clean Air Plan defines control strategies to reduce emissions and ambient concentrations of air pollutants; safeguard public health by reducing exposure to air pollutants that pose the greatest health risk, with an emphasis on protecting the communities most heavily affected by air pollution; and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to protect the climate.

⁹ Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). 2017. *Clean Air Plan*. April 19.

Consistency with the Clean Air Plan can be determined if the project: (1) supports the goals of the Clean Air Plan; (2) includes applicable control measures from the Clean Air Plan; and (3) would not disrupt or hinder implementation of any control measures from the Clean Air Plan. As discussed below, implementation of the proposed Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Clean Air Plan, and this impact would be **less than significant**.

Clean Air Plan Goals. The primary goals of the Bay Area Clean Air Plan are to: attain air quality standards; reduce population exposure and protect public health in the Bay Area; and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect climate.

The BAAQMD has established significance thresholds for project construction and operational impacts at a level at which the cumulative impact of exceeding these thresholds would have an adverse impact on the region's attainment of air quality standards. The health and hazards thresholds were established to help protect public health. The proposed project would establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that would guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the City's HNA. As discussed below, implementation of the proposed Plan would result in less than significant emissions. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not conflict with the Clean Air Plan goals.

Clean Air Plan Control Measures. The control strategies of the Clean Air Plan include measures in the following categories: Stationary Source Measures, Transportation Measures, Energy Measures, Building Measures, Agriculture Measures, Natural and Working Lands Measures, Waste Management Measures, Water Measures, and Super-Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Pollutants Measures. The project's compliance with each of these control measures is discussed below. As discussed, implementation of the proposed Plan would not conflict with the Clean Air Plan control measures.

Stationary Source Control Measures. The Stationary Source Control Measures, which are designed to reduce emissions from stationary sources such as metal melting facilities, cement kilns, refineries, and glass furnaces, are incorporated into rules adopted by the BAAQMD and then enforced by BAAQMD permit and inspection programs. Because the proposed project would not include any such stationary sources, the Stationary Source Measures of the Clean Air Plan do not apply to the project.

Transportation Control Measures. The BAAQMD identifies Transportation Control Measures as part of the Clean Air Plan to decrease emissions of criteria pollutants, toxic air contaminants (TACs), and GHGs by reducing demand for motor vehicle travel, promoting efficient vehicles and transit service, decarbonizing transportation fuels, and electrifying motor vehicles and equipment. Implementation of the proposed Plan would not inhibit the ability of residents and employees to use alternative modes of transportation. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not conflict with Transportation Control Measures.

Energy Control Measures. The Clean Air Plan also includes Energy Control Measures, which are designed to reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants, TACs, and GHGs by decreasing the amount of electricity consumed in the Bay Area, as well as decreasing the carbon intensity of the electricity used by switching to less GHG intensive fuel sources for electricity generation. Because these measures apply to electrical utility providers and local government agencies (and

not to individual projects), the Energy Control Measures of the Clean Air Plan are not directly applicable to the proposed project. However, no new proposed buildings or energy intensive uses are proposed as part of the Plan. All work will be accomplished by use of hand crews or mechanical equipment; supported by chippers and/or burning as determined appropriate on a case-by-case basis, while conserving native vegetation. Implementation of the proposed Plan would expand and continue to the maintenance activities already occurring at the HNA, and therefore would not result in a substantial increase in energy usage. Therefore, the Energy Control Measures are not applicable to the proposed project.

Building Control Measures. The BAAQMD has authority to regulate emissions from certain sources in buildings such as boilers and water heaters but has limited authority to regulate buildings themselves. Therefore, the strategies in the control measures for this sector focus on working with local governments that do have authority over local building codes, to facilitate adoption of best GHG control practices and policies. Therefore, the Building Control Measures of the Clean Air Plan are not applicable to the proposed project. In addition, implementation of the proposed Plan would not involve the construction of any new buildings.

Agriculture Control Measures. The Agriculture Control Measures are designed to primarily reduce emissions of methane. Since implementation of the proposed Plan does not include any agricultural activities, the Agriculture Control Measures of the Clean Air Plan do not apply to the proposed project.

Natural and Working Lands Control Measures. The Natural and Working Lands Control Measures focus on increasing carbon sequestration on rangelands and wetlands, as well as encouraging local governments to adopt ordinances that promote urban tree plantings. Because implementation of the proposed Plan does not include the disturbance of any rangelands or wetlands, the Natural and Working Lands Control Measures of the Clean Air Plan are not applicable to the proposed project. However, the proposed project would be supportive of forest conservation efforts, which is in-line with the goals of these measures.

Waste Management Control Measures. The Waste Management Measures focus on reducing or capturing methane emissions from landfills and composting facilities, diverting organic materials away from landfills, and increasing waste diversion rates through efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle. It is anticipated that most of the resulting biomass associated with eucalyptus removal proposed as part of the Plan would be shipped by truck to a power plant. Other removal efforts may include reuse or implementation of a carbonator. The proposed project would comply with local requirements for waste management (e.g., recycling, and composting services). Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the Waste Management Control Measures of the Clean Air Plan.

Water Control Measures. The Water Control Measures focus on reducing emissions of criteria pollutants, TACs, and GHGs by encouraging water conservation, limiting GHG emissions from publicly owned treatment works (POTWs), and promoting the use of biogas recovery systems. Since these measures apply to POTWs and local government agencies (and not individual projects), the Water Control Measures are not directly applicable to the proposed project.

Super GHG Control Measures. The Super-GHG Control Measures are designed to facilitate the adoption of best GHG control practices and policies through the BAAQMD and local government agencies. Since these measures do not apply to individual projects, the Super-GHG Control Measures are not applicable to the proposed project.

Clean Air Plan Implementation. As discussed above, implementation of the proposed Plan would not disrupt or hinder implementation of a control measure from the Clean Air Plan, and this impact would be **less than significant**.

b. Would the project violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation? (Less Than Significant Impact)

The BAAQMD is currently designated as a non-attainment area for State and national ozone standards and national particulate matter ambient air quality standards. The BAAQMD's non-attainment status is attributed to the region's development history. Past, present, and future development projects contribute to the region's adverse air quality impacts on a cumulative basis. By its very nature, air pollution is largely a cumulative impact. No single project is sufficient in size to, by itself, result in non-attainment of ambient air quality standards. Instead, a project's individual emissions contribute to existing cumulatively significant adverse air quality impacts. If a project's contribution to the cumulative impact is considerable, then the project's impact on air quality would be considered significant.

In developing thresholds of significance for air pollutants, the BAAQMD considered the emission levels for which a project's individual emissions would be cumulatively considerable. If a project exceeds the identified significance thresholds, its emissions would be cumulatively considerable, resulting in significant adverse air quality impacts to the region's existing air quality conditions. The following analysis assesses the potential project-level air quality impacts and CO impacts associated with implementation of the Plan.

During implementation of the proposed Plan, short-term degradation of air quality may occur due to the release of particulate matter emissions (i.e., fugitive dust) generated by activities that require the use of mechanical equipment. Emissions from equipment are also anticipated and would include CO, nitrogen oxide (NO_x), reactive organic gases (ROG), directly emitted particulate matter (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀), and TACs such as diesel exhaust particulate matter.

Effects on air quality from implementation of the proposed Plan would be greatest during vegetation removal due to the disturbance of soils. If not properly controlled, these activities would temporarily generate particulate emissions. Sources of fugitive dust would include disturbed soils at the HNA. Unless properly controlled, vehicles leaving the site would deposit dirt and mud on local streets, which could be an additional source of airborne dust after it dries. PM₁₀ emissions would vary from day to day, depending on the nature and magnitude of construction activity and local weather conditions. PM₁₀ emissions would depend on soil moisture, silt content of soil, wind speed, and the amount of operating equipment. Larger dust particles would settle near the source, while fine particles would be dispersed over greater distances from the construction site. However, vegetation removal activities would be relatively minimal and would be temporary. Therefore, these impacts would be less than significant. Furthermore, the proposed project would be in compliance

with BAAQMD regulations related to fugitive dust emissions, further reducing the potential impact related to particulate matter emissions.

In addition to dust-related PM₁₀ emissions, equipment powered by gasoline and diesel engines would generate CO, SO₂, NO_x, ROG and some soot particulate (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀) in exhaust emissions. These emissions would be temporary and limited to the immediate area surrounding the areas of vegetation removal.

Long-term air pollutant emission impacts are also those associated with mobile sources (e.g., vehicle trips) and energy sources (e.g., natural gas) related to implementation of the proposed Plan. It is anticipated that most of the resulting biomass associated with eucalyptus removal proposed as part of the Plan would be shipped by truck to a power plant or other methods as mentioned above. However, eucalyptus removal activities would be temporary, and these truck trips would terminate as removal is completed. Therefore, even with these temporary truck trips, implementation of the proposed Plan would not substantially increase the number of vehicle trips to and from the HNA or include new energy intensive uses, no other long-term air pollutant emission impacts are anticipated.

Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State ambient air quality standards. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Localized CO Impacts. Emissions and ambient concentrations of CO have decreased dramatically in the Bay Area with the introduction of the catalytic converter in 1975. No exceedances of the State or federal CO standards have been recorded at Bay Area monitoring stations since 1991. The BAAQMD's 2022 CEQA Guidelines include recommended methodologies for quantifying concentrations of localized CO levels for proposed development projects. A screening level analysis using guidance from the BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines was performed to determine the impacts of the project. The screening methodology provides a conservative indication of whether the implementation of a project would result in significant CO emissions. According to the BAAQMD's 2022 CEQA Guidelines, a project would result in a less than significant impact to localized CO concentrations if the following screening criteria are met:

- The project is consistent with an applicable congestion management program established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways, and the regional transportation plan and local congestion management agency plans.
- Project traffic would not increase traffic volumes at affected intersections to more than 44,000 vehicles per hour.
- The project would not increase traffic volumes at affected intersections to more than 24,000 vehicles per hour where vertical and/or horizontal mixing is substantially limited (e.g., tunnel, parking garage, bridge underpass, natural or urban street canyon, or below-grade roadway).

Implementation of the proposed Plan would not conflict with standards established by the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC). As discussed above, implementation of the proposed Plan would not substantially increase the number of vehicle trips to and from the HNA. The project's contribution to peak-hour traffic volumes at intersections in the vicinity of the project site would be

well below 44,000 vehicles per hour. Similarly, the project would not increase traffic volumes at affected intersections to more than 24,000 vehicles such that vertical and/or horizontal mixing would be substantially limited. As such, implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in localized CO concentrations that exceed State or federal standards, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

- c. *Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)? (Less Than Significant Impact)*

Sensitive receptors are defined as residential uses, schools, daycare centers, nursing homes, and medical centers. Individuals particularly vulnerable to diesel particulate matter are children, whose lung tissue is still developing, and the elderly, who may have serious health problems that can be aggravated by exposure to diesel particulate matter. Exposure from diesel exhaust associated with construction activity contributes to both cancer and chronic non-cancer health risks.

According to the BAAQMD, a project would result in a significant impact if it would: individually expose sensitive receptors to TACs resulting in an increased cancer risk greater than 10.0 in one million, an increased non-cancer risk of greater than 1.0 on the hazard index (chronic or acute), or an annual average ambient PM_{2.5} increase greater than 0.3 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³). A significant cumulative impact would occur if the project, in combination with other projects located within a 1,000-foot radius of the project site, would expose sensitive receptors to TACs resulting in an increased cancer risk greater than 100.0 in one million, an increased non-cancer risk of greater than 10.0 on the hazard index (chronic), or an ambient PM_{2.5} increase greater than 0.8 µg/m³ on an annual average basis. Impacts from substantial pollutant concentrations are discussed below.

The HNA is generally surrounded by urban development, including existing residential and school uses that could be exposed to diesel emission exhaust during the vegetation removal activities. However, these activities would be minimal and temporary and are not anticipated to exceed BAAQMD thresholds. Therefore, sensitive receptors would not be exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations and potential impacts would be **less than significant**.

- d. *Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people? (Less Than Significant Impact)*

During implementation of the proposed Plan, some odors may be present due to diesel exhaust. However, these odors would be temporary and localized. Because the project's potential odor impacts are localized and temporary, they would not adversely affect a substantial number of people and would not result in frequent odor complaints. Implementation of the proposed Plan would not include any activities or operations that would generate objectionable odors as may be more commonly observed with wastewater treatment, landfills and composters, heavy manufacturers and food processors, and, once operational, the project would not be a source of odors. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

5.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☒	☐	☐
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The information and analysis in this section is based, in part, on the Biological Resources Assessment prepared for the HNA (**Appendix A**).¹⁰

The project site consists of the 107.18-acre HNA and is divided into three sections: HNA North (24.22 acres), Madera Property (9.53 acres) and HNA South (73.43 acres). Elevations ranges from approximately 150 and 650 feet above sea level. The project site is characterized by steep hillslopes with predominantly western and southern exposures. Several stream/drainage channels are present in the HNA and flow in the southwest direction into culverts beneath the adjacent residential area to the southwest. Some of the drainages occur within concrete v-ditches and become natural stream channels further downstream within the HNA. Streams/drainages are likely to be considered jurisdictional features by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and subject to regulation under Section 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act and/or the California Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act.

¹⁰ LSA. 2024. Biological Resources Assessment, Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan, El Cerrito, California. October 2023. (Appendix A).

Vegetation in the HNA is characterized by native and non-native grassland, riparian scrub and woodland, oak woodland, and other scrub and “soft” chaparral, in addition to extensive introduced landscaping and naturalized non-native species such as eucalyptus and pine. There are 6 major vegetation cover types within the HNA, as described in Section 3.1.2, Existing Conditions, above and depicted in Figure 3-3.

Several common wildlife species inhabit the project site. Most of the bird species observed were foraging in the oak woodland and scrub habitats. A few birds, such as turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), and common raven (*C. corax*) were observed flying over the project site. No active bird nests were identified during the reconnaissance-level field surveys, which were conducted in the late summer and early fall of 2023, but a few inactive stick nests were found in the onsite trees. Numerous resident birds were observed foraging at the project site, suggesting that they likely nested on or near the project site. Non-native fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger*) nests were also observed in the oak trees. Foraging black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and Botta’s pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*) burrows were observed in the non-native grasslands.

a. *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? (Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)*

Special-status species are defined as follows:

- Species that are listed, formally proposed for listing, or designated as candidates for listing as threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA);
- Species that are listed, or designated as candidates for listing, as rare, threatened, or endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA);
- Plant species on California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) Lists 1A, 1B, and 2 in the California Native Plant Society’s (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants;
- Animal species designated as Species of Special Concern or Fully Protected by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW);
- Species that meet the definition of rare, threatened, or endangered under Section 15380 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*; and
- Species considered being a taxon of special concern by the relevant local agencies.

To identify special-status plant and wildlife species known to occur or potentially occurring in the project site vicinity, the following resources were reviewed: Friends of Five Creek’s Native Plants of the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area, the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Vegetation Management

Plan,¹¹ Biological Resources Report for the Madera Property Fuel Reduction Project,¹² California Department of Fish and Wildlife's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation online system, California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Inventory of Rare Plants, and eBird's online system for the occurrence of special-status plant and/or wildlife species on or near the project site.

In addition, a biologist conducted biological field surveys at the project site on August 11, September 27, and October 3, 2023. Surveys involved walking throughout the project site to search for biological resources, such as the presence of special-status plants, wildlife, and their habitats, and sensitive habitats, such as wetlands and drainage channels. The potential presence of special-status species was based on an evaluation of the habitat types present on the site and the CNDDDB records and other occurrence information from the vicinity of the site. During the field survey, the biologist also investigated the presence of waters of the United States/waters of the State (including wetlands and drainages).

Based on the results of the database search and literature review, 10 special-status plant species and 31 special-status wildlife species have been documented in the vicinity of the project site. Table 5.A summarizes the potential for occurrence for each special-status plant and wildlife species occurring in the vicinity of the project site.

Table 5.A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ¹
Plants			
<i>Amsinckia lunaris</i> Bent-flowered fiddleneck	1B	Occurs in coastal bluff scrub, cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland, openings. Elevation: 3–500 m Blooms: March–June	Although suitable habitat is present, the potential for this species to occur is low due to the density of invasive plants. Nearest occurrence is near San Pablo Ridge approximately 2.4 miles from the project site.
<i>Arctostaphylos pallida</i> Pallid manzanita	FT/CE/1B	Broadleaved upland forest, close coned coniferous forest, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and chaparral. Grows on siliceous shale, sandy, or gravelly substrates in uplifted marine terraces. Elevation: 185–465 m Blooms: December–March	Although woodland habitat is present, suitable substrates are absent. Nearest CNDDDB occurrence is in Sobrante Ridge Regional Preserve approximately 3.0 miles from the project site.

¹¹ LSA Associates, Inc. (LSA). 1987. El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Vegetation Management Plan. Prepared for the City of El Cerrito.

¹² LSA Associates, Inc. (LSA). 2014. Biological Resources Report for the Madera Property Fuel Reduction Project, El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, CA.

Table 5.A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ¹
<i>Astragalus tener</i> var. <i>tener</i> Alkali milk-vetch	1B	Playas and vernal pools in freshwater wetlands, alkali sink, valley grassland, wetland-riparian. Elevation: 0–90 m Blooms: March–June	No suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a possibly extirpated 1900 record from an unknown location near the Stege Marsh in Richmond.
<i>Cirsium andrewsii</i> Franciscan thistle	1B	Northern coastal scrub, mixed evergreen forest, wetland-riparian. Elevation: 0–160 m Blooms: March–July	Although woodland habitat is present, the potential for this species to occur is low due to the density of invasive plants. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is near Tilden Regional Park approximately 3.3 miles from the project site.
<i>Dirca occidentalis</i> Western leatherwood	1B	Broad-leaved upland forest, chaparral, closed-cone coniferous forest, cismontane woodland, north coast coniferous forest, riparian forest, and riparian woodland on brushy slopes, mesic sites. Elevation: 30–395 m Blooms: January–March	Suitable woodland habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from an unknown location in Wildcat Canyon Regional Park approximately 0.4 mile from the project site.
<i>Fritillaria liliacea</i> Fragrant fritillary	1B	Northern coastal scrub, coastal prairie, valley grassland, wetland-riparian. Elevation: 0–360 m Blooms: February–April	Although woodland habitat is present, the potential for this species to occur is low due to the density of invasive plants. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a possibly extirpated 1938 record from an unknown location near the Mira Vista Country Club, near the north end of Wildcat Canyon Regional Park.
<i>Gilia millefoliata</i> Dark-eyed gilia	1B	Coastal strand. Elevation: 0–30 m Blooms: April–July	No suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from an 1863 record at unknown location in Oakland estimated at approximately 3.6 miles from the project site.
<i>Helianthella castanea</i> Diablo helianthella	1B	Broadleaved upland forest, chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, riparian woodland, valley and foothill grassland, usually within rocky azonal soils. Elevation: 60–300 m Blooms: April–June.	Suitable habitat present within the woodland and scrub habitat, but species likely not to occur due to prior disturbance and the introduction of invasive species. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from a presumed extant population near the San Pablo Reservoir approximately 2.2 miles from the project site.

Table 5.A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ¹
Loma Prieta hoita <i>Hoita strobilina</i>	1B	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, and riparian woodland on mesic serpentine sites. Elevation: 30–860 m Blooms: May–October	Although woodland is present, serpentine is absent from the project site. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from a presumed extant population in El Sobrante approximately 2.0 miles from the project site.
Santa Cruz tarplant <i>Holcarpa macradenia</i>	FT/CE/1B	Occurs in sandy-clay soil in coastal prairie, coastal scrub, and in valley and foothill grassland. Elevation: 10–220 m Blooms: June–October	Although valley and foothill grassland is present, this species is known to occur on sandy soils, which are absent from the project site. All extant populations of this plant have been reintroduced. The closest CNDDDB occurrences are northeast of the project site in Wildcat Canyon Regional Preserve approximately 0.7 mile from the project site.
Insects			
Monarch butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	FC/Sensitive Winter Roosting Sites	Winter roosts along the coast from northern Mendocino to Baja California, Mexico in wind-protected tree groves (eucalyptus, Monterey pine, cypress) with nectar and water sources nearby. Uses milkweed (<i>Asclepias</i> spp.) as host plants.	Suitable sheltered groves of trees present, but project site is likely located at too high of an elevation to provide suitable roost sites. Suitable breeding habitat present in onsite patches of milkweed; milkweed has been recorded on the project site (Xerces et al. 2023). Suitable nectar plants present. Individual monarch butterflies observed flying through project site during the October field survey. Closest CNDDDB occurrence of an overwintering roost is at the University of California Richmond Field Station, approximately 1.2 miles from the project site.
Crotch's bumble bee <i>Bombus crotchii</i>	–/ Candidate CE	Open grassland and scrub habitats supporting flowering plants, such as <i>Asclepias</i> sp., <i>Chaenactis</i> sp., <i>Lupinus</i> sp., <i>Medicago</i> sp., <i>Phacelia</i> sp., and <i>Salvia</i> sp.	Suitable habitat present. Closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1933 and 2015 record from Berkeley, approximately 2.4 miles from the project site.
Western bumble bee <i>Bombus occidentalis</i>	–/ Candidate CE	Variety of habitat types, supporting native flowering plants. Species has declined precipitously perhaps from disease.	Suitable habitat present. Closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1992 record from Berkeley Richmond Field Station, in Richmond, approximately 1.2 miles from the site.
Fish			
Steelhead (central California coast Distinct Population Segment) <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	FT/CSC	Pacific Ocean, San Francisco estuary, Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and tributaries.	No suitable habitat present. Onsite stream and drainages do not provide suitable habitat. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.

Table 5.A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ¹
Amphibians			
California tiger salamander <i>Ambystoma californiense</i>	FT/CT	Breeds in vernal pools, ponds, and stock ponds. Spends summer and early Fall in uplands surrounding breeding sites, taking refuge in small mammal burrows or other underground cover.	Although suitable upland habitat is present in grasslands, no suitable breeding habitat present at or near the site. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.
California red-legged frog <i>Rana draytonii</i>	FT/CSC	Found in lowlands and foothills in or near permanent ponds and streams with dense, shrubby, or emergent riparian vegetation.	Suitable non-breeding aquatic, upland, and dispersal habitat present in onsite streams, but species not known to occur at or near the project site (CDFW 2023). The closest extant CNDDDB occurrence is from near the San Pablo Dam approximately 2.2 miles from the project site. The CNDDDB also includes a 1956 record approximately 1.5 miles from the project site at Jewell Lake in Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley, but due to the presence of introduced predators, such as bullfrogs and fish, this occurrence is likely extirpated.
Foothill yellow-legged frog Central Coast Distinct Population Segment <i>Rana boylei</i>	FT/CE	Partly shaded, shallow streams and riffles with a rocky substrate.	No suitable habitat present. No extant CNDDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site.
Reptiles			
Northwestern pond turtle <i>Emys marmorata</i>	FC/CSC	Ponds, marshes, rivers, streams, and irrigation ditches with aquatic vegetation. Requires basking sites and adjacent grasslands or other open habitat for egg-laying.	Suitable aquatic habitat present in onsite streams, but lack of deep plunge pools and high-quality basking sites likely precludes the species from occurring. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from Jewell Lake in Tilden Regional Park approximately 1.5 miles from the project site.
Alameda whipsnake <i>Masticophis lateralis euryxanthusi</i>	FT/CT	Chaparral and rock outcrops. Also occurs in riparian woodland, forests, and grasslands where chaparral and rocky outcrops are present nearby.	Suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is approximately 1.6 miles from the project site.
Birds			
American white pelican <i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>	-/CSC	Occurs in shallow inland and coastal marine habitats, marshes, lakes, and rivers.	No suitable habitat present. Species does not breed in the project area but may fly over the project site. Species observed at the project site (eBird 2023). Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.

Table 5.A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ¹
Long-eared owl <i>Asio otus</i>	–/CSC	Woodlands and forests that are open or adjacent to grasslands, meadows, or shrublands.	Suitable nesting habitat present in trees on or adjacent to the site. No CNDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the site.
Short-eared owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	–/CSC	Open grasslands, meadows, and marshes with few trees. Requires dense ground vegetation for both roosting and nesting.	Suitable habitat present. Wintering/migrating individuals observed in Point Pinole Regional Park (eBird 2023). No CNDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the site.
Burrowing owl <i>Athene cunicularia</i>	–/CSC	Nests in burrows in grasslands and woodlands; often associated with ground squirrels. Will also nest in artificial structures (culverts, concrete debris piles, etc.)	Suitable habitat present, but not known to nest in the project area. During the time of the field surveys, no ground squirrel burrows were observed and the grass within the grassland was too tall for burrowing owl burrows. Species is known to winter along the San Francisco Bay shoreline in Richmond, Albany, and Berkeley. Closest CNDDB occurrences is in Richmond, approximately 1.5 miles from the project site.
White-tailed kite <i>Elanus leucurus</i>	–/CFP	Nests in shrubs and trees in open areas and forages in adjacent grasslands and agricultural land.	May nest and forage on the project site. Species observed at the project site. Closest CNDDB occurrences is approximately 3.2 miles from the project site.
Northern harrier <i>Circus hudsonius</i>	–/CSC	Nests and forages in meadows, grasslands, open rangeland, and fresh or saltwater marshes.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. The closest CNDDB occurrence is from the Berkeley Meadow near the Berkeley Marina approximately 3.2 miles from the project site.
Golden eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	–/CFP	Forages in rolling foothill or coast-range terrain, with open grassland and scattered large trees. Nests in large trees, on cliffs, and occasionally on power line poles.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. No CNDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site.
Bald eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Delisted/CE; CFP	Winters at lakes, reservoirs, river systems, and some rangelands and coastal wetlands throughout most of California. Breeds in mountainous habitats near reservoirs, lakes and rivers, mainly in the northern two-thirds of the State, in the Central Coast Range, and on Santa Catalina Island. Nests generally built in the upper canopy of large trees.	No suitable habitat present, but species could fly over the project site. The closest CNDDB occurrence is approximately 3.2 miles from the project site.

Table 5.A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ¹
American peregrine falcon <i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	Delisted/ Delisted/ CFP	Forages in open country, mountains, and seacoasts. Nests on high cliffs, bridges, and buildings.	No suitable nesting habitat present, but grasslands provide suitable foraging habitat.
Loggerhead shrike <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	–/CSC	Found in grasslands and open shrub or woodland communities. Nests in dense shrubs or trees and forages in scrub, open woodlands, grasslands, and croplands. Frequently uses fences, posts, and utility lines as hunting perches.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present, but species is rare in the project vicinity. No CNDDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site.
Vaux's swift <i>Chaetura vauxi</i>	–/CSC	Grasslands and agricultural fields; nests in dense vegetation in large hollow trees near open water; forages in most habitats but prefers rivers and lakes.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. Species observed at the project site. Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.
Olive-sided flycatcher <i>Contopus cooperi</i>	–/CSC	Coniferous forests with open canopies.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. Species observed at the project site. Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.
Purple martin <i>Progne subis</i>	–/CSC	Occurs in woodlands; nests in tree snags and abandoned woodpecker cavities and human-made structures.	Suitable nesting habitat present, but species is rare in the County. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.
Grasshopper sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	–/CSC	Occurs in grasslands with coyote brush and other shrubs.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.
Tricolored blackbird <i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	–/CT, CSC	Nests in dense vegetation near open water, forages in grasslands and agricultural fields.	No suitable nesting habitat present, but site provides suitable foraging habitat. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.
Yellow warbler <i>Dendroica petechia</i>	–/CSC	Nests in extensive willow riparian woodlands.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present, but species is a rare breeder in the County. May forage on the site during migration. Species observed during migration at the project site. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles.
Mammals			
Townsend's big-eared bat <i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	–/CSC	Found in wooded areas with caves or old buildings for roost sites.	No suitable roosting, hibernating habitat present, but could forage over the project site. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from Strawberry Canyon approximately 3.4 miles from the project site.

Table 5.A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ¹
Pallid bat <i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	–/CSC	Occupies a wide variety of habitats at low elevations. Most commonly found in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting.	Suitable roosting, hibernating, or foraging habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1943 record from an unknown location in El Cerrito.
Western red bat <i>Lasiurus blossevillii</i>	–/CSC	Often roosts and forages on or near riparian habitat. Roosts primarily in trees, 2-40 feet above ground, from sea level up through mixed conifer forests. Prefers habitat edges and mosaics with trees that are protected from above and open below with open areas for foraging.	Suitable roosting habitat present in trees and foraging habitat present. Species does not breed in the project area. No CNDDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site. Species observed near Jewell Lake in Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley.
Big free-tailed bat <i>Nyctinomops macrotis</i>	–/CSC	Typically in deserts and arid grasslands where rocky outcrops, canyons, or cliffs occur for roosting. Occasionally roosts in buildings, caves, and tree cavities.	No suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1916 record from an unknown location in Berkeley estimated at approximately 2.4 miles from the project site.
San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat <i>Neotoma fuscipes annectens</i>	–/CSC	Primarily along riparian areas within chaparral and woodlands. Feeds mainly on woody plants but also eats acorns, grasses, and fungi. Builds conspicuous stick houses in trees and on the ground.	Suitable habitat and species present within the riparian woodland, scrub, and trees on and adjacent to the site. Woodrat houses observed during the field surveys. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is approximately 4.2 miles from the project site.
American badger <i>Taxidea taxus</i>	–/CSC	Grassland, scrub, and woodland with loose-textured soils.	Suitable grassland habitat present, but site's proximity to residential development and isolation from large open space area likely preclude this species. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles.

Sources: LSA 2023 (CDFW 2023; eBIRD 2023; Glover 2009; Xerces et al. 2023).

Status Codes:

FT = Federal threatened.

FC = Federal candidate.

CE = California endangered.

CT = California threatened.

CFP = California fully protected.

CSC = California Species of Special Concern.

List 1B = California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) List 1B: plant considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.

– = No status

¹ Nearest records are based on CNDDDB (CDFW 2023) occurrences unless otherwise noted.

None of the special-status plant species are likely to occur within the majority of project site due to: (1) prior disturbance in the project area; (2) the introduction of non-native plant species; and (3) the absence of suitable habitat and substrates such as wetlands and serpentine substrates. Less disturbed areas on the project site, such as the oak woodland, riparian woodland, scrub, and native grasslands, may provide suitable habitat for special-status plant species. Implementation of the Plan would include vegetation removal, trail widening and construction, and other activities that could result in the direct removal of special-status plant species, if present during fuel reduction treatment activities. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-1**, which requires that protocol-level plant surveys be conducted where suitable habitat is present and adequate buffer areas be established if special-status plant species are identified, would reduce potential impacts to special-status plant species to **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1

Protocol-Level Plant Surveys. If fuel reduction treatments are proposed within the native grasslands, riparian woodland, drainage channels, or the less disturbed portions of the oak woodland and scrub habitat), focused plant surveys for sensitive native local plants and special-status plants should be conducted according to CDFW's *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Plant Populations and Natural Communities* by a qualified biologist. If special-status plant species or sensitive native local plant communities are identified within the project work limits by a qualified biologist, then a qualified biologist shall establish an adequate buffer area for each plant population and/or sensitive natural community to exclude activities that directly remove or alter the habitat of, or result in indirect adverse impacts on, the special-status plant species or sensitive natural community. Buffer areas shall be marked with temporary fencing or other barriers at the boundary of the disturbance. A qualified biologist shall oversee installation of a temporary, plastic mesh-type construction fence (Tensor Polygrid or equivalent) at least 4 feet (1.2 meters) tall around any established buffer areas to prevent encroachment by construction vehicles and personnel. The qualified biologist shall determine the exact location of the fencing. The fencing shall be strung tightly on posts set at maximum intervals of 10 feet (3 meters) and shall be checked and maintained weekly until all construction is complete.

Recommended buffer distances to minimize and avoid potential adverse impacts to listed plants or sensitive natural communities from activities are as follows:

- *Cutting and Removing Vegetation by Hand or Hand Tools (e.g., weeding):* 3-foot (1 meter) buffer.
- *Mechanical Removal of Individual Plants or Woody Vegetation (e.g., chainsaw, weed eater):* 3-foot buffer or up to height of removed vegetation (whichever is greater).
- *Removal of Vegetation with Heavy Equipment (e.g., bulldozer, tractor, "bush hog"):* 2 times the width of the equipment plus the height of vegetation.

With implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-1**, this impact would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

Special-status animal species that are known to occur in the vicinity of the project site and for which suitable habitat is present include the following:

- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*; Federal Candidate)
- Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*; State Candidate Endangered)
- Western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*; State Candidate Endangered)
- Alameda whipsnake (*Masticophis lateralis*; Federal and State Threatened)
- California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*; Federal Threatened, California Species of Special Concern)
- Northwestern pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*; Federal Candidate, California Species of Special Concern)
- American white pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Long-eared owl (*Asio otus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*; California Fully Protected)
- Northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*; California Fully Protected)
- Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*; State Endangered, California Fully Protected)

- American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*; California Fully Protected)
- Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Vaux's swift (*Chaetura vauxi*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Olive-sided flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Purple martin (*Progne subis*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*; State Threatened, California Species of Special Concern)
- Yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Townsend's western big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Western red bat (*Lasiurus frantzii*; California Species of Special Concern)
- San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes annectens*; California Species of Special Concern)
- American badger (*Taxidea taxus*; California Species of Special Concern)

Special-status wildlife species could be impacted both directly and indirectly during ongoing maintenance activities associated with implementation of the proposed Plan. The potential for protected resources to be impacted by maintenance activities associated with implementation of the proposed Plan are a function of the likelihood the species is present when the project activity occurs, as well as the type and duration of activities. Another factor is the sensitivity of the species or resource to disturbance. For example, a roosting bat may not react to activities near its roost during the day, whereas a raptor may abandon its nest if activities occur within 100 feet from the nest. Special-status wildlife species that are known to occur at the project site or have been documented in the vicinity of the project site, are discussed below.

Monarch Butterfly. The monarch butterfly is a federal candidate listed species that could breed within the project site. This species utilizes other flowering species for nectaring during the breeding season. Although no milkweed was observed during the reconnaissance-level field surveys and milkweed is not listed in the Friends of Five Creek plant list, milkweed has been recorded at the HNA by the Western Monarch Milkweed Tracker. Therefore, monarch butterflies could breed within the HNA. In addition, individual monarch butterflies were observed flying through the project site during the October 3, 2023, field survey. However, the project site is not known to support wintering monarch butterflies, and therefore, winter roosts (which are considered sensitive habitat by CDFW)

would likely not be impacted by fuel reduction activities. While it is possible that milkweed plants could be used by breeding monarchs, related impacts would be minimal because of the large area of open space that would be maintained relative to project-related habitat alteration, and because winter roosts would not be disturbed. In addition, **Mitigation Measures BIO-2a** and **BIO-2b** would further reduce potential impacts to monarch butterflies by requiring field surveys for milkweed prior to fuel treatment activities and detailing restrictions for vegetation control activities that may occur during the monarch breeding season in areas containing milkweed and nectar plants.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2a

Milkweed Field Surveys. Prior to fuel treatment activities, appropriately timed field surveys (generally June through September) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to identify, map, and estimate (a) stand sizes, densities, and number and species of milkweed (*Asclepias* spp. and others); (b) number and species of adult nectar plants in the entire project site; and (c) record any observations of monarch activity.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2b**Vegetation Control Activities During Monarch Breeding Season.**

Vegetation control activities may occur between December 1 and March 14 without special restrictions. From March 15 to November 30 restrictions for vegetation control practices (e.g., ground disturbance, tree removal, mowing, grazing, herbicide application, or hand removal) during the monarch breeding season in areas containing milkweed and nectar plants shall apply. During the monarch breeding season from March 15-November 30, the City and its contractors may conduct vegetation control activities and other management actions provided that:

- Site specific buffers shall be established by a qualified biologist around patches of milkweed and associated nectar plants where no vegetation control may occur.
- If milkweed and associated nectar plants cannot be avoided, a qualified biologist shall complete pre-activity surveys. If no monarch breeding activity is identified, Contractors may proceed with vegetation control activities subject to conditions below. If monarch breeding activity is identified, the milkweed stand shall be avoided until a qualified biologist implements a salvage and relocation plan that has been reviewed and approved by the applicable Resource Agency.
- Unoccupied growing milkweed shall be avoided by a minimum of 2 feet during the application of herbicides (target spray, cut stump, wiping and wicking). Herbicide application within 125 feet of a milkweed plant shall be conducted with a low-pressure backpack sprayer to reduce the risk of drift.

- No broad-spectrum herbicide application shall take place within 125 feet of occupied monarch habitat when wind speeds exceed 10 mph, or temperatures exceed 85°F to minimize potential for drift and volatilization.
- No persistent or pre-emergent herbicides shall be used within 125 feet of milkweed or other occupied monarch habitats.
- No prescribed fire treatment shall occur within 125 feet of habitat occupied by monarchs during the active monarch season.
- Mowing shall not be conducted within 125 feet of active monarch breeding habitat (adults or larvae) during the breeding season March 15-November 30. Mowing projects affecting nectar plants any time of year within 125 feet of active monarch habitat shall only be conducted when temperatures are above 55 degrees on a sunny day and 60 degrees on cloudy days to avoid injuring adult monarchs.
- If mowing occurs from March to June near areas where breeding occurs, mowing height shall be set to a minimum of 10-12 inches to avoid cutting newly emerged milkweed plants.

With implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-2a and BIO-2b**, potential impacts on monarch butterflies would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

Crotch's and Western Bumble Bee. The Crotch's and western bumble bee are Candidate State Endangered listed species. These species are known to occur in grassland and scrub habitat where suitable native nectar plants are present. These species historically occurred in the region but are now considered rare. Due to the presence of suitable flowering plant species, these species, although unlikely due to their rarity, could be present. Should Crotch's and/or western bumble bee colonies or overwintering queens be present in underground nests within the project site, construction activities could adversely affect this species and its habitat, resulting in a potentially significant impact to these bumblebee species. As such, implementation of the proposed Plan would include **Mitigation Measure BIO-3**, which requires pre-activity surveys prior to ground disturbing activities to identify bumble bee activity and development of a protection plan, in order to reduce impacts to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure BIO-3

Foraging Bumble Bee Pre-activity Surveys. A minimum of three pre-activity surveys shall be conducted within 40 days during appropriate activity periods (i.e., April through September) prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities to identify bumble bee foraging activity. The pre-activity surveys shall occur when temperatures are above 60° Fahrenheit (15.5°Celsius) and not during wet conditions (e.g., foggy, raining, or drizzling). The survey

shall be conducted at least 2 hours after sunrise and 3 hours before sunset and shall occur at least 1 hour after rain subsides. Preferably, the survey should be conducted during sunny days with low wind speeds (less than 8 miles per hour), but surveying during partially cloudy days or overcast conditions are permissible if the surveyors can still see their own shadow. Surveys shall be repeated for each year of project activities.

If Crotch's and/or western bumble bees, or potential Crotch's or western bumble bees (since bumble bees can be difficult to identify in the field) are observed within the project site, a plan to protect Crotch's and/or western bumble bee nests and individuals shall be developed and implemented in consultation with CDFW and USFWS. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following measures:

- Specifications for fuel treatment timing and sequencing requirements (e.g., avoidance of raking, mowing, tilling, or other ground disturbance until late March to protect overwintering queen bumble bees);
- Establishment of appropriate no-disturbance buffers for bumble bee nest sites to avoid impacts to the bees and monitoring by a qualified biologist to ensure compliance if bumble bee nests are identified;
- Restrictions associated with fuel treatment practices, equipment, or materials that may harm bumble bees (e.g., avoidance of pesticides/herbicides, BMPs to minimize the spread of invasive plant species);
- Provisions to avoid Crotch's and/or western bumble bees, or potential western bumble bees if observed away from a bumble bee nest during project activity (e.g., ceasing of project activities until the animal has left the active work area on its own volition);
- Prescription of an appropriate restoration seed mix targeted for the western bumble bee, including native plant species known to be visited by native bumble bee species and containing a mix of flowering plant species with continual floral availability through the entire active season of the western bumble bee (March through September); and
- Avoidance of herbicide applications that are toxic to bumble bees for vegetation management activities.

With implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-3**, potential impacts to Crotch's and western bumblebees would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

California Red-Legged Frog. Suitable non-breeding aquatic, upland, and dispersal habitat is present in onsite streams; however, the species has not been recorded at the project site. The nearest occurrence of the California red-legged frog is at Jewell Lake, approximately 1.5 miles from the project site. Therefore, impacts related to the California red-legged frog would be **less than significant**. **Alameda Whipsnake.** Alameda whipsnake is a federal and State listed threatened species that occurs in chaparral and rock outcrops and adjacent habitats, such as riparian woodland, oak woodland, and grasslands. Although very little high-quality chaparral habitat is present, the project site provides suitable habitat for this species. Focused habitat field surveys for Alameda whipsnake at the project site in 1993 determined that the project site provides suitable habitat for this species. However, no CNDDDB occurrences have been recorded at the project site and the closest non-historic CNDDDB occurrence was recorded near the San Pablo Dam, approximately 2.7 miles from the project site. The likelihood that Alameda whipsnake occurs at the project site is low and therefore, impacts related to the Alameda whipsnake would be **less than significant**. **Northwestern Pond Turtle.** The stream channels that convey larger amounts of water could support northwestern pond turtles and therefore, this species could be present during periods of high flows. However, implementation of the proposed Plan would not impact any streams on the project site with implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-7a** (see Section 5.2.b, below). Therefore, impacts related to the northwestern pond turtle would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**. **Special-Status Birds and Other Nesting Bird Species.** Several special-status bird species are known to occur at or near the project site. These bird species could nest, winter, and/or migrate through the project site. Some of these bird species, such as the American peregrine falcon, could forage on the project site, but are unlikely to nest at or adjacent to the site due to the lack of suitable nesting habitat. Special-status birds observed at the project site include white-tailed kite, olive-sided flycatcher, and Vaux's swift, among others. Several other special-status birds have been recorded in the project vicinity. White-tailed kite is a commonly observed species in the San Francisco Bay Area, where the species is often found roosting in trees in urban areas where large trees are present. The nearest observation of white-tailed kite to the HNA is near Camp Herms, approximately 0.5 mile east of the HNA. The HNA is surrounded by urban development containing large trees and other potential nesting and roosting trees, and nesting and roosting habitat is found within the HNA and in the surrounding open-space areas (e.g., Wildcat Creek, Tilden Park and East Bay Regional Park District) that are less than 0.5 mile from the HNA. Regarding golden eagle, no observation records exist and the nearest suitable habitat for the species is in the Wildcat Creek drainage area, where open grasslands provide foraging opportunities for golden eagles. The nearest known nest location for the golden eagle is in Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve, approximately 6.3 miles southeast of the HNA. Therefore, it is unlikely that golden eagles are present within the HNA, and no impacts are anticipated; therefore, mitigation is not required.

The proposed project would remove approximately 30 acres of eucalyptus trees in several patches, each not exceeding 12 acres. Tree removal would occur multiple phases, which would reduce potential impacts associated with the removal of habitat for white-tailed kite, golden eagle, and other special-status species. In addition, these areas would be revegetated with native vegetation that would enhance the natural habitat within the HNA. Therefore, the removal of mature trees

from the HNA would not substantially restrict the range of white-tailed kite or golden eagle. Further, proposed tree removals would likely increase the amount of foraging area for white tailed kite in the HNA. In addition, based on the distance from the nearest known nesting location for the golden eagle, the removal of eucalyptus trees at the HNA is not anticipated to impact nesting habitat for golden eagles and therefore will not restrict the range of the species in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Proposed construction of the project could result in a potentially significant impact to nesting birds, either directly from removing the nest or indirectly from noise or human presence during construction of the proposed project. Active nests of special-status and other native bird species are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and/or California Fish and Game Code. Breeding birds are most likely to abandon nests early in the nest cycle. If the young birds are forced to fledge early, they could be subject to predation or starvation, which could result in reproductive failure. This impact would be considered potentially significant. Implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-4a and BIO-4b**, requiring pre-activity surveys for nesting birds and establishment of appropriate buffers, would ensure potential direct and indirect impacts to nesting birds during all fuel reduction treatment activities would be reduced to **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4a

Nesting Bird Surveys. Prior to fuel reduction treatment activities occurring during the nesting bird season (February 1 through September 15), a pre-activity activity surveys for nesting birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no nests will be disturbed during project implementation. Surveys will be conducted no more than seven days prior to the initiation of fuel reduction treatment activities. During this survey, the biologist shall inspect all trees and other potential nesting habitats (e.g., shrubs, ground, and structures) for nests in the impact area plus a surrounding buffer (generally 250 feet for passerines, 1,000 feet for raptors, and 0.5 mile for the golden eagle), as determined by the qualified biologist, based on the intensity of disturbance and duration of the vegetation treatment. The survey area shall encompass reasonably accessible areas of the treatment site and the immediately surrounding vicinity viewable from the treatment site. The survey area shall be determined by a qualified biologist, based on the potential species in the area, location of suitable nesting habitat, intensity of potential disturbance, and duration of vegetation treatment. If removal of potential nesting substrate or project grading will occur during more than one nesting season, or in different parts of the site in phases over the course of a single season, then additional pre-activity surveys must be performed within seven days prior to initiation of work in any particular area. If the pre-activity activity survey does not identify the presence of any active nests on or within 300 feet of the site, construction or vegetation treatment activities may proceed.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4b

Nesting Bird Buffers. If nests known to have eggs or young, or that cannot be confirmed to be inactive or to lack eggs or young, are found, or adults are demonstrating nesting behavior, a qualified biologist shall establish an appropriate fuel reduction-free buffer around each nest. Generally, a buffer of 1,000 feet for large raptors, 500 feet for smaller raptors, and 250 feet for passerines (songbirds) is adequate to avoid causing nest abandonment. Factors to be considered for determining buffer size and location shall include presence of natural buffers provided by vegetation or topography, nest height above ground, baseline levels of noise and human activity, species sensitivity, and expected treatment activities. The buffer shall remain in place until the qualified biologist has confirmed that the nest is no longer active.

If a smaller buffer distance than that identified above is necessary and determined to be appropriate for a particular nest or nests, a qualified biologist shall monitor the nest(s) before the activity to document baseline nesting behavior and monitor the nest during vegetation treatment or road construction to ensure nesting birds are not exhibiting signs of stress and territorial behavior. If signs of stress are observed during the monitoring, treatment or construction activities shall cease or buffer shall increase, as determined by a qualified biologist, to a sufficient distance where the nesting birds are no longer exhibiting signs of stress.

To prevent encroachment, the buffer shall be clearly marked for avoidance. No personnel or equipment shall be allowed to enter the protective buffer until the qualified biologist determines that the young have fully fledged and will no longer be adversely affected by the project. Nests of common birds within the buffer need not be monitored during treatment. The qualified biologist shall observe any identified active raptor nests prior to the start of any construction-related activities to establish a behavioral baseline of the adults and any nestlings, and the nest site(s) shall be monitored by the biologist periodically to see if the birds are stressed by the construction activities and if the protective buffer needs to be increased. The established buffer shall remain in effect until the young have fledged or the nest is no longer active as confirmed by the biologist.

With implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-4a** and **BIO-4b**, potential impacts to nesting birds would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

Special-Status Bats and Other Bat Species. Several bat species, including special-status bat species, could roost and/or forage at the project site. All roosts of native bats, regardless of their status, are protected by California Fish and Game Code. Townsend's western big-eared bat (California Species

of Special Concern) may briefly forage over the project site but would not roost on the project site due to the lack of suitable roosting habitat. Suitable habitat for pallid bat and western red bat, both of which are California Species of Special Concern, and other bat species could roost in the onsite trees. Pallid bats will roost in tree cavities and in structures, while western red bats roost in trees. Western red bats typically roost in riparian habitats but could roost in any of the larger onsite trees. This species does not breed in the area but does occur in the spring and fall during migration.

Roosting bats could be disturbed, killed, or injured by tree removal activities, if present in fuel reduction activity areas. Disturbance of roosting special-status bats would be a potentially significant impact. Implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-5a** and **BIO-5b** would reduce potential direct and indirect impacts to bat species during all fuel reduction treatment activities by requiring pre-activity tree habitat assessments and implementation of appropriate tree removal methods.

Mitigation Measure BIO-5a Focused Tree Habitat Assessment for Bat Species. Prior to any tree removal during the maternity roosting period (April 15 to August 31) or hibernation period (October 15 to February 28), a focused tree habitat assessment shall be conducted by a qualified biologist of all trees that will be removed or impacted by vegetation treatment activities. Trees containing suitable potential bat roost habitat features would then be clearly marked. The habitat assessments should be conducted enough in advance to allow preparation of a report with specific recommendations, and to ensure tree removal can be scheduled during seasonal periods of bat activity if required. If it is determined that day roosting bats are unlikely to occur, the tree may be removed as described below. If the absence of roosting bats cannot be confirmed, then the removal of trees providing suitable maternity or hibernation roosting habitat should only be conducted during seasonal periods of bat activity, including between March 1 and April 15 or between September 1 and October 15.

Mitigation Measure BIO-5b Tree Removal. Appropriate methods shall be used to minimize the potential of harm to bats during tree removal. Such methods may include but are not limited to using a two-step tree removal process. This method is conducted over two consecutive days and works by creating noise and vibration by cutting non-habitat branches and limbs from habitat trees using chainsaws only (no other heavy machinery) on Day 1. The noise and vibration disturbance, together with the visible alteration of the tree, is very effective in causing bats that emerge nightly to feed, to not return to the roost that night. The remainder of the tree is removed on Day 2. A biologist qualified in two-step tree removal is required on Day 1 to supervise and instruct the tree-cutters who will be on the site conducting the work, but only for a sufficient length of time to train

all tree cutters who will conduct two-step removal of habitat trees. The biologist is generally not required on Day 2, unless a very large cavity is present and a large colony is suspected. Fallen branches and trees shall be left onsite overnight to allow any bats that may be present to fly away during the nighttime hours. Removal of native oaks and riparian trees shall be avoided where possible.

With implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-5a** and **BIO-5b**, potential impacts on bats would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat. The San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat is a California Species of Special Concern. This species occurs in riparian woodland, woodland/forests, and scrub habitat and has been observed at the project site. Woodrat houses were observed in the northern portion of the project site, but this species could occur throughout the project site where suitable habitat is present. Woodrat houses on the ground and in trees could be destroyed by tree removal and other fuel reduction treatment activities, leading to direct and indirect mortality of San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat. This is a potentially significant impact. Therefore, **Mitigation Measure BIO-6**, requiring a pre-activity survey for the San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat, would be implemented in order to impacts to this species to a **less than significant** level.

Mitigation Measure BIO-6

San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat Pre-activity Surveys. A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-activity survey for San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat nests prior to the start of project activities. Surveys will be conducted in the immediate work area and a 25-foot buffer around those areas. If woodrat nests are present, the nests will be flagged in the field and delineated on project site maps in order to avoid potential impacts to woodrat nests during vegetation treatment activities. For any woodrat nests that cannot be avoided, a woodrat nest relocation plan shall be prepared and submitted to CDFW for approval. At a minimum, the plan shall include the phased dismantling and relocation of the nest materials to a suitable location, and the installation of artificial shelters at a ratio of 1:1 per dismantled nest to provide readily accessible refugia for dispersing individuals. If breeding woodrats are present, relocation of houses shall be delayed until the breeding season is over or the qualified biologist otherwise determines that young are no longer present.

With implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-6**, potential impacts to the San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

American Badger. Grasslands present on the site may be suitable for the American badger, but this species is not likely to occur due to the project site's proximity to urban development and isolation from larger open grassland habitat. In addition, the soil characteristics of the rock outcrop would limit burrowing activities in the majority of the project area. Nevertheless, **Mitigation Measure BIO-**

7b (see Section 5.2.b below), which protects native grassland, would ensure that if present, impacts to the American badger would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

Overall, with implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** through **BIO-7**, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS. Impacts would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

b. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? (Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

The project site consists of the HNA, an open space area in the City. Vegetation in the HNA is characterized by native and non-native grassland, riparian scrub and woodland, oak woodland, and other scrub and “soft” chaparral, in addition to extensive introduced landscaping and naturalized non-native species such as eucalyptus and pine. There are six major vegetation cover types within the HNA, as described above and depicted in Figure 3-3. Of the six major vegetation cover types, the areas of riparian woodlands and native grassland are considered sensitive plant communities under CEQA.

Riparian woodland occurs along the streams and drainages and occupies a relatively small acreage within the HNA. Riparian woodland occurs in the drainages northwest of Earl Court, southwest of Kent Court, north of Buckingham Drive, east of Gladys Avenue, and in the upper portion of the Wildwood drainage. Species present within the riparian woodland indicate the presence of water in the moist canyon bottom environment.

Native grasslands in the HNA consist of small, dispersed patches of native graminoids¹³, including perennial bunchgrasses. These are generally rare, but fairly common in certain areas, such as El Cerrito Memorial Grove and the Julian Fuel Break, which supports a healthy stand of purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*). The presence and relative abundance of native annual and perennial herbs is influenced by the level of historic and recent disturbance at a particular site.

To minimize disturbance to riparian habitat occurring adjacent to the fuel reduction area, riparian areas shall be clearly delineated by a qualified biologist, as required by **Mitigation Measure BIO-7a**. In addition, **Mitigation Measure BIO-7b** requires the proposed fuel treatments to avoid/minimize impacts to the purple needlegrass grasslands, other native grasslands, and other sensitive natural communities, if feasible and to provide compensatory mitigation for any impacted areas. In addition, the stands of native grasslands shall be avoided during fuel treatment activities.

Mitigation Measure BIO-7a Riparian Delineation. To minimize disturbance to riparian habitat occurring adjacent to the fuel reduction area, riparian areas shall be clearly delineated by a qualified biologist. Riparian areas shall be

¹³ In botany and ecology, a graminoid refers to a herbaceous plant with a grass-like morphology.

separated and protected from the work area through silt fencing, amphibian/reptile-friendly fiber rolls (i.e., no mono-filament), or other appropriate erosion control material. Material staging, and all other project-related activity shall be located as far as possible from riparian areas with no driving or parking of vehicles or equipment within the dripline of a riparian tree.

Mitigation Measure BIO-7b

Avoidance/Minimization of Purple Needlegrass and Other Grasslands. If feasible, the proposed fuel treatments shall avoid/minimize impacts to the purple needlegrass grasslands, other native grasslands, and other sensitive natural communities. The stands of native grasslands shall be avoided during fuel treatment activities.

If the native grasslands cannot be avoided, the loss of native grasslands shall be mitigated by restoring an equivalent amount of native grasslands onsite. The City shall reseed temporarily disturbed areas of native grassland habitat that are disturbed by fuel reduction activities with an appropriate weed-free native seed mix that contains the particular native grass seed and/or plugs. Any restored native grassland areas shall be monitored and reported on an annual basis, as required by CDFW.

With implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-7a** and **BIO-7b**, implementation of the proposed Plan would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities. Impacts would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

- c. *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? (Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)*

While several streams/drainage channels that may be considered jurisdictional features by the USACE and RWQCB and subject to regulation under Section 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act and/or the California Porter Cologne Act are present within the HNA, no other potential waters of the United States or State, such as seasonal wetlands or seeps, were observed during the reconnaissance-level field survey. However, the survey was conducted during the dry season when wetlands and seeps are less identifiable. Therefore, additional jurisdictional features, such as wetlands and seeps, could be present within the HNA. To address potential impacts on state or federally protected wetlands that may be present, **Mitigation Measure BIO-8** requires that onsite streams/drainages (and seasonal wetlands/seeps, if present) be avoided during the fuel reduction activities, where possible. In addition, **Mitigation Measure BIO-8** requires that no fill, including plant cuttings, rocks, or soils will be placed in these jurisdictional features without obtaining the appropriate permits from the regulatory agencies and implementing mitigation in accordance with permit requirements.

Mitigation Measure BIO-8

Streams/Drainages. Potential impacts to potentially jurisdictional features, such as the onsite streams/drainages (and seasonal wetlands/seeps, if present), are subject to regulation by the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW. These features will be avoided during the fuel reduction activities, where possible. No fill, including plant cuttings, rocks, or soils will be placed in these jurisdictional features without the appropriate permits from the regulatory agencies. If these features are impacted, the City would need to obtain the required permits from the relevant regulatory agencies, including the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB. These permits would include conditions and BMPs that the City would implement during fuel reduction activities. These permits may also specify mitigation, which the City would provide as specified by the regulatory agencies.

With implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-8**, implementation of the proposed Plan would not have a substantial adverse effect on any state or federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Impacts would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

- d. Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites? (Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)*

The HNA provides a movement corridor for several wildlife species, including aquatic species that use the stream and riparian channels during the wet season and numerous species of birds, amphibians, reptiles, insects, and mammals that move through the HNA. However, wildlife movement within the streams, drainages, riparian, woodland, and grassland habitat would not be permanently impacted by the proposed fuel management activities. Wildlife that currently inhabit the project site are expected to continue to move through the site after the fuel reduction activities have been implemented. In addition, although the HNA is not known to support important wildlife nursery sites, several species of birds and bats could breed at the HNA. Implementation of mitigation measures for nesting birds, roosting bats, and other wildlife species, as detailed in Mitigation Measures BIO-2 through BIO-7, would protect wildlife nursery sites, if present. Impacts would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

- e. Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? (Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)*

Chapter 7, Resources and Hazards, of the City's General Plan establishes goals, policies, and actions to protect natural resources within the City. Specifically, Policies R1.1, R1.2, R1.3, R1.7, R1.9, and R1.11 state:

Policy R1.1

Habitat Protection. Preserve oak/woodland, riparian vegetation, creeks, native grasslands, wildlife corridors and other important wildlife habitats. Loss of these

habitats should be fully offset through creation of habitat of equal value. Compensation rate for habitat re-creation shall be determined by a qualified biologist.

- Policy R1.2** **Rare and Endangered Species.** Limit development in areas that support rare and endangered species. If development of these areas must occur, any loss of habitat should be fully compensated on site. If off-site mitigation is necessary, it should occur within the El Cerrito planning area whenever possible and must be accompanied by plans and a monitoring program prepared by a qualified biologist.
- Policy R1.3** **Potential Environmental Impacts.** Encourage development patterns that minimize impacts on the City's biological, visual, and cultural resources, and integrate development with open space areas.
- Policy R1.7** **Creek Protection.** Preserve riparian vegetation, protect owners and buyers of property from erosion and flooding, and increase public access to the creeks. Lands adjacent to riparian areas should be protected as public or private permanent open space through dedication or easements.
- Policy R1.9** **Development Near Creeks.** For development adjacent to creeks and major drainages, provide adequate building setbacks from creek banks, provision of access easements for creek maintenance purposes and for public access to creekside amenities, and creek improvements such as bank stabilization. Also protect riparian vegetation outside the setback.
- Policy R1.11** **Native Plant Communities.** Encourage use of native plant species for landscaping in hillside areas, preserve unique plant communities, and use fire-preventive landscaping techniques.

As described above, implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, including **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** through **BIO-8**, would ensure that impacts to special-status species, creeks, habitat, and native plant communities would be reduced to a less than significant level. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not conflict with the policies or goals of the City's General Plan.

Chapter 13.28 of the City's Municipal Code provides regulations for the removal of private and public trees. Although implementation of the proposed Plan would include vegetation removal, including the removal of mature trees, proposed activities would be implemented to reduce the threat of fire hazard in the area and would not conflict with Chapter 13.28 of the City's Municipal Code.

Overall, with implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** through **BIO-8**, implementation of the proposed Plan would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Impacts would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

- f. Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? (No Impact)*

The HNA is not situated within the limits of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not conflict with any approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan. **No impact** would occur.

5.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The information and analysis in this section is based, in part, on the Cultural Resources Assessment prepared for the project site (**Appendix B**).¹⁴

a. *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5? (No Impact)*

CEQA defines a “historical resource” as a resource which meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Listed in, or eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR);
- Listed in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5020.1(k);
- Identified as significant in a historical resource survey meeting the requirements of Section 5024.1(g) of the PRC; or
- Determined to be a historical resource by a project's lead agency (PRC Section 21084.1 and *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5[a]).

The CRHR defines a “historical resource” as a resource that meets one or more of the following criteria: (1) associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns or local or regional history of the cultural heritage of California or the United States; (2) associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history; (3) embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values; or (4) has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation. Under CEQA, historical resources can include precontact (i.e., Native American) archaeological deposits, historic-period archaeological deposits, historic buildings, and historic districts.

¹⁴ Solano Archaeological Services, LLC. 2023. Cultural Resources Technical Memorandum, Cultural Resources Investigation – Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan, City of El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California. October 18. (Appendix B).

Background research and a field survey were conducted to identify potential cultural resources at the project site. The results are summarized below.

On September 18, 2023, a cultural resources records search of the project site and a 0.5-mile radius was conducted by the Northwest Information Center (NWIC). The NWIC, an affiliate of the State of California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), is the official State repository of cultural resource records and reports for Contra Costa County. As part of the background research, national, State, and local inventories for cultural resources were also reviewed and the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted. The record search results identified one cultural resource, a house built in 1898, located immediately adjacent to the project site. The NWIC record search results also reported six additional cultural resources within 0.5 mile of the project site. The NWIC also noted that two previous cultural resources investigations included at least a portion of the project site, and an additional five studies have been conducted within 0.5 mile of the project site. No resources were identified within the HNA.

A search of the Sacred Lands File (SLF) by the NAHC was also requested on August 15, 2023, to determine the potential presence of Native American cultural resources that might be affected by implementation of the proposed Plan. The NAHC responded on August 24, 2023, stating that the search of the SLF was positive, indicating that a culturally sensitive property had been identified within or near the project site. Although the NAHC noted that a culturally significant property was known to be present within or near the project site, none of the tribal representatives contacted as part of tribal consultation have expressed any concerns regarding this possible site.

On September 27, 2023, qualified archaeologists conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of the project site utilizing pedestrian transects. The previously documented 1898 house on Navellier Street was noted by the field team; however, no historic-era or early Native American sites, features, sensitive landforms, or soil types (e.g., midden) or artifacts were recorded on the project site as part of the pedestrian survey.

The proposed project would establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that would guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the City's HNA and would not include substantial ground disturbance. In addition, the literature review, database searches, and field survey indicated that no development of any kind has occurred in the project site. Consequently, the Cultural Resources Assessment determined that the project site has a low level of sensitivity for significant historic-era sites, features, or artifacts. As the previously documented 1898 house on Navellier Street, adjacent to the project site, would not be affected by implementation of the proposed Plan, implementation of the proposed Plan would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, and **no impact** would occur.

b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? (Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

According to the *State CEQA Guidelines*, "When a project will impact an archaeological site, a lead agency shall first determine whether the site is an historical resource" (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5(c)(1)). Those archaeological sites that do not qualify as historical resources shall be

assessed to determine if these qualify as “unique archaeological resources” (California PRC Section 21083.2).

As discussed above, the archival research, outreach to the Native American community, and an intensive field survey performed as part of the Cultural Resources Assessment did not document any indications of prehistoric activities at the project site or surrounding area. Although the NAHC indicated that a culturally significant property was known to be present near the project site, none of the tribal contacts and representatives have expressed any concerns regarding this possible site. In addition, the intensive field survey did not identify any potentially sensitive landforms or significant level terrain at the project site, suggesting it retains a low level of sensitivity for containing traces of early Native American occupation. In addition, the proposed project would establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that will guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the City’s HNA and would not include substantial ground disturbance. Therefore, the potential for the proposed fuel reduction activities to impact previously undiscovered archaeological resources is low. Nevertheless, implementation of **Mitigation Measure CUL-1** would be implemented to ensure work stoppage in the event of an archaeological discovery.

Mitigation Measure CUL-1

Unanticipated Archaeological Deposits. Should an archaeological deposit be encountered during project activities, all ground-disturbing activities within 25 feet shall be redirected and a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology shall be contacted to assess the situation, determine if the deposit qualifies as a historical resource, consult with agencies as appropriate, and make recommendations for the treatment of the discovery. If the deposit is found to be significant (i.e., eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources), the City shall be responsible for funding and implementing appropriate mitigation measures. Mitigation measures may include recording the archaeological deposit, data recovery and analysis, and public outreach regarding the scientific and cultural importance of the discovery. Upon completion of the selected mitigations, a report documenting methods, findings, and recommendations shall be prepared by the qualified archaeologist, and the final report shall be submitted to the Northwest Information Center at Sonoma State University. Significant archaeological materials shall be submitted to an appropriate local curation facility and used for future research and public interpretive displays, as appropriate.

With implementation of **Mitigation Measure CUL-1**, potential impacts to archaeological resources would be reduced to **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

c. Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? (Less Than Significant Impact)

Based on previous archaeological investigation and analysis, there is a low potential for the disturbance of archaeological human remains. However, if human remains are encountered at the project site, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5(e)(1) state that no further disturbance shall occur to the area of the find until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition of the remains pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately and shall make a determination within two working days of being notified. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner shall notify the NAHC by phone within 24 hours, and the NAHC shall then immediately determine and notify a Most Likely Descendent (MLD). With the permission of the landowner or his/her authorized representative, the MLD may inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection and make recommendations or preferences for treatment of the remains within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. MLD recommendations may include scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials, preservation of Native American human remains and associated items in place, relinquishment of Native American human remains and associated items to the descendants for treatment, or any other culturally appropriate treatment.

Compliance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code and PRC Section 5097.98 regarding the treatment of human remains would ensure that potential impacts to human remains would be **less than significant**.

5.6 ENERGY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The proposed project would establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that would guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the HNA. No new proposed buildings or energy intensive uses are proposed as part of the Plan. All work would be accomplished by use of hand crews or mechanical equipment; supported by chippers and/or burning as determined appropriate on a case-by-case basis, while conserving native vegetation. Implementation of the proposed Plan would expand and continue the maintenance activities already occurring at the HNA, and therefore would not result in a substantial increase in energy usage.

Therefore, the proposed project would have **no impact**, either individually or cumulatively, on energy.

5.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv. Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

a. *Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*

- i. *Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. (No Impact)*

The San Francisco Bay Area is one of the most seismically active regions in the United States. The significant earthquakes that occur in the Bay Area are generally associated with crustal movement along well-defined active fault zones of the San Andreas Fault system, which regionally trend in a northwesterly direction. Fault rupture is generally expected to occur along active fault traces that have exhibited signs of recent geological movement (i.e., within the last 11,000 years).

The State of California enacted the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act in 1972, requiring the State Geologist to delineate Earthquake Fault Zones (EFZ) along known active faults that have high potential for fault rupture. Active faults are defined as a fault that has surface displacement within

the last 11,000 years.¹⁵ State regulations prohibit habitable structures from being sited within 50 feet of an active fault. According to the California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application (“EQ Zapp”),¹⁶ the HNA is not located within an Earthquake Fault Zone. Therefore, fault rupture through the HNA is not anticipated, and implementation of the proposed Plan would not directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects related to fault rupture. **No impact** would occur.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking? (Less Than Significant Impact)

The project site is located in the San Francisco Bay Area, a region of intense seismic activity. Due to the location of the project site in a seismically active area, strong seismic ground shaking at the site is highly probable during the life of the project. The intensity of ground shaking would depend on the characteristics of the fault, distance from the fault, the earthquake magnitude and duration, and site-specific geologic conditions. The intensity of an earthquake is a subjective measure of the perceptible effects of a seismic event at a given point. The Modified Mercalli Intensity (MMI) scale is the most commonly used scale to measure the subjective effects of earthquake intensity. It uses values ranging from I to XII.¹⁷

Mapping has been compiled by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) for the likely shaking intensities in the Bay Area that would have a 10 percent chance of occurring in any 50-year period. A large earthquake (magnitude 6.7 or greater) on one of the major active faults in the region would generate severe (MMI 8) ground shaking at the HNA.¹⁸

The most significant adverse impact associated with strong seismic shaking is potential damage to structures and improvements. As the proposed project is a fire resiliency plan and would not include the construction of any new structures, no significant adverse impacts associated with strong seismic shaking would occur. Implementation of the proposed Plan would not create any new impacts related to strong seismic shaking beyond existing conditions and impacts would be **less than significant**.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? (Less Than Significant Impact)

Liquefaction is the transformation of loose, fine-grained sediment to a fluid-like state similar to quicksand. This phenomenon occurs due to strong seismic activity and lessens the soil’s ability to support a structural foundation. The primary factors affecting the possibility of liquefaction in soil are: (1) intensity and duration of earthquake shaking; (2) soil type and relative density;

¹⁵ California Department of Conservation (DOC). 2019. Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones. Website: www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/alquist-priolo (accessed January 2025).

¹⁶ California Department of Conservation (DOC). 2021. *California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application (“EQ Zapp”)*. Website: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/EQZApp/app/> (accessed January 2025).

¹⁷ United States Geological Survey (USGS). 2018. The Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale. Website: www.usgs.gov/natural-hazards/earthquake-hazards/science/modified-mercalli-intensity-scale?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects, (accessed January 2025).

¹⁸ Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). 2018. Probabilistic Earthquake Shaking Hazard Map. Website: <https://mtc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4a6f3f1259df42eab29b35dfcd086fc8> (accessed January 2025).

(3) overburden pressures; and (4) depth to groundwater. Soil most susceptible to liquefaction is clean, loose, fine-grained sands and non-plastic silts that are saturated.

Mapping has been compiled by the MTC and ABAG to delineate areas susceptible to liquefaction. According to the MTC and ABAG, liquefaction susceptibility at the project site is considered low to very low.¹⁹ Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure. This impact would be **less than significant**.

iv. Landslides? (Less Than Significant Impact)

A landslide generally occurs on relatively steep slopes and/or on slopes underlain by weak materials. According to the MTC and ABAG, the project site contains areas susceptible to landslides. Vegetation removal associated with implementation of the proposed Plan would increase the likelihood of landslides at the HNA; however, revegetation of the HNA with native plant species would stabilize soils. Implementation of the proposed Plan would not create any new impacts related to strong seismic shaking beyond existing conditions and impacts would be **less than significant**.

b. Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? (Less Than Significant Impact)

Vegetation removal associated with implementation of the proposed Plan could result in soil erosion between the time when vegetation removal is completed, and new native vegetation is established. Exposed soils could be entrained in stormwater runoff and transported off the project site. However, as discussed above, revegetation of the HNA with native plant species would stabilize soils. Overall, implementation of the proposed Plan would not create any new impacts related to substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil beyond existing conditions and impacts would be **less than significant**.

c. Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? (Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated)

As discussed above, implementation of the proposed Plan would not create any new impacts related to landslides or liquefaction beyond existing conditions and the HNA is not anticipated to become unstable or result in on- or off-site landslides, liquefaction, or lateral spreading as a result of implementation of the proposed Plan. In addition, geotechnical analysis would be performed to assess the potential for soil instability to occur at the project site, especially in the Quarry Hill Grove and at the east wall of the former EBMUD property at Motorcycle Hill, as required by **Mitigation**

¹⁹ Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). 2018. Probabilistic Earthquake Shaking Hazard Map. Website: <https://mtc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4a6f3f1259df42eab29b35dfcd086fc8> (accessed January 2025).

Measure GEO-1. This geotechnical analysis would be performed prior to implementation of any actions proposed as part of the Plan.

Mitigation Measure GEO-1 **Geotechnical Analysis.** Prior to implementation of any actions proposed as part of the Plan, including vegetation removal, geotechnical analysis shall be performed to assess the potential for soil instability to occur at the project site. Geotechnical analysis shall include the evaluation of areas that contain steep slopes, such as the Quarry Hill Grove and at Motorcycle Hill. Specific geotechnical design recommendations shall be developed to mitigate the potential for soil instability, including stabilization using biotechnical stabilization measures. This measure shall be completed to the satisfaction of the City of El Cerrito Director of Public Works, or designee.

With implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**, which requires preparation of a geotechnical evaluation and implementation of recommendations to reduce potential slope instability, impacts related to unstable slopes would be reduced to **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

d. Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property? (Less Than Significant Impact)

Expansive soils are characterized by the potential for shrinking and swelling as the moisture content of the soil decreases and increases, respectively. Shrink-swell potential is influenced by the amount and type of clay minerals present and can be measured by the percentage of change in the soil volume. Soils underlying the project site are composed of cut and fill land associated with the Los Osos complex (9 to 30 percent slopes) and the Millsholm complex (9 to 30 percent slopes), quarry, and rock outcrop associated with the Xerorthents association according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey.²⁰

Implementation of the proposed Plan would not include the construction of new habitable structures and the conditions of the HNA would be generally the same as existing conditions. Therefore, impacts associated with expansive soils would be **less than significant**.

e. Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water? (No Impact)

Implementation of the proposed Plan would not include the construction or use of septic tanks, alternative wastewater disposal systems, or City operated sewers as no wastewater generation

²⁰ United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). 2023. Web Soil Survey. Website: <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx> (accessed January 2025).

would occur with implementation of the proposed Plan. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would have **no impact** associated with soils incapable of supporting alternative wastewater disposal systems.

f. Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? (Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

Although no paleontological resources or unique geological features are known to exist within or near the HNA, site disturbance activities associated with the implementation of the proposed Plan could result in the accidental discovery of paleontological resources. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-2** would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure GEO-2

Unanticipated Paleontological Resources. Should paleontological resources be encountered during project subsurface construction activities, all ground-disturbing activities within 25 feet shall be redirected and a qualified paleontologist contacted to assess the situation, consult with agencies as appropriate, and make recommendations for the treatment of the discovery. For purposes of this mitigation, a “qualified paleontologist” shall be an individual with the following qualifications: (1) a graduate degree in paleontology or geology and/or a person with a demonstrated publication record in peer-reviewed paleontological journals; (2) at least two years of professional experience related to paleontology; (3) proficiency in recognizing fossils in the field and determining their significance; (4) expertise in local geology, stratigraphy, and biostratigraphy; and (5) experience collecting vertebrate fossils in the field. If the paleontological resources are found to be significant and project activities cannot avoid them, measures shall be implemented to ensure that the project does not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of the paleontological resource. Measures may include monitoring, recording the fossil locality, data recovery and analysis, a final report, and accessioning the fossil material and technical report to a paleontological repository. Upon completion of the assessment, a report documenting methods, findings, and recommendations shall be prepared and submitted to the City of Vallejo for review. If paleontological materials are recovered, this report also shall be submitted to a paleontological repository such as the University of California Museum of Paleontology, along with significant paleontological materials. Public educational outreach may also be appropriate.

Implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-2** would reduce the level of the potential impact through the identification of paleontological resources during construction; the evaluation of unanticipated discoveries; and the recovery of significant paleontological data from those resources that warrant such investigation. This process would recover scientifically consequential information from at-risk resources to offset their potential loss. Therefore, with implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-2**, this impact would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

5.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
g. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
h. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are present in the atmosphere naturally, are released by natural sources, or are formed from secondary reactions taking place in the atmosphere. The gases that are widely seen as the principal contributors to human-induced global climate change are:

- Carbon dioxide (CO₂);
- Methane (CH₄);
- Nitrous oxide (N₂O);
- Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs);
- Perfluorocarbons (PFCs); and
- Sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆).

Over the last 200 years, humans have caused substantial quantities of GHGs to be released into the atmosphere. These extra emissions are increasing GHG concentrations in the atmosphere and enhancing the natural greenhouse effect, believed to be causing global warming. While manmade GHGs include naturally-occurring GHGs such as CO₂, methane, and N₂O, some gases, like HFCs, PFCs, and SF₆ are completely new to the atmosphere.

Certain gases, such as water vapor, are short-lived in the atmosphere. Others remain in the atmosphere for significant periods of time, contributing to climate change in the long term. Water vapor is excluded from the list of GHGs above because it is short-lived in the atmosphere and its atmospheric concentrations are largely determined by natural processes, such as oceanic evaporation.

These gases vary considerably in terms of Global Warming Potential (GWP), a concept developed to compare the ability of each GHG to trap heat in the atmosphere relative to another gas. The GWP is based on several factors, including the relative effectiveness of a gas to absorb infrared radiation and length of time that the gas remains in the atmosphere ("atmospheric lifetime"). The GWP of each gas is measured relative to CO₂, the most abundant GHG. The definition of GWP for a particular GHG is the ratio of heat trapped by one unit mass of the GHG to the ratio of heat trapped by one unit mass of CO₂ over a specified time period. GHG emissions are typically measured in terms of pounds or tons of "CO₂ equivalents" (CO₂e).

a. Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? (Less Than Significant Impact)

This section describes the proposed project's GHG emissions and contribution to global climate change. In April 2023, the BAAQMD adopted the 2022 CEQA Guidelines²¹ which identify applicable GHG significance thresholds. These thresholds evaluate a project based on its effect on California's efforts to meet the State's long-term climate goals. Applying this approach, the BAAQMD identifies and provides supporting documentation, outlining the necessary requirements that new land use development projects must implement to achieve California's long-term climate goal of carbon neutrality by 2045. Based on the analysis, the BAAQMD found that new land use development projects need to incorporate specified design elements to contribute their "fair share" toward implementation of the goal of carbon neutrality by 2045. If a project is designed and built to incorporate the identified design elements, then it would contribute its portion of what is necessary to achieve California's long-term climate goals—its "fair share"—and an agency reviewing the project under CEQA can conclude that the project will not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change. The document concludes that if a project does not incorporate these design elements, it should be found to result in a significant climate impact because it would hinder California's efforts to address climate change.

According to BAAQMD's 2022 CEQA Guidelines, a project would have a less than significant impact related to GHG emissions if it would:

a. Include, at a minimum, the following project design elements:

1. Buildings

- a. The project will not include natural gas appliances or natural gas plumbing (in both residential and nonresidential development).
- b. The project will not result in any wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary electrical usage as determined by the analysis required under CEQA Section 21100(b)(3) and Section 15126.2(b) of the *State CEQA Guidelines*.

2. Transportation

- a. Achieve a reduction in project-generated VMT below the regional average consistent with the current version of the California Climate Change Scoping Plan (currently 15 percent) or meet a locally adopted SB743 VMT target, reflecting the recommendations provided in the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*:
 1. Residential projects: 15 percent below the existing VMT per capita
 2. Office projects: 15 percent below the existing VMT per employee
 3. Retail projects: no net increase in existing VMT

²¹ Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). 2023. *California Environmental Quality Act Air Quality Guidelines*. April.

- b. Achieve compliance with off-street electric vehicle requirements in the most recently adopted version of CALGreen Tier 2.
- b. Or be consistent with a local GHG reduction strategy that meets the criteria under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b).

The proposed project would establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that would guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the HNA. The proposed project does not constitute a new land use development project; however, implementation of the proposed Plan would produce combustion emissions from various sources. During vegetation removal activities, GHGs would be emitted through the operation of mechanical equipment, such as woodchippers and helicopters (if necessary), and from worker vehicles, each of which typically use fossil-based fuels to operate. In addition, although the City currently has no plans to implement prescribed burning on a large scale, the proposed project may include some prescribed burning, as determined appropriate on a case-by-case basis. The combustion of fossil-based fuels creates GHGs such as CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O. Furthermore, CH₄ is emitted during the fueling of heavy equipment. Exhaust emissions from proposed management activities would vary daily as construction activity levels change.

The BAAQMD does not have an adopted threshold of significance for GHG emissions. However, lead agencies are encouraged to disclose GHG emissions that would occur. As discussed in Section 5.3, Air Quality, equipment powered by gasoline and diesel engines would be temporary. In addition, the proposed project would comply with the BAAQMD's recommended measures, such as reducing the amount of vehicle idling and requiring the use of properly maintained equipment. Although some prescribed burns may occur, burning activities would be temporary and relatively minimal. Required fire suppression equipment (e.g., fire engine[s] and a water tender) would be on site during a prescribed broadcast burn both to bolster already-existing control lines and quickly extinguish any fire that deviated from the burn prescription. In addition, prescribed burns in the HNA would require the approval of the El Cerrito Fire Department and the preparation of a Burn Plan that includes a Smoke Management Plan (SMP) approved by the BAAQMD. BAAQMD Regulation 5 requires all burn activity to only occur with written approval of an SMP by BAAQMD and to only be conducted on permissive burn days.

Although the proposed project is not considered a new land use development project, this section evaluates the proposed project's consistency with the BAAQMD's project design elements.

Natural Gas Usage. According to the BAAQMD, a less than significant GHG impact would occur if the project does not include natural gas appliances or natural gas plumbing. The proposed project would establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan, and would not include long-term or operational use of natural gas. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the BAAQMD's project design element related to natural gas and would be consistent with the BAAQMD's GHG emission thresholds. As such, the proposed project would not generate significant GHG emissions that would have a significant effect on the environment.

Energy Usage. The project must not result in any wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary energy usage as determined by the analysis required under Section 21100(b)(3) and Section 15126.2(b) of the

State CEQA Guidelines. As discussed previously in Section 5.6, Energy, the proposed project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of fuel or energy. As such, the proposed project would be consistent with this design element.

Vehicle Miles Traveled. To meet the BAAQMD's VMT threshold, the project must achieve a reduction in project-generated VMT below the regional average consistent with the current version of the California Climate Change Scoping Plan or meet a locally adopted SB 743 VMT target, reflecting the recommendations provided in the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's (OPR) *2018 Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts* in CEQA. As discussed in Section 5.17, Transportation, implementation of the proposed Plan would not substantially increase the number of vehicles traveling to and from the HNA and would not result in any VMT impacts. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with this design element.

Electric Vehicle Requirements. This criterion requires that the project achieve compliance with off-street electric vehicle requirements in the most recently adopted version of the CALGreen Tier 2 measures. The proposed project would not provide any vehicle parking spaces; therefore, this project design feature would not be applicable to the proposed project.

As discussed above, the proposed project would not conflict with the BAAQMD's project design elements related to natural gas, energy, VMT, or electric vehicle requirements. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the BAAQMD's GHG emission thresholds. In addition, implementation of the proposed Plan would expand and continue the maintenance activities already occurring at the HNA, and therefore would not result in a substantial increase in greenhouse gas emissions. As such, the proposed project would not generate GHG emissions that would have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, the proposed project would result in **less than significant impacts** related to greenhouse gas emissions.

b. Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? (Less Than Significant Impact)

Overall, the implementation of the comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan would be supportive of long-term State and regional goals to reduce GHG emissions, by working to reduce fire hazards and to conserve forests that act as important sinks for anthropogenic carbon emissions. As discussed above, the proposed project would be consistent with the project design thresholds of significance recommended by the BAAQMD, supporting that the proposed project would be contributing its "fair share" of emission reductions to support achieving State goals for emission reductions and carbon neutrality by 2045. Furthermore, the proposed project would be supportive of State goals to conserve natural resources, as included in the 2022 California Air Resources Board Scoping Plan, which supports the State's achievement of legislation including Assembly Bill (AB) 1279 and Senate Bill (SB) 32. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. This impact would be **less than significant**.

5.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a. Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? (Less Than Significant Impact)

Implementation of the proposed Plan may involve the minimal use of herbicides at the HNA for vegetation management. Herbicides are chemicals that kill or inhibit plant growth; they can be extremely effective tools when used to control certain species. However, the effectiveness of herbicides can vary among sites, species, and climatic conditions. Environmental risks posed by herbicide use include drift, volatilization, persistence in the environment, groundwater contamination, and harmful effects on insects and other animals. In order to minimize these environmental risks, the application of herbicides at the HNA would be limited to direct application on eucalyptus tree stumps or other woody invasive species stumps and resprouts i.e., brushed or injected into the inner bark; cut stems and stumps (cut stump), and pin-point treatment of selected invasive herbaceous plant species. Herbicide application for widely occurring herbaceous weeds is not recommended without specific cause and City-approved prescription. Application of herbicides in the HNA must be made under direct supervision and control of a Licensed Applicator pursuant to the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) regulations, site specific methods, and pre-approved by the City Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Coordinator.

Stumps would be ground to the tree root collar where accessible, to minimize the use of herbicides. Where inaccessible, a qualified licensed pest control applicator would apply an herbicide solution to the cambium layer of the freshly cut tree stump within a few minutes of felling. The herbicide mixture would likely consist of a combination of Garlon 4 Ultra (triclopyr), Stalker (imazapyr), and/or RoundUp (glyphosate²²) in a solution of methylated seed oil, water, or other product as indicated and acceptable by the product label, and marking dye (e.g., Hi-Light). All chemical applications would be conducted per the CDPR pesticide guidance. All cut tree stumps would receive semiannual follow-up treatment of herbicides. Semiannual follow-up treatments would involve strictly controlled low-volume foliar spray mix applied to any re-sprouted foliage after the re-sprout reaches three feet in height but before it reaches six feet in height. In addition, where herbicide application is not recommended (riparian areas, near seeps or rare plants), tarping of stumps may be applicable.

Transport and use of hazardous materials would be subject to all applicable State and federal laws, such as the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the California Hazardous Materials Management Act, the California Health and Safety Code, and California Code of Regulations Title 8 and Title 22. Therefore, compliance with existing regulations would ensure that implementation of the proposed Plan would not create a significant hazard to the public, or the environment associated with the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials by ensuring these materials are properly handled during implementation of the proposed Plan. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

b. Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? (Less Than Significant Impact)

As described above, small quantities of herbicides would be used at the HNA during implementation of the proposed Plan. Improper use, storage, or handling could result in a release of hazardous materials into the environment which could pose a risk to construction workers and the public. However, the City and its contractors would be required to comply with existing government regulations in the use and disposal of these materials, and such materials would not be used in sufficient strength or quantity to create a substantial risk to human or environmental health. In addition, implementation of the proposed Plan does not include the demolition of existing structures. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

c. Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? (Less Than Significant Impact)

Schools in the surrounding area include Madera Elementary School, located immediately northeast of the HNA, and Fred T. Korematsu Middle School, located approximately 0.2 mile west of the HNA. As described above, small quantities of herbicides would be used at the HNA during implementation of the proposed Plan. However, the application of herbicides in the HNA would be made under direct supervision and control of a Licensed Applicator pursuant to the CDPR regulations, site

²² Note that the City of El Cerrito has currently a moratorium on the use of glyphosate. Thus, any glyphosate use will require City approval under special circumstances.

specific methods, and pre-approved by the City IPM Coordinator. Therefore, impacts related to emitting hazardous emissions or handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school would be **less than significant**.

d. Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? (Less Than Significant Impact)

The HNA and surrounding area was evaluated via the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) GeoTracker database,²³ the Department of Toxic Substances Control's (DTSC) EnviroStor database,²⁴ and the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese) List²⁵ for the purposes of identifying recognized environmental conditions or historical recognized environmental conditions. The HNA is not included on any list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

The nearest listed hazardous site to the HNA is the Stege Sanitary District site, located at 7500 Schmidt Lane adjacent to the west side of the HNA. However, the site is listed as closed, indicating that regulatory requirements for response actions, such as site assessment and remediation, have either been completed or were not necessary and, therefore, potential migration of residual contaminants in groundwater beneath the site does not likely pose a risk to human health and the environment. Based on the analysis provide above, and because the HNA itself is not included on any list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, impacts would be **less than significant**.

e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area? (No Impact)

The nearest airport to the HNA is the Oakland International Airport located over 14 miles south of the HNA. The HNA is not located within the airport land use plan for the Oakland International Airport and none of the proposed activities would affect air traffic patterns. Therefore, the project would result in **no impact** regarding safety hazards or excessive noise for people residing within the project area.

²³ State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). 2022. Geotracker Database. Website: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/> (accessed January 2025).

²⁴ California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). 2022. EnviroStar Database. Website: <https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/> (accessed January 2025).

²⁵ California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA). 2020. Cortese List Data Resources. Website: calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/ (accessed January 2025).

f. Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (No Impact)

The El Cerrito Police Department, El Cerrito/Kensington Fire Department and the Kensington Police Department have designed a Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation Booklet²⁶ to help residents protect their families, homes, and neighborhoods, particularly during wildfire season. This booklet includes evacuation and preparedness tips and an evacuation map for the El Cerrito and Kensington communities. In addition, the City's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)²⁷ identifies operational strategies and plans for managing inherently complex and potentially catastrophic events.

Implementation of the proposed Plan would be consistent with the goal and policies of the City's Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation Booklet and EOP. Implementation of the proposed Plan would not alter or block adjacent roadways and would not be expected to impair the function of nearby emergency evacuation routes. Although implementation of the Plan would widen unimproved surface fire trails to provide vehicle access to treatment areas and improve emergency and maintenance vehicle access, these road improvements would be restricted to the HNA and would not cause permanent alterations to vehicle circulation routes and patterns in the surrounding area or impede public access or travel upon public rights-of-way. Instead, these improvements would provide emergency vehicles better access to the HNA.

Further, as the proposed project would implement the fuel reduction measures outlined in the proposed Plan and would help the City address wildfire concern at the HNA and surrounding area. Therefore, **no impact** related to impairing or interfering with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan would occur.

g. Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands? (No Impact)

Over the last few years, community concerns regarding fire risk in the HNA and surrounding communities have significantly increased. The proposed Plan provides a science-based framework and strategy to improve fire resilience and forest health in the HNA and the surrounding neighborhoods and residential areas. Overall, implementation of the proposed Plan would address fire hazards at the HNA and the surrounding area, and **no impact** related to exposing people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires would occur.

²⁶ City of El Cerrito. 2022. El Cerrito & Kensington Residents Guide to Wildfire Preparedness & Evacuation. November.

²⁷ City of El Cerrito. 2022. City of El Cerrito Emergency Operations Plan. April.

5.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or offsite;	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv. Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a. Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality? (Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated)

Under existing conditions, stormwater runoff at the HNA either infiltrates into the soil or discharges to one of the several stream/drainage channels that are present in the HNA. These generally flow in the southwest direction into culverts beneath the adjacent residential area to the southwest. Some of the drainages occur within concrete v-ditches and become natural stream channels further downstream within the HNA. During implementation of the proposed Plan, vegetation removal would expose soils and there would be an increased potential for soil erosion and sedimentation compared to existing conditions. In addition, herbicides used during vegetation management activities could be discharged into receiving waters during rain events.

As discussed in the proposed Plan, trees within 50 feet of watercourses (e.g., along Wildwood Creek) would not be removed as part of this action. If control of non-native or hazard trees with the riparian buffer is required later, these activities would be accomplished pursuant to a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement or a Routine Maintenance Agreement to be authorized by CDFW. Erosion control Best Management Practices (BMPs), identified by the San Francisco Bay Regional

Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), would be implemented to control erosion during and after vegetation removal. In addition, as required by **Mitigation Measure BIO-7a**, riparian areas shall be separated and protected from the work area through silt fencing, amphibian/reptile-friendly fiber rolls (i.e., no mono-filament mesh), or other appropriate erosion control material. Material staging, and all other project-related activity shall be located as far as possible from riparian areas with no off-road driving or parking of vehicles or equipment within the dripline of a riparian tree. The HNA would be revegetated with native species, which would stabilize the soil and reduce erosion impacts. In addition, the application of herbicides in the HNA would be minimal and would be made under direct supervision and control of a Licensed Applicator pursuant to the CDPR regulations, site specific methods, and pre-approved by the City IPM Coordinator.

Therefore, because implementation of the proposed Plan would include erosion control BMPs and adhere to application regulation related to herbicide use, implementation of the proposed Plan would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality. Impacts would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

b. Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? (No Impact)

The HNA does not overlie a groundwater basin.²⁸ In addition, no groundwater dewatering would be necessary during implementation of the proposed Plan and no new impervious surface area would be development at the HNA. Therefore, **no impact** related to depletion of groundwater supplies or interference with groundwater recharge in a manner that may impede sustainable groundwater management during construction and operation would occur.

c. Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

i. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; (Less Than Significant Impact)

Implementation of the proposed Plan would generally maintain the same drainage patterns as existing conditions. As discussed above, implementation of the proposed Plan could increase erosion or siltation at the HNA during vegetation removal activities. However, trees within 50 feet of watercourses (e.g., along Wildwood Creek) would not be removed as part of these actions. In addition, erosion control BMPs, identified by the San Francisco Bay RWQCB, would be implemented to control erosion during and after vegetation removal. Therefore, impacts related to substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site would be **less than significant**.

²⁸ California Department of Water Resources (DWR). 2022. SGMA Data Viewer. Website: <https://sgma.water.ca.gov/webgis/index.jsp?appid=gasmaster&rz=true> (accessed January 2025).

ii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off site; (No Impact)

As previously discussed, no new impervious surface area would be developed at the HNA, and implementation of the proposed Plan would generally maintain the same drainage patterns as existing conditions. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off site. **No impact** would occur.

iii. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or (Less Than Significant Impact)

As previously discussed, no new impervious surface area would be developed at the HNA, and implementation of the proposed Plan would generally maintain the same drainage patterns as existing conditions. Runoff from the HNA would continue to either infiltrate into the soil or discharge to one of the several stream/drainage channels that are present in the HNA, flowing in the southwest direction into culverts beneath the adjacent residential area to the southwest. The existing stormwater infrastructure in the residential area to the southwest would have sufficient capacity to continue to accommodate runoff from the HNA. In addition, erosion BMPs, identified by the San Francisco Bay RWQCB²⁹ and implemented as part of the proposed Plan and the minimal application of herbicides in the HNA made under direct supervision and control of a Licensed Applicator pursuant to the CDPR regulations, site specific methods, and pre-approved by the City IPM Coordinator would ensure no additional sources of polluted runoff would enter the stormwater system.

For these reasons, impacts related to the exceedance of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or substantial additional sources of polluted runoff during construction and operation would be **less than significant**.

iv. Impede or redirect flood flows? (No Impact)

According to the MTC and ABAG, the HNA is not within a 100-year floodplain or 500-year floodplain.³⁰ As implementation of the proposed Plan would not include the construction of any new structures and would not be located within a floodplain, implementation of the proposed Plan would not impede or redirect flood flows, and there would be **no impact**.

²⁹ See https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/planningtmdls/basinplan/web/bp_ch4c.html#4.19.

³⁰ Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). 2018. Probabilistic Earthquake Shaking Hazard Map. Website: <https://mtc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4a6f3f1259df42eab29b35dfcd086fc8> (accessed January 2025).

d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? (No Impact)

As previously discussed, the HNA is not located within a 100-year floodplain or 500-year floodplain. In addition, the MTC and ABAG does not identify the HNA as within a tsunami hazard zone.³¹ Seiches are waves that are created in an enclosed body of water such as a bay, lake, or harbor and go up and down or oscillate and do not progress forward like standard ocean waves. The nearest enclosed body of water to the HNA is the San Pablo Reservoir, located approximately 2.4 miles east of the HNA. Due to the distance from the HNA and the presence of an intervening mountain range, San Pablo Reservoir would not inundate the HNA in the event of a seiche. Therefore, there would be **no impact** related to the release of pollutants in the event of inundation due to flood hazard, tsunamis, or seiches.

e. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? (Less Than Significant Impact)

The project site is within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB. The Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay Basin (Basin Plan)³² is the master policy document that establishes the water quality objectives and strategies needed to protect designated beneficial water uses for all surface and groundwater within its jurisdiction. As discussed above, implementation of the proposed Plan would include implementation of BMPs, identified by the San Francisco Bay RWQCB, would address potential water quality impacts.

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was enacted in September 2014. SGMA requires governments and water agencies located within high- and medium-priority groundwater basins to halt overdraft of the basins. SGMA requires the formation of local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs), which are required to adopt Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) to manage the sustainability of the groundwater basins. As previously discussed, the project site does not overly a groundwater basin.³³ Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of a sustainable groundwater management plan.

For the reasons above and with implementation of applicable BMPs, implementation of the proposed Plan would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

³¹ Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). 2018. Probabilistic Earthquake Shaking Hazard Map. Website: <https://mtc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4a6f3f1259df42eab29b35dfcd086fc8> (accessed January 2025).

³² San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). 2017. San Francisco Bay Region. *Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay Basin*. May 4.

³³ California Department of Water Resources (DWR). 2022. SGMA Data Viewer. Website: <https://sgma.water.ca.gov/webgis/index.jsp?appid=gasmaster&rz=true> (accessed January 2025).

5.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The City of El Cerrito General Plan Land Use Map³⁴ and City of El Cerrito Zoning Map³⁵ designates the majority of the HNA as Parks and Open Space and Open Space Natural (OS-N), respectively. However, a portion of the HNA in the northeast is designated as Very Low Density residential and zoned Single-family Residential with a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet (RS-10). The proposed project would establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that would guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the City's HNA and would not result in a change to the existing land use. Additionally, maintenance associated with implementation of the proposed Plan would be restricted to the existing HNA. Although implementation of the Plan would widen unimproved surface fire trails to provide vehicle access to treatment areas and improve emergency and maintenance vehicle access, these road improvements would also be restricted to the HNA, and the proposed project would not alter any other existing roadways. Therefore, implementation of the Plan would not divide any established community.

Therefore, the proposed project would have **no impact**, either individually or cumulatively, related to land use and planning.

³⁴ City of El Cerrito. 2012. General Plan Land Use Map.

³⁵ City of El Cerrito. Zoning Map. Website: <https://maps.digitalmapcentral.com/production/VECommunityView/cities/ElCerrito/index.aspx> (accessed December 2024).

5.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

No mineral resources are identified within the City, and the nearest mineral resources in Contra Costa County are located over 16 miles east of the HNA.³⁶ The HNA does not contain any known mineral resources and is not used for mineral production. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource of value to the region or residents of the State or any locally important mineral resource recover site, and **no impact**, either individually or cumulatively, related to the loss of mineral resources would occur.

³⁶ Contra Costa County. 2024. Contra Costa County 2045 General Plan – Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element, Figure COS-13: Mineral Resource Areas. November 5.

5.13 NOISE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Noise is usually defined as unwanted sound and consists of any sound that may produce physiological or psychological damage and/or interfere with communication, work, rest, recreation, or sleep. Several noise measurement scales exist that are used to describe noise in a particular location. A decibel (dB) is a unit of measurement that indicates the relative intensity of a sound. Sound levels in dB are calculated on a logarithmic basis. An increase of 10 dB represents a 10-fold increase in acoustic energy, while 20 dB is 100 times more intense, and 30 dB is 1,000 times more intense. Each 10 dB increase in sound level is perceived as approximately a doubling of loudness; and similarly, each 10 dB decrease in sound level is perceived as half as loud. Sound intensity is normally measured through the A-weighted decibel (dBA) sound level. This scale gives greater weight to the frequencies of sound to which the human ear is most sensitive. The A-weighted sound level is the basis for 24-hour sound measurements that better represent human sensitivity to sound at night.

As noise spreads from a source, it loses energy so that the farther away the noise receiver is from the noise source, the lower the perceived noise level would be. Geometric spreading causes the sound level to attenuate or be reduced, resulting in a 6 dB reduction in the noise level for each doubling of distance from a single point source of noise to the noise sensitive receptor of concern.

There are many ways to rate noise for various time periods, but an appropriate rating of ambient noise affecting humans also accounts for the annoying effects of sound. Equivalent continuous sound level (L_{eq}) is the total sound energy of time varying noise over a sample period. However, the predominant rating scales for human communities in the State of California are the L_{eq} , the community noise equivalent level (CNEL), and the day-night average level (L_{dn}) based on dBA. CNEL is the time varying noise over a 24-hour period, with a 5 dBA weighting factor applied to the hourly L_{eq} for noises occurring from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. (defined as relaxation hours) and 10 dBA weighting factor applied to noise occurring from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. (defined as sleeping hours). L_{dn} is similar to the CNEL scale, but without the adjustment for events occurring during the evening relaxation hours. CNEL and L_{dn} are within one dBA of each other and are normally exchangeable. The noise adjustments are added to the noise events occurring during the more sensitive hours.

A project would have a significant noise effect if it would substantially increase the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas or conflict with adopted environmental plans and goals of applicable regulatory agencies, including, as appropriate, the City of El Cerrito.

Certain land uses are considered more sensitive to noise than others. Examples of these land uses include residential areas, educational facilities, hospitals, childcare facilities, and senior housing. The project site is surrounded by a mix of uses within an urban area of the City. The project site is located within an urban area of the City, adjacent to residential uses and schools. The closest sensitive receptors are residential uses located adjacent to the HNA.

a. Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? (Less Than Significant Impact)

Implementation of the proposed Plan would result in short-term noise impacts on the nearby sensitive receptors during vegetation removal activities that use mechanical equipment, such as woodchippers during vegetation removal activities. In addition, helicopters may be used to remove felled trees from areas that are not accessible by road, such as felled eucalyptus trees from Motorcycle Hill. The closest sensitive receptors are the residences directly adjacent to the HNA. Maximum noise would be short-term, generally intermittent depending on the phase, and variable depending on receiver distance from the activity. The duration of noise impacts generally would be from one day to 20 days depending on the type of vegetation removal, with the use of helicopters lasting up to 20 days.

Title 10, Public Peace, Morals, and Welfare, of the City's Municipal Code provides the City's noise ordinance and prohibits unnecessary noises or sounds that are physically annoying or disturbing to others. For construction activities, the City enforces specific hours to minimize disturbances. Construction noise that exceeds ambient noise levels is allowed Monday through Friday only between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and Saturday only between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. No construction noise is permitted on Sundays and holidays. The use of mechanical equipment and helicopters during vegetation removal activities would only occur during these permitted times. Further, the use of mechanical equipment, including helicopters, would be temporary in nature, and would cease once vegetation removal activities are completed. In addition, implementation of the proposed Plan would expand and continue the maintenance activities already occurring at the HNA. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in the generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in noise levels in excess of standards established by the City's noise ordinance. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

b. Would the project result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? (Less Than Significant Impact)

Vibrating objects in contact with the ground radiate vibration waves through various soil and rock strata to the foundations of nearby buildings. As the vibration propagates from the foundation throughout the remainder of the building, the vibration of floors and walls may cause perceptible vibration from the rattling of windows or a rumbling noise. The rumbling sound caused by the

vibration of room surfaces is called groundborne noise. When assessing annoyance from groundborne noise, vibration is typically expressed as root mean square (rms) velocity in units of decibels of 1 micro-inch per second. To distinguish vibration levels from noise levels, the unit is written as "VdB." Human perception to vibration in indoor environments starts at levels as low as 67 VdB and sometimes lower. Annoyance due to vibration in residential settings starts at 70 VdB. Groundborne vibration is almost never annoying to people who are outdoors. Although the motion of the ground may be perceived, without the effects associated with the shaking of the building, the motion does not provoke the same adverse human reaction.

In extreme cases, excessive groundborne vibration has the potential to cause structural damage to buildings. Common sources of groundborne vibration include trains and construction activities such as blasting, pile driving and operating heavy earthmoving equipment.

Although implementation of the proposed Plan would include the use of mechanical equipment during vegetation removal activities, these activities would be minimal and temporary. No impact pile driving or other substantial construction equipment use or activity would occur as part of implementation of the proposed Plan.

For all other equipment associated with the proposed activities, vibration impacts would approach 0.089 inches per second at a distance of 25 feet. This level would not exceed the 0.12 inches per second threshold at which there is virtually no risk resulting in architectural damage to buildings extremely susceptible to vibration damage. Therefore, adjacent buildings would be structurally safe from fuel reduction activities and no structural damages would occur as a result of onsite fuel reduction activities. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? (No Impact)

The nearest airport to the HNA is the Oakland International Airport located over 14 miles south of the HNA. The HNA is not located within the airport land use plan for the Oakland International Airport. Furthermore, the project would not increase use or activity within the HNA and existing conditions would largely remain the same after fuel management activities are implemented. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels due to the proximity of a public airport. There would be **no impact**.

5.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
d. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The HNA currently provides open space and recreational opportunities for residents living in the area and in the City and does not contain any residential units. The implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in an increase in housing or employment, as implementation of the Plan would expand and continue the maintenance activities already occurring at the HNA and would not provide additional housing on-site or require additional permanent employees for operation. As there would be no measurable increase in employees, no measurable inducement of population growth would occur. In addition, implementation of the proposed Plan does not include the demolition of any existing structures or the removal of any existing housing units and would not otherwise displace any existing people or housing.

Therefore, the proposed project would have **no impact**, either individually or cumulatively, related to population and housing.

5.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
f. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
i. Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii. Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii. Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv. Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
v. Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

As discussed in Section 4.2.7, above, implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in any new unplanned population growth, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in an increase in population that would require the provision of new fire or police facilities, schools, parks, or other public facilities or result in the need for physically altered facilities. In addition, implementation of the proposed Plan would address fire concerns at the HNA, which would help reduce the risk of fire at the HNA and surrounding area, reducing the burden for fire protection services in the City.

Therefore, the proposed project would have **no impact** related to public services, parks, or other public facilities.

5.16 RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
h. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

As discussed in Section 4.2.7, above, implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in any new unplanned population growth, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in an increase in population that would require the provision of new parks and recreational facilities in the City. In addition, implementation of the Plan would expand and continue the maintenance activities already occurring at the HNA and the HNA would continue to serve the same population as existing conditions. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not contribute to the increased use of existing neighborhood or regional parks such that substantial physical deterioration would occur. In addition, implementation of the proposed Plan does not include the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Therefore, **no impact**, either individually or cumulatively, related to recreation would occur.

5.17 TRANSPORTATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
i. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒
j. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines §15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
k. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
l. Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☒

As discussed above, implementation of the Plan would expand and continue the maintenance activities already occurring at the HNA and would continue to serve the same population as existing conditions. Some new access points and trails within the HNA are proposed as part of the Plan; however, any increase in use of the HNA with implementation of the Plan is anticipated to be minimal. As such, implementation of the proposed Plan would not substantially increase the number of vehicles traveling to and from the HNA. Implementation of the proposed Plan would also not conflict with any program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, result in any vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impacts, substantial increase hazards due to a geometric design feature, or result in inadequate emergency access. Although implementation of the Plan would widen unimproved surface fire trails to provide vehicle access to treatment areas and improve emergency and maintenance vehicle access, these road improvements would be restricted to the HNA, and the proposed project would not alter any other existing public roadways.

Therefore, **no impact**, either individually or cumulatively, related to transportation would occur.

5.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)? Or	☐	☒	☐	☐
ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

- i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)? Or*
- ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.*

Native American consultation was conducted in compliance with Assembly Bill (AB) 52. A letter and map depicting the project site (i.e., HNA) and surrounding area was sent to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) requesting a search of the Sacred Lands File (SLF) and list of tribes eligible to consult with the City, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.1, 21080.3.1, and 21080.3.2, on August 15, 2023. On August 24, 2023, the NAHC responded in a letter with a list of tribal contacts and stated that the search of the SLF was positive, indicating that a culturally sensitive property had been identified within or near the HNA. Letters to the list of tribal contacts

were sent on August 30, 2023, informing them of the proposed project and inquiring if they had any knowledge of cultural properties within or near the HNA.

On September 11, 2023, Francis Ranstead, Tribal Administrator for the Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation (Lisjan Nation) responded and requested consultation regarding implementation of the proposed Plan. The Lisjan Nation also engaged directly with the City in a meeting on October 18, 2023. At this meeting, the Lisjan Nation representatives requested a copy of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and Northwest Information Center (NWIC) search which the City provided. The representatives also requested confirmation that ground disturbances would not occur near creek bottoms and that the City would notify them if the scope changed. In the City's letter dated December 7, 2023, the City confirmed that no ground disturbances is planned as part of the project and agreed to contact the representatives if the project scope changes. There were no further requests.

As discussed in Section 5.3, Cultural Resources, the archival research, outreach to the Native American community, and an intensive field survey performed as part of the Cultural Resources Assessment did not document any indications of prehistoric activities at the project site or surrounding area. Although the NAHC indicated that a culturally significant property was known to be present near the project site, none of the tribal contacts and representatives have expressed any concerns regarding this possible site. In addition, the intensive field survey did not identify any potentially sensitive landforms or significant level terrain at the project site, suggesting it retains a low level of sensitivity for containing traces of early Native American occupation. In addition, the proposed project would establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that will guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the City's HNA and would not include substantial ground disturbance. Nevertheless, implementation of **Mitigation Measure CUL-1** would ensure work stoppage in the event of an archaeological discovery. With implementation of **Mitigation Measures CUL-1** and compliance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code and Section 5097.98 of the PRC, the potential discovery of previously unidentified tribal cultural resources would be reduced to a **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

5.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
b. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The proposed project would establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that would guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the City's HNA. No new buildings would be constructed with implementation of the proposed Plan; therefore, the proposed project would not include uses that would increase demand for wastewater treatment, stormwater management, water, and solid waste disposal (landfill service facilities) and would not adversely affect long-term water supplies. The proposed project would not require or result in the construction of new utilities or expansion of existing facilities.

Therefore, **no impact**, either individually or cumulatively, related to utilities and service systems would occur.

5.20 WILDFIRE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
g. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
h. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☐	☒
i. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
j. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☐	☒

According to the most recent fire hazard maps approved by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), the HNA is located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) in a Local Responsibility Area (LRA).³⁷ As previously discussed, the HNA is heavily vegetated and can present a fire hazard to the surrounding residential areas and to the City as a whole. Over the last few years, community concerns regarding fire risk in the HNA and surrounding communities have significantly increased. The City has responded with ongoing and increased vegetation maintenance activities, completing work largely based on past planning efforts. The proposed project is intended to guide more robust, comprehensive, and balanced management of the HNA. The proposed Plan provides a science-based framework and strategy to improve fire resilience and forest health in the HNA and the surrounding neighborhoods and residential areas. In order to accomplish this, the proposed Plan includes goals, objectives, and actions related to protecting residential areas surrounding the HNA from wildfire, establishing fuel breaks, reducing abundance of high-risk invasive trees, and developing a fire roads and trails network. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not exacerbate wildfire risks or expose surrounding uses to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Instead, implementation of the proposed Plan would help reduce the risk of wildfire at the HNA.

Therefore, **no impact**, either individually or cumulatively, related to wildfire would occur.

³⁷ California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer. Website: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/03beab8511814e79a0e4eabf0d3e7247/> (accessed January 2025).

5.21 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☐	☒	☐	☐
c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☐	☒

- a. *Does the Project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? ? (Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated)*

Implementation of the mitigation measures recommended in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) would ensure that implementation of the proposed Plan would not substantially degrade the quality of the environment; reduce the habitat, population, or range of a plant or animal species; or eliminate important examples of California history or prehistory. Section 5.2, Biological Resources, includes mitigation measures (**Mitigation Measures BIO-1** through **BIO-8**) to minimize impacts to special-status species, riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities, wetlands, and migratory corridors. Mitigation (**Mitigation Measure CUL-1**) is provided in Section 4.5, Cultural Resources, in the event that unanticipated archaeological resources, including human remains, are identified in the project area. With implementation of these mitigation measures, implementation of the proposed Plan would result in less than significant impacts to the quality of the environment. This impact would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

- b. *Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)? (Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated)*

The *State CEQA Guidelines* require a discussion of significant environmental impacts that would result from project-related actions in combination with “closely related past, present, and probably future projects: located in the immediate vicinity” (*State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15130[b][1][A]). Cumulative environmental impacts are those impacts that by themselves are not significant, but when considered with impacts occurring from other projects in the vicinity would result in a cumulative impact. Related projects considered to have the potential of creating cumulative impacts in association with the proposed project consist of projects that are reasonably foreseeable and that would be constructed or operated during the life of the proposed project.

The proposed project’s impacts would be individually limited and not cumulatively considerable. The potentially significant impacts that can be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of recommended mitigation measures include the topics of biological resources, cultural/tribal cultural resources, and geology and soils. For the topic of biological resources, implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** through **BIO-8** would ensure that impacts to special-status species, riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities, wetlands, and migratory corridors would be less than significant. For the topics of cultural/tribal cultural resources, potentially significant impacts to archaeological and tribal cultural resources would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of **Mitigation Measure CUL-1**. For the topic of geology and soils, implementation of **Mitigation Measures GEO-1 and GEO-2** would ensure that impacts related to unstable soils and paleontological resources would be less than significant.

For all other environmental topics, implementation of the proposed Plan would have no impacts or less than significant impacts and, therefore, would not substantially contribute to any potential cumulative impacts for these topics. All environmental impacts that could occur as a result of implementation of the proposed Plan would be reduced to less than significant through the implementation of the mitigation measures recommended in this document.

Implementation of these measures would ensure that the impacts of the project would be below established thresholds of significance and that these impacts would not combine with the impacts of other cumulative projects to result in a cumulatively considerable impact on the environment as a result of project development. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? (No Impact)

Implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in any environmental effects that would cause substantial direct or indirect adverse effects to human beings, beyond those topics previously discussed in Sections 4.2.1 through 4.2.11 and Sections 5.1 through 5.8 of this IS/MND. **No impact** would occur.

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APPENDIX A

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

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BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA



LSA

November 2024

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA

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November 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The City of El Cerrito (“City”) proposes to develop and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and vegetation management plan for the City’s “Hillside Natural Area” (HNA). The purpose of the “Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan” is to:

- identify and protect critical resource areas,
- guide the City’s fire fuel reduction, native forest conservation, and maintenance activities, and
- evaluate fire road and trail network conditions.

This Biological Resources Report provides a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)-compliant identification of special-status species and their habitats, wetlands and other regulated waters, and other potential biological resource constraints to the Plan development. The report also provides recommended mitigation measures to address the requirements of CEQA.

PROJECT SITE DESCRIPTION

Site Characteristics

The project site is located within the City of El Cerrito, California (Figure 1). The HNA is approximately 107.18 acres and is divided into three sections: Hillside Natural Area North (“Motorcycle Hill;” 24.22 acres), Madera Property (9.53 acres) and Hillside Natural Area South (73.43 acres). Elevations range from approximately 150 and 650 feet above sea level. The project site is characterized by steep hillslopes with predominantly western and southern exposures (Figure 2). There are 6 major vegetation cover types within the HNA (Figure 3). Soils on the project site consist of mostly Rock outcrop-Xerorthents association with Cut and fill land-Millsholm complex mapped along the western boundary and Quarry mapped near the southern boundary of the project site (USDA 2023; Figure 4).

Vegetation Communities

The project site supports ruderal/non-native grassland, native grassland, coast live oak woodland, scrub, riparian woodland, and drainages (Figure 3).

Ruderal/Non-Native Grassland. The ruderal/non-native grassland (33.47 acres) supports primarily non-native annual grassland species with patches of perennial grassland and ruderal plant species.

Non-native grasses are also abundant throughout the understory within all habitat types at the project site.

Native Grasslands. Native grasslands (Figure 3) observed on the project site consist of small localized patches of purple needle grass (*Stipa pulchra*), foothill needle grass (*Stipa lepida*), bent grass (*Agrostis pallens*), and creeping wild rye (*Elymus triticoides*).

North Franciscan Coastal Scrub. The scrub habitat within the project site comprises 2.6 acres and is dominated by coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), and French broom (*Genista monspessulana*). Other dominant to co-dominant species include orange bush monkey flower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*). Stands of northern Franciscan coastal scrub are found throughout the project site, but they mainly occupy the steeper portions of the south and west facing slopes along the eastern boundary.

Coast Live Oak Woodland. The coast live oak woodland (28.7 acres) on the project site is dominated by coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) with California bay (*Umbellularia californica*), California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), and Toyon (*Hetromeles arbutifolia*).

Riparian Woodland. Riparian woodland occupies approximately 1.15 acres on the HNA, but that estimate is probably too low and will need to be evaluated by field mapping. It occurs along the streams and drainages and contains trees and shrubs, such as arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), Pacific willow (*S. lasiandra*), cottonwood (*Populus sp.*), alder (*Alnus sp.*), California bay (*Umbellularia californica*), California buckeye, and coast live oak. Riparian woodland is considered a sensitive plant community under CEQA.

Eucalyptus and Pine Groves. Eucalyptus groves are present in several areas within the project site. They are the most prevalent vegetation community at the project site, totaling over 36.2 acres. Eucalyptus are the dominant tree species within the groves. Both blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) and yellow gum (*E. viminalis*) are growing at the project site (LSA 1987).

Rock Outcrops. Rock outcrops are present in small areas throughout the project site. Species observed at the outcrops include naked-stem buckwheat (*Eriogonum nudum*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), coyote mint (*Monardella villosa*), and various non-native plants.

Streams/Drainages. Several intermittent and ephemeral streams/drainage channels are present in the project site (Figure 3). These streams/drainages appear to flow in the southwest direction and flow off the project site into culverts beneath the adjacent residential area to the southwest. Some of the drainages occur within concrete v-ditches and become natural stream channels further downstream within the project site. These streams/drainages are likely to be considered jurisdictional features by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and subject to regulation under Section 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act and/or the California Porter Cologne Act.

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

For the purposes of this assessment, special-status species are defined as follows:

- Species that are listed, formally proposed, or designated as candidates for listing as threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA);
- Species that are listed, or designated as candidates for listing, as rare, threatened, or endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA);
- Plant species that are on the California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) Lists 1A, 1B, and 2;
- Animal species designated as Species of Special Concern or Fully Protected by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW); or
- Species that meet the definition of rare, threatened, or endangered under Section 15380 of the CEQA guidelines.

Several special-status species could occur on the project site or in the vicinity (Table A). No special-status species were observed during the field survey.

SPECIES FOR WHICH AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION AND MITIGATION MAY BE REQUIRED:

- **Special-Status Plants.** If fuel reduction treatments are proposed within the native grasslands, riparian woodland, drainage channels, or the less disturbed portions of the oak woodland and scrub habitat (such as areas where French broom is not present), focused plant surveys for special-status plants should be conducted according to CDFW's Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Plant Populations and Natural Communities (CDFW 2018).
- **Monarch Butterfly.** The monarch butterfly is a federal candidate listed species that could breed within the project site. No California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB; CDFW 2023) occurrences for monarch butterfly have been recorded at the project site, but the species was observed during field work on October 10, 2023, at Motorcycle Hill.
- **Crotch and Western Bumble Bee.** The Crotch and western bumble bee are Candidate State Endangered listed species. These species are known to occur in grassland and scrub habitat where suitable native nectar plants are present. These species historically occurred in the region but are now considered rare. Due to the presence of suitable flowering plant species, these species, although unlikely due to their rarity, could be present.
- **Special-Status Birds and Other Nesting Bird Species.** Several special-status bird species are known to occur at or near the project site (Table A; see list above). These bird species could nest, winter, and/or migrate through the project site. Some of these bird species, such as the American peregrine falcon, could forage on the project site, but are unlikely to nest at or adjacent to the site due to the lack of suitable nesting habitat. Special-status birds observed at the project site include white-tailed kite, olive-sided flycatcher, and Vaux's swift, among others (eBird 2023). Active nests of special-status and other native bird species are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and/or California Fish and Game Code.
- **Special-Status Bats and Other Bat Species.** Several bat species, including special-status bat species, could roost and/or forage at the project site. All roosts of native bats, regardless of their status, are protected by California Fish and Game Code. Townsend's western big-eared bat

(California Species of Special Concern) may briefly forage over the project site but would not roost on the project site due to the lack of suitable roosting habitat. Suitable habitat for pallid bat and western red bat, both of which are California Species of Special Concern and other bat species could roost in the onsite trees.

- San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat. The San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat is a California Species of Special Concern. This species occurs in riparian woodland, woodland/forests, and scrub habitat and has been observed at the project site. LSA observed woodrat houses in the northern portion of the site, but this species could occur throughout the project site where suitable habitat is present.

OTHER MITIGATION MEASURES

- Waters of the United States/Waters of the State. Potential impacts to potentially jurisdictional features, such as the onsite streams/drainages (and seasonal wetlands/seeps, if present), are subject to regulation by the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW. These features will be avoided during the fuel reduction activities, where possible. If these features are impacted, the City would need to obtain the required permits from the relevant regulatory agencies, including the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB.
- Riparian Vegetation. To minimize disturbance to riparian habitat occurring adjacent to the fuel reduction area, riparian areas shall be clearly delineated by a qualified biologist. Riparian areas shall be separated and protected from the work area through silt fencing, amphibian/reptile-friendly fiber rolls (i.e., no mono-filament), or other appropriate erosion control material. If impacts to riparian habitat within the project area cannot be avoided, a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) shall be prepared and implemented for all impacted riparian habitat.
- Native Grasslands and Other Sensitive Natural Communities. If feasible, the proposed fuel treatments shall avoid/minimize impacts to the purple needlegrass grasslands, other native grasslands, and other sensitive natural communities. The stands of native grasslands shall be avoided during fuel treatment activities. If the native grasslands cannot be avoided, the loss of native grasslands shall be mitigated by restoring an equivalent acreage of native grasslands onsite. The City shall reseed temporarily disturbed areas of native grassland habitat that are disturbed by fuel reduction activities with an appropriate weed-free native seed mix that contains the particular native grass seed and/or plugs. Any restored native grassland areas shall be monitored and reported on an annual basis, as required by CDFW.

INTRODUCTION

Background

The City of El Cerrito (“City”) proposes to implement the Project (project) to establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and vegetation management plan for the City’s “Hillside Natural Area” (HNA). The “Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan” will:

- identify and protect critical resource areas,
- guide the City’s fire fuel reduction, native forest conservation, and maintenance activities, and
- evaluate fire road and trail network access.

Over the last few years, community concerns regarding fire risk in the City’s HNA and surrounding residential communities have significantly increased. The City has responded with ongoing and increased vegetation maintenance activities, completing work largely based on planning efforts that were completed many years ago, including the 1994 City of El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Fire Hazard Reduction Plan. However, the need for more robust, comprehensive, and balanced vegetation management practices became increasingly evident and was identified in the City’s 2015 Urban Greening Plan. Additionally, in 2019, the El Cerrito Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan specifically called for action to “support the El Cerrito-Kensington Wildfire Action Plan goals and policies by creating defensible spaces, increasing weed abatement, and managing dead or diseased trees and other vegetation, especially in the Hillside Natural Area”. El Cerrito voters passed a measure (Measure H) to further fund park maintenance activities that same year and the City has since increased its fire fuel reduction and vegetation management activities, in part with these park maintenance funds. Given the ongoing and historic drought, rising global temperatures and community concerns regarding the risk of wildfire, an updated plan with the required environmental site analysis is needed now to guide the City in performing and budgeting for the most effective, sustainable, and cost-efficient fuel reduction and forest conservation activities.

This Plan was developed with support from a \$166,750 State Coastal Conservancy grant in September 2022. The Coastal Conservancy is a California state agency, established in 1976 to protect and improve natural lands and waterways, to help people get to and enjoy the outdoors, and to sustain local economies along California’s coast. It acts with others to protect and restore, and increase public access to California’s coast, ocean, coastal watersheds and the San Francisco Bay Area. Its vision is of a beautiful, restored, and accessible coast for current and future generations of Californians.

Purpose

The purpose of the Biological Resources Report is to provide a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)-compliant identification of special-status species and their habitats, wetlands and other regulated waters, and other potential biological resource constraints to the Plan development. The

report includes a description of the project, an explanation of the methods used to conduct the analysis, the results of field surveys including documentation of plant and wildlife species observed, and a list of special-status species (plants and animals) that could potentially occur at the site (and the likelihood of occurrence). The report also provides recommended mitigation measures to address the requirements of CEQA (50 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] §402.12).

Methods

LSA reviewed available background information/literature, such as the *Friends of Five Creek's Native Plants of the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area*, and the *El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Vegetation Management Plan* (LSA 1987), Biological Resources Report for the Madera Property Fuel Reduction Project (LSA 2014), and searched the records of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB; CDFW 2023), United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS 2023) Information for Planning and Consultation online system, California Native Plant Society's Inventory of Rare Plants (CNPS 2023), and eBird's online system (eBird 2023) for the occurrence of special-status plant and/or wildlife species on or near the project site.

An LSA senior biologist conducted a biological field survey at the project site on August 11, September 27, and October 3, 2023. The survey involved walking throughout the project site to search for biological resources, such as the presence of special-status plants, wildlife, and their habitats, and sensitive habitats, such as wetlands and drainage channels. The potential presence of special-status species was based on an evaluation of the habitat types present on the site and the CNDDDB records and other occurrence information from the vicinity of the site. During the field survey, the biologist also investigated the presence of waters of the United States/waters of the State (including wetlands and drainages).

The scientific and vernacular nomenclature for the plant and wildlife species used in this study are from the following standard sources:

- Plants (Baldwin et al. 2012) and updates listed on the Jepson Herbarium website (<http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/eflora/>)
- Amphibians and Reptiles (Crother 2017)
- Birds (American Ornithologists' Union 1998) and supplements through 2023
- Mammals (Bradley et al. 2014)

PROJECT SITE DESCRIPTION

Location and Site Characteristics

The project site is located within the City of El Cerrito, California (Figure 1). The HNA is approximately 107.18 acres and is divided into three sections: Hillside Natural Area North ("Motorcycle Hill;" 24.22 acres), Madera Property (9.53 acres) and Hillside Natural Area South (73.43 acres). Elevations ranges from approximately 150 and 650 feet above sea level. The project site is characterized by steep hillslopes with predominantly western and southern exposures (Figure 2). There are 6 major vegetation cover types within the HNA (Figure 3). Soils on the project site consist of mostly Rock outcrop-Xerorthents association with Cut and fill land-Millsholm complex mapped along the western boundary and Quarry mapped near the southern boundary of the project site (USDA 2023; Figure 4).

Vegetation

Vegetation in the City of El Cerrito is characterized by native and non-native grassland, riparian scrub and woodland, oak woodland, salt marsh near the San Francisco Bay, and other scrub and "soft" chaparral, in addition to extensive introduced landscaping and naturalized nonnative species such as eucalyptus, pine and French broom. LSA inventoried over 150 plant species that commonly occur in the HNA. The majority of those are native (n=82), but most of the non-native species are considered invasive. In addition, Friends of Five Creek (2014) produced a plant list containing 129 native species. The heavily vegetated, undeveloped San Pablo and Sobrante ridges occur northeast of the City. The project site supports ruderal/non-native grassland, native grassland, coast live oak woodland, scrub, riparian woodland, and drainages (Figure 3).

Ruderal/Non-Native Grassland. The ruderal/non-native grassland (33.47 acres) supports primarily non-native annual grassland species with patches of perennial grassland and ruderal plant species. Dominant annual grass species include wild oats (*Avena fatua*) and ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*). The dominant grass in the perennial grassland is veldt grass (*Ehrharta erecta*). Associated species observed in the annual grassland include rattlesnake grass (*Briza minor*), wild mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), bristly ox-tongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), field hedge parsley (*Torilis arvensis*), and willow leaf lettuce (*Lactuca saligna*). Non-native grasses are also abundant throughout the understory within all habitat types at the project site.

Native Grasslands. Native grasslands observed on the project site consist of patches of purple needle grass (*Stipa pulchra*), foothill needle grass (*Stipa lepida*), bent grass (*Agrostis pallens*), and creeping wild rye (*Elymus triticoides*). Native herbaceous species observed within the native grasslands include soap root (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*), golden rod (*Solidago velutina*), hayfield tarweed (*Hemizonia congesta* subsp. *luzulifolia*), and bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*). Several other native grassland plant species, such as blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), narrowleaf mule

ears (*Wyethia angustifolia*), and arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), have been observed at the project site (Friends of Five Creeks 2014).

North Franciscan Coastal Scrub. The scrub habitat within the project site comprises 2.6 acres and is dominated by coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) and French broom (*Genista monspessulana*). Other dominant to co-dominant species include orange bush monkey flower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*). California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), coffeeberry (*Frangula californica*), and poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*). Stands of northern Franciscan coastal scrub are found throughout the project site, but they mainly occupy the steeper portions of the south and west facing slopes along the eastern boundary.

Coast Live Oak Woodland. The coast live oak woodland on the project site (28.7 acres) is dominated by coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) with California bay (*Umbellularia californica*) and California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*). This woodland supports an abundance of mature native shrubs, vines, and grasses including toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), pink honeysuckle (*Lonicera hispidula*), California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), California aster (*Aster chilensis*), Pacific pea (*Lathyrus vestitus*), California bee plant (*Scrophularia californica*), blue witch (*Solanum umbelliferum*), coyote brush, bush monkey flower, poison oak, and bent grass. Non-native species observed within the oak woodland included pittosporum (*Pittosporum sp.*), Bailey Acacia (*Acacia baileyana*), blackwood acacia (*Acacia melanoxylon*), pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*), orange cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster franchetii*), Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*), English ivy (*Hedera canariensis*), plum (*Prunus sp.*), and non-native grasses. Understory species include beaked hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta*), wood fern (*Dryopteris arguta*), western sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*), soap plant (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*), pink honeysuckle (*Lonicera hispidula*), poison oak, California blackberry, coffeeberry, and coyote brush.

Riparian Woodland. Riparian woodland occurs along the streams and drainages. This community occupies approximately 1.15 acres on the HNA, but that estimate is probably too low and will need to be evaluated by field mapping. Tree species observed include arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), Pacific willow (*S. lasiandra*), cottonwood (*Populus sp.*), alder (*Alnus sp.*), California bay (*Umbellularia californica*), California buckeye, and coast live oak. Associated species observed include common lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina var. cyclosorum*), western chain fern (*Woodwardia fimbriata*), California blackberry, Himalayan blackberry, blue elderberry, English ivy, and French broom.

Eucalyptus and Pine Groves. Eucalyptus groves are present in several areas within the project site. They are the most prevalent vegetation community at the project site, totaling over 36.2 acres. Eucalyptus are the dominant tree species within the groves. Blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*), red ironbark (*E. sideroxylon*) and yellow gum (*E. viminalis*) are growing at the project site (LSA 1987). Conifers, primarily Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) and coast live oaks also occur within the groves. Dense shade created by the eucalyptus canopy, combined with volatile chemicals contained in the large amount of bark and leaf litter deposited by eucalyptus, create poor growing conditions for most herbaceous and woody understory species. Consequently, the understory of these woodlands is often devoid of vegetation and may consist of a thick layer of bark and leaves. Where openings in

the canopy allow sufficient light to penetrate to the grove floor, patches of poison oak, toyon, other shrubs and annual grasses can occur.

Rock Outcrops. Rock outcrops are present in small areas throughout the project site. Species observed at the outcrops include naked-stem buckwheat (*Eriogonum nudum*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), coyote mint (*Monardella villosa*), and various non-native plants.

Streams/Drainages. Several intermittent and ephemeral streams/drainage channels are present in the project site (Figure 3). These streams/drainages appear to flow in the southwest direction and flow off the project site into culverts beneath the adjacent residential area to the southwest. Some of the drainages occur within concrete v-ditches and become natural stream channels further downstream within the project site.

Wildlife

Several common wildlife species inhabit the project site. Most of the bird species observed were foraging in the oak woodland and scrub habitats. A few birds, such as of turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), and common raven (*C. corax*) were observed flying over the project site. No active bird nests were identified during the reconnaissance-level field surveys, which were conducted in the late summer and early fall of 2023, but a few inactive stick nests were found in the onsite trees. Numerous resident birds were observed foraging at the project site, suggesting that they likely nested on or near the project site. Non-native fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger*) nests were also observed in the oak trees. Foraging black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and Botta's pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*) burrows were observed in the non-native grasslands.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

For the purposes of this assessment, special-status species are defined as follows:

1. Species that are listed, formally proposed, or designated as candidates for listing as threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA);
2. Species that are listed, or designated as candidates for listing, as rare, threatened, or endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA);
3. Plant species that are on the California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) Lists 1A, 1B, and 2;
4. Animal species designated as Species of Special Concern or Fully Protected by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW); or
5. Species that meet the definition of rare, threatened, or endangered under Section 15380 of the CEQA guidelines.

Several special-status species could occur on the project site or in the vicinity (Table A). No special-status species were observed during the field survey.

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ^a
Plants			
<i>Amsinckia lunaris</i> Bent-flowered fiddleneck	1B	Occurs in coastal bluff scrub, cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland; openings. Elevation: 3-500 m. Blooms: March-June	Although suitable habitat is present, the potential for this species to occur is low due to the density of invasive plants. Nearest occurrence is near San Pablo Ridge approximately 2.4 miles from the project site.
<i>Arctostaphylos pallida</i> Pallid manzanita	FT/CE/1B	Broadleaved upland forest, close coned coniferous forest, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and chaparral. Grows on siliceous shale, sandy, or gravelly substrates in uplifted marine terraces. Elevation: 185-465 m. Blooms: December-March	Although woodland habitat is present, suitable substrates are absent. Nearest CNDDDB occurrence is in Sobrante Ridge Regional Preserve approximately 3.0 miles from the project site.
<i>Astragalus tener</i> var. <i>tener</i> Alkali milk-vetch	1B	Playas and vernal-pools in freshwater wetlands, alkali sink, valley grassland, wetland-riparian. Elevation: 0-90 m. Blooms: March-June	No suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a possibly extirpated 1900 record from an unknown location near the Stege Marsh in Richmond.
<i>Cirsium andrewsii</i> Franciscan thistle	1B	Northern coastal scrub, mixed evergreen forest, wetland-riparian. Elevation: 0-160 m. Blooms: March-July	Although woodland habitat is present, the potential for this species to occur is low due to the density of invasive plants. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is near Tilden Regional Park approximately 3.3 miles from the project site.
<i>Dirca occidentalis</i> Western leatherwood	1B	Broad-leaved upland forest, chaparral, closed-cone coniferous forest, cismontane woodland, north coast coniferous forest, riparian forest, and riparian woodland on brushy slopes, mesic sites. Elevation: 30-395 m. Blooms: January-March	Suitable woodland habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from an unknown location in Wildcat Canyon Regional Park approximately 0.4 mile from the project site.
<i>Fritillaria liliacea</i> Fragrant fritillary	1B	Northern coastal scrub, coastal prairie, valley grassland, wetland-riparian. Elevation: 0-360 m. Blooms: February-April	Although woodland habitat is present, the potential for this species to occur is low due to the density of invasive plants. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a possibly extirpated 1938 record from an unknown location near the Mira Vista Country Club, near the

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ^a
			north end of Wildcat Canyon Regional Park.
<i>Gilia millefoliata</i> Dark-eyed gilia	1B	Coastal strand. Elevation: 0-30 m. Blooms: April-July	No suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from an 1863 record at unknown location in Oakland estimated at approximately 3.6 miles from the project site.
<i>Helianthella castanea</i> Diablo helianthella	1B	Broadleaved upland forest, chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, riparian woodland, valley and foothill grassland, usually within rocky azonal soils. Elevation: 60–300 m. Blooms: April-June.	Suitable habitat present within the woodland and scrub habitat, but species likely not to occur due to prior disturbance and the introduction of invasive species. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from a presumed extant population near the San Pablo Reservoir approximately 2.2 miles from the project site.
Loma Prieta hoita <i>Hoita strobilina</i>	1B	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, and riparian woodland on mesic serpentine sites. Elevation: 30-860 m. Blooms: May- October	Although woodland is present, serpentine is absent from the project site. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from a presumed extant population in El Sobrante approximately 2.0 miles from the project site.
Santa Cruz tarplant <i>Holocarpa macradenia</i>	FT/CE/1B	Occurs in sandy-clay soil in coastal prairie, coastal scrub, and in valley and foothill grassland. Elevation: 10-220 m. Blooms: June-October	Although valley and foothill grassland is present, this species is known to occur on sandy soils, which are absent from the project site. All extant populations of this plant have been reintroduced. The closest CNDDDB occurrences are northeast of the project site in Wildcat Canyon Regional Preserve approximately 0.7 mile from the project site.
Insects			
Monarch butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	FC/Sensitive Winter Roosting Sites	Winter roosts along the coast from northern Mendocino to Baja California, Mexico in wind-protected tree groves (eucalyptus, Monterey pine, cypress) with nectar and water sources nearby. Uses milkweed (<i>Asclepias</i> spp.) as host plants.	Suitable sheltered groves of trees present, but project site is likely located at too high of an elevation to provide suitable roost sites. Suitable breeding habitat present in onsite patches of milkweed; milkweed has been recorded on the project site (Xerces et al. 2023). Suitable nectar plants present. Individual monarch butterflies observed flying through project site during the October field survey. Closest CNDDDB occurrence of an overwintering roost is at the University of California Richmond Field Station, approximately 1.2 miles from the project site.
Crotch bumble bee <i>Bombus crotchii</i>	—/ Candidate CE	Open grassland and scrub habitats supporting flowering plants, such	Suitable habitat present. Closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1933 and

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ^a
		as <i>Asclepias</i> sp., <i>Chaenactis</i> sp., <i>Lupinus</i> sp., <i>Medicago</i> sp., <i>Phacelia</i> sp., and <i>Salvia</i> sp.	2015 record from Berkeley, approximately 2.4 miles from the project site.
Western bumble bee <i>Bombus occidentalis</i>	–/ Candidate CE	Variety of habitat types, supporting native flowering plants. Species has declined precipitously perhaps from disease.	Suitable habitat present. Closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1992 record from Berkeley Richmond Field Station, in Richmond, approximately 1.2 mile from the site.
Fish			
Steelhead (central California coast Distinct Population Segment) <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	FT/CSC	Pacific Ocean, San Francisco estuary, Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and tributaries.	No suitable habitat present. Onsite stream and drainages do not provide suitable habitat. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.
Amphibians			
California tiger salamander <i>Ambystoma californiense</i>	FT/CT	Breeds in vernal pools, ponds, and stock ponds. Spends summer and early Fall in uplands surrounding breeding sites, taking refuge in small mammal burrows or other underground cover.	Although suitable upland habitat is present in grasslands, no suitable breeding habitat present at or near the site. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.
California red-legged frog <i>Rana draytonii</i>	FT/CSC	Found in lowlands and foothills in or near permanent ponds and streams with dense, shrubby, or emergent riparian vegetation.	Suitable non-breeding aquatic, upland, and dispersal habitat present in onsite streams, but species not known to occur at or near the project site (CDFW 2023). The closest extant CNDDDB occurrence is from near the San Pablo Dam approximately 2.2 miles from the project site. The CNDDDB also includes a 1956 record approximately 1.5 miles from the project site at Jewell Lake in Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley, but due to the presence of introduced predators, such as bullfrogs and fish, this occurrence is likely extirpated.
Foothill yellow-legged frog Central Coast Distinct Population Segment <i>Rana boylei</i>	FT/CE	Partly shaded, shallow streams and riffles with a rocky substrate.	No suitable habitat present. No extant CNDDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site.
Reptiles			
Northwestern pond turtle <i>Emys marmorata</i>	FC/CSC	Ponds, marshes, rivers, streams, and irrigation ditches with aquatic vegetation. Requires basking sites and adjacent grasslands or other open habitat for egg-laying.	Suitable aquatic habitat present in onsite streams, but lack of deep plunge pools and high quality basking sites likely precludes the species from occurring. The closest

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ^a
			CNDDDB occurrence is from Jewell Lake in Tilden Regional Park approximately 1.5 miles from the project site.
Alameda whipsnake <i>Masticophis lateralis euryxanthusi</i>	FT/CT	Chaparral and rock outcrops. Also occurs in riparian woodland, forests, and grasslands where chaparral and rocky outcrops are present nearby.	Suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is approximately 1.6 miles from the project site.
Birds			
American white pelican <i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>	–/CSC	Occurs in shallow inland and coastal marine habitats, marshes, lakes, and rivers.	No suitable habitat present. Species does not breed in the project area but may fly over the project site. Species observed at the project site (eBird 2023). Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.
Long-eared owl <i>Asio otus</i>	–/CSC	Woodlands and forests that are open or adjacent to grasslands, meadows, or shrublands.	Suitable nesting habitat present in trees on or adjacent to the site. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the site.
Short-eared owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	–/CSC	Open grasslands, meadows, and marshes with few trees. Requires dense ground vegetation for both roosting and nesting.	Suitable habitat present. Wintering/migrating individuals observed in Point Pinole Regional Park (eBird 2023). No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the site.
Burrowing owl <i>Athene cunicularia</i>	–/CSC	Nests in burrows in grasslands and woodlands; often associated with ground squirrels. Will also nest in artificial structures (culverts, concrete debris piles, etc.)	Suitable habitat present, but not known to nest in the project area. During the time of the field surveys, no ground squirrel burrows were observed and the grass within the grassland was too tall for burrowing owl burrows. Species is known to winter along the San Francisco Bay shoreline in Richmond, Albany, and Berkeley (eBird 2023). Closest CNDDDB occurrences is in Richmond, approximately 1.5 miles from the project site.
White-tailed kite <i>Elanus leucurus</i>	–/CFP	Nests in shrubs and trees in open areas and forages in adjacent grasslands and agricultural land.	May nest and forage on the project site. Species observed at the project site (eBird 2023). Closest CNDDDB occurrences is approximately 3.2 miles from the project site.
Northern harrier <i>Circus hudsonius</i>	–/CSC	Nests and forages in meadows, grasslands, open rangeland, and fresh or saltwater marshes.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from the Berkeley

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ^a
			Meadow near the Berkeley Marina approximately 3.2 miles from the project site.
Golden eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	–/CFP	Forages in rolling foothill or coast-range terrain, with open grassland and scattered large trees. Nests in large trees, on cliffs, and occasionally on power line poles.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. No CNDDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site.
Bald eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Delisted/CE; CFP	Winters at lakes, reservoirs, river systems, and some rangelands and coastal wetlands throughout most of California. Breeds in mountainous habitats near reservoirs, lakes and rivers, mainly in the northern two-thirds of the State, in the Central Coast Range, and on Santa Catalina Island. Nests generally built in the upper canopy of large trees.	No suitable habitat present, but species could fly over the project site. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is approximately 3.2 miles from the project site.
American peregrine falcon <i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	Delisted/ Delisted/ CFP	Forages in open country, mountains, and seacoasts. Nests on high cliffs, bridges, and buildings.	No suitable nesting habitat present, but grasslands provide suitable foraging habitat.
Loggerhead shrike <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	–/CSC	Found in grasslands and open shrub or woodland communities. Nests in dense shrubs or trees and forages in scrub, open woodlands, grasslands, and croplands. Frequently uses fences, posts, and utility lines as hunting perches.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present, but species is rare in the project vicinity (eBird 2023). No CNDDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site.
Vaux's swift <i>Chaetura vauxi</i>	–/CSC	Grasslands and agricultural fields; nests in dense vegetation in large hollow trees near open water; forages in most habitats but prefers rivers and lakes.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. Species observed at the project site (eBird 2023). Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.
Olive-sided flycatcher <i>Contopus cooperi</i>	–/CSC	Coniferous forests with open canopies.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. Species observed at the project site (eBird 2023). Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.
Purple martin <i>Progne subis</i>	–/CSC	Occurs in woodlands; nests in tree snags and abandoned woodpecker cavities and human-made structures.	Suitable nesting habitat present, but species is rare in the County (Glover 2009). No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.
Grasshopper sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	–/CSC	Occurs in grasslands with coyote brush and other shrubs.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.
Tricolored blackbird <i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	–/CT, CSC	Nests in dense vegetation near open water, forages in grasslands and agricultural fields.	No suitable nesting habitat present, but site provides suitable foraging habitat. No CNDDDB

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ^a
			occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.
Yellow warbler <i>Dendroica petechia</i>	–/CSC	Nests in extensive willow riparian woodlands.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present, but species is a rare breeder in the County (Glover 2009). May forage on the site during migration. Species observed during migration at the project site (eBird 2023). No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles.
Mammals			
Townsend's big-eared bat <i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	–/CSC	Found in wooded areas with caves or old buildings for roost sites.	No suitable roosting, hibernating habitat present, but could forage over the project site. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from Strawberry Canyon approximately 3.4 miles from the project site.
Pallid bat <i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	–/CSC	Occupies a wide variety of habitats at low elevations. Most commonly found in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting.	Suitable roosting, hibernating, or foraging habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1943 record from an unknown location in El Cerrito.
Western red bat <i>Lasiurus blossevillei</i>	–/CSC	Often roosts and forages on or near riparian habitat. Roosts primarily in trees, 2-40 feet above ground, from sea level up through mixed conifer forests. Prefers habitat edges and mosaics with trees that are protected from above and open below with open areas for foraging.	Suitable roosting habitat present in trees and foraging habitat present. Species does not breed in the project area. No CNDDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site. Species observed near Jewell Lake in Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley (LSA pers. obs.).
Big free-tailed bat <i>Nyctinomops macrotis</i>	–/CSC	Typically in deserts and arid grasslands where rocky outcrops, canyons, or cliffs occur for roosting. Occasionally roosts in buildings, caves, and tree cavities.	No suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1916 record from an unknown location in Berkeley estimated at approximately 2.4 miles from the project site.
San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat <i>Neotoma fuscipes annectens</i>	–/CSC	Primarily along riparian areas within chaparral and woodlands. Feeds mainly on woody plants but also eats acorns, grasses, and fungi. Builds conspicuous stick houses in trees and on the ground.	Suitable habitat and species present within the riparian woodland, scrub, and trees on and adjacent to the site. Woodrat houses observed during the field surveys. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is approximately 4.2 miles from the project site.
American badger <i>Taxidea taxus</i>	–/CSC	Grassland, scrub, and woodland with loose-textured soils.	Suitable grassland habitat present, but site's proximity to residential development and isolation from large open space area likely

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence ^a
			preclude this species. No CNDDB occurrences within 5 miles.

Source: LSA 2023 (CDFW 2023, eBird 2023, Glover 2009, Xerces et al. 2023)

Status Codes:

FT = Federal threatened.

FC = Federal candidate.

CE = California endangered.

CT = California threatened.

CFP = California fully protected.

CSC = California Species of Special Concern.

List 1B = California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) List 1B: plant considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.

– = No status

^a Nearest records are based on CNDDB (CDFW 2023) occurrences unless otherwise noted.

Special-Status Plants

Special-status plant species for which extant or non-historic CNDDB (CDFW 2023) records exist in the vicinity consist of the following species:

- Bent-flowered fiddleneck (*Amsinckia lunaris*; CRPR List 1B)
- Pallid manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pallida*; Federal Threatened, State Endangered, CRPR List 1B)
- Franciscan thistle (*Cirsium andrewsii*; CRPR List 1B)
- Western leatherwood (*Dirca occidentalis*; CRPR List 1B)
- Fragrant fritillary (*Fritillaria liliacea*; CRPR List 1B)
- Diablo helianthella (*Helianthella castanea*; CRPR List 1B)
- Loma Prieta hoita (*Hoita strobilina*; CRPR List 1B)
- Santa Cruz tarplant (*Holocarpha macradenia*; Federal Threatened, State Endangered, CRPR List 1B).

Several other special-status plants are also known to occur in the region (Diablo Fire Safe Council 2017). None of these or other special-status species, however, are likely to occur within the majority of project site due to; 1) prior disturbance in the project area; 2) the introduction of non-native plant species; and 3) the absence of suitable habitat and substrates such as wetlands and serpentine substrates. Less disturbed areas on the project site, such as the oak woodland, riparian woodland, scrub, and native grasslands, may provide suitable habitat for special-status plant species and therefore, protocol-level plant surveys are recommended to be conducted where suitable habitat is present (see Recommendations section).

Special-Status Wildlife

Special-status animal species that are known to occur in the vicinity of the project site and for which suitable habitat is present include the following:

- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*; Federal Candidate)
- Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*; State Candidate Endangered)
- Western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*; State Candidate Endangered)
- Alameda whipsnake (*Masticophis lateralis*; Federal and State Threatened)
- California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*; Federal Threatened, California Species of Special Concern)
- Northwestern pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*; Federal Candidate, California Species of Special Concern)
- American white pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Long-eared owl (*Asio otus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*; California Fully Protected)
- Northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*; California Fully Protected)
- Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*; State Endangered, California Fully Protected)
- American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*; California Fully Protected)
- Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Vaux's swift (*Chaetura vauxi*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Olive-sided flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Purple martin (*Progne subis*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*; State Threatened, California Species of Special Concern)
- Yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Townsend's western big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Western red bat (*Lasiurus frantzii*; California Species of Special Concern)
- San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes annectens*; California Species of Special Concern)
- American badger (*Taxidea taxus*; California Species of Special Concern)

Monarch Butterfly. The monarch butterfly is a federal candidate listed species that could breed within the project site. Monarch butterflies breed from June to September and require their obligate larval host plant, milkweed (*Asclepias spp.*), for laying eggs, larval development, and metamorphosis. This species utilizes other flowering species for nectaring during the breeding season. Although no milkweed was observed during LSA's reconnaissance-level field surveys and milkweed is not listed in Friends of Five Creek (2014) plant list, milkweed has been recorded at the Hillside Natural Area by the Western Monarch Milkweed Tracker (Xerces et al. 2023). Therefore, monarch butterflies could breed. Individual monarch butterflies were observed flying through the project site during the October 3, 2023, field survey.

Trees do provide suitable overwintering roosting habitat for monarch butterflies. The project site is situated approximately 1.5 miles from the San Francisco Bay shoreline, which falls within the

distance in which monarchs overwintering roosts are known to occur (Xerces et al. 2023). According to a monarch study completed for the project site in 1993 by Entomological Consulting Services, Ltd (ECHNA 1993), the project site may be situated at too high an elevation to allow monarchs to use the project site as an overwintering roost site. No CNDDDB occurrences for monarch butterfly have been recorded at the project site, while the closest CNDDDB occurrence for an overwinter roost is in Richmond, approximately 1.2 miles from the site. The project site is not listed as a location for Xerces Society's Thanksgiving Count for monarch butterflies (Xerces Society Western Monarch Count 2022).

Crotch and Western Bumble Bee. The crotch and western bumble bee are Candidate State Endangered listed species. These species are known to occur in grassland and scrub habitat where suitable native nectar plants are present. These species historically occurred in the region but are now considered rare. Due to the presence of suitable flowering plant species, these species, although unlikely due to their rarity, could be present.

California Red-Legged Frog. The California red-legged frog is not expected to occur onsite due the lack of suitable aquatic habitat on or adjacent to the project site (the streams/drainages on-site carry minimal water flow and are isolated from other aquatic habitat, such as ponds and lakes). This species has not been recorded at the project site, but does occur at Jewell Lake, approximately 1.5 miles from the site (CDFW 2023).

Alameda Whipsnake. Alameda whipsnake is a Federal and State listed threatened species that occurs in chaparral and rock outcrops and adjacent habitats, such as riparian woodland, oak woodland, and grasslands. Although very little high-quality chaparral habitat is present, the project site provides suitable habitat for this species. Beeman and Associates (1993) conducted focused habitat field surveys for Alameda whipsnake at the project site in 1993 and determined that the site provides suitable habitat for this species. No CNDDDB occurrences have been recorded at the project site. The closest non-historic CNDDDB occurrence was recorded near the San Pablo Dam, approximately 2.7 miles from the project site. The likelihood that Alameda whipsnake occurs at the project site is low.

Northwestern Pond Turtle. The northwestern pond turtle is not expected to occur onsite due the lack of suitable aquatic habitat on or adjacent to the project site (the streams/drainages on-site carry minimal water flow and are isolated from other natural aquatic habitat). The stream channels that convey larger amounts of water could support northwestern pond turtles and therefore, this species could be present during periods of high flows.

Special-Status Birds and Other Nesting Bird Species. Several special-status bird species are known to occur at or near the project site (Table A; see list above). These bird species could nest, winter, and/or migrate through the project site. Some of these bird species, such as the American peregrine falcon, could forage on the project site, but are unlikely to nest at or adjacent to the site due to the lack of suitable nesting habitat. Special-status birds observed at the project site include white-tailed kite, olive-sided flycatcher, and Vaux's swift, among others (eBird 2023). Several other special-status birds have been recorded in the project vicinity (CDFW 2023, eBird 2023). Active nests of special-

status and other native bird species are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and/or California Fish and Game Code.

Special-Status Bats and Other Bat Species. Several bat species, including special-status bat species, could roost and/or forage at the project site. All roosts of native bats, regardless of their status, are protected by California Fish and Game Code. Townsend's western big-eared bat (California Species of Special Concern) may briefly forage over the project site but would not roost on the project site due to the lack of suitable roosting habitat. Suitable habitat for pallid bat and western red bat, both of which are California Species of Special Concern) and other bat species could roost in the onsite trees. Pallid bats will roost in tree cavities and in structures, while western red bats roost in trees. Western red bats typically roost in riparian habitats but could roost in any of the larger onsite trees. This species does not breed in the area but does occur in the spring and fall during migration. The western red bat has been observed approximately 1.5 miles from the project site near Jewell Lake (LSA pers. obs.).

San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat. The San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat is a California Species of Special Concern. This species occurs in riparian woodland, woodland/forests, and scrub habitat and has been observed at the project site. LSA observed woodrat houses in the northern portion of the site, but this species could occur throughout the project site where suitable habitat is present.

American Badger. Grasslands present on the site may be suitable for the American badger, but this species is not likely to occur due to the project site's proximity to urban development and isolation from larger open grassland habitat. In addition, the soil characteristics of the rock outcrop-Xerorthents limit burrowing activities in the majority of the project area.

STREAMS/DRAINAGES

Several stream/drainage channels are present on the project site (Figure 3). Some of these drainages occur within concrete v-ditches. These streams/drainages are likely to be considered jurisdictional features by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and subject to regulation under Section 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act and/or the California Porter Cologne Act.

No other potential waters of the United States/State, such as seasonal wetlands or seeps, were observed during the reconnaissance-level field survey, but the survey was conducted during the dry season when wetlands and seeps are less identifiable. Therefore, additional jurisdictional features, such as wetlands and seeps, could be present at the project site.

RIPARIAN HABITAT AND SENSITIVE PLANT COMMUNITIES

Riparian Woodland

As described above, riparian woodland vegetation is present along the stream and drainage channels. The onsite riparian habitat contains both native and non-native trees and shrubs, including willows (*Salix spp.*), acacias (*Acacia spp.*), coast live oak, alder, and cottonwood. Riparian woodland is considered a sensitive plant community under CEQA.

Native Grasslands

As discussed above, scattered patches of native grasslands are present within the non-native grassland habitat. Species observed during LSA's 2023 reconnaissance-level field survey include purple needlegrass, but several native grasses have been identified at the project site (Friends of Five Creeks 2014, LSA 1987). Most native grasslands are considered sensitive natural communities under CEQA.

WILDLIFE MOVEMENT CORRIDORS

The project site provides a movement corridor for several wildlife species. The stream and riparian channels provide movement habitat for aquatic species during the wet season. Numerous species of birds, amphibians, reptiles, insects, and mammals also move through the project site. Wildlife movement within the streams, drainages, riparian, woodland, and grassland habitat will not be permanently impacted by the proposed fuel management activities. Wildlife that currently inhabit the project site are expected to continue to move through the site after the fuel reduction activities have been implemented.

WILDLIFE NURSERY SITES

The project site is not known to support important wildlife nursery sites, such as heron rookeries, but several species of birds and bats could breed at the project site. The recommended mitigation measures for nesting birds, roosting bats, and other wildlife species would protect wildlife nursery sites, if present.

HABITAT CONSERVATION PLANS

The project site is not situated within the limits of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES

Based on the field investigation, literature review, and database search, LSA makes the following recommendations:

GENERAL AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION MEASURES

The following general avoidance measures shall be implemented to avoid potential direct and indirect impacts to special-status wildlife species during all fuel reduction treatment activities:

- Biological surveys appropriate to special-status wildlife species potentially present shall be conducted by the qualified biologist within 5 to 7 days prior to initiation of fuel reduction treatments. All special-status wildlife species observed during surveys shall be reported to the CNDDB.
- Before any fuel reduction treatments activities begin on the project, the qualified biologist shall conduct a training session for fuel reduction workers and other personnel present during

vegetation treatment activities. The training shall include a description of each special-status species that might occur and their respective habitats, the general measures that are being implemented to protect each of the species as they relate to the project, and the physical boundaries within the project shall be accomplished. The training shall also provide instruction in the appropriate protocol to follow in the event that a special-status species is found onsite, including contact telephone numbers.

- A qualified biologist or biological monitor shall be present to observe fuel reduction treatment activities and shall have the authority to halt work as necessary if special-status species are in harm's way or permit conditions or mitigation measures are being violated. If special-status wildlife species are found within or near fuel reduction treatment areas, all fuel reduction activities shall cease in the vicinity of the animal until the animal moves on its own outside of the project area (if possible). The wildlife resource agency(ies) with jurisdiction over the species shall be contacted if permits issued for the project do not address relocation of the species regarding any additional avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures that may be necessary if the animal does not move on its own. The daily monitoring report prepared by the qualified biologist shall document the activities of the animal within the site; exclusion fence construction, modification, and repair efforts; and movements of the animal once again outside of the treatment area. This report shall be submitted to the City and the appropriate regulatory agency with jurisdiction over the wildlife species.
- Before starting ground disturbing activities within fuel reduction treatment areas, the City and its contractors shall clearly delineate the boundaries of the fuel reduction treatment area with fencing, stakes, or flags. Contractors shall be required to restrict fuel reduction treatment-related activities to within the fenced, staked, or flagged areas. Contractors shall maintain fencing, stakes, and flags until the completion of fuel reduction activities in that area. Fencing stakes and flags shall be removed upon completion of work. Sensitive habitat areas, including special-status wildlife species habitat, known plant populations, and jurisdictional wetlands, shall be clearly indicated on the fuel reduction treatments plans.
- Vehicles shall pass and turn around only within the delineated work area boundary or existing local road network. Where new access is required outside of existing roads or the work area, the route shall be clearly marked (i.e., flagged and/or staked) prior to being used, subject to review and approval of the qualified biologist.
- Where wildlife exclusion fencing is not installed and ground disturbing activity (e.g., road or trail construction) is occurring, the qualified biologist shall approve the proposed disturbance in advance and clear the area prior to the start of ground disturbance activity.
- The introduction of exotic plant species shall be avoided first through prevention, followed by physical methods. All equipment shall arrive at the project area free of soil, seed, and vegetative debris to reduce the likelihood of introducing new weed species. Mechanical seeding equipment shall be inspected for residual seeds and cleaned prior to use onsite. Equipment operators shall ensure that clothing, footwear, and equipment used during vegetation treatment and road construction is free of soil, seeds, vegetative matter or other debris or seed-bearing material

before entering the project site or from an area with known infestations of invasive plants and noxious weeds. Weed populations introduced into the site during treatment or construction shall be eliminated by mechanical means approved by the qualified biologist.

- Vehicles and equipment shall be in proper working condition to ensure that there is no potential for fugitive emissions of motor oil, antifreeze, hydraulic fluid, grease, or other hazardous materials. Contractor equipment shall be checked for leaks daily prior to operation and repaired when leaks are detected. Fuel containers shall be stored within appropriately sized secondary containment barriers. The qualified biologist shall be immediately informed of any hazardous spills and not more than 24 hours of the incident occurrence. Hazardous spills shall be immediately cleaned up and the contaminated soil shall be properly disposed of at an appropriate facility. If vehicle or equipment maintenance is necessary, it may be performed in the designated staging areas, as shown on the treatment or construction plans or approved by the qualified biologist.
- Temporarily disturbed areas shall be returned to pre-project conditions or better.
- Herbicide will only be administered by Qualified Applicator Certificate holders (minimum qualification) from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation using best practices including from the EPA (2018b). Applicators must be trained by a biologist to recognize milkweed, monarch butterflies and special-status bumble bees and their habitat.
- No herbicide application will take place within 125 ft of active monarch or bumble bee breeding sites (eggs, larvae, or active adult nectaring sites) when these insects are present (adults or larvae) based on Natural Resources Conservation Service and Monarch Joint Venture guidance (2022a). If herbicide application must occur within 125 ft of occupied monarch or bumble bee breeding and nectaring habitat, then application will only be conducted using targeted spraying, cut stump, and wiping by a trained and licensed applicator and will be no closer than 2 ft to milkweed and other important nectar sources.
- Herbicide application by qualified applicators is only allowed to occur when the Qualified Applicator Certificate holder determines it is appropriate forecasted weather (e.g., no heavy winds above 15 mph or any precipitation) and that the herbicide activities will not damage soil and/or vegetative cover. No herbicide application will be permitted 12 hours before or after a storm.

Special-Status Plants

If fuel reduction treatments are proposed within the native grasslands, riparian woodland, drainage channels, or the less disturbed portions of the oak woodland and scrub habitat (such as areas where French broom is not present), focused plant surveys for special-status plants should be conducted according to CDFW's *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Plant Populations and Natural Communities* (CDFW 2018).

Nesting Birds

The following general avoidance measures shall be implemented to avoid potential direct and indirect impacts to nesting birds during all fuel reduction treatment activities:

- Prior to fuel reduction treatment activities occurring during the nesting bird season (February 1 through August 31), a preactivity activity surveys for nesting birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no nests will be disturbed during project implementation. Surveys will be conducted no more than seven days prior to the initiation of fuel reduction treatment activities. During this survey, the biologist shall inspect all trees and other potential nesting habitats (e.g., shrubs, ground and structures) in the impact area plus a surrounding 300-foot buffer for nests. If removal of potential nesting substrate or project grading will occur during more than one nesting season, or in different parts of the site in phases over the course of a single season, then additional pre-activity surveys must be performed within seven days prior to initiation of work in any particular area. If the preactivity activity survey does not identify the presence of any active nests on or within 300 feet of the site, construction or vegetation treatment activities may proceed.
- If nests known to have eggs or young, or that cannot be confirmed to be inactive or to lack eggs or young, are found, or adults are demonstrating nesting behavior, a qualified biologist shall establish an appropriate fuel reduction-free buffer around each nest. Generally, a buffer of 300 feet for raptors and 100 feet for songbirds are adequate to avoid causing nest abandonment. The buffer shall remain in place until the qualified biologist has confirmed that the nest is no longer active.
- If less than a 100-foot nest buffer is necessary and determined to be appropriate for a particular nest or nests, a qualified biologist shall monitor the nest(s) before the activity to document baseline nesting behavior and monitor the nest during vegetation treatment or road construction to ensure nesting birds are not exhibiting signs of stress and territorial behavior. If signs of stress are observed during the monitoring, treatment or construction activities shall cease or buffer shall increase, as determined by a qualified biologist, the to a sufficient distance where the nesting birds are longer exhibiting signs of stress.
- To prevent encroachment, the buffer shall be clearly marked for avoidance. The established buffer shall remain in effect until the young have fledged or the nest is no longer active as confirmed by the biologist.

Roosting Bats

The following general avoidance measures shall be implemented to avoid potential direct and indirect impacts to bat species during all fuel reduction treatment activities:

- Prior to any tree removal during the maternity roosting period (April 15 to August 31) or hibernation period (October 15 to February 28), a focused tree habitat assessment shall be conducted by a qualified biologist of all trees that will be removed or impacted by vegetation treatment activities. Trees containing suitable potential bat roost habitat features would then be clearly marked. The habitat assessments should be conducted enough in advance to allow

preparation of a report with specific recommendations, and to ensure tree removal can be scheduled during seasonal periods of bat activity if required. If it is determined that day roosting bats are unlikely to occur, the tree may be removed as described below. If the absence of roosting bats cannot be confirmed, then the removal of trees providing suitable maternity or hibernation roosting habitat should only be conducted during seasonal periods of bat activity, including:

Between March 1 and April 15; or

Between September 1 and October 15.

- Appropriate methods will be used to minimize the potential of harm to bats during tree removal. Such methods may include but are not limited to using a two-step tree removal process. This method is conducted over two consecutive days and works by creating noise and vibration by cutting non-habitat branches and limbs from habitat trees using chainsaws only (no other heavy machinery) on Day 1. The noise and vibration disturbance, together with the visible alteration of the tree, is very effective in causing bats that emerge nightly to feed, to not return to the roost that night. The remainder of the tree is removed on Day 2. A biologist qualified in two-step tree removal is required on Day 1 to supervise and instruct the tree-cutters who will be on the site conducting the work, but only for a sufficient length of time to train all tree cutters who will conduct two-step removal of habitat trees. The biologist is generally not required on Day 2, unless a very large cavity is present and a large colony is suspected. Fallen branches and trees should be left onsite overnight to allow any bats that may be present to fly away during the nighttime hours.
- Removal of native oaks and riparian trees will be avoided where possible.

San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat

- A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-activity survey for San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat nests prior to the start of project activities. Surveys will be conducted in the immediate work area and a 25-foot buffer around those areas. If woodrat nests are present, the nests will be flagged in the field and delineated on project site maps in order to avoid potential impacts to woodrat nests during vegetation treatment activities. For any woodrat nests that cannot be avoided, a woodrat nest relocation plan shall be prepared and submitted to CDFW for approval. At a minimum, the plan shall include the phased dismantling and relocation of the nest materials to a suitable location, and the installation of artificial shelters at a ratio of 1:1 per dismantled nest to provide readily accessible refugia for dispersing individuals. If breeding woodrats are present, relocation of houses shall be delayed until the breeding season is over or the qualified biologist otherwise determines that young are no longer present.

Monarch Butterfly

The project site is not known to support wintering monarch butterflies, and therefore, winter roosts (which are considered sensitive habitat by CDFW) would likely not be impacted by fuel reduction activities. While it is possible that milkweed plants could be used by breeding monarchs, related impacts would be minimal because of the large area of open space maintained relative to project-

related habitat alteration, and because winter roosts would not be disturbed. The following avoidance and minimization measures shall be observed:

- Prior to fuel treatment activities, appropriately timed field surveys (generally June through September) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to identify, map, and estimate (a) stand sizes, densities, and number and species of milkweed (*Asclepias* spp. and others); (b) number and species of adult nectar plants in the entire project site; and (c) record any observations of monarch activity.
- Vegetation control activities may occur between December 1 and March 14 without special restrictions. The following restrictions are applicable from March 15 to November 30 for vegetation control practices (e.g., ground disturbance, tree removal, mowing, grazing, herbicide application, or hand removal) during the monarch breeding season in areas containing milkweed and nectar plants:
 - a. During the monarch breeding season from March 15-November 30, the City and its contractors may conduct vegetation control activities and other management actions provided:
 - b. Site specific buffers are established by a qualified biologist around patches of milkweed and associated nectar plants where no vegetation control may occur.
 - c. If milkweed and associated nectar plants cannot be avoided, a qualified biologist shall complete pre-activity surveys. If no monarch breeding activity is identified, Contractors may proceed with vegetation control activities subject to conditions below. If monarch breeding activity is identified, the milkweed stand shall be avoided until a qualified biologist implements a salvage and relocation plan that has been reviewed and approved by the applicable Resource Agency.
 - d. Unoccupied growing milkweed will be avoided by a minimum of 2 ft during the application of herbicides (target spray, cut stump, wiping and wicking). Herbicide application within 125 ft of a milkweed plant will be conducted with a low-pressure backpack sprayer to reduce the risk of drift.
 - e. No broad-spectrum herbicide application will take place within 125 ft of occupied monarch habitat when wind speeds exceed 10 mph, or temperatures exceed 85°F to minimize potential for drift and volatilization.
 - f. No persistent or pre-emergent herbicides will be used within 125 ft of milkweed or other occupied monarch habitats.
 - g. No prescribed fire treatment will occur within 125 ft of habitat occupied by monarchs during the active monarch season.
 - h. Mowing will not be conducted within 125 ft of active monarch breeding habitat (adults or larvae) during the breeding season March 15-November 30. Mowing projects affecting

nectar plants any time of year within 125 ft of active monarch habitat shall only be conducted when temperatures are above 55 degrees on a sunny day and 60 degrees on cloudy days to avoid injuring adult monarchs (Monarch Joint Venture 2022b).

- i. If mowing occurs from March to June near areas where breeding occurs, mowing height will be set to a minimum of 10-12 inches to avoid cutting newly emerged milkweed plants.

Crotch's and Western Bumble Bees

A minimum of two preactivity surveys shall be conducted within 30 days during appropriate activity periods (i.e., March through September) prior to the start of ground disturbing activities to identify bumble bee activity. The preactivity surveys shall occur when temperatures are above 60° Fahrenheit (15.5°Celsius) and not during wet conditions (e.g., foggy, raining, or drizzling). The survey shall be conducted at least 2 hours after sunrise and 3 hours before sunset and shall occur at least 1 hour after rain subsides. Preferably, the survey should be conducted during sunny days with low wind speeds (less than 8 miles per hour), but surveying during partially cloudy days or overcast conditions are permissible if the surveyors can still see their own shadow.

If western bumble bees, or potential Crotch or western bumble bees (since bumble bees can be difficult to identify in the field) are observed within the project site, a plan to protect Crotch and/or western bumble bee nests and individuals shall be developed and implemented in consultation with CDFW and USFWS. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following measures:

- Specifications for fuel treatment timing and sequencing requirements (e.g., avoidance of raking, mowing, tilling, or other ground disturbance until late March to protect overwintering queen bumble bees);
- Establishment of appropriate no-disturbance buffers for bumble bee nest sites to avoid impacts to the bees and monitoring by a qualified biologist to ensure compliance if bumble bee nests are identified;
- Restrictions associated with fuel treatment practices, equipment, or materials that may harm bumble bees (e.g., avoidance of pesticides/herbicides, BMPs to minimize the spread of invasive plant species);
- Provisions to avoid western bumble bees, or potential western bumble bees if observed away from a bumble bee nest during project activity (e.g., ceasing of project activities until the animal has left the active work area on its own volition); and
- Prescription of an appropriate restoration seed mix targeted for the western bumble bee, including native plant species known to be visited by native bumble bee species and containing a mix of flowering plant species with continual floral availability through the entire active season of the western bumble bee (March through September).

Waters of the United States/Waters of the State

Potential impacts to potentially jurisdictional features, such as the onsite streams/drainages (and seasonal wetlands/seeps, if present), are subject to regulation by the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW. These features will be avoided during the fuel reduction activities, where possible. No fill, including plant cuttings, rocks, or soils will be placed in these jurisdictional features without the appropriate permits from the regulatory agencies. If these features are impacted, the City would need to obtain the required permits from the relevant regulatory agencies, including the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB. These permits would include conditions and BMPs that the City would implement during fuel reduction activities. These permits may also specify mitigation, which the City would provide as specified by the regulatory agencies.

Riparian Vegetation

To minimize disturbance to riparian habitat occurring adjacent to the fuel reduction area, riparian areas shall be clearly delineated by a qualified biologist. Riparian areas shall be separated and protected from the work area through silt fencing, amphibian/reptile-friendly fiber rolls (i.e., no mono-filament), or other appropriate erosion control material. Material staging, and all other project-related activity shall be located as far as possible from riparian areas with no driving or parking of vehicles or equipment within the dripline of a riparian tree.

Native Grasslands and Other Sensitive Natural Communities

If feasible, the proposed fuel treatments shall avoid/minimize impacts to the purple needlegrass grasslands, other native grasslands, and other sensitive natural communities. The stands of native grasslands shall be avoided during fuel treatment activities.

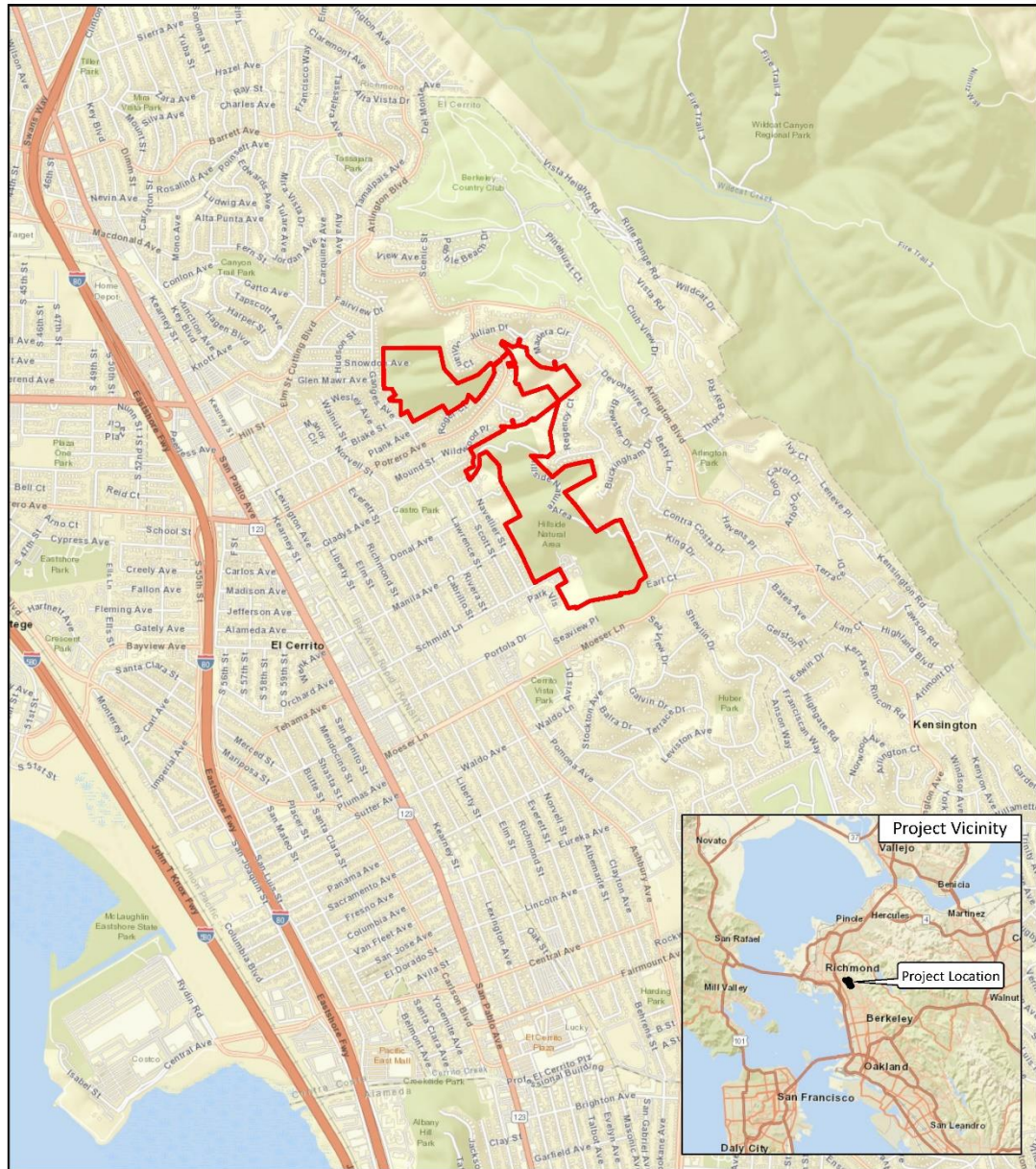
If the native grasslands cannot be avoided, the loss of native grasslands shall be mitigated by restoring an equivalent amount of native grasslands onsite. The City shall reseed temporarily disturbed areas of native grassland habitat that are disturbed by fuel reduction activities with an appropriate weed-free native seed mix that contains the particular native grass seed and/or plugs. Any restored native grassland areas shall be monitored and reported on an annual basis, as required by CDFW.

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FIGURES



LSA

LEGEND

Project Site

FIGURE 1



0 1000 2000
FEET

SOURCE: Contra Costa County (05/2024); Esri (2024).

I:\2023\20231296\GIS\MXD\Bio Report\Figure 1_Hillside Natural Area, El Cerrito.mxd (7/5/2024)

*Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California*
Regional Location

Figure 1: General Location

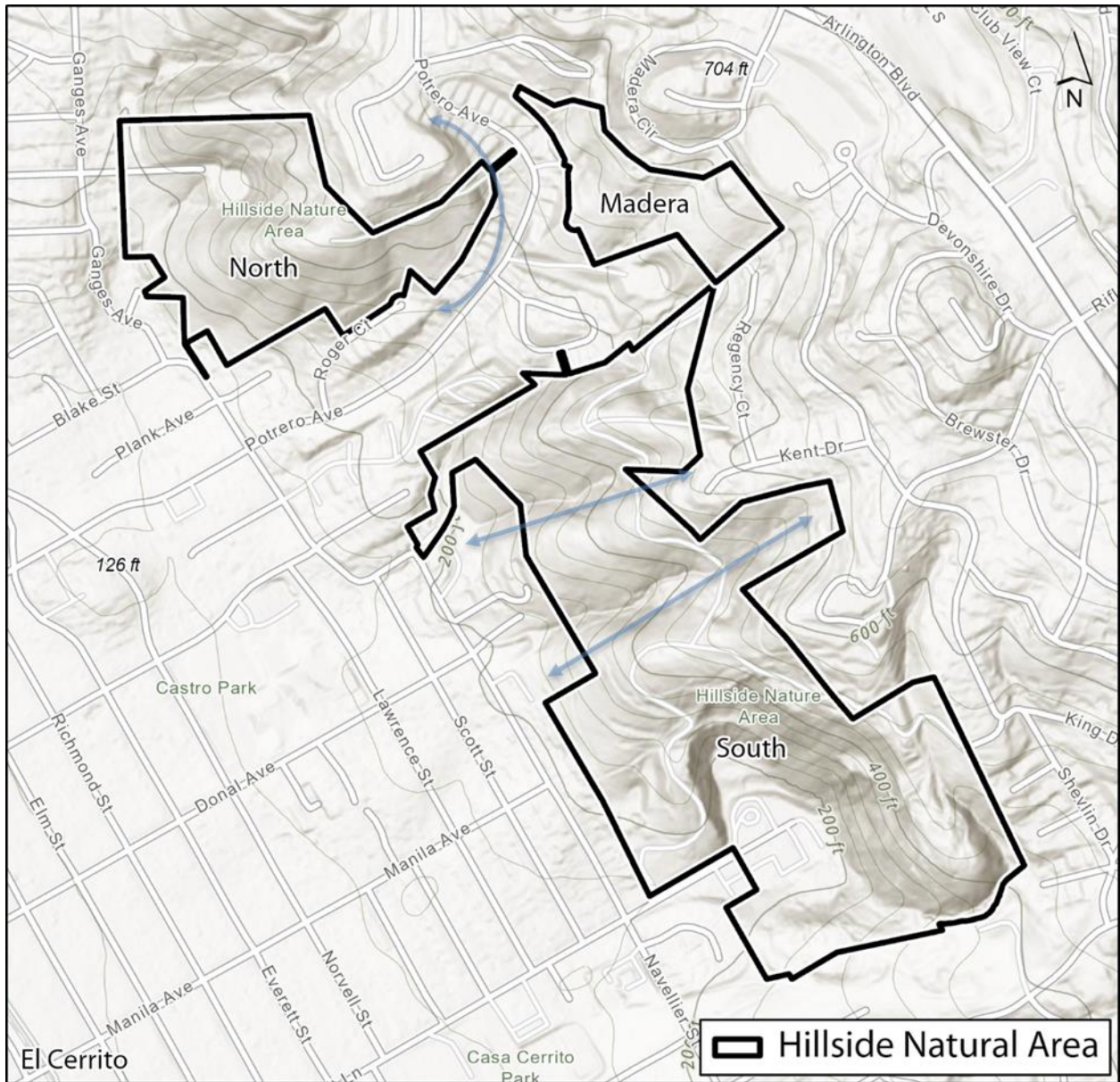


Figure 2: Project Site Topography (blue arrows indicate major drainages).

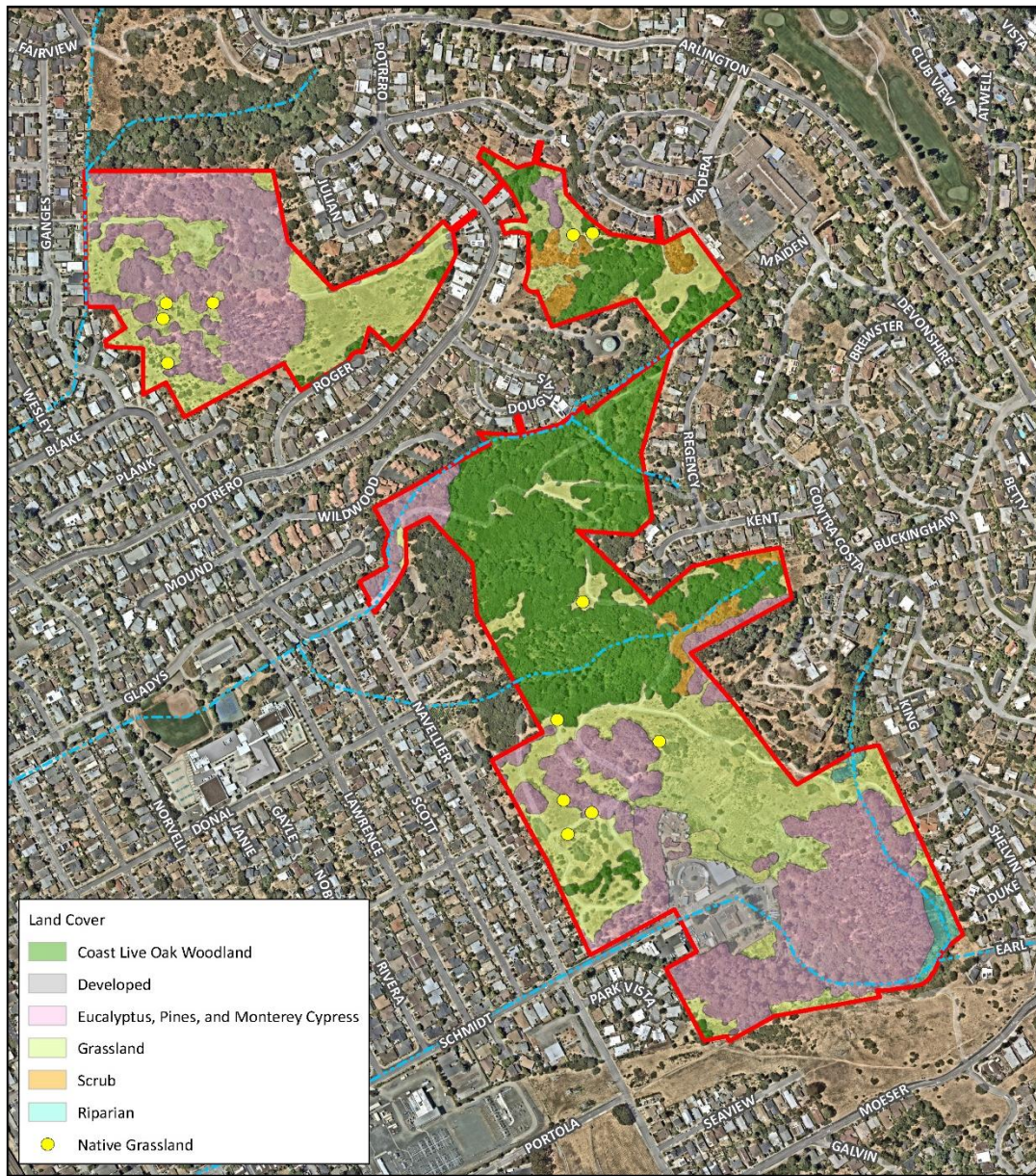


FIGURE 3

*Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California*

Land Cover

Figure 3:Vegetation Communities



LSA

LEGEND

- ▭ Project Site
- ▭ Soil Map Units



0 300 600
FEET

SOURCE: NRCS (10/2023); Contra Costa County (05/2024); Nearmap (07/2023).
I:\2023\20231296\GIS\MXD\Bio Report\Figure 5_Soils.mxd (7/6/2024)

FIGURE 4

*Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California
Soil Types*

Figure 4: Soils

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APPENDIX B

CULTURAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

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CULTURAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Date: October 18th, 2023
To: LSA Associates, Inc.
From: Solano Archaeological Services, LLC
Subject: Cultural Resources Investigation – Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan, City of El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California

INTRODUCTION

This technical memorandum summarizes the background research, Native American community outreach, archaeological survey, and study findings for the proposed Hillside Natural Area (HNA) Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan in the City of El Cerrito (the City), Contra Costa County, California (the Project). As a discretionary effort, the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements, and Solano Archaeological Services, LLC (SAS) has prepared this report to support compliance with the cultural resources provisions of CEQA.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project area consists of approximately 107.18-acre (ac.) on three discontinuous but adjacent lots generally located to the northwest, and southeast of Potrero Avenue. (Attachment A, Figure 1). The project area is depicted on the *Richmond, California* U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic 7.5 minute quadrangle in Township 1 North, Range 4 West, sections 15, 16, 21, and 22 (Attachment A, Figures 2, 3).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Community concerns regarding fire risk in the City's HNA and surrounding residential communities have significantly increased. The City has responded with ongoing and increased vegetation maintenance activities, completing work largely based on planning efforts completed in the 1990s. However, the need for more robust, comprehensive, and balanced vegetation management practices was identified in the City's 2015 Urban Greening Plan. Additionally, in 2019, the El Cerrito Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan specifically called for action to "support the El Cerrito-Kensington Wildfire Action Plan goals and policies by creating defensible spaces, increasing weed abatement, and managing dead or diseased trees and other vegetation, especially in the Hillside Natural Area". El Cerrito voters passed a measure (Measure H) to further fund park maintenance activities that same year and the City has since increased its fire fuel reduction and vegetation management activities, in part with these park maintenance funds. Given the ongoing and historic drought, rising global temperatures and community concerns regarding the risk of wildfire, an updated plan with the required environmental site analysis is needed now to guide the City in performing and budgeting for the most effective, sustainable, and cost-efficient fuel reduction and forest conservation activities. To assist in this effort, the City of El Cerrito was awarded a \$145,000 State Coastal Conservancy grant in September 2022 to complete the Plan by September 2024.

The purpose of this project is to establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and vegetation management plan for the City's HNA. The proposed plan will:

- identify and protect critical resource areas,
- guide the City's fire fuel reduction, native forest conservation, and maintenance activities, and
- evaluate fire road and trail network conditions.

REGULATORY SETTING

CEQA requires that public agencies having authority to finance or approve public or private projects assess the effects of those projects on cultural resources. Cultural resources include buildings, sites, structures, objects, or districts, each of which may have historical, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or scientific significance. CEQA states that if a proposed project would result in an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a significant cultural resource (termed a "historical resource"), alternative plans or mitigation measures must be considered. Because only significant cultural resources need to be addressed, the significance of cultural resources must be determined before mitigation measures are developed.

CEQA §5024.1 (Public Resources Code [PRC] §5024.1) and §15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] §15064.5) define a *historical resource* as "a resource listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources." A historical resource may be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources if it:

- 1) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage
- 2) Is associated with the lives of persons important to our past
- 3) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction represents the work of an important creative individual; or possesses high artistic values; or
- 4) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history

In addition, CEQA also distinguishes between two classes of archaeological resources: archaeological sites that meet the definition of a historical resource, and "unique archaeological resources." An archaeological resource is considered unique if it:

- Is associated with an event or person of recognized significance in California or American history or of recognized scientific importance in prehistory
- Can provide information that is of demonstrable public interest and is useful in addressing scientifically consequential and reasonable research questions
- Has a special or particular quality such as oldest, best example, largest, or last surviving example of its kind
- Is at least 100 years old and possesses substantial stratigraphic integrity; or
- Involves important research questions that historical research has shown can be answered only with archaeological methods (Public Resources Code §21083.2)

According to the CEQA Guidelines, a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, or a unique archaeological resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR §15064.5[b]). CEQA further states that a substantial adverse change in the significance of a resource means the physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL SETTING

The project area lies within the east bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area, where warm, dry summers are complemented by cool, wet winters with rainfall averaging 25–50 inches per year. This climate is complemented by a diverse topographic landscape bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean, to the east by low coastal mountains and the Central Valley, and to the south by the southern coast mountain ranges. Accordingly, this region has a rich and diverse natural environment with lush stands of redwood, pine, and fir trees, as well as grassland, oak, and chaparral zones. Large expanses of these varied vegetation zones form extensive, highly productive interfaces where prehistoric people exploited staples, such as acorns. Moreover, these widespread verdant areas support abundant species of wildlife, also a staple resource for prehistoric people (Baumhoff 1978).

The geologic legacy of the San Francisco Bay area also proved important to local Native American groups. Rocks and minerals for tool production and other uses were abundant in the general region. Sources of obsidian continue to be present at Napa Mountain and Anadel, and Franciscan chert can be found in local streambeds. Equally important were deposits of asphaltum (a tar-like substance originating from natural oil seepage) in Marin County and hematite and cinnabar in Sonoma County. The geology of the project area vicinity is also an important consideration when evaluating factors that affect archaeological site visibility. The geomorphic setting of the project area and vicinity includes alluvial, colluvial, and estuarine environments that actively deposited sediments during the Holocene epoch. The region has also been subject to widespread filling during the historic and modern periods (Rice et al. 2002; Wagner et al. 2002) which may have buried prehistoric and early historic-period archaeological sites and remains.

Prehistoric Setting

The prehistoric cultural chronology for the Bay Area was developed over a century of organized archaeological survey, from N. C. Nelson in 1906 to the present day. Since the 1950s, archaeological work in Marin, San Francisco, and Contra Costa Counties has led to identification and refinement of a cultural sequence of early Native American occupation. This sequence consists of the Early Holocene (*Lower Archaic*), Early Period (*Middle Archaic*), Lower Middle Period (*Initial Upper Archaic*), Upper Middle Period (*Late Upper Archaic*), Initial Late Period (*Lower Emergent*), and Terminal Late Period.

The Early Holocene or Lower Archaic (8,000 B.C. – 3,500 B.C.) is characterized as a mobile forager pattern, with milling slabs, handstones, and a variety of large, wide-stemmed and leaf-shaped projectile points, largely composed of local Franciscan chert dominating archaeological assemblages (Hylkema 2002:235; Milliken et al. 2007:114). During the Early Period or Middle Archaic (3,500 B.C. – 500 B.C.), several technological and social developments emerged including new groundstone technology and the first cut shell beads in mortuaries suggest new levels of sedentism and increased regional trade in the Bay Area (Vellanoweth 2001). The Lower Middle Period or Initial Upper Archaic (500 B.C. – A.D. 430) is marked by a “major disruption in symbolic integration systems” (Milliken et al. 2007:115) and new bone tools appeared for the first time, including barbless fish spears, elk femur spatulas, tubes, and whistles, as well as coiled basketry manufacture (Bennyhoff 1986:70; Bieling 1998:218). During the Upper Middle Period or Late Upper Archaic, (A.D. 430 – 1050), many sites from the previous period were abandoned, and single-barbed bone fish spears, ear spools, and large mortars were developed (Milliken et al. 2007:116).

Following the Archaic Period, the Initial Late Period or Lower Emergent (A.D. 1050 – 1550) is marked by an increase in sedentism, status ascription, and ceremonial integration in lowland Central California (Fredrickson 1973). Increased social stratification throughout the Bay Area after 1250 A.D. is expressed in mortuary practices through the quality of goods in high-status burials and cremations (Fredrickson 1994). The Terminal Late Period is defined by changes in artifact types and mortuary objects including toggle harpoons, hopper mortars, plain corner-notched arrow-sized projectile points, clamshell disk beads, magnesite tube beads, and secondary cremation in the North Bay (Bennyhoff 1994:54; Wickstrom 1986).

Ethnographic Context

During the early decades of the 20th century, pioneering anthropologists including Alfred Kroeber of the University of California at Berkeley, laid the groundwork for understanding the cultures of California's indigenous peoples (Lightfoot 2005). Due to the extensive cultural diversity that existed within pre-colonial California, Kroeber and other early anthropologists created a framework to organize populations into language groups. The people living in central coastal California at the time of Euro-American contact were grouped into the Costanoan language family (also referred to as Ohlone), which occupied the coastal area from San Francisco Bay to south of Monterey Bay. Eight separate language groups are believed to have been within this family. Around fifty politically autonomous groups referred to as tribelets ranged in population from 50 to 500 individuals (Levy 1978). Linguistically, the Costanoan people were divided into large groups consisting of sets of tribelets that spoke a common dialect within a particular geographical area. The dialect spoken amongst the tribelets that occupied the Palo Alto area is believed to have been *Chochenyo*, one of the eight linguistically separate groups within the Costanoan family (Levy 1978). The closest documented village to the project area where Chochenyo was likely spoken was *Huchiuñ*, several miles to the northwest of the HNA. According to (Bennyhoff 1977:142), *Huchiuñ Costanoan is firmly established in the Point San Pablo-Richmond region. The tribelet center was probably CCO-270, in the present town of San Pablo.*

The Costanoan carefully managed the landscape within their territory with wildlife habitat and desirable fauna being enhanced through controlled burns. This burning also eased the gathering of acorns; a staple food for the Costanoans. Other plants utilized ethnographically include nuts of buckeye, laurel and hazelnut trees, seeds of various plants, numerous berries, and roots. Animals consumed by the Costanoan included deer, elk, antelope, grizzly bear, sea lion, whale, various small mammals, numerous species of birds and waterfowl, and several species of fish including steelhead, salmon, and sturgeon. The Costanoan people traded mussels, abalone shells, salt, and dried abalone with neighbors to the east, and obtained piñon nuts, obsidian, and other items in return (Levy 1978).

With the establishment of seven Spanish missions within traditional Costanoan territory beginning in 1769, native peoples experienced dramatic cultural changes. The introduction of Spanish administration led to the relocation of many native Californians from their villages to missions for the purpose of being “converted” and to serve as laborers. The exact timing and nature of the relocation of the Chochenyo speakers is difficult to determine. Mission Santa Clara began converting Native Americans in 1777 but prior to 1806 their records are problematic for determining tribal group affiliation. In 1797, Mission San Jose de Guadeloupe (Mission San Jose) began converting native peoples, yet their registers provide no tribal names until 1803 (Milliken 1995). Despite this information gap, more than likely, the Chochenyo group was brought under Spanish administration sometime between 1801, and 1806 in the Santa Clara, and San Jose Missions (Milliken 1995), and possibly Mission San Francisco de Asís (Mission Dolores) when other Costanoan groups were subjected to the same fate.

At the missions, native groups were subjected to a daily routine of agricultural labor and a regimented lifeway. By 1810, the indigenous people of present-day Contra Costa and the surrounding counties had been entirely relocated to the missions. With notable exceptions, such as the village of *Alisal* (in present-day Alameda County) where the traditional native social system persisted into the 20th century, the indigenous mode of existence had largely disappeared by 1810. By 1935, for all practical purposes the Costanoan language was extinct and, by 1968, less than 200 people could claim probable Costanoan/Ohlone descent (Levy 1978). Today, however, the Ohlone people are reinvesting in their culture and traditional lifeways. Through new-found political, economic, and social influence Costanoan peoples constitute a thriving native community within the broader context of present-day California.

Historic Period Setting

Although Spanish expeditions to the California coastline date to the 16th and early 17th centuries (e.g., Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542, Sebastian Rodriguez Cermeño in 1595, and Sebastián Vizcaino in 1602), the conventional date for the beginning of the Spanish Period in California is 1769, the date of the founding of the first mission in California, *Mission San Diego de Alcalá*. Spanish exploration of the San Francisco Bay Area and surrounding lands also began in 1769 when Gaspar de Portola led his expedition into Alta California to locate Monterey Bay. In 1774, Don Fernando de Rivera y Moncada headed another party to identify potential mission sites, and Juan Bautista de Anza followed with an expedition in 1776 (Beck and Haase 1974).

The Franciscans eventually established 21 missions and four presidios (military bases) between Sonoma and San Diego between 1769, and 1823 (Beck and Haase 1974). The missions were situated so that they could be reached within a day's ride of each other. The presidios were spread out evenly among the missions although some missions also housed soldiers within their walls. Most missions included a Convento (padre's residence), housing for the neophytes, and various other facilities such as school rooms, shops, mills, tanneries, storehouses, sheds, and livestock corrals. Other amenities, such as gardens, vineyards, orchards, cultivated fields, and grazing land were developed in and around the missions (Blackmar 1976) that were self-sustaining as they raised a variety of grains and crops as well as sheep and cattle.

Mexico achieved independence from Spain in 1821 at which time Alta California was declared a territory of the Mexican republic. In 1834, the Mexican government secularized the missions and divided their land holdings into ranchos including Rancho San Pablo within which the NHA is located. Rancho San Pablo was a 17,938-ac. land grant given to Francisco María Castro, a former soldier at the San Francisco Presidio and one-time *alcalde* of the Pueblo of San José, in 1823 (Beck and Haase 1974). With the cession of California to the United States following the Mexican–American War, the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo provided that the land grants would be honored. As required by the California Land Act of 1851(9 Stat. 631), a claim for Rancho San Pablo was filed with the Public Land Commission by Joaquín Ysidro Castro in 1852, and the grant was patented to Joaquín Ysidro Castro in 1878.

El Cerrito

The most notable Euro-American to settle in what would become the City of El Cerrito was Wilhelm F. Rust, a native of Hannover (Germany) who immigrated to California in 1883. He leased property, built a blacksmith shop and his business grew supporting the local cattle ranches, dairies, and farms. As a community grew around his shop and a hardware store he later purchased, the settlement was named Rust in his honor. The town remained generally quiet and unremarkable until 1906 when the San Francisco earthquake destroyed much of the city and refugees fled to the east side of the San Francisco Bay and quickly settled in. The town of Rust essentially became official in 1909 when a post office was established in Rust's hardware store, and he took on the role as the Postmaster.

The town rapidly grew and was formally incorporated at El Cerrito (*little hill* in Spanish) in 1917 with a population of 1,500 residents. One of the first orders of business after the City was incorporated was to impose a license fee for each of the saloons in town to pay the wages of marshal, clerk and treasurer, and for other needs of the City. As there were nearly twenty saloons scattered about the community, mostly along San Pablo Avenue, the revenue was significant and for the first time, fire and police protection were also available to the new city's residents. Priority was given to a street paving program and soon after the incorporation the driving of cattle down San Pablo Avenue to a slaughterhouse on Central Avenue was stopped (El Cerrito Historical Society 2023).

Being just across from San Francisco, El Cerrito grew quickly, reaching a population of 3,852 in 1930, and 7,000 in 1940. During the World War II years, the population sky-rocketed to over 16,000 and with the post-war housing boom, to over 18,000 in 1950. Today, El Cerrito has a population of 24,000 and serves as an economic and cultural hub for the Bay Area.

Chung Mei Home

In 1923, Dr. Charles R. Shepard founded the Chung Mei Home for Chinese Boys after seeing dozens of hungry, abandoned Chinese boys in San Francisco's Chinatown. Shepard noted that "No other orphanage would take in children of color or Asiatic races." The home was first located in an old wooden building in Berkeley, but in part due to the efforts of the boys themselves, money was raised to build a larger facility and the location in El Cerrito was eventually chosen. The home (Chung Mei Home Historic District) was built in 1935 on a hillside bordered by Elm Street to the west and by existing residential housing to the north, east, and south. The home consisted of a main building, a maintenance building, an art studio, an L-shaped classroom building, a gymnasium, a library/classroom building, and numerous additional structures, buildings, and features. From 1935 to 1954, the home provided residential care, guidance, and structure for neglected and abandoned Chinese boys. The present-day Chung Mei Home for Chinese Boys Historic District (the District) still reflects its institutional design and integrity. LSA Associates of Richmond, California completed a Historical Resources Evaluation of the district in 2007. The evaluation concluded that the District appeared eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources for its association with the Chinese experience in California and the San Francisco Bay Area.

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 21080.1, 21080.3.1, and 21080.3.2 require public agencies to consult with the appropriate California Native American tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purpose of mitigating impacts to cultural resources. To meet PRC requirements, on August 15th, 2023, SAS emailed a letter and a map depicting the project area and surrounding vicinity to the NAHC requesting a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search, and a list of Native American community representatives who might have an interest in, or concerns with the proposed Project. The NAHC responded to SAS on August 24th stating that the search of the SLF was positive, indicating that a culturally sensitive property had been identified within or near the project area (Attachment B).

The NAHC also provided a list of appropriate local tribal organizations and individual contacts each of which SAS by mailed letter on August 30th, 2023, informing them of the proposed Project and inquiring if they had any knowledge of cultural properties within or near the project area. On September 11th, Francis Ranstead, Tribal Administrator for the Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation (Lisjan Nation), emailed SAS and noted that:

The Tribe would like to consult for this project. You can find our Calendly link below to schedule a consultation at your earliest convenience. Please make sure to include the project name in the notes section when scheduling the consultation to help us prepare for our meeting.

Francis Ranstead, in a separate email, also requested:

...a copy of the final CHRIS, Sacred Lands File and EIR for this project, along with the SLF from Native American Heritage Commission and any additional archeological reports. Our physical address is: PO BOX 6487 Oakland CA 94603 or if you would prefer to send them electronically, please send them to this email address.

Since SAS cannot directly engage in Consultation and requests for Project documentation have to go through the City, SAS forwarded these requests to the City for further action. No other requests have been forwarded from any of the contacts suggested by the NAHC. If additional outreach or requests for Consultation are received, SAS will forward them to the City and prepare an addendum to this report if necessary.

The Lisjan Nation also engaged directly with the City in a meeting on October 18th, 2023. At this meeting, the Lisjan Nation representatives requested confirmation that ground disturbances would not occur near creek bottoms and that the City would notify them if the scope changed. The representatives also requested a copy of this report which the City provided.

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL RESOURCES INFORMATION SYSTEM RECORDS SEARCH

The Northwest Information Center (NWIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System provided the results of a record search request to SAS on September 18th, 2023 (NWIC File No. 23-0215). This search included a review of the NWIC archives for previously known or recorded cultural resources, studies, and isolates within the project area and a half-mile (mi.) radius. The search also included, but was not necessarily restricted to, a review of the following sources:

- The *National Register of Historic Places* (Historic Properties Directory, California Office of Historic Preservation)
- The *California Register of Historic Places* (Historic Properties Directory, California Office of Historic Preservation)
- The *California Historical Landmarks* (California Office of Historic Preservation)
- The *California Points of Historical Interest* (California Office of Historic Preservation)
- The *California Inventory of Historic Resources* (California Department of Parks and Recreation).

The NWIC record search indicated that one cultural resource, a house built in 1898 on Navellier Street (P-07-000995), was located immediately adjacent to the project area. NWIC also reported six additional cultural resources within one half-mi. of the project area:

- P-07-002714: Prehistoric shell midden at 8420 Buckingham Ave.
- P-07-002910: Chung Me Home for Chinese Boys District / Windrush School
- P-07-002911: Main building - Chung Me Home for Chinese Boys
- P-07-002912: Maintenance building - Chung Me Home for Chinese Boys
- P-07-002913: Windrush School classroom building
- P-07-003064: Indian mound at Navellier Street

The NWIC also noted that two previous cultural resources investigations included at least a portion of the current project area and an additional five studies have been conducted within the half-mi. search area.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

In order to ascertain patterns of public-private land ownership within the project area and identify potential undocumented cultural resources and sensitive landforms, SAS conducted additional archival research focused on historic mapping and federal land transfer records. This research consisted of reviews of the Bureau of Land Management's General Land Office (GLO) archives including patent records, historical USGS topographic quadrangle maps, and aerial photography.

USGS mapping showing the project area and surrounding region dates to as early as 1895 with regular modifications and re-prints throughout the 20th century. The early topographic quadrangle (1895) does not show any developments within the project area other than a possible building at the current-day intersection of Arlington Boulevard and where Scenic Drive would be constructed in the mid-late 1940s (outside the HNA). This building appears on USGS mapping between 1895, and 1947 after which time development was clearly shown encroaching on the area where the HNA would eventually be established. Historic aerial photography, which only dates to as early as 1946, does not show any indications of a structure or building at the Arlington Boulevard/Scenic Drive location. The duration of its depiction on USGS mapping well into the 1940s suggests the symbol for the building on the USGS mapping was an error simply transferred onto later printings long after the actual building or structure was gone.

Aerial photography generally confirms a lack of buildings, structures, or substantial road alignments in the HNA parcels. However, a clear picture of encroaching urban/suburban development can be seen during the latter half of the 20th century.

A review of GLO land patent records detailing the transfers of public land to private individuals and companies (or the State of California) shows that only one patent was issued for lands encompassing the project area. This was for the 17,938-ac. Rancho San Pablo which, under the California Land Act of 1851, was formally patented to Francisco Maria Castro, Juakin Isidro Castro, and Juakin Y. Castro. The 1867 GLO plat map of Township 1 North, Range 4 West shows the boundaries of the Rancho San Pablo but no other developments, natural features, or survey markers are depicted which was common practice at the time for Mexican land grant properties.

FIELD SURVEY

Methods

On September 27th, 2023, SAS archaeologists conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of the project area utilizing pedestrian transects spaced no greater than approximately 10 meters apart. A sub-meter accurate Trimble GPS unit was utilized to verify project area boundaries and to record locations of landscape features and cultural resources. In areas where extremely steep hillsides and/or impenetrably dense vegetation were present, opportunistic survey techniques were employed as necessary using existing trails within the HNA.

Results

The project area consists of a rugged landscape of slopes, drainages, and dense woodlands on a series of steep-sided hills with a western aspect towards San Francisco Bay. Ground surface visibility was poor throughout the project area due to heavy vegetation with the exception of small erosional areas along established trails, and in rodent burrows. One previously documented historic-era resource, the 1898 house on Navellier Street (P-07-000995) was noted by the SAS field team. No other historic-era or early Native American sites, features, sensitive landforms or soil types (e.g., midden) or artifacts were recorded. Representative photographs of the overall project area as encountered in the field survey are included as Attachment C.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Archival research, outreach to the Native American community, and an intensive field survey did not document indications of prehistoric activities in the project area. Although the NAHC noted that a culturally significant property was known to be present within or near the project area, none of the tribal contacts and representatives have expressed any concerns regarding this possible site. In addition, an intensive field survey did not identify any potentially sensitive landforms or significant level terrain in the project area, suggesting it retains a low level of sensitivity for containing traces of early Native American occupation. Concerning historic period resources, historic mapping, aerial photographs, archival research, and the field survey indicated that no developments of any kind occurred in the project area although P-07-000995 is located immediately adjacent. Consequently, SAS proposes a low level of sensitivity for the project area to exhibit potentially significant historic-era sites, features, or artifacts. As P-07-000995 would not be affected by the proposed Project, no Native American representatives or groups have expressed concerns regarding the Project, and research did not identify any cultural resources or sensitive landforms, SAS recommends that the Project would have *no impact on historical resources* per CEQA.

If human remains or any associated funerary artifacts are discovered during construction, all work must cease within the immediate vicinity of the discovery. In accordance with the California Health and Safety Code (Section 7050.5), the Contra Costa County Sheriff/Coroner must be contacted immediately. If the Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which will in turn appoint a Most Likely Descendent (MLD) to act as a tribal representative. The MLD will work with the City and a qualified archaeologist to determine the proper treatment of the human remains and any associated funerary objects. Construction activities will not resume until either the human remains are exhumed, or the remains are avoided via Project construction design change.

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ATTACHMENT A

Figures

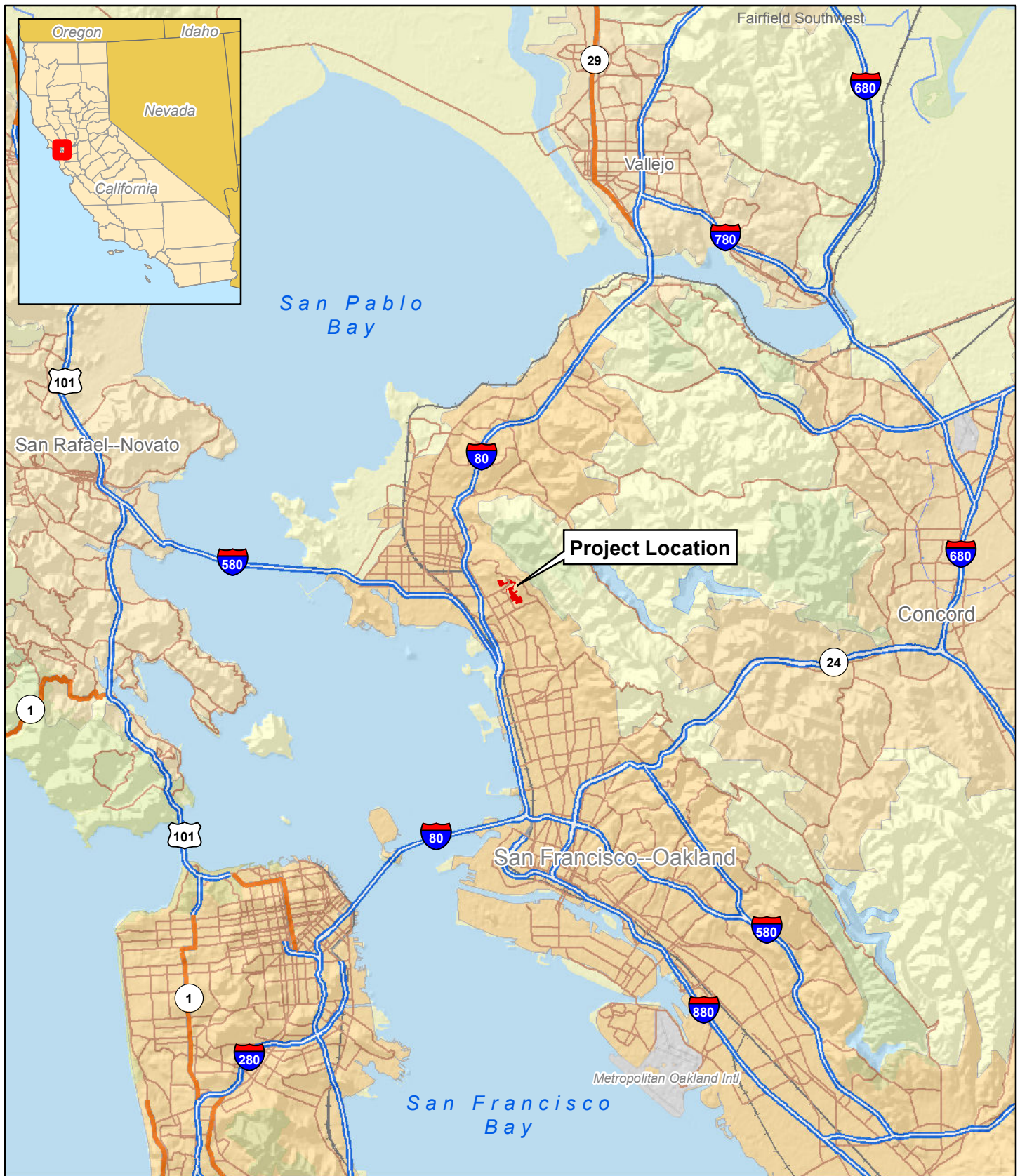


Figure 1. Project Vicinity Map.

Hillside natural Area Plan Project Area

Sources: *USA Base Map* [layer], *Data and Maps* [CD]. ESRI, 2006.

1:250,000

0 3 Miles

0 6 Kilometers



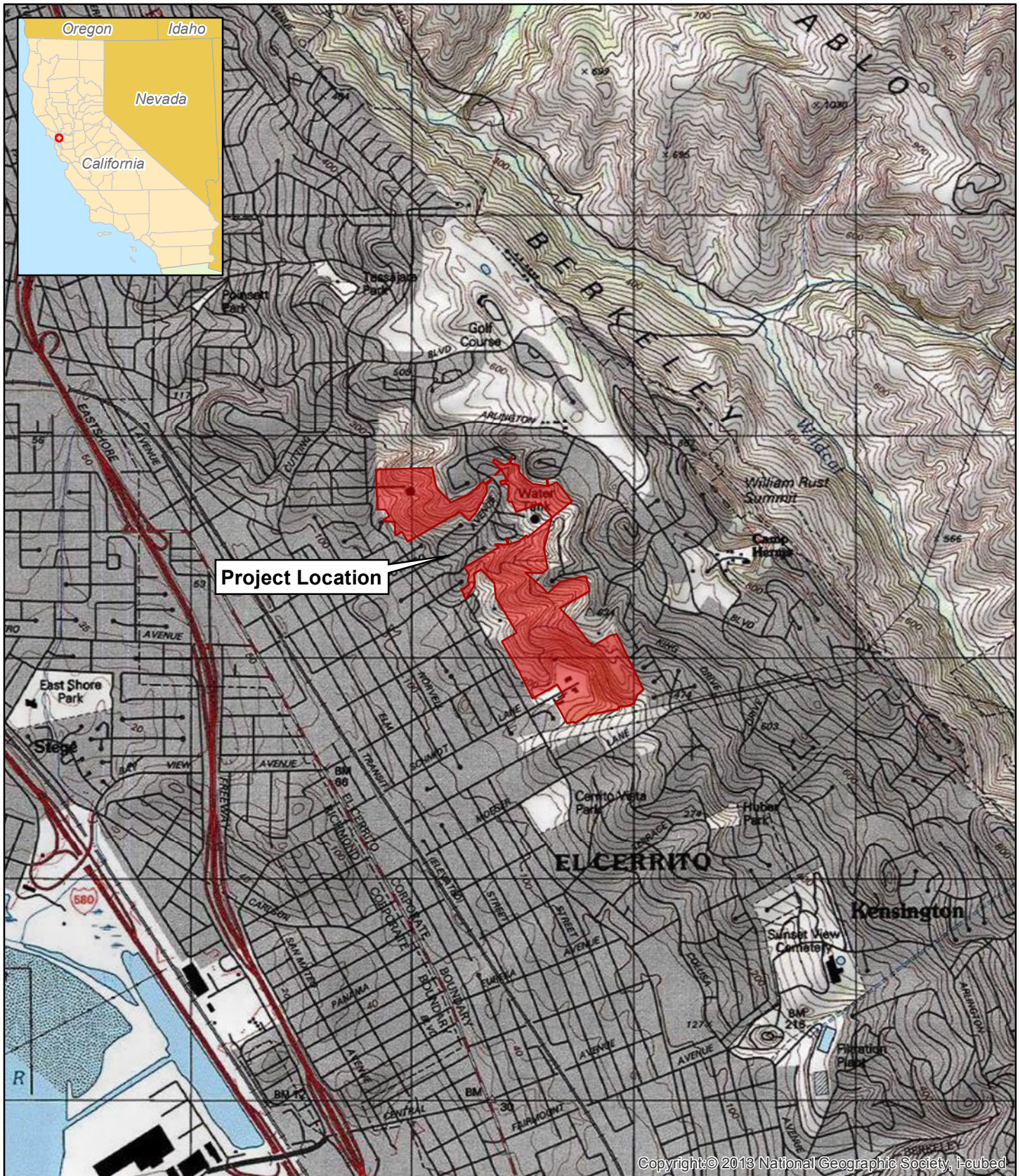


Figure 2. Project Location Map.

■ Hillside Natural Area Plan Project Area

San Pablo Land Grant (Presumed T01N, R04W, Secs 15, 16, 21 and 22).
Richmond 7.5' Series Quadrangle, USGS, 1980.

1:24,000

0.5

Miles

1

Kilometers





Figure 3. Project Area Map.

Hillside Natural Area Plan Project Area

Total Acres: 106.22

1:10,000

0 500 Feet

0 250 Meters



ATTACHMENT B

Native American Community Outreach

**NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION**

August 24, 2023

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Solano Archaeological ServicesVia Email to: brian@solanoarchaeology.comCHAIRPERSON
Reginald Pagaling
ChumashVICE-CHAIRPERSON
Buffy McQuillen
Yokayo Pomo, Yuki,
NomlakiSECRETARY
Sara Dutschke
MiwokPARLIAMENTARIAN
Wayne Nelson
LuiseñoCOMMISSIONER
Isaac Bojorquez
Ohlone-CostanoanCOMMISSIONER
Stanley Rodriguez
KumeyaayCOMMISSIONER
VacantCOMMISSIONER
VacantCOMMISSIONER
VacantEXECUTIVE SECRETARY
**Raymond C.
Hitchcock**
Miwok, Nisenan**NAHC HEADQUARTERS**
1550 Harbor Boulevard
Suite 100
West Sacramento,
California 95691
(916) 373-3710
nahc@nahc.ca.gov
NAHC.ca.gov

Re: Native American Tribal Consultation, Pursuant to the Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), Amendments to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014), Public Resources Code Sections 5097.94 (m), 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2 and 21084.3, Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, Alameda County

To Whom It May Concern:

Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1 (c), attached is a consultation list of tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the above-listed project. Please note that the intent of the AB 52 amendments to CEQA is to avoid and/or mitigate impacts to tribal cultural resources, (Pub. Resources Code §21084.3 (a)) ("Public agencies shall, when feasible, avoid damaging effects to any tribal cultural resource.")

Public Resources Code sections 21080.3.1 and 21084.3(c) require CEQA lead agencies to consult with California Native American tribes that have requested notice from such agencies of proposed projects in the geographic area that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the tribes on projects for which a Notice of Preparation or Notice of Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration has been filed on or after July 1, 2015. Specifically, Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1 (d) provides:

Within 14 days of determining that an application for a project is complete or a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, the lead agency shall provide formal notification to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, which shall be accomplished by means of at least one written notification that includes a brief description of the proposed project and its location, the lead agency contact information, and a notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation pursuant to this section.

The AB 52 amendments to CEQA law does not preclude initiating consultation with the tribes that are culturally and traditionally affiliated within your jurisdiction prior to receiving requests for notification of projects in the tribe's areas of traditional and cultural affiliation. The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) recommends, but does not require, early consultation as a best practice to ensure that lead agencies receive sufficient information about cultural resources in a project area to avoid damaging effects to tribal cultural resources.

The NAHC also recommends, but does not require that agencies should also include with their notification letters, information regarding any cultural resources assessment that has been completed on the area of potential effect (APE), such as:

1. The results of any record search that may have been conducted at an Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), including, but not limited to:

- A listing of any and all known cultural resources that have already been recorded on or adjacent to the APE, such as known archaeological sites;
- Copies of any and all cultural resource records and study reports that may have been provided by the Information Center as part of the records search response;
- Whether the records search indicates a low, moderate, or high probability that unrecorded cultural resources are located in the APE; and
- If a survey is recommended by the Information Center to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.

2. The results of any archaeological inventory survey that was conducted, including:

- Any report that may contain site forms, site significance, and suggested mitigation measures.

All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum, and not be made available for public disclosure in accordance with Government Code section 6254.10.

3. The result of any Sacred Lands File (SLF) check conducted through the Native American Heritage Commission was positive. Please contact the tribes on the attached list for more information.

4. Any ethnographic studies conducted for any area including all or part of the APE; and

5. Any geotechnical reports regarding all or part of the APE.

Lead agencies should be aware that records maintained by the NAHC and CHRIS are not exhaustive and a negative response to these searches does not preclude the existence of a tribal cultural resource. A tribe may be the only source of information regarding the existence of a tribal cultural resource.

This information will aid tribes in determining whether to request formal consultation. In the event that they do, having the information beforehand will help to facilitate the consultation process.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from tribes, please notify the NAHC. With your assistance, we can assure that our consultation list remains current.

If you have any questions, please contact me at my email address: Cody.Campagne@nahc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Cody Campagne

Cody Campagne
Cultural Resources Analyst

Attachment

Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
Contra Costa County
8/24/2023

County	Tribe Name	Fed (F) Non-Fed (N)	Contact Person	Contact Address	Phone #	Fax #	Email Address	Cultural Affiliation	Counties	Last Updated
Contra Costa	Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista	N	Irene Zwierlein, Chairperson	3030 Soda Bay Road Lakeport, CA, 95453	(650) 851-7489	(650) 332-1526	amahmutsuntribal@gmail.com	Costanoan	Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz	
	Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation	N	Corrina Gould, Chairperson	10926 Edes Avenue Oakland, CA, 94603	(510) 575-8408		cvtribe@gmail.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Delta Yokut	Alameda, Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Solano, Stanislaus	3/22/2023
	Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation	N	Deja Gould, Language Program Manager	10926 Edes Ave Oakland, CA, 94603	(510) 575-8408		cvtribe@gmail.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Delta Yokut	Alameda, Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Solano, Stanislaus	3/22/2023
	Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation	N	Cheyenne Gould, Tribal Cultural Resource Manager	10926 Edes Ave Oakland, CA, 94603	(510) 575-8408		cvtribe@gmail.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Delta Yokut	Alameda, Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Solano, Stanislaus	3/22/2023
	Guidiville Rancheria of California	F	Bunny Tarin, Tribal Administrator	PO Box 339 Talmage, CA, 95481	(707) 462-3682		admin@guidiville.net	Pomo	Alameda, Contra Costa, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Sonoma	6/21/2023
	Guidiville Rancheria of California	F	Michael Derry, Historian	PO Box 339 Talmage, CA, 95481	(707) 391-1665		historian@guidiville.net	Pomo	Alameda, Contra Costa, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Sonoma	6/21/2023
	Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan	N	Ann Marie Sayers, Chairperson	P.O. Box 28 Hollister, CA, 95024	(831) 637-4238		ams@indiancanyon.org	Costanoan	Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz	
	Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan	N	Kanyon Sayers-Roods, MLD Contact	1615 Pearson Court San Jose, CA, 95122	(408) 673-0626		kanyon@kanyonconsulting.com	Costanoan	Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz	4/17/2018
	Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area	N	Charlene Nijmeh, Chairperson	20885 Redwood Road, Suite 232 Castro Valley, CA, 94546	(408) 464-2892		cnijmeh@muwekma.org	Costanoan	Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Merced, Napa, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus	
	Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area	N	Monica Arellano, Vice Chairwoman	20885 Redwood Road, Suite 232 Castro Valley, CA, 94546	(408) 205-9714		monicavarellano@gmail.com	Costanoan	Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Merced, Napa, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus	7/12/2019
	The Ohlone Indian Tribe	N	Vincent Medina, Tribal Consultant	17365 Via Del Rey San Lorenzo, CA, 94580	(510) 610-7587		vincent.d.medina@gmail.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Patwin Plains Miwok	Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara	7/24/2023
	The Ohlone Indian Tribe	N	Andrew Galvan, Chairperson	P.O. Box 3388 Fremont, CA, 94539	Phone: (510) 882-0527	(510) 687-9393	chochenyo@AOL.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Patwin Plains Miwok	Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara	7/24/2023
	The Ohlone Indian Tribe	N	Desiree Vigil, THPO	1775 Marco Polo Way, Apt. 21 Burlingame, CA, 94010	(650) 290-0245		dirwin0368@yahoo.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Patwin Plains Miwok	Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara	7/24/2023

This list is current only as of the date of this document. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

Record: PROJ-2023-004249
Report Type: AB52 GIS
Counties: Contra Costa
NAHC Group: All

This list is only applicable for consultation with Native American tribes under Public Resources Code Sections 21080.3.1 for the proposed Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, Contra Costa County.

P.O. Box 367
Elmira, CA 95625



707-718-1416 ▲ Fax 707-451-4775
www.solanoarchaeology.com

August 30th, 2023

The Ohlone Indian Tribe
Andrew Galvan
P.O. Box 3388
Fremont, CA 94539

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Mr. Galvan:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

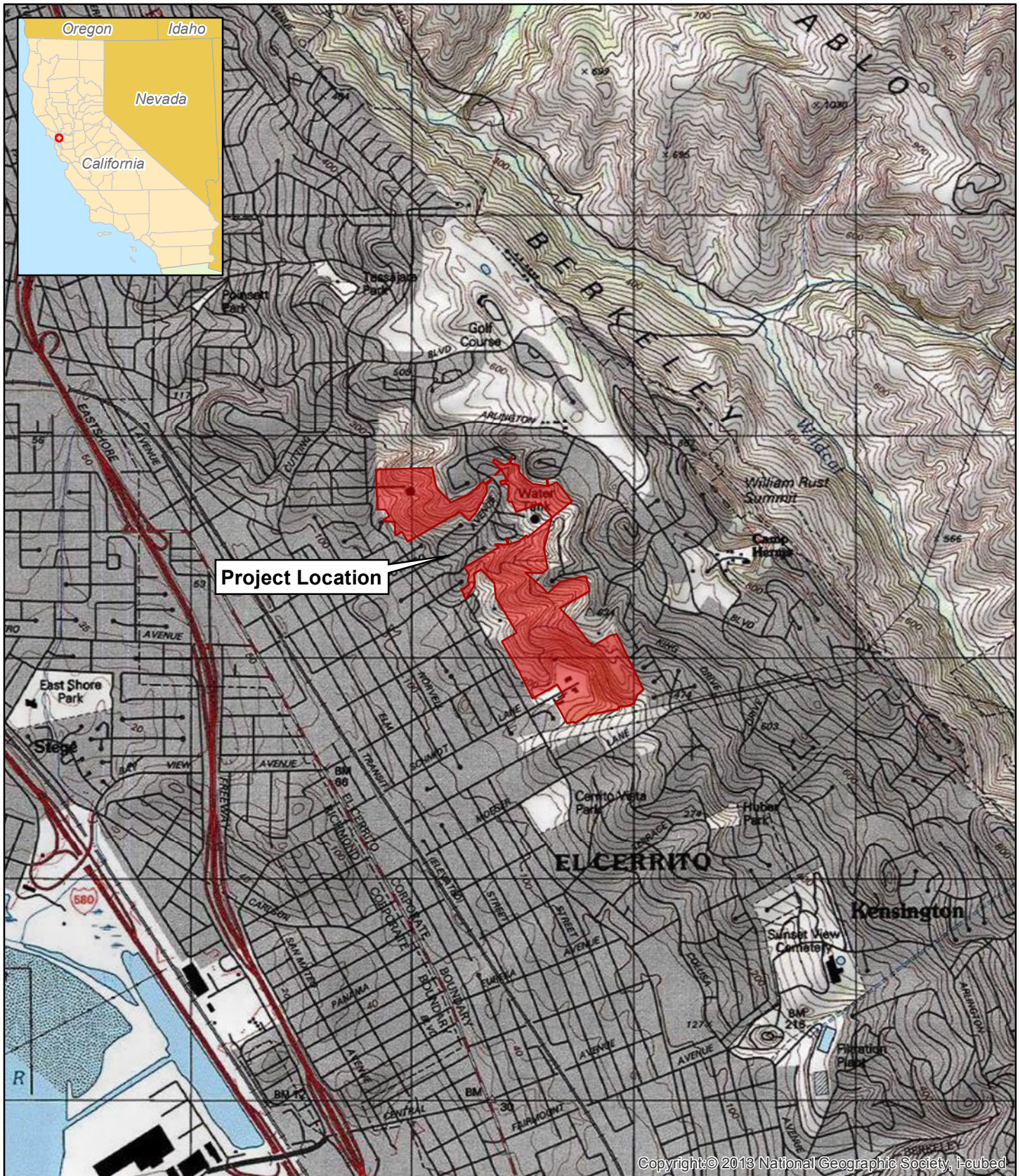
The cultural investigation will include an intensive field survey and we would like to know if you have any knowledge of cultural resources in the vicinity. For your information, the Native American Heritage Commission conducted a search of the Sacred Lands File and identified a previously documented culturally sensitive site or property within or near the project area. If you have any concerns with the proposed Project or know of any potentially significant properties in the area, I would appreciate hearing from you.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by email at brian@solanoarchaeology, or via phone at 530-417-7007.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Brian Ludwig".

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



Copyright: © 2013 National Geographic Society, I-cubed

Project Location Map.

1:24,000

■ Hillside Conservation Management Plan Project Area

San Pablo Land Grant (Presumed T01N, R04W, Secs 15, 16, 21 and 22).
Richmond 7.5' Series Quadrangle, USGS, 1980.

0.5

Miles

1

Kilometers





August 30th, 2023

Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan
Ann Marie Sayers, Chair
P.O. Box 28
Hollister, CA 95024

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Sayers:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brian Ludwig".

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Guidiville Rancheria
Bunny Tarin, Tribal Administrator
P.O. Box 339
Talmage, CA 95481

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Tarin:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area
Charlene Nijmeh, Chair
20885 Redwood Rd.
Suite 232
Castro Valley, CA 94546

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Nijmeh:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Regards,

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation
Cheyenne Gould
10926 Edes Ave.
Oakland, CA 94603

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Gould:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Regards,

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation
Corrina Gould, Chair
10926 Edes Ave.
Oakland, CA 94603

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Gould:

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Regards,

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation
Deja Gould
10926 Edes Ave.
Oakland, CA 94603

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Gould:

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brian Ludwig".

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

The Ohlone Indian Tribe
Desiree Vigil
1775 Marco Polo Way, Apt. 21
Burlingame, CA 94010

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Vigil:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brian Ludwig".

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista
Irene Zwierlein, Chair
3030 Soda Bay Rd.
Lakeport, CA 95453

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Zwierlein:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brian Ludwig".

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan
Kanyon Sayers-Roods
P.O. Box 28
Hollister, CA 95024

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Sayers-Roods:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

The cultural investigation will include an intensive field survey and we would like to know if you have any knowledge of cultural resources in the vicinity. For your information, the Native American Heritage Commission conducted a search of the Sacred Lands File and identified a previously documented culturally sensitive site or property within or near the project area. If you have any concerns with the proposed Project or know of any potentially significant properties in the area, I would appreciate hearing from you.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by email at brian@solanoarchaeology, or via phone at 530-417-7007.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brian Ludwig".

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Guidiville Rancheria
Michael Derry, Historian
P.O. Box 339
Talmage, CA 95481

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Mr. Derry:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

The cultural investigation will include an intensive field survey and we would like to know if you have any knowledge of cultural resources in the vicinity. For your information, the Native American Heritage Commission conducted a search of the Sacred Lands File and identified a previously documented culturally sensitive site or property within or near the project area. If you have any concerns with the proposed Project or know of any potentially significant properties in the area, I would appreciate hearing from you.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by email at brian@solanoarchaeology, or via phone at 530-417-7007.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brian Ludwig".

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area
Monica Arellano
20885 Redwood Rd.
Suite 232
Castro Valley, CA 94546

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Arellano:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

The cultural investigation will include an intensive field survey and we would like to know if you have any knowledge of cultural resources in the vicinity. For your information, the Native American Heritage Commission conducted a search of the Sacred Lands File and identified a previously documented culturally sensitive site or property within or near the project area. If you have any concerns with the proposed Project or know of any potentially significant properties in the area, I would appreciate hearing from you.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by email at brian@solanoarchaeology, or via phone at 530-417-7007.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brian Ludwig".

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

The Ohlone Indian Tribe
Vincent Medina
17365 Via Del Rey
San Lorenzo, CA 94580

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Mr. Medina:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

The cultural investigation will include an intensive field survey and we would like to know if you have any knowledge of cultural resources in the vicinity. For your information, the Native American Heritage Commission conducted a search of the Sacred Lands File and identified a previously documented culturally sensitive site or property within or near the project area. If you have any concerns with the proposed Project or know of any potentially significant properties in the area, I would appreciate hearing from you.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by email at brian@solanoarchaeology, or via phone at 530-417-7007.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brian Ludwig".

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator

ATTACHMENT C

Representative Project Area Photographs



Photo 0718. Project area overview, view to north



Photo 0913. Project area overview, view to west



Photo 2404. Representative photo, steep slope



Photo 0927. Enhanced drainage in project area, view to NE



Photo 5720. HNA nature trail, view to south



Photo 3822. 1332 Navellier St., view to northeast



Exhibit B to Resolution

CARLSBAD
CLOVIS
IRVINE
LOS ANGELES
PALM SPRINGS
POINT RICHMOND
RIVERSIDE
ROSEVILLE
SAN LUIS OBISPO

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 22, 2025

To: Sean Moss, Planning Manager, City of El Cerrito

FROM: Theresa Wallace, AICP, Principal
Shanna Guiler, AICP, Associate/Senior Environmental Planner

SUBJECT: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan
Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration - Response to Comments

In accordance with Section 15074 of the CEQA Guidelines, prior to approving a project, the decision-making body of the lead agency shall consider the proposed environmental document together with any comments received during the public review process. Although there is no legal requirement to formally respond to comments on a proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) as there is for an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), this memorandum provides a response to the written comments received on the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) to aid the City of El Cerrito decision-makers in their review of the project.

The IS/MND was circulated for public review for a period of 30 days, from March 13, 2025, to April 14, 2025. Three comment letters were received during the public review period. One comment was received from a regional agency and two were received from individuals. In the following pages, the comments and responses are enumerated to allow for cross-referencing of CEQA-related comments. The enumerated comment letters are included in this memorandum, followed by the respective responses.

As noted above, CEQA does not require or provide guidance on responding to comments on MNDs; therefore, this memorandum follows CEQA Guidelines Section 15088, applicable to responses to comments on EIRs, which requires that agencies respond only to significant environmental issues raised in connection with the project. Therefore, this document focuses primarily on responding to comments that relate to the adequacy of the information and environmental analysis provided in the IS/MND. It should be noted that during preparation of the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (Plan), the City conducted a broad community engagement process with multiple opportunities for the Stakeholder Advisory Group and the broader community to provide input at each key project phase, including public review of the Draft Plan. Comments received by the City on the Draft Plan were addressed as part of the planning process.

Written responses to all written comments on the Draft IS/MND are provided below. A reproduction of each comment letter received on the Draft IS/MND is provided as an attachment to this memorandum (Attachment A). Mitigation measures identified in the Draft IS/MND are incorporated

into the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) also attached (Attachment B). The MMRP will be adopted by the City if the IS/MND is adopted.

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

This section includes responses to each substantive CEQA-related comment. Each comment letter is assigned a letter (A, B, C, etc.) and individual comments within each letter are numbered consecutively. For instance, comment A-1 is the first numbered comment in Letter A. Please note that text within individual letters that has not been numbered does not raise environmental issues or relate to the adequacy of the information or analysis within the IS/MND, and therefore, no comment is enumerated or response required, per CEQA Guidelines Section 15132.

The following comment letters were submitted:

LETTER A

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Erin Chappell, Regional Manager, Bay Delta Region,
April 10, 2025

LETTER B

Parks and Recreation Commissioner, Hari Lamba
April 13, 2025

LETTER C

Marlene Keller
March 27, 2025

Where revisions to the Draft IS/MND text are called for, the page is set forth followed by the appropriate revision. Added text is indicated with double underlined text, and deleted text is shown in ~~strikeout~~. As described herein, these changes have been made to clarify, amplify, or make minor edits to the IS/MND text for the proposed project. Such changes are a result of further review of, and public comments related to, the IS/MND. The changes are generally minor changes that do not constitute significant new information, change the conclusions of the environmental analysis, or require recirculation of the document (*State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15073.5).

LETTER A

Erin Chappell, Regional Manager, Bay Delta Region, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

April 10, 2025

Response A-1

This comment is introductory, provides CDFW's role as a Trustee Agency, and does not address the adequacy of the information or analysis in the Draft IS/MND. Therefore, no further response is required.

- Response A-2 This comment summarizes the proposed project and does not address the adequacy of the information or analysis in the Draft IS/MND. Therefore, no further response is required.
- Response A-3 This comment summarizes various regulatory requirements that are under the purview of CDFW, including a Lake or Streambed Alteration Notification, California Fish and Game Code protections for raptors and nesting birds, fully protected species, the California Endangered Species Act, and the Native Plant Protection Act. Potential impacts to special-status species, riparian areas under the jurisdiction of the CDFW are described in Section 5.4 of the Draft IS/MND. As described in Draft IS/MND, potential impacts to biological resources would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of identified mitigation measures. This comment does not address the adequacy of the information or analysis in the Draft IS/MND. Therefore, no further response is required.
- Response A-4 This comment states that the IS/MND should include a discussion of potential impacts to white-tailed kite, golden eagle, and other special-status bird species resulting from tree removal that would occur with Plan implementation. A discussion of potential impacts to special-status birds and other nesting bird species with implementation of the proposed project is provided in Section 5.4, Biological Resources, of the Draft IS/MND.
- White-tailed kite is a commonly observed species in the San Francisco Bay Area, where the species is often found roosting in trees in urban areas where large trees are present. The nearest observation of white-tailed kite to the HNA is near Camp Herms, approximately 0.5 mile east of the HNA. The HNA is surrounded by urban development containing large trees and other potential nesting and roosting trees, and nesting and roosting habitat is found within the HNA and in the surrounding open space areas (e.g., Wildcat Creek, Tilden Park and East Bay Regional Park District) that are less than 0.5 mile from the HNA. Regarding golden eagle, no observation records exist and the nearest suitable habitat for golden eagle is in the Wildcat Creek drainage area, where open grasslands provide foraging opportunities for golden eagles. The nearest known nest location for the golden eagle is in Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve, approximately 6.3 miles southeast of the HNA. Therefore, it is unlikely that golden eagles are present within the HNA, and no impacts are anticipated; therefore, mitigation is not required.
- The proposed project would remove approximately 30 acres of eucalyptus trees in several patches, each not exceeding 12 acres. Tree removal would occur in multiple phases, which would reduce potential impacts associated with the removal of habitat for white-tailed kite, golden eagle, and other special-status species. In addition, these areas would be revegetated with native vegetation that would enhance the natural habitat within the HNA. Therefore, the removal of mature trees from the HNA would not

substantially restrict the range of white-tailed kite or golden eagle. Further, proposed tree removals would likely increase the amount of foraging area for white tailed kite in the HNA. In addition, based on the distance from the nearest known nesting location for the golden eagle, the removal of eucalyptus at the HNA is not anticipated to impact nesting habitat for golden eagles and therefore will not restrict the range of golden eagle in the San Francisco Bay Area.

In response to this comment, page 5-26 of the Draft IS/MND has been revised as follows to include the above description:

Special-Status Birds and Other Nesting Bird Species. Several special-status bird species are known to occur at or near the project site. These bird species could nest, winter, and/or migrate through the project site. Some of these bird species, such as the American peregrine falcon, could forage on the project site, but are unlikely to nest at or adjacent to the site due to the lack of suitable nesting habitat. Special-status birds observed at the project site include white-tailed kite, olive-sided flycatcher, and Vaux's swift, among others. Several other special-status birds have been recorded in the project vicinity. White-tailed kite is a commonly observed species in the San Francisco Bay Area, where the species is often found roosting in trees in urban areas where large trees are present. The nearest observation of white-tailed kite to the HNA is near Camp Herms, approximately 0.5 mile east of the HNA. The HNA is surrounded by urban development containing large trees and other potential nesting and roosting trees, and nesting and roosting habitat is found within the HNA and in the surrounding open space areas (e.g., Wildcat Creek, Tilden Park and East Bay Regional Park District) that are less than 0.5 mile from the HNA. Regarding golden eagle, no observation records exist and the nearest suitable habitat for golden eagle is in the Wildcat Creek drainage area, where open grasslands provide foraging opportunities for golden eagles. The nearest known nest location for the golden eagle is in Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve, approximately 6.3 miles southeast of the HNA. Therefore, it is unlikely that golden eagles are present within the HNA, and no impacts are anticipated; therefore, mitigation is not required.

The proposed project would remove approximately 30 acres of eucalyptus trees in several patches, each not exceeding 12 acres. Tree removal would occur multiple phases, which would reduce potential impacts associated with the removal of habitat for white-tailed kite, golden eagle, and other special-status species. In addition, these areas would be revegetated with native vegetation that would enhance the natural habitat within the HNA. Therefore, the removal of mature trees from the HNA would not substantially restrict the range of white-tailed

kite or golden eagle. Further, proposed tree removals would likely increase the amount of foraging area for white tailed kite in the HNA. In addition, based on the distance from the nearest known nesting location for the golden eagle, the removal of eucalyptus at the HNA is not anticipated to impact nesting habitat for golden eagles and therefore will not restrict the range of golden eagle in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The revisions identified above represent a minor change to the Draft IS/MND in order to clarify the Draft IS/MND analysis. These revisions do not change the conclusions or analysis of impacts in the Draft IS/MND necessitating recirculation of the Draft IS/MND.

Response A-5

This comment provides recommendations for Mitigation Measures BIO-4a and BIO-4b to further reduce potential impacts to nesting birds. In response to this comment, Mitigation Measures BIO-4a and BIO-4b on page 5-27 of the Draft IS/MND have been revised as follows:

Mitigation Measure BIO-4a

Nesting Bird Surveys. Prior to fuel reduction treatment activities occurring during the nesting bird season (February 1 through September 15 August 31), a pre-activity activity surveys for nesting birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no nests will be disturbed during project implementation. Surveys will be conducted no more than seven days prior to the initiation of fuel reduction treatment activities. During this survey, the biologist shall inspect all trees and other potential nesting habitats (e.g., shrubs, ground, and structures) for nests in the impact area plus a surrounding buffer, generally 250 feet for passerines, 1,000 feet for raptors, and 0.5 mile for the golden eagle, as determined by the qualified biologist, based on the intensity of disturbance and duration of the vegetation treatment. The survey area shall encompass reasonably accessible areas of the treatment site and the immediately surrounding vicinity viewable from the treatment site. The survey area shall be determined by a qualified biologist, based on the potential species in the area, location of suitable nesting habitat, the intensity of potential disturbance and the duration of vegetation treatment ~~foot buffer for nests~~. If removal of potential nesting substrate or project grading will occur during more than one nesting season, or in different parts of the site in phases over the course of a single season, then additional pre-activity surveys must be performed within seven days prior to initiation of work in any particular area. If the pre-activity survey does not identify the presence of any active nests on or within the survey area, construction or vegetation treatment activities may proceed.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4b

Nesting Bird Buffers. If nests known to have eggs or young, or that cannot be confirmed to be inactive or to lack eggs or young, are found, or adults are demonstrating nesting behavior, a qualified biologist shall establish an appropriate fuel reduction-free buffer around each nest. Generally, a buffer of 1,000 300 feet for large raptors, 500 feet for smaller raptors, and 250 feet for passerines (songbirds) are adequate to avoid causing nest abandonment. Factors to be considered for determining buffer size and location shall include presence of natural buffers provided by vegetation or topography, nest height above the ground, baseline levels of noise and human activity, species sensitivity, and expected treatment activities. The buffer shall remain in place until the qualified biologist has confirmed that the nest is no longer active.

If less than a 100-foot nest buffer a smaller buffer distance than that identified above is necessary and determined to be appropriate for a particular nest or nests, a qualified biologist shall monitor the nest(s) before the activity to document baseline nesting behavior and monitor the nest during vegetation treatment or road construction to ensure nesting birds are not exhibiting signs of stress and territorial behavior. If signs of stress are observed during the monitoring, treatment or construction activities shall cease or buffer shall increase, as determined by a qualified biologist, to a sufficient distance where the nesting birds are longer exhibiting signs of stress.

To prevent encroachment, the buffer shall be clearly marked for avoidance. No personnel or equipment shall be allowed to enter the protective buffer until the qualified biologist determines that the young have fully fledged and will no longer be adversely affected by the project. Nests of common birds within the buffer need not be monitored during treatment. The qualified biologist shall observe any identified active raptor nests prior to the start of any construction-related activities to establish a behavioral baseline of the adults and any nestlings, and the nest site(s) shall be monitored by the biologist periodically to see if the birds are stressed by the construction activities and if the protective buffer needs to be increased. The established buffer shall remain in effect until the young have fledged or the nest is no longer active as confirmed by the biologist.

The revisions to Mitigation Measures BIO-4a and BIO-4b do not change the significance of the environmental issue conclusions within the Draft IS/MND and do not represent significant new information such that recirculation of the Draft IS/MND is required.

Response A-6

This comment provides recommendations for Mitigation Measure BIO-3 to further reduce potential impacts to Crotch's bumble bee or western bumble bee. In response to this comment, Mitigation Measure BIO-3, on page 5-24 of the Draft IS/MND has been revised as follows:

Mitigation Measure BIO-3

Foraging Bumble Bee Pre-activity Surveys. A minimum of ~~three~~ two pre-activity surveys shall be conducted within ~~30~~ 40 days during appropriate activity periods (i.e., ~~March-April~~ through September) prior to the start of ground disturbing activities to identify bumble bee foraging activity. The pre-activity surveys shall occur when temperatures are above 60° Fahrenheit (15.5°Celsius) and not during wet conditions (e.g., foggy, raining, or drizzling). The survey shall be conducted at least 2 hours after sunrise and 3 hours before sunset and shall occur at least 1 hour after rain subsides. Preferably, the survey should be conducted during sunny days with low wind speeds (less than 8 miles per hour), but surveying during partially cloudy days or overcast conditions are permissible if the surveyors can still see their own shadow. Surveys shall be repeated for each year of project activities.

If Crotch's and/or western bumble bees, or potential Crotch's or western bumble bees (since bumble bees can be difficult to identify in the field) are observed within the project site, a plan to protect Crotch's and/or western bumble bee nests and individuals shall be developed and implemented in consultation with CDFW and USFWS. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following measures:

- Specifications for fuel treatment timing and sequencing requirements (e.g., avoidance of raking, mowing, tilling, or other ground disturbance until late March to protect overwintering queen bumble bees);
- Establishment of appropriate no-disturbance buffers for bumble bee nest sites to avoid impacts to the bees and monitoring by a qualified biologist to ensure compliance if bumble bee nests are identified;
- Restrictions associated with fuel treatment practices, equipment, or materials that may harm bumble bees (e.g., avoidance of pesticides/herbicides, BMPs to minimize the spread of invasive plant species);
- Provisions to avoid Crotch's and/or western bumble bees, or potential western bumble bees if observed away from a bumble bee nest during project activity (e.g., ceasing of project activities

until the animal has left the active work area on its own volition); ~~and~~

- Prescription of an appropriate restoration seed mix targeted for the western bumble bee, including native plant species known to be visited by native bumble bee species and containing a mix of flowering plant species with continual floral availability through the entire active season of the western bumble bee (March through September); and
- Avoidance of herbicide applications which are toxic to bumble bees for vegetation management activities.

The revisions to Mitigation Measure BIO-3 do not change the significance of the environmental issue conclusions within the Draft IS/MND and do not represent significant new information such that recirculation of the Draft IS/MND is required.

Response A-7

This comment provides recommended measures to be incorporated into the IS/MND for the protection of native oaks associated with the control plan for Sudden Oak Death. As provided in Action 5 of the proposed Plan, these measures, which provide best management practices for the use of heavy equipment and equipment sanitation to reduce the risk of spread of Sudden Oak Death, have been incorporated into the proposed control plan for Sudden Oak Death. As these best management practices are provided as part of the project, these measures do not need to be incorporated into the IS/MND. In addition, the proposed Plan states that as a precaution against spreading the Sudden Oak Death pathogen, cleaning and disinfecting of all tools, boots, gloves, and vehicles after use on confirmed or suspected infested trees or in known infested areas is highly recommended.

Response A-8

The comment, which requests that information regarding special-status species and natural communities be submitted to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), is noted. Consistent with CDFW's request, if special-status species or natural communities are detected during surveys of the project site, occurrence information would be reported to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), as feasible.

Response A-9

The comment, which describes the requirements for the payment of environmental filing fees, is noted. Consistent with State requirements, the City will pay all CDFW environmental documenting filing fees upon filing the Notice of Determination (NOD), if the project is approved.

Response A-10

This comment concludes the letter and does not address the adequacy of the information or analysis in the Draft IS/MND. Therefore, no further response is required.

LETTER B

Hari Lamba
April 13, 2025

Response B-1

This comment provides suggested revisions to various elements of the proposed Plan, including those related to fire protection and reducing fire hazards. The comment also references recent fires that have occurred in the State and expresses concerns related to adequate water supplies and infrastructure systems and references Mitigation Measure BIO-8. Mitigation Measure BIO-8, as provided on page 5-31 of the Draft IS/MND, provides mitigation for potential impacts to jurisdictional waters such as the onsite streams/drainages (and seasonal wetlands/seeps, if present) and does not relate to water supply for fire. This comment does not address the adequacy of the information or analysis in the Draft IS/MND; rather, it relates to the merits of the proposed project and various recommendations in the Plan. As described above, the Draft Plan was made available for review and comment as part of the planning process. Therefore, no further response is required.

Response B-2

This comment suggests that milkweed be planted in the HNA in order to protect and encourage the population of monarch butterflies. As discussed in Section 5.4, Biological Resources of the Draft IS/MND, no milkweed was observed during the reconnaissance-level field surveys at the HNA and the HNA is not known to support wintering monarch butterflies. However, milkweed has been recorded at the HNA by the Western Monarch Milkweed Tracker. Therefore, monarch butterflies could breed within the HNA. While it is possible that milkweed plants could be used by breeding monarchs, related impacts would be minimal because of the large area of open space that would be maintained relative to project-related habitat alteration, and because winter roosts would not be disturbed. In addition, Mitigation Measures BIO-2a and BIO-2b would further reduce potential impacts to monarch butterflies by requiring field surveys for milkweed prior to fuel treatment activities and detailing restrictions for vegetation control activities that may occur during the monarch breeding season in areas containing milkweed and nectar plants. With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-2a and BIO-2b, the IS/MND determined that all potential impacts on monarch butterflies would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated. No change to the Draft IS/MND is required.

Response B-3

This comment provides suggestions for the proposed Plan, including adding fuel cell vehicles to the list of zero emission vehicles and discouraging mountain bikes in the HNA to reduce damage to pedestrian trails and reduce dust. This comment does not address the adequacy of the information or analysis in the Draft IS/MND; rather, it relates to the merits of the proposed project. As described above, the Draft Plan was made

available for review and comment as part of the planning process.
Therefore, no further response is required.

Response B-4 This comment in support of the inclusion of Mitigation Measure GEO-1, which requires geotechnical surveys for the hillside areas within the HNA, is noted. No further response is required.

Response B-5 This comment concludes the comment letter and expresses support for the proposed Plan. As this comment relates to the merits of the proposed project, no further response is required.

LETTER C

Marlene Keller
March 27, 2025

Response C-1 This comment states that the commenter lives adjacent to the Hillside Natural Area (HNA); that they have reviewed the proposed Plan, the IS/MND prepared for the proposed Plan, and other associated documents; and that the commenter supports the City's adoption of the proposed Plan and IS/MND. This comment does not address the adequacy of the information or analysis in the Draft IS/MND; rather, it relates to the merits of the proposed project. No further response is required.

ATTACHMENTS

A: Comment letters

B: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

ATTACHMENT A

COMMENT LETTERS



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
 DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
 Bay Delta Region
 2825 Cordelia Road, Suite 100
 Fairfield, CA 94534
 (707) 428-2002
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



Comment Letter A

April 10, 2025

Karineh Samkian, Senior Program Manager
 City of El Cerrito
 10890 San Pablo Avenue
 El Cerrito, CA 94530
KSamkian@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

Subject: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan, Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, SCH No. 2025030610, Contra Costa County

Dear Karineh Samkian:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) received a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) from the City of El Cerrito (City) for the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (Project) pursuant the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines.¹

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect California fish and wildlife. Likewise, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Project that CDFW, by law, may be required to carry out or approve through the exercise of its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

CDFW ROLE

CDFW is California's **Trustee Agency** for fish and wildlife resources and holds those resources in trust by statute for all the people of the State. (Fish & G. Code, §§ 711.7, subd. (a) & 1802; Pub. Resources Code, § 21070; CEQA Guidelines § 15386, subd. (a).) CDFW, in its trustee capacity, has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species. (*Id.*, § 1802.) Similarly, for purposes of CEQA, CDFW is charged by law to provide, as available, biological expertise during public agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically on projects and related activities that have the potential to adversely affect fish and wildlife resources.

CDFW is also submitting comments as a **Responsible Agency** under CEQA. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21069; CEQA Guidelines, § 15381.) CDFW expects that it may

¹ CEQA is codified in the California Public Resources Code in section 21000 et seq. The "CEQA Guidelines" are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with section 15000.

A-1

Karineh Samkian, Senior Program Manager
 City of El Cerrito
 April 10, 2025
 Page 2

need to exercise regulatory authority as provided by the Fish and Game Code. As proposed, for example, the Project may be subject to CDFW's Lake and Streambed Alteration (LSA) regulatory authority. (Fish & G. Code, § 1600 et seq.) Likewise, to the extent implementation of the Project as proposed may result in "take" as defined by State law of any species protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.), the project proponent may seek related take authorization as provided by the Fish and Game Code.

A-1 cont.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Proponent: City of El Cerrito

Objective: The objective of the Project is to establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan to guide maintenance activities in the City of El Cerrito's 107.18-acre Hillside Natural Area. Primary Project activities to reduce fire hazard include pruning and removing trees and other vegetative growth, removing eucalyptus stands and non-native conifers, and ongoing maintenance of vegetation within the Hillside Natural Area. Methods of removal may include the use of mechanical equipment, hand crews, herbicide, chipping, and burning. Primary Project activities to manage forest health include managing threats to native oak species, removing invasive species, and restoring native plants within the Project site.

A-2

Location: The Project site is located within the City of El Cerrito, Contra Costa County. The approximate coordinates for the project are 37.922434°N, -122.302019°W.

Timeframe: A timeframe is not specified for the initiation of Project activities.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement

CDFW requires an LSA Notification, pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1600 et seq., for Project activities affecting river, lakes or streams and associated riparian habitat. Notification is required for any activity that may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow; change or use material from the bed, channel, or bank (including associated riparian or wetland resources); or deposit or dispose of material where it may pass into a river, lake, or stream. Work within ephemeral streams, drainage ditches, washes, watercourses with a subsurface flow, and floodplains is generally subject to notification requirements. In addition, infrastructure installed beneath such aquatic features, such as through horizontal directional drilling, is also generally subject to notification requirements. Therefore, any impact to the mainstems, tributaries, or floodplains or associated riparian habitat caused by the proposed Project will likely require an LSA Notification. CDFW may not execute a final LSA Agreement until it has

A-3

Karineh Samkian, Senior Program Manager
 City of El Cerrito
 April 10, 2025
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considered the IS/MND and complied with its responsibilities as a responsible agency under CEQA.

Raptors and Other Nesting Birds

CDFW has authority over actions that may result in the disturbance or destruction of active bird nest sites or the unauthorized take of birds. Fish and Game Code sections protecting birds, their eggs, and nests include section 3503 (regarding unlawful take, possession, or needless destruction of the nests or eggs of any bird), section 3503.5 (regarding the take, possession, or destruction of any birds-of-prey or their nests or eggs), and section 3513 (regarding unlawful take of any migratory nongame bird). Migratory birds are also protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA).

Fully Protected Species

Fully protected species, such as white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*) and golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) may not be taken or possessed at any time and no licenses or permits may be issued for their take except as follows:

- Take is for necessary scientific research;
- Efforts to recover a fully protected, endangered, or threatened species;
- Live capture and relocation of a bird species for the protection of livestock; or
- They are a covered species whose conservation and management is provided for in a Natural Community Conservation Plan (Fish & G. Code, §§ 3511, 4700, 5050, & 5515).

A-3 cont.

Specified types of infrastructure projects may be eligible for an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for unavoidable impacts to fully protected species if certain conditions are met (Fish & G. Code §2081.15). Project proponents should consult with CDFW early in the Project planning process.

California Endangered Species Act and Native Plant Protection Act

A CESA ITP must be obtained from CDFW if the Project has the potential to result in “take” of plants or animals listed under CESA or the Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA), either during construction or over the life of the Project. Under CESA, “take” means “hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill.” (Fish & G. Code, § 86). CDFW’s issuance of an ITP is subject to CEQA and to facilitate permit issuance, any project modifications and mitigation measures must be incorporated into the CEQA document analysis, discussion, and mitigation monitoring and reporting program. If the Project will impact CESA listed species, early consultation

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is encouraged, as significant modification to the Project and mitigation measures may be required in order to obtain a CESA permit.

CEQA requires a mandatory finding of significance if a project is likely to substantially impact threatened or endangered species. Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21001, subd. (c) & 21083; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15380, 15064 & 15065.) In addition, pursuant to CEQA, the Lead Agency cannot approve a project unless all impacts to the environment are avoided or mitigated to less-than-significant levels, or the lead agency makes and supports Findings of Overriding Consideration (FOC) for impacts that remain significant despite the implementation of all feasible mitigation. FOC under CEQA, however, do not eliminate the Project proponent's obligation to comply with the Fish and Game Code.

A-3 cont.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the comments and recommendations below to assist the City in adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Project's significant, or potentially significant, direct and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources. Editorial comments or other suggestions may also be included to improve the document. Based on the Project's avoidance of significant impacts with implementation of mitigation measures, CDFW concludes that a MND is appropriate for the Project.

I. Mitigation Measure or Alternative and Related Impact Shortcoming

COMMENT 1: White-Tailed Kite, Golden Eagle, and Other Special-Status Species

Issue: The IS/MND does not assess potential impacts to special-status species resulting from tree removal within the Project site.

Specific Impact: Project objectives include reducing the risk of fire within the Hillside Natural Area by removing stands of eucalyptus and non-native conifers. Though eucalyptus is a non-native species and a fire hazard, it may still provide valuable habitat for white-tailed kite, golden eagle, and other local special-status species with potential to occur within the Project area. Without an assessment of potential adverse impacts resulting from removal of these trees, including habitat loss or fragmentation, impacts to special-status species may still be *potentially significant*.

Why Impact Would Occur: White-tailed kite was observed during preliminary surveys of the Project site, and the IS/MND indicates that there is potential habitat within the Project site to support golden eagle. Both species have been documented using eucalyptus trees for nesting (Hunt et. al., 1998; Vaughn, 2011) and therefore may utilize eucalyptus stands in the Hillside Natural Area as habitat. Though the IS/MND does not specify the total acreage of trees to be removed, it indicates that eucalyptus and pine groves comprise over 36.2 acres of the Hillside Natural Area

A-4

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(page 3-8). Though removal of eucalyptus and other trees will reduce fire risk within the Hillside Natural Area, it may contribute to habitat loss or habitat degradation for special-status species such as white-tailed kite or golden eagle. Habitat loss from conversion and clearing remains one of the largest threats to white-tailed kite and golden eagle (Dunk, 1995; CDFW, 2018), and vegetation clearing can cause habitat fragmentation and edge effects which permeate beyond the Project site (Harris, 1988; Murcia, 1995).

Evidence Impact Would Be Significant: Consistent with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15380, the status of the white-tailed kite and golden eagle as Fully Protected species (Fish & G. Code § 3511) qualifies them as endangered, rare, or threatened species under CEQA. Therefore, if the Project has the potential to reduce habitat for white-tailed kite or golden eagle to an extent which substantially restricts their range, this would be a *mandatory finding of significance* and must be evaluated in the initial study (CEQA Guidelines § 15065 & 15380).

A-4 cont.

To Minimize Significant Impacts: To evaluate and avoid potential impacts to white-tailed kite and golden eagle, CDFW recommends that the IS/MND evaluate potential impacts to white-tailed kite, golden eagle, and other special-status species resulting from the removal of trees within the Project site.

COMMENT 2: Nesting Birds

Issue: Mitigation Measures BIO-4a and 4b may not be sufficient to reduce impacts to nesting birds to less-than-significant levels.

Specific Impact: Nesting birds are particularly sensitive to human disturbance. If nests within the area of disturbance are either undetected during surveys or unassessed for signs of distress, impacts to nesting birds as a result of Project activities may still be *potentially significant*.

Why Impact Would Occur: Project activities including ground disturbance, operation of heavy machinery, and the movement of workers may generate noise or visual disturbances which may in turn result in nest abandonment, reduced reproductive success, or loss or reduced health or vigor of eggs or young. If nesting birds occur within the Project site and are undetected during surveys, Project activities including pruning, tree removal, and vegetation removal may inadvertently crush, destroy, or remove active nests.

A-5

Evidence Impact Would be Significant: Take of nesting birds, birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes, and migratory nongame bird as designated in the federal MBTA is a violation of Fish and Game Code §§ 3503, 3503.5, 3513.

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To Reduce Impacts to Nesting Birds to a Less-Than-Significant Level: CDFW recommends the following modifications to Mitigation Measures BIO-4a and 4b:

BIO-4a – Nesting Bird Season. Nesting bird season should be defined as February 1 through September 15.

BIO-4a – Survey Methods and Radii. CDFW recommends the following minimum survey radii: (1) 250 feet for passerines, (2) 1,000 feet for raptors, and (3) 0.5 miles for golden eagle. Protocol-level surveys for golden eagle should be conducted prior to Project commencement according to the Interim Golden Eagle Inventory and Monitoring Protocols and Other Recommendations document, located at: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=83940>.

A-5 cont.

BIO-4b – Active Nest Buffers. CDFW recommends the following typical protective buffers for nesting birds: 1) 1,000 feet for large raptors such as buteos, 2) 500 feet for smaller raptors such as accipiters, and 3) 250 feet for passerines. No Project personnel or equipment shall be allowed to enter the protective buffer until the Qualified Biologist determines that the young have fully fledged and will no longer be adversely affected by the Project.

BIO-4b – Biological Monitoring. A Qualified Biologist shall observe any identified active nests prior to the start of any construction-related activities to establish a behavioral baseline of the adults and any nestlings, and the nest site(s) shall be monitored by the biologist periodically to see if the birds are stressed by the construction activities and if the protective buffer needs to be increased.

COMMENT 3: Crotch's Bumble Bee and Western Bumble Bee

Issue: Mitigation Measure BIO-3 may not be sufficient to reduce potential adverse impacts to Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) or western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*) to less-than-significant levels.

Specific Impact: If special-status bumble bees are undetected during pre-activity surveys, additional protective measures would not be implemented. If special-status bumble bees occur within the Project site but are undetected during pre-activity surveys, impacts to special-status bumble bees resulting from Project activities may be *potentially significant*.

A-6

Why Impact Would Occur: Though on-site surveys provide valuable information for determining potential impacts of Project activities, surveys may fail to detect the presence of bumble bees. Additionally, bumble bees move nest sites each year and may be present within the Project site in years following surveys even if they are initially undetected (CDFW, 2023). The IS/MND identifies potential suitable foraging,

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nesting, and overwintering habitat within the Project site, as well as the potential for these species to occur.

Project activities include removal of vegetative growth and brush within the Project site, which may be accomplished manually or with the use of herbicides. Direct mortality to bumble bees could occur during vegetation removal and clearing, as bumble bees may utilize grasses, under brush piles, old bird nests, and dead trees or hollow logs for nesting, or they may overwinter in leaf litter of woody forest edges (Williams et al. 2014; Hatfield et al. 2015; CDFW, 2023). Additionally, certain herbicides used for vegetation management may lead to direct mortality of bumble bees if exposed while foraging within the Project site.

Evidence Impact Would Be Significant: Bumble bees are critically important because they pollinate a wide range of plants over the lifecycles of their colonies, which typically live longer than most native solitary bee species. Crotch and western bumble bee are candidate species under CESA (CEQA Guidelines, §15380, subds. (c)(1)). Unauthorized take of this species pursuant to CESA is a violation of Fish and Game Code section 2080 et seq.

A-6 cont.

Recommended Potentially Feasible Mitigation Measures to Minimize Significant Impacts: To help reduce potential impacts to Crotch's and western bumble bee to less-than-significant levels, CDFW offers the following recommendations:

Mitigation Measure BIO-3a – Bumble Bee Pre-activity Surveys. A minimum of three pre-activity surveys should be conducted. Surveys should be repeated for each year of Project activities.

Herbicide Use. Because potential habitat for bumble bee species exists within the Project site, CDFW recommends the avoidance of herbicides which are toxic to bumble bees for vegetation management activities. The Pollinator Resource Center on the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation (<https://www.xerces.org/pollinator-resource-center/california>) offers some resources to protect pollinators from pesticides.

II. Editorial Comments and/or Suggestions

COMMENT 4: Native Oak Protection

Thank you for including active management of native oak species as an action item of the plan. CDFW concurs with the plan for control of Sudden Oak Death within the Hillside Natural Area and offers additional recommendations to help support this goal, as well as protect oak trees from potential harm incidental to Project activities. To help

A-7

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protect native oak trees during Project activities, CDFW recommends the following potentially feasible mitigation measures be incorporated:

Native Oak Protection – Heavy Equipment. No materials shall be stored, and no vehicles or equipment shall be driven or parked within the dripline of an oak tree.

Native Oak Protection – Equipment Sanitation. If work must be conducted in infested areas, it should be conducted during dry conditions to the greatest extent feasible. Shoes, pruning gear, and other equipment should be disinfected before working in areas with susceptible species, and all gear and equipment should be cleaned of soil, mud, and organic debris prior to exiting infested areas. Additional sanitation guidelines can be found at https://www.suddenoakdeath.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Professional-sanitation-guide_January-2013.pdf.

A-7 cont.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

CEQA requires that information developed in environmental impact reports and negative declarations be incorporated into a database which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e).) Accordingly, please report any special-status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). The CNDDDB field survey form can be filled out and submitted online at the following link: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Submitting-Data>. The types of information reported to CNDDDB can be found at the following link: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Plants-and-Animals>.

A-8

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEES

The Project, as proposed, would have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of environmental document filing fees is necessary. Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW. Payment of the environmental document filing fee is required in order for the underlying project approval to be operative, vested, and final. (See Cal. Code Regs, tit. 14, § 753.5; Fish & G. Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089.)

A-9

CONCLUSION

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the IS/MND to assist the City in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources.

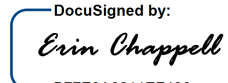
A-10

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Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to
Torrey Soland, Environmental Scientist, at (707) 266-2878 or
Torrey.Soland@wildlife.ca.gov; or Sara Kern, Senior Environmental Scientist
(Supervisory) at Sara.Kern@wildlife.ca.gov.

A-10 cont.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

B77E9A6211EF486...
Erin Chappell
Regional Manager
Bay Delta Region

ec: Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse, Sacramento

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New Jersey. 208pp

Comment Letter B

From: Hari Lamba <hlamba101@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, April 13, 2025 3:09 PM

To: Chris Jones <CJones@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>; Karineh Samkian <KSamkian@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>

Subject: Re: HNA Plan CEQA Comment Period

Hello Karineh,

Here are my comments and suggestions for the HNA Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan.

1. Fire Defensible space should be established in HNA North with the 14.9 acre private property - can the property owner be contacted to establish this?
2. Fire Defensible spaces need to be established HNA south, especially for the homes adjacent to Navellier street. Recommend written messages be dropped in the mail to these addresses advising them to do that for 100 feet from their property.
3. Now that the rainy season is over, there has been much growth of the underbrush, grasses and trees. Since the hotter drier season is here, I recommend that any fuel reduction measures relating to these be done early to reduce the available fuel for a wildfire.
4. Pacific Palisades has taught us that urban wildfires can occur too. While this may be out of the context of this plan, homeowners may be reminded to establish say 5 foot spaces between their houses and trees and shrubs adjacent to their house structures, so the fire does not spread to their home.
5. Mitigation Measure BIO-8 concerns water aspects. Again, Pacific Palisades fire taught us that Fire crews needed excess water after their water hydrants were empty, and reservoirs had been drained. I see water flowing down streams from the HNA, especially through my property. Can we consider establishing water harvesting based storage tanks in the HNA area that can be used by fire crews as they are fighting fires in the HNA area (and may be far from a water hydrant? Our fire department can be consulted on this. I see that we will need permits from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, SF Water Quality Control Board and the US Army Corps of Engineers.
6. Monarch Butterflies need protection and encouragement, and I see them flitting over my property. I recommend that Milkweed be planted at favorable locations as they lay their eggs on it and eat the plant itself. The Illinois Department of Transportation had undertaken to plant milkweed in some of the spaces along its highways especially at clover leaf entrances and exits (at our request when I was in Illinois before 2017).
7. For Transportation Control Measures, I suggest that fuel cell vehicles be added to the list of zero emission vehicles, especially as El Cerrito may have a hydrogen refueling station soon.

B-1

B-2

B-3

8. I recommend that Mountain bikes be discouraged in the HNA as their trails can be damaging to the pedestrian trails and create higher levels of dust.

B-3
(cont.)

9. In regard to GEO-1, I commend the inclusion of Geotechnical surveys for the hillsides. If there is a wildfire, then just after that if there is heavy rain caused by an atmospheric river, there can be landslides. The survey should evaluate some steep slope sections in this regard.

B-4

Please let me know your responses to my comments. The HNA plan is a great plan and I commend LSA and your department for doing such a good job. My comments are only submitted by way of suggestions for improvement. Please feel free to call me if that will be of help to you.

B-5

Climate Change and wildfires and urban wildfires are the new norm. It's great that we are preparing for it.

Chris: Can we put this on the agenda for our PRC meeting on April 23 ?

Hari Lamba
Commissioner
Parks and Recreation Commission
City of El Cerrito
(630)215-4648

On Fri, Mar 14, 2025 at 11:09 AM Chris Jones <CJones@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us> wrote:

Happy Friday Everyone,

Please see message below from Karineh Samkian regarding the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan.

Take Care,

Chris

Hello Commissioners,

The Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) comment period is open until 4 pm on April 14, 2025. The Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (attached) may be viewed online at el-cerrito.org/hillside or in person during normal business hours at the City of El Cerrito Community Development Department

(10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito). Comments must be received by email to me or dropped off at the Community Development Department at City Hall. The Response to Comments will be posted on the website after the comment period closes.

Thank you,

Karineh Samkian

Senior Program Manager
[Operations + Environmental Services Division](#)
City of El Cerrito
Phone: (510)525-7603
Email: KSamkian@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us



Mission Statement: *The City of El Cerrito serves our diverse community by providing exceptional services that create a safe and resilient future **for all**.*

Comment Letter C

From: Marlene Keller <marlenekeller9577@comcast.net>

Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2025 4:16 PM

To: Karineh Samkian <KSamkian@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>

Subject: Comment on the City of El Cerrito's Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration on the HNA Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

I have reviewed:

- * the Draft Final HNA Plan
- * the 108 public comments and responses
- * CEQA documents and
- * the IS/MND

I fully support the city's adoption of the plan and the proposed MND.

I am a resident of El Cerrito, with a home next to the HNA and daily walks in the HNA give me familiarity with the trees, plants and serious, urgent fire risks.

Marlene Keller
8355 Kent Ct
El Cerrito, CA

Sent from my iPhone

C-1

ATTACHMENT B

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

This Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) was formulated based upon the findings of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) prepared for the proposed Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (“project” or “Plan”). The proposed project would establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that will guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the City of El Cerrito’s Hillside Natural Area (HNA).

The MMRP, which is provided in Table A, lists mitigation measures that would be applicable to the proposed project and identifies mitigation monitoring requirements. The MMRP presented in Table A is organized in a matrix format. The first column identifies the impact, and the second column identifies the mitigation measure that would be implemented for each project impact. The third column, “Monitoring Timing,” refers to when the monitoring will occur to ensure that the mitigation action is completed. The fourth column, “Monitoring Responsibility,” identifies the agency that will ensure that the mitigation measure is implemented; and the last column, entitled “Verification,” is for the lead agency to provide verification that the measures have been implemented.

This MMRP has been prepared to comply with the requirements of State law (Public Resources Code Section 21081.6). State law requires the adoption of an MMRP when mitigation measures are required to avoid significant impacts. The MMRP is intended to ensure compliance during implementation of the proposed project. The Final MMRP must be adopted when the El Cerrito City Council makes a final decision on the project.

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Table A: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Timing for Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party / Approving Agency	Verification (Date and Initials)
5.4 Biological Resources				
Fuel reduction treatment activities, including vegetation removal, trail widening and construction, and other activities, could result in the direct removal of special-status plant species.	Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Protocol-Level Plant Surveys. If fuel reduction treatments are proposed within the native grasslands, riparian woodland, or the less disturbed portions of the oak woodland and scrub habitat, focused plant surveys for sensitive native local plants and special-status plants should be conducted according to CDFW's <i>Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Plant Populations and Natural Communities</i> by a qualified biologist. If special-status plant species or sensitive native local plant communities are identified within the project work limits by a qualified biologist, then a qualified biologist shall establish an adequate buffer area for each plant population and/or sensitive natural community to exclude activities that directly remove or alter the habitat of, or result in indirect adverse impacts on, the special-status plant species or sensitive natural community. Buffer areas shall be marked with temporary fencing or other barriers at the boundary of the disturbance. A qualified biologist shall oversee installation of a temporary barrier such as, plastic mesh-type construction fence (Tensor Polygrid or equivalent) at least 4 feet (1.2 meters) tall around any established buffer areas to prevent encroachment by construction vehicles and personnel. The qualified biologist shall determine the exact location of the fencing. The fencing shall be strung tightly on posts set at maximum intervals of 10 feet (3 meters) and shall be checked and maintained weekly until all construction is complete. Recommended buffer distances to minimize and avoid potential adverse impacts to listed plants or sensitive natural communities from activities are as follows: ● Cutting and Removing Vegetation by Hand or Hand Tools (e.g., weeding): 3-foot (1 meter) buffer. ● Mechanical Removal of Individual Plants or Woody Vegetation (e.g., chainsaw, weed eater): 3-foot buffer or up to height of removed vegetation (whichever is greater).	Prior to fuel reduction treatments within the native grasslands, riparian woodland, or the less disturbed portions of the oak woodland and scrub habitat.	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	

Table A: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Timing for Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party / Approving Agency	Verification (Date and Initials)
	Removal of Vegetation with Heavy Equipment (e.g., bulldozer, tractor, "bush hog"): 2 times the width of the equipment plus the height of vegetation.			
Fuel reduction treatment and vegetation control activities could result in the removal of milkweed and impacts to monarch butterflies.	Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Milkweed Field Surveys. Prior to fuel treatment activities, appropriately timed field surveys (generally June through September) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to identify, map, and estimate (a) stand sizes, densities, and number and species of milkweed (<i>Asclepias</i> spp. and others); (b) number and species of adult nectar plants in the entire project site; and (c) record any observations of monarch activity.	Prior to fuel treatment activities and between June through September.	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	
	Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Vegetation Control Activities During Monarch Breeding Season. Vegetation control activities may occur between December 1 and March 14 without special restrictions. From March 15 to November 30 restrictions for vegetation control practices (e.g., ground disturbance, tree removal, mowing, grazing, herbicide application, or hand removal) during the monarch breeding season in areas containing milkweed and nectar plants shall apply. During the monarch breeding season from March 15–November 30, the City and its contractors may conduct vegetation control activities and other management actions provided that: - Site specific buffers shall be established by a qualified biologist around patches of milkweed and associated nectar plants where no vegetation control may occur. - If milkweed and associated nectar plants cannot be avoided, a qualified biologist shall complete pre-activity surveys. If no monarch breeding activity is identified, Contractors may proceed with vegetation control activities subject to conditions below. If monarch breeding activity is identified, the milkweed stand shall be avoided until a qualified biologist implements a salvage and relocation plan that has been reviewed and approved by the applicable Resource Agency. - Unoccupied growing milkweed shall be avoided by a minimum of 2 feet during the application of herbicides (target spray, cut stump, wiping and wicking). Herbicide application within 125 feet	Prior to vegetation control activities during the monarch breeding season (March 15 to November 30) in areas containing milkweed and nectar plants.	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	

Table A: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Timing for Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party / Approving Agency	Verification (Date and Initials)
	of a milkweed plant shall be conducted with a low-pressure backpack sprayer to reduce the risk of drift. • No broad-spectrum herbicide application shall take place within 125 feet of occupied monarch habitat when wind speeds exceed 10 mph, or temperatures exceed 85°F to minimize potential for drift and volatilization. • No persistent or pre-emergent herbicides shall be used within 125 feet of milkweed or other occupied monarch habitats. • No prescribed fire treatment shall occur within 125 feet of habitat occupied by monarchs during the active monarch season. • Mowing shall not be conducted within 125 feet of active monarch breeding habitat (adults or larvae) during the breeding season March 15-November 30. Mowing projects affecting nectar plants any time of year within 125 feet of active monarch habitat shall only be conducted when temperatures are above 55 degrees on a sunny day and 60 degrees on cloudy days to avoid injuring adult monarchs. If mowing occurs from March to June near areas where breeding occurs, mowing height shall be set to a minimum of 10-12 inches to avoid cutting newly emerged milkweed plants.			
Construction activities could adversely impact the Crotch's and western bumble bee and their habitat.	Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Foraging Bumble Bee Pre-activity Surveys. A minimum of three pre-activity surveys shall be conducted within 40 days during appropriate activity periods (i.e., March through September) prior to the start of ground disturbing activities to identify bumble bee foraging activity. The pre-activity surveys shall occur when temperatures are above 60° Fahrenheit (15.5°Celsius) and not during wet conditions (e.g., foggy, raining, or drizzling). The survey shall be conducted at least 2 hours after sunrise and 3 hours before sunset and shall occur at least 1 hour after rain subsides. Preferably, the survey should be conducted during sunny days with low wind speeds (less than 8 miles per hour), but surveying during partially cloudy days or overcast conditions are permissible if the surveyors can still see their own shadow. Surveys shall be repeated for each year of project activities.	Within 40 days prior to the start of ground disturbing activities from March through September.	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	

Table A: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Timing for Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party / Approving Agency	Verification (Date and Initials)
	If Crotch's and/or western bumble bees, or potential Crotch's or western bumble bees (since bumble bees can be difficult to identify in the field) are observed within the project site, a plan to protect Crotch's and/or western bumble bee nests and individuals shall be developed and implemented in consultation with CDFW and USFWS. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following measures: • Specifications for fuel treatment timing and sequencing requirements (e.g., avoidance of raking, mowing, tilling, or other ground disturbance until late March to protect overwintering queen bumble bees); • Establishment of appropriate no-disturbance buffers for bumble bee nest sites to avoid impacts to the bees and monitoring by a qualified biologist to ensure compliance if bumble bee nests are identified; • Restrictions associated with fuel treatment practices, equipment, or materials that may harm bumble bees (e.g., avoidance of pesticides/herbicides, BMPs to minimize the spread of invasive plant species); • Provisions to avoid Crotch's and/or western bumble bees, or potential western bumble bees if observed away from a bumble bee nest during project activity (e.g., ceasing of project activities until the animal has left the active work area on its own volition); • Prescription of an appropriate restoration seed mix targeted for the western bumble bee, including native plant species known to be visited by native bumble bee species and containing a mix of flowering plant species with continual floral availability through the entire active season of the western bumble bee (March through September); and • Avoidance of herbicide applications which are toxic to bumble bees for vegetation management activities.			
Construction activities could result in impacts	Mitigation Measure BIO-4a: Nesting Bird Surveys. Prior to fuel reduction treatment activities occurring during the nesting bird	Prior to fuel reduction treatment activities	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito	

Table A: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Timing for Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party / Approving Agency	Verification (Date and Initials)
to nesting birds, either directly from removing the nest or indirectly from noise or human presence during construction activities.	season (February 1 through September 15), pre-activity activity surveys for nesting birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no nests will be disturbed during project implementation. Surveys will be conducted no more than seven days prior to the initiation of fuel reduction treatment activities. During this survey, the biologist shall inspect all trees and other potential nesting habitats (e.g., shrubs, ground, and structures) for nests in the impact area plus a surrounding buffer, generally 250feet for passerines, 1,000 feet for raptors, and 0.5 mile for the golden eagle, as determined by a qualified biologist, based on the intensity of disturbance and duration of the vegetation treatment. The survey area shall encompass reasonably accessible areas of the treatment site and the immediately surrounding vicinity viewable from the treatment site. The survey area shall be determined by a qualified biologist, based on the potential species in the area, location of suitable nesting habitat, the intensity of potential disturbance and the duration of vegetation treatment. If removal of potential nesting substrate or project grading will occur during more than one nesting season, or in different parts of the site in phases over the course of a single season, then additional pre-activity surveys must be performed within seven days prior to initiation of work in any particular area. If the pre-activity survey does not identify the presence of any active nests in the survey area, construction or vegetation treatment activities may proceed.	occurring during the nesting bird season (February 1 through September 15).	Public Works Department Director, or designee	
	Mitigation Measure BIO-4b: Nesting Bird Buffers. If nests known to have eggs or young, or that cannot be confirmed to be inactive or to lack eggs or young, are found, or adults are demonstrating nesting behavior, a qualified biologist shall establish an appropriate fuel reduction-free buffer around each nest. Generally, a buffer of 1,000 feet for large raptors, 500 feet for smaller raptors, and 250 feet for passerines (songbirds) are adequate to avoid causing nest abandonment. Factors to be considered for determining buffer size and location shall include presence of natural buffers provided by vegetation or topography, nest height above ground, baseline levels of noise and human activity, species sensitivity, and expected	Prior to construction activities if nests are known to have eggs or young, or that cannot be confirmed to be inactive or to lack eggs or young, are found, or adults are demonstrating nesting behavior.	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	

Table A: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Timing for Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party / Approving Agency	Verification (Date and Initials)
	treatment activities. The buffer shall remain in place until the qualified biologist has confirmed that the nest is no longer active. If a smaller buffer distance than that identified above is necessary and determined to be appropriate for a particular nest or nests, a qualified biologist shall monitor the nest(s) before the activity to document baseline nesting behavior and monitor the nest during vegetation treatment or road construction to ensure nesting birds are not exhibiting signs of stress and territorial behavior. If signs of stress are observed during the monitoring, treatment or construction activities shall cease or buffer shall increase, as determined by a qualified biologist, to a sufficient distance where the nesting birds are longer exhibiting signs of stress. To prevent encroachment, the buffer shall be clearly marked for avoidance. No personnel or equipment shall be allowed to enter the protective buffer until the qualified biologist determines that the young have fully fledged and will no longer be adversely affected by the project. Nests of common birds within the buffer need not be monitored during treatment. The qualified biologist shall observe any identified active raptor nests prior to the start of any construction-related activities to establish a behavioral baseline of the adults and any nestlings, and the nest site(s) shall be monitored by the biologist periodically to see if the birds are stressed by the construction activities and if the protective buffer needs to be increased. The established buffer shall remain in effect until the young have fledged or the nest is no longer active as confirmed by the biologist.			
Tree removal during fuel reduction activities could result in impacts to roosting bats and their habitat.	Mitigation Measure BIO-5a: Focused Tree Habitat Assessment for Bat Species. Prior to any tree removal during the maternity roosting period (April 15 to August 31) or hibernation period (October 15 to February 28), a focused tree habitat assessment shall be conducted by a qualified biologist of all trees that will be removed or impacted by vegetation treatment activities. Trees containing suitable potential bat roost habitat features would then be clearly marked.	Prior to any tree removal during the maternity roosting period (April 15 to August 31) or hibernation period	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	

Table A: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Timing for Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party / Approving Agency	Verification (Date and Initials)
	The habitat assessments should be conducted enough in advance to allow preparation of a report with specific recommendations, and to ensure tree removal can be scheduled during seasonal periods of bat activity if required. If it is determined that day roosting bats are unlikely to occur, the tree may be removed as described below. If the absence of roosting bats cannot be confirmed, then the removal of trees providing suitable maternity or hibernation roosting habitat should only be conducted during seasonal periods of bat activity, including between March 1 and April 15 or between September 1 and October 15.	(October 15 to February 28).		
	Mitigation Measure BIO-5b: Tree Removal. Appropriate methods shall be used to minimize the potential of harm to bats during tree removal. Such methods may include but are not limited to using a two-step tree removal process. This method is conducted over two consecutive days and works by creating noise and vibration by cutting non-habitat branches and limbs from habitat trees using chainsaws only (no other heavy machinery) on Day 1. The noise and vibration disturbance, together with the visible alteration of the tree, is very effective in causing bats that emerge nightly to feed, to not return to the roost that night. The remainder of the tree is removed on Day 2. A biologist qualified in two-step tree removal is required on Day 1 to supervise and instruct the tree-cutters who will be on the site conducting the work, but only for a sufficient length of time to train all tree cutters who will conduct two-step removal of habitat trees. The biologist is generally not required on Day 2, unless a very large cavity is present and a large colony is suspected. Fallen branches and trees shall be left onsite overnight to allow any bats that may be present to fly away during the nighttime hours. Removal of native oaks and riparian trees shall be avoided where possible.	During tree removal activities.	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	
Tree removal and other fuel reduction treatment activities could result in impacts on the San Francisco	Mitigation Measure BIO-6: San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat Pre-activity Surveys. A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-activity survey for San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat nests prior to the start of project activities. Surveys will be conducted in the immediate work area and a 25-foot buffer around those areas. If	Prior to the start of project activities.	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	

Table A: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Timing for Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party / Approving Agency	Verification (Date and Initials)
dusky-footed woodrat and their habitat.	woodrat nests are present, the nests will be flagged in the field and delineated on project site maps in order to avoid potential impacts to woodrat nests during vegetation treatment activities. For any woodrat nests that cannot be avoided, a woodrat nest relocation plan shall be prepared and submitted to CDFW for approval. At a minimum, the plan shall include the phased dismantling and relocation of the nest materials to a suitable location, and the installation of artificial shelters at a ratio of 1:1 per dismantled nest to provide readily accessible refugia for dispersing individuals. If breeding woodrats are present, relocation of houses shall be delayed until the breeding season is over or the qualified biologist otherwise determines that young are no longer present.			
Fuel reduction activities could result in impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities, including purple needlegrass grasslands and other native grasslands.	Mitigation Measure BIO-7a: Riparian Delineation. To minimize disturbance to riparian habitat occurring adjacent to the fuel reduction area, riparian areas shall be clearly delineated by a qualified biologist. Riparian areas shall be separated and protected from the work area through silt fencing, amphibian/reptile-friendly fiber rolls (i.e., no mono-filament), or other appropriate erosion control material. Material staging, and all other project-related activity shall be located as far as possible from riparian areas with no driving or parking of vehicles or equipment within the dripline of a riparian tree.	Prior to fuel reduction activities.	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	
	Mitigation Measure BIO-7b: Avoidance/Minimization of Purple Needlegrass and Other Grasslands. If feasible, the proposed fuel treatments shall avoid/minimize impacts to the purple needlegrass grasslands, other native grasslands, and other sensitive natural communities. The stands of native grasslands shall be avoided during fuel treatment activities. If the native grasslands cannot be avoided, the loss of native grasslands shall be mitigated by restoring an equivalent amount of native grasslands onsite. The City shall reseed temporarily disturbed areas of native grassland habitat that are disturbed by fuel reduction activities with an appropriate weed-free native seed mix that contains the particular native grass seed and/or plugs. Any	During fuel treatment activities.	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	

Table A: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Timing for Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party / Approving Agency	Verification (Date and Initials)
	restored native grassland areas shall be monitored and reported on an annual basis, as required by CDFW.			
Fuel reduction activities could result in impacts on state or federally protected wetlands that may be present within the HNA.	Mitigation Measure BIO-8: Streams/Drainages. Potential impacts to potentially jurisdictional features, such as the onsite streams/drainages (and seasonal wetlands/seeps, if present), are subject to regulation by the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW. These features will be avoided during the fuel reduction activities, where possible. No fill, including plant cuttings, rocks, or soils will be placed in these jurisdictional features without the appropriate permits from the regulatory agencies. If these features are impacted, the City would need to obtain the required permits from the relevant regulatory agencies, including the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB. These permits would include conditions and BMPs that the City would implement during fuel reduction activities. These permits may also specify mitigation, which the City would provide as specified by the regulatory agencies.	During fuel reduction activities.	Qualified Biologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	
5.5 Cultural Resources				
Fuel reduction activities could result in impacts to previously undiscovered archaeological resources that may be present within the HNA.	Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Unanticipated Archaeological Deposits. Should an archaeological deposit be encountered during project activities, all ground-disturbing activities within 25 feet shall be redirected and a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology shall be contacted to assess the situation, determine if the deposit qualifies as a historical resource, consult with agencies as appropriate, and make recommendations for the treatment of the discovery. If the deposit is found to be significant (i.e., eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources), the City shall be responsible for funding and implementing appropriate mitigation measures. Mitigation measures may include recording the archaeological deposit, data recovery and analysis, and public outreach regarding the scientific and cultural importance of the discovery. Upon completion of the selected mitigations, a report documenting methods, findings, and recommendations shall be prepared by the qualified archaeologist, and the final report shall be submitted to the Northwest Information Center at Sonoma State	During project activities.	Qualified Archaeologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	

Table A: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Timing for Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party / Approving Agency	Verification (Date and Initials)
	University. Significant archaeological materials shall be submitted to an appropriate local curation facility and used for future research and public interpretive displays, as appropriate.			
5.7 Geology and Soils				
Soil instability could occur at the project site, especially in the Quarry Hill Grove and at the east wall of the former EBMUD property at Motorcycle Hill.	Mitigation Measure GEO-1: Geotechnical Analysis. Prior to implementation of any actions proposed as part of the Plan, including vegetation removal, geotechnical analysis shall be performed to assess the potential for soil instability to occur at the project site. Geotechnical analysis shall include the evaluation of areas that contain steep slopes, such as the Quarry Hill Grove and at Motorcycle Hill. Specific geotechnical design recommendations shall be developed to mitigate the potential for soil instability, including stabilization using biotechnical stabilization measures. This measure shall be completed to the satisfaction of the City of El Cerrito Director of Public Works, or designee.	Prior to implementation of any project actions.	Licensed Professional Geologist or Geological Engineer / City of El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	
Site disturbance activities could result in the accidental discovery of paleontological resources.	Mitigation Measure GEO-2: Unanticipated Paleontological Resources. Should paleontological resources be encountered during project subsurface construction activities, all ground-disturbing activities within 25 feet shall be redirected and a qualified paleontologist contacted to assess the situation, consult with agencies as appropriate, and make recommendations for the treatment of the discovery. For purposes of this mitigation, a “qualified paleontologist” shall be an individual with the following qualifications: (1) a graduate degree in paleontology or geology and/or a person with a demonstrated publication record in peer-reviewed paleontological journals; (2) at least two years of professional experience related to paleontology; (3) proficiency in recognizing fossils in the field and determining their significance; (4) expertise in local geology, stratigraphy, and biostratigraphy; and (5) experience collecting vertebrate fossils in the field. If the paleontological resources are found to be significant and project activities cannot avoid them, measures shall be implemented to ensure that the project does not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of the paleontological resource. Measures may include monitoring, recording the fossil locality, data recovery and	During project subsurface construction activities.	Qualified Paleontologist / City of El Cerrito El Cerrito Public Works Department Director, or designee	

Table A: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Timing for Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party / Approving Agency	Verification (Date and Initials)
	analysis, a final report, and accessioning the fossil material and technical report to a paleontological repository. Upon completion of the assessment, a report documenting methods, findings, and recommendations shall be prepared and submitted to the City of Vallejo for review. If paleontological materials are recovered, this report also shall be submitted to a paleontological repository such as the University of California Museum of Paleontology, along with significant paleontological materials. Public educational outreach may also be appropriate.			

Source: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (LSA 2024)

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RESOLUTION 2025 - XX

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL CERRITO APPROVING
THE HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION
MANAGEMENT PLAN

WHEREAS, the City has responded to community concerns regarding fire risk in the Hillside Natural Area (HNA) with ongoing and increased vegetation maintenance activities by completing work based largely on past planning efforts; and

WHEREAS, the need for more robust, comprehensive, and current vegetation management practices, that balance fuel reduction with native forest conservation, has been recognized in the City's 2015 Urban Greening Plan and in the City's 2019 Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City applied for and was awarded a \$145,000 State of California Coastal Conservancy Wildfire Resilience Capacity Building Grant per Resolution 2022-83 in November 2022 to develop the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (Plan) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents; and

WHEREAS, the City issued a Request for Proposals from qualified consultants to assist the City in developing the Plan and CEQA documents, and entered into an agreement with LSA Associates, Inc. per Resolution 2023-40; and

WHEREAS, the HNA Plan was developed through: 1) document review of existing City plans and policies, 2) interdepartmental communication and coordination, 3) technical assessments and studies (biological, cultural, fuel and fire hazard, and trails), and 4) robust community engagement consisting of public meetings, input from a Stakeholder Advisory Group, a community survey, stakeholder group meetings, and consultation with the Park and Recreation Commission, Urban Forest Committee, and Environmental Quality Committee, as documented in the HNA Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Draft Plan was released for a 45-day public comment period in the summer of 2024, a Response to Comments document was prepared, and the Plan was updated as necessary; and

WHEREAS, the HNA Plan was reviewed and recommended for adoption by the Park and Recreation Commission, Urban Forest Committee and the Environmental Quality Committee in December of 2024, with proposed changes, many of which have been incorporated into the final version of the HNA Plan; and

WHEREAS, an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the Plan were adopted by the City Council as part of the City Council's duly noticed meeting on June 3, 2025.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of El Cerrito that the foregoing recitals are true and correct and made part of this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the HNA Plan is attached as Exhibit A and incorporated as though fully set forth herein.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of El Cerrito approves the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage and adoption.

I CERTIFY that at a regular meeting on June 3, 2025, the City Council of the City of El Cerrito passed this Resolution by the following vote:

AYES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
NOES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSTAIN:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSENT:	COUNCILMEMBERS:

IN WITNESS of this action, I sign this document and affix the corporate seal of the City of El Cerrito on June 3, 2025.

Holly M. Charl  ty, City Clerk

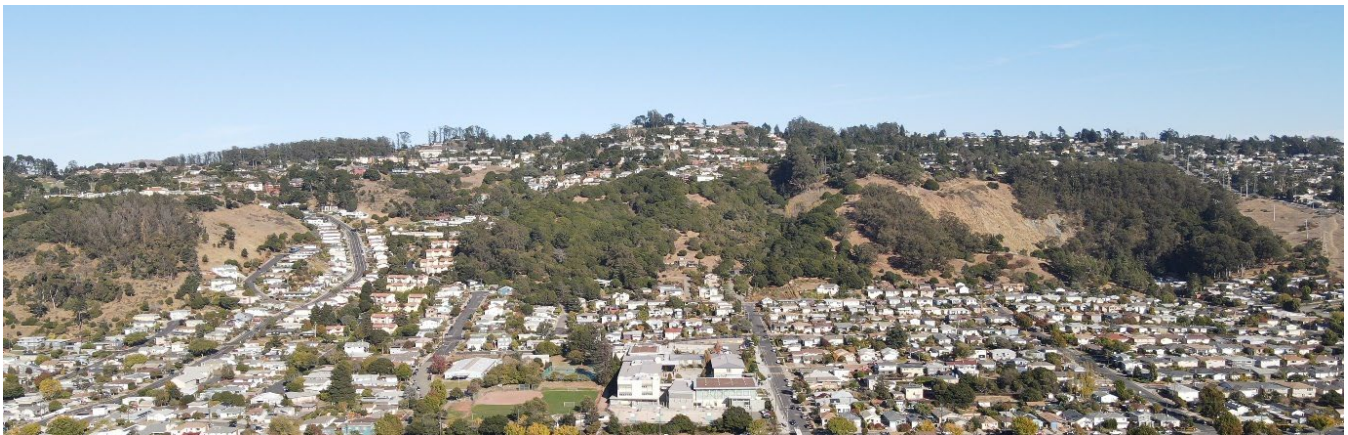
APPROVED:

Carolyn Wysinger, Mayor

DRAFT

HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA



LSA

December 2024

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DRAFT

**HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE
AND FOREST CONSERVATION
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA

City of El Cerrito
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, California 94530

Prepared by:

LSA
157 Park Place
Pt. Richmond, California 94801
510.236.6810

Funding provided by:



Project No. 20231296

LSA

December 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Hillside Natural Area (HNA) (Figure 1) is a valuable open-space asset in El Cerrito that is popular with residents and visitors for its recreational opportunities, scenic vistas, and natural landscape. Over the last few years, community concerns regarding fire risk in the HNA and surrounding communities have significantly increased. The City of El Cerrito (City) has responded with ongoing and increased vegetation maintenance activities, completing work largely based on past planning efforts. A new plan is needed to guide more robust, comprehensive, and balanced management of the HNA.

This Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (Plan) provides a science-based framework and strategy to guide the City's management of the HNA and to aid in securing grant funding for priority management activities. Representing a locally driven solution in partnership with community groups from El Cerrito, the Plan draws upon a site-specific assessment of conditions and constraints and formulates goals, objectives, and actions that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and prioritized for implementation. This Plan represents a focus on forest conservation, fuel reduction, and vegetation management of the City-owned open space for the purposes of fire prevention. However, it is important to recognize that addressing growing fire risks must also include actions residents can take in their homes and neighborhoods, such as home hardening by making structures less prone to ignition and creating defensible space around structures to prevent a fire from reaching the structure. The City embraces its leadership role in bringing diverse interests together to align and integrate fire prevention activities, coordinate investments in future resilience, and educate and engage community members.

VISION

Based on stakeholder feedback provided at community workshops and through a public survey, the following vision for the HNA was developed. El Cerrito's HNA is:

- A **premier recreational open space** offering multiple benefits of outdoor recreation, to be enjoyed by residents and visitors.
- A **fire-resilient, healthy natural landscape** where the risk of fire can be managed with reduced fuel loads and the effective maintenance of strategic fuel breaks that enhance mitigation efforts in the event of a wildland fire situation.
- A **natural, native-dominated plant community** where non-native and invasive species are managed and natural ecosystem function is high, supporting a variety of native, endemic, and rare species.
- Embedded into **neighborhoods that are acutely aware of and responsive to risks of wildland fire** and that embrace defensive space and home hardening to make buildings and infrastructure more fire resistant.

- **Maintained by joint efforts of the City and its residents** and supported by outside funding from local, State, federal, and private partnerships.
- **Managed adaptively to respond to changing conservation priorities and ecological conditions (due to climate change).** Adaptive management supports the natural development of a climate- and fire-resilient natural landscape that provides crucial ecosystem services for the El Cerrito community.

HOW WE GOT HERE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The City of El Cerrito planned an equitable and inclusive community engagement process with multiple opportunities for the broader community to provide input. **The Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG)** served as a bridge between the community and City staff. **Public workshops** raised awareness of the planning process and gathered priorities. Through facilitated breakout group discussions, stakeholders vetted the proposed management activities and assessment results. The public participated in an **online survey** yielding 358 responses. The City's **project website**¹ provided community members and stakeholders with project specific documents and information, including an overview of the Plan's purpose and progress, workshop dates and locations, access to the online survey, and the opportunity to directly engage with the planning team.

TECHNICAL STUDIES AND ASSESSMENTS

The following technical studies were prepared to support development and implementation of the Plan:

- A **Biological Resources Assessment** (Appendix A) identifies special-status species and their habitats, wetlands and other regulated waters, and other potential biological resource constraints to the Plan development (Figure 1). The report also provides recommended measures to address potential impacts to biological resources.
- The **Fire Risk Assessment** (Appendix B) identifies and develops a map of the vegetative fuel types in the HNA and its immediate environs. Using data on weather, topography, and fuel characteristics, fire behavior was modeled to assess the locations of long flame lengths, where tree crown scorch is likely, and where the resulting embers would land. Fire modeling and expert opinion of the local fire department personnel were combined to assess fire threat and risk, strategies, and opportunities. Vegetation management prescriptions are designed to be consistent with the overall goal of reducing fire risk and incorporating best management practices (BMPs) and procedures.
- A **Cultural Resources Evaluation** (Appendix C) includes the findings of a field survey, results from Native American consultation/outreach efforts, and review of records of the California Inventory of Historic Resources, National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historic Places (CRHR), California Historical Landmarks, and California Points of Historical Interest. The report provides project-specific recommendations in conjunction with Native American concerns, as well as potential effects of project implementation.

¹ <https://www.el-cerrito.org/1650/Hillside-Natural-Area-Plan>

- The **Fire Road and Trail Conditions Report** (Appendix D) evaluates the conditions of the existing fire roads and trails, surface and access restrictions, maintenance needs, and potential expansion opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This summary of recommendations presents a prioritized list of actions to reduce the risks and impacts of severe fire events in the HNA (Table 1). The recommended actions are designed to minimize fire threats and vulnerabilities, while at the same time protecting the recreational and ecological values that the HNA offers. These actions are based on current best practices to protect and improve ecosystem function, conserve native plant and animal communities, minimize soil erosion, and enhance recreational possibilities.

The following actions and recommendations incorporate the feedback received from community engagement touchpoints and the findings of the studies and assessments conducted for the Plan, as well as best practices.

Table 1: Summary of Management Actions, Priority, Location, Prescriptions and Implementation Cost Categories

Action	Priority	Location	Prescription	Lead Department	Cost Category ²
1: Create Defensible Space (Objective 1.1)	Highest	Within 100 feet of dwelling structures immediately adjacent to the HNA.	Where dwelling structures are closer than 100 feet from the HNA, the City will manage portions of the HNA within this distance to create a defensible space by maintaining vegetation. The City will promote Contra Costa County Measure X as a funding source for private property owners to manage the portions of their properties within this distance.	El Cerrito Fire Department	\$\$ one-time \$ ongoing
2: Establish Shaded Fuel Breaks (Objective 1.2)	High	A 100- feet wide shaded fuel break along the entire perimeter of the HNA, beginning at the property boundary (where feasible i.e. the presence of a drainage or other topographic features may prohibit full 100' feet.)	Establish and maintain a shaded fuel break by removing or pruning trees, shrubs, brush, and other vegetative growth. A canopy of large native trees will be maintained where possible. All work will be accomplished by use of hand crews or mechanical equipment; supported by chippers and/or burning as determined appropriate on a case-by-case basis, while conserving native vegetation.	El Cerrito Fire Department El Cerrito Public Works Department	\$\$\$ one-time \$ ongoing
3: Remove Eucalyptus And Non-Native Conifers (Objective 1.3)	High-medium, depending on location and cost	1. The eucalyptus stand at Motorcycle Hill 2. The extensive eucalyptus stand at Quarry Hill 3. Eucalyptus and other non-native trees between Kent Court and Buckingham Drive 4. Non-native invasive trees on the Madera property 5. The Ken Smith eucalyptus grove and potentially along riparian corridors (likely requires permit from CDFW).	Stand removal involves the felling of all standing trees and prevention of resprouting from the stump. Landings are typically needed to sort, store, and chip cut trees into mulch and spread or remove the material. Stump treatments may include herbicides and tarping. Small logs and branches may be burned or chipped. Include follow-up treatments for latent seedling and weed management.	El Cerrito Public Works Department El Cerrito Fire Department	\$\$\$\$ one-time \$ ongoing

² Costs are expected to vary substantially. The categories represented here indicate a relative scale of costs, from Low (\$, in the \$1,000s) to High (\$\$\$\$, exceeding \$100,000). Costs also depend on the size and slope of the treatment area, the size of the trees to be removed, and additional considerations (equipment access) and slash treatments (including chipping and/or burning). Individualized projects will be designed by the City based on input from contractors and other experts, and cost estimates will be available prior to contracting and implementation.

Table 1: Summary of Management Actions, Priority, Location, Prescriptions and Implementation Cost Categories

Action	Priority	Location	Prescription	Lead Department	Cost Category ²
4: Manage A Sustainable System Of Fire Roads & Trails (Objective 1.4)	High-medium, depending on location	Improvements to the fire road access at Potrero Avenue and King Court, addition of service access to Motorcycle Hill, conversion of Ken Smith trail into a fire road with turnaround, and improvement of existing roads to enhance emergency equipment response.	Improved fire roads and trails are needed to facilitate implementing vegetation treatment projects and provide firefighting equipment and personnel access to various parts of the HNA. Existing unimproved surface fire trails will be widened and recontoured where necessary to provide vehicle access to treatment areas, as well as for emergency vehicle and maintenance access while preserving native vegetation and preventing weed spread where practicable.	El Cerrito Public Works Department El Cerrito Fire Department	\$\$\$ one-time \$ ongoing
5: Actively Manage Threats To Native Oak Species (Objective 2.1)	High-Medium	Throughout the existing oak woodlands at the HNA.	SOD is present in the HNA but has not reached a high level of infection. Disease monitoring and selective tree removal is a critical component of this Plan. Conduct a complete inventory of all mature oak and bay laurel trees for monitoring the progression of SOD within the HNA. Best management practices include limiting the movement of host material or infested soil.	El Cerrito Public Works Department	\$\$ ongoing
6: Remove Invasives (Objective 2.2)	Medium	Throughout the HNA, wherever they are found. Single infestations are targeted first, followed by spot treatments and follow-up maintenance projects.	Remove invasive plants mostly by hand and prevent re-invasion where practicable. Mechanical treatments (grinding, shredding, chipping, mulching, or mowing) of understory shrubs or small trees in some places. Prioritize invasive species removal in healthy native plant communities	El Cerrito Public Works Department	\$\$ ongoing
7: Restore And Re-Establish Native Species (Objective 2.3)	Medium	Prioritize areas where invasive species removals are complete. This includes the removal of eucalyptus and conifer stands at Motorcycle Hill and Quarry Hill, but also shrub and grassland patches throughout the HNA where invasive species have been removed.	Promote passive restoration of plants from the existing native seedbank wherever possible. In some cases, active restoration of native plants is necessary following invasive plant control. Active restoration includes the initial reintroduction of the native, site-adapted	El Cerrito Public Works Department	\$-\$\$\$ one-time \$ ongoing

Table 1: Summary of Management Actions, Priority, Location, Prescriptions and Implementation Cost Categories

Action	Priority	Location	Prescription	Lead Department	Cost Category ²
			species (grasses and shrubs). Conserving native grasslands and other sensitive natural communities, enhancing, and expanding them is an important part of achieving this goal.		
8: Monitor Key Performance Indicators (Objectives 3.1 – 3.3)	Medium	Monitoring at the HNA will include the key indicators resiliency, recreation, plan review, and public relations.	Use monitoring to adapt management practices for each of these key indicators: ● <u>Fire Behavior</u>: Inspect fuel breaks at the HNA annually. Inspections of defensible space is another metric of the neighborhood's resilience. ● <u>Biodiversity</u>: Regularly monitor the HNA for the abundance and presence of key special-status species, including monarch butterfly, and monitor native plant communities, weed cover, and wildlife populations as funding allows. ● <u>Fire-Adapted Communities</u>: Conduct FlamMap (or equivalent) analysis of fire risk and behavior every 5–10 years as a means to pinpoint areas of deficiencies and target vegetation treatments. ● <u>Trail Monitoring</u>: Inspect all trails at least once per year to evaluate surface conditions. ● <u>Plan Review</u>: Provide a review and, if necessary, update to the Plan every 5 years. ● <u>Public Relations</u>: Provide multiple avenues for a community engagement and feedback process that allows the community and stakeholders to support and be informed of the City's management of the HNA.	El Cerrito Public Works Department El Cerrito Fire Department	\$ ongoing

CDFW = California Department of Fish and Wildlife
City = City of El Cerrito
feet = foot/feet

HNA = Hillside Natural Area
SOD = Sudden Oak Death

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AB	Assembly Bill
ATV	all-terrain vehicle
BAAQMD	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
BMP	best management practice
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Cal-IPC	California Invasive Plant Council
CalVeg	Classification and Assessment with Landsat of Visible Ecological Groupings
Cascadia	Cascadia Consulting Group
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDPR	California Department of Pesticide Regulation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
City	City of El Cerrito
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CO	carbon monoxide
COMTF	California Oak Mortality Task Force
Consultant	LSA Associates, Inc.
CRHR	California Register of Historic Places
CRPR	California Rare Plant Rank
CWPP	Community Wildfire Protection Plan
DBH	diameter at breast height
EA	Environmental Assessment
EBMUD	East Bay Municipal Utility District
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
EQC	Environmental Quality Committee (City of El Cerrito)
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
FHRP	Fire Hazard Reduction Plan

ft	feet
GIS	geographic information system
GPS	Global Positioning System
GSOB	goldspotted oak borer
GVWR	Gross Vehicular Weight Rating
HNA	Hillside Natural Area
IS	Initial Study
lbs	pounds
LiDAR	Light Detection and Ranging
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MOB	Mediterranean oak borer
mph	miles per hour
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NO ₂	nitrogen dioxide
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O ₃	ozone
PFIRS	Prescribed Fire Information Reporting System
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Plan	Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan
PM ₁₀	particulate Matter less than 10 microns in diameter
RAWS	Remote Automatic Weather Station
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SAG	Stakeholder Advisory Group
SAS	Solano Archaeological Services LLC
SMP	Smoke Management Plan
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
SOD	Sudden Oak Death
UFC	Urban Forestry Committee (City of El Cerrito)
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

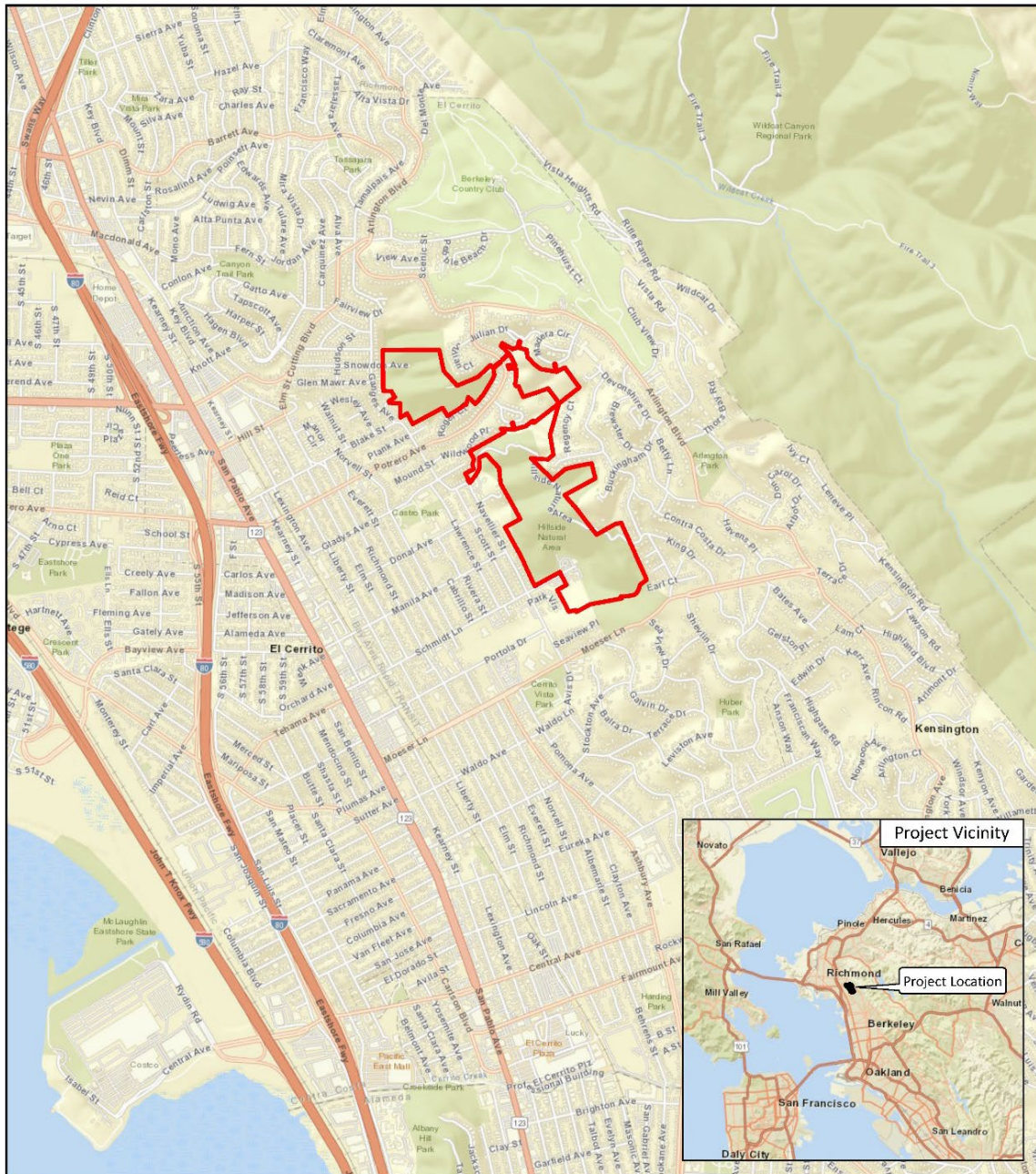
INTRODUCTION

The **Hillside Natural Area (HNA)** (Figure 1) is a valuable open space asset within El Cerrito that is popular with residents and visitors for its recreational opportunities, its scenic vistas, and the biodiversity and natural beauty of its natural landscape. The HNA is heavily vegetated and can present a fire hazard to the surrounding residential areas and to the City of El Cerrito (City) as a whole. There is a strong consensus in the science community that **climate change** extends the periods of fire risk and enhances the likelihood of fires throughout the San Francisco Bay Area (Bay Area). Over the last few years, **community concerns** regarding fire risk in the HNA and surrounding communities have significantly increased. The City has responded with ongoing and increased vegetation maintenance activities, completing work largely based on past planning efforts. A new **Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (Plan)** is needed to guide more robust, comprehensive, and balanced management of the HNA. The present Plan is intended to further guide the City's management and aid in securing grant funding for high-priority management activities.

The Plan provides a science-based framework and strategy to improve fire resilience and forest health in the HNA and the surrounding neighborhoods and residential areas. It represents a **locally driven solution** in partnership with community groups from El Cerrito. The Plan draws upon a site-specific assessment of conditions and constraints and formulates goals and objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and prioritized for implementation. It also aids in securing grant funding for priority management activities.

Building the HNA's resilience to fires means also restoring the **health of the native plant communities**. Native vegetation that is properly managed to avoid fuel accumulation and invasion by flammable non-native plants is key to reducing the risk to residential neighborhoods and livelihoods. This Plan represents a focus on forest conservation, fuel reduction, and proper vegetation management of the City-owned open space for the purposes of fire prevention. However, it is also important to recognize that addressing growing fire risks must also include actions residents take in their homes and neighborhoods, such as home hardening by making structures less prone to ignition, and creating defensible space around structures to prevent a fire from reaching the structure. The City embraces its leadership role in bringing diverse interests together to align and integrate fire prevention activities, coordinate investments in future resilience, and educate and engage community members.

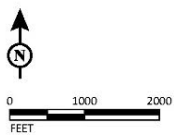
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LSA

LEGEND

Project Site



SOURCE: Contra Costa County (05/2024); Esri (2024).

Figure 1: Regional Location, Hillside Natural Area, El Cerrito

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BACKGROUND

Fire is considered a natural part of the ecosystem in the East Bay, but the region also has a long history of destructive wildfire. Triggered by three major fires in summer 1986, El Cerrito community members voiced an increased concern for fire safety to the surrounding homes. The catastrophic Oakland Tunnel Fire raged through the hills in October 1991 and consumed 2.5 square miles of mostly residential neighborhoods. Twenty-five people were killed and 150 were injured. The fire destroyed 2,843 single-family dwellings and 437 apartment and condominium units and 2,000 automobiles. Ten thousand people were evacuated.

The City has responded to the community's fire concerns with ongoing and increased vegetation maintenance activities, completing work largely based on planning initiated in the 1990s. In addition, home hardening and Firewise landscaping are recommended as the most effective ways to increase the fire resilience of neighborhoods. The history of wildfire planning in El Cerrito is reflected in several major planning guidance documents since the late 1980s, described further below.

EL CERRITO HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN (1987)

The El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Vegetation Plan (LSA 1987³) was developed by the City to address the fire risk of the HNA by reducing fuel loads and establishing fuel breaks in the HNA. The HNA Vegetation Management Plan is aimed primarily at managing hazardous fire conditions and the two main variables that affect the intensity of a fire: fuel levels and weather. The Vegetation Management Plan also addressed erosion control standards, exotic species, management of El Cerrito Memorial Grove, and maintaining the health of native vegetation. While this plan provided preliminary proposals for fire prevention and management, it did not provide a fire risk analysis or present fuel modification recommendations. Additionally, the effort did not include a review of potential environmental impacts to allow for full implementation of the plan in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

WHY DO WE NEED THIS PLAN?

Elevated fire risk concerns established the need for improved management practices.

The City of El Cerrito is actively responding by thinning eucalyptus groves, reducing ladder fuel, and removing dead trees.

The City has limited funding to implement more comprehensive fire risk management activities.

An updated plan is needed that will address and balance fire resilience with native forest conservation and will help secure grant funding.

³ Sources for citations made within the text of this document are listed alphabetically in the References section (page 95).

EL CERRITO HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE HAZARD REDUCTION PLAN

In 1992, the City began development of the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Fire Hazard Reduction Plan (FHRP) based in part on the 1987 plan. The plan incorporated a Fire Hazard Analysis (ESA 1993a) and an HNA Environmental Assessment (EA) (ESA 1993b) that addressed the wildland/urban interface that links the HNA and surrounding adjacent residential neighborhoods. It applied current empirical and modeling methods designed to quantitatively assess the fire hazards within the HNA. The analysis provided recommendations for an array of fuel modification treatments and on-site infrastructure actions to reduce fire hazard to the HNA and adjacent residences. Following the completion of the Fire Hazard Analysis, the City produced a Preliminary EA to identify potential environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the recommended treatments within various portions of the HNA. Several issues were identified as requiring further study, including geology and soils; sensitive plant species; sensitive natural communities, and endangered, threatened, or sensitive animal species. The FHRP proposed several fire management techniques and new or improved infrastructure systems (fire roads and water delivery systems) for better management of fire potential within the HNA.

In 1994, the City prepared the “Fire Hazard Reduction Plan: Initial Study And Mitigated Negative Declaration” (ESA 1994) to evaluate potential significant impacts and identify mitigation measures for the FHRP. Subsequently, the City adopted the FHRP and approved the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and Mitigation Monitoring Program as the CEQA documents (City Council Resolution 94-103).

EL CERRITO – KENSINGTON WILDFIRE ACTION PLAN

The El Cerrito – Kensington Wildfire Action Plan (Diablo Fire Safe Council 2017) is an appendix to the Contra Costa Countywide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and follows the standards for CWPPs established by the federal Healthy Forest Restoration Act, including (1) Identifying and prioritizing fuel reduction opportunities across the county, (2) addressing structural ignitability and (3) collaborating with stakeholders. The plan complements local agreements and existing plans for fire protection for a coordinated effort in determining appropriate fire management actions. The Contra Costa Countywide CWPP is the result of an area-wide planning effort. The El Cerrito Kensington Fire Action Plan looks at similar issues but allows for a more detailed investigation and customized recommendations for the El Cerrito and Kensington communities. The first countywide CWPP in 2009 began with compilation of existing documents, analysis of fire behavior potential (based on fuels, topography, and historical weather conditions), and collaboration with homeowners, representatives of special interest groups, and agency officials. In 2014–2015, an updated plan was revised through a similar area-wide effort that reviewed the plan, updated relevant sections, and refined priority actions. The goal of the plan is to reduce hazard through increased information and education about fires, hazardous fuels reduction, actions to reduce dwelling structure ignitability, and other recommendations to assist emergency preparedness and fire suppression efforts. Most importantly, it facilitates a coordinated effort among the various stakeholders. The El Cerrito Kensington Fire Action Plan is a multi-year guiding document that will facilitate the implementation of present and future mitigation efforts.

2015 EL CERRITO URBAN GREENING PLAN AND 2019 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

The City's 2015 Urban Greening Plan (El Cerrito 2015) identified the need for more robust, comprehensive, and balanced vegetation management practices. Additionally, in 2019, the El Cerrito Parks & Recreation Facilities Master Plan specifically called for action to "support the El Cerrito-Kensington Wildfire Action Plan goals and policies by creating defensible spaces, increasing weed abatement, and managing dead or diseased trees and other vegetation, especially in the Hillside Natural Area."

El Cerrito voters passed Measure H in 2019 to maintain and improve recreation services and parks. A portion of the funds support HNA maintenance activities, and the City has since increased its fire fuel reduction and vegetation management activities, in part with these maintenance funds.

2021 RESOLUTION DECLARING WILDFIRE PREVENTION AND SAFETY A TOP PRIORITY

In 2021, the City Council passed a "Resolution Declaring Wildfire Prevention and Safety as a Top Priority for the City of El Cerrito and Encouraging a Variety of Strategies to Prevent and Abate Fire Hazards." This resolution assures residents and businesses that fire prevention is a top priority, and that discussions and efforts will continue locally and regionally on how best to prevent and abate fire hazards in El Cerrito, including, but not limited to:

- Seeking grants and other resources for fire prevention and mitigation;
- Planning for evacuation in case of a disaster;
- Updating the Vegetation Management Policy to encourage the removal of flammable vegetation near homes;
- Updating building and fire codes as necessary to make dwelling structures more resistant to fire; and
- Reducing fuel loads in the HNA.

CONCURRENT PLANNING EFFORTS

Other plans that are related and in development include:

- City of El Cerrito Climate Action and Adaptation Plan
- 2024 Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan
- City of El Cerrito Safety Element

WHAT IS FIRE RESILIENCE?

The term “fire” in this Plan generally refers to a destructive wildland fire that consumes plants and vegetation debris in natural areas.⁴ This Plan uses the terminology of fire resilience to reference a condition of natural areas that are resistant to fire ignition and spread, resilient to damage, and recover quickly after a fire, because these fires are minor. Ecological resilience characterizes the ecosystem’s ability to recover to its original state. However, in the face of climate change and ongoing human influences (invasive species, ignition sources, fire intervals, recreational uses, etc.), returning to pre-disturbance conditions (i.e., the conditions before a major fire occurred) is often not desirable, especially when fuel loads and poor forest conditions led to the fire. Thus, the HNA will require intentional management to a new functionality that will be sustainable under future conditions.

This Plan promotes “adaptive resilience” in managing fuel conditions and vegetation. The goal is to support a native species-dominated landscape that is adapted to anticipated future conditions, including fire, without posing a significant risk to the surrounding neighborhoods and communities. The current forest and non-forested habitats at the HNA are heavily dominated by invasive species (especially eucalyptus, which covers over 33 percent of the site). Approximately 29 acres of oak woodlands remain, but they are dense and even-aged and have been invaded by non-native plants. Increasing the resilience of existing oak woodlands to climate impacts includes protection of oak woodlands from fire, restoration of native perennial grasses and forbs, climate-informed management of vegetation, and restricting the transmission of pathogens. Overall, oaks are well adapted to survive disturbances such as drought and fire, but climate change and other stressors may limit their ability to recover from future disturbances.

FOREST CONSERVATION

Biodiversity is essential for the ecological processes that support all life on Earth, including humans. Clean air and water, nutrients, temperature regulation, protection from floods and fires, and food are all products of this biodiversity. There are also health benefits from being surrounded by nature. Challenges to the HNA’s biodiversity include maintaining habitat for rare, threatened, or endemic species while controlling and eliminating invasive species that displace native plants and change ecosystem functions, fire behavior, and severity. Reducing the severity of fires also lowers carbon emissions and reduces tree mortality and soil loss that can have long-lasting effects on forest recovery and biodiversity. This Plan aims to avoid or reduce long-term, large-magnitude, or broad-scale biodiversity losses through management actions intended to decrease HNA-wide natural disturbance frequency, extent, intensity, or severity, as well as to guide management actions so that they retain and support biodiversity in the HNA.

PURPOSE

Rising global temperatures and community concerns regarding the risk of fire make the development of an updated Plan with the required environmental analysis necessary. The primary

⁴ Other types of fire, such as those consuming flammable gasses or liquids, are not considered primary wildland fires under this Plan but may occur as a result of industrial or residential structures being ignited by a fire spreading from a wildland area.

purpose of the Plan is to guide the City of El Cerrito in performing the most effective, sustainable, and cost-efficient fuel reduction and forest conservation activities.

The City desired to establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and forest conservation plan that will guide maintenance activities and improve eligibility for grant funding for the City's HNA. The Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan aims to:

1. Identify and protect critical resource areas, such as sensitive natural communities, wetlands and riparian zones, and special-status species that may occur in the HNA.
2. Guide the City's fire fuel reduction, native forest conservation, and fire prevention activities by providing specific, measurable, achievable, reasonable, and time-sensitive prescriptions for forest management. Some of these activities will be conducted within the City's current scope and budget for fire risk reduction; others will require additional funding.
3. Provide compliance with CEQA via an Initial Study (IS) as a preliminary tool to identify and mitigate potential impacts of Plan implementation, resulting in an anticipated Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). This will ensure compliance with State and federal grant guidelines.
4. Evaluate fire road and trail network conditions.

Key Considerations of this Plan

Natural areas provide essential habitats for wildlife, protect water resources, and offer opportunities for recreation and education. Effective management of these areas requires strategic planning to ensure their long-term preservation and balance multiple uses. It also lays out a step-by-step Plan that can be followed over time. Key considerations for the Plan include:

- **A Science-Based Framework:** At a fundamental level, it is important to understand the natural resources in the area, including vegetation, wildlife, water resources, topography, weather, and geological features. This information can help guide decisions about how to best protect and manage these resources. This Plan relies on scientifically collected data, peer-reviewed literature, and proven ecological knowledge, including Traditional Ecological Knowledge (i.e., the ongoing accumulation of knowledge about a specific ecosystem that is derived by Indigenous people through their direct contact and manipulation of the environment). The science-based framework not only relies on data on species and ecological processes, but also acknowledges the human dimensions of conservation and forest management (i.e., human health, relationship with nature, and ecosystem services).
- **Stakeholder Involvement and Recognition:** Engaging stakeholders, including local communities, land managers, elected officials, neighbors, and conservation organizations, is critical to the success of natural areas management. Stakeholders provide valuable insights and perspectives on the resources and challenges in the area and can help identify potential conflicts and

solutions. This Plan was developed with extensive stakeholder input, and its success largely depends on continued community engagement.

- **Balancing Multiple Uses/Values:** Natural areas in urban settings often have multiple uses, including recreation and wildlife habitat, but they can also impose significant burdens for risk mitigation, especially fire. Strategic planning must balance these uses to ensure that the natural resources are protected while still providing benefits to the community.
- **Ecologically Sound Practices:** Fuel reduction projects can affect the biological diversity of the HNA. This Plan approves and promotes only methods and approaches that maintain, enhance, and restore native plant community structure and ecological function. This Plan and the associated CEQA compliance document provides an extensive list of avoidance, minimization and—if needed—mitigation measures designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts during or following implementation of the Plan’s actions.
- **Defensible Space:** Defensible space, coupled with ignition-resistant construction, is essential to reducing fire risk to neighborhoods. Defensible space is the buffer around a building in which vegetation is managed for fire. Currently, 100 feet of defensible space are required by law (see also Assembly Bill [AB] 3074, passed into law in 2020, pertaining to the new ember-resistant zone within 0 to 5 feet of a home). While defensible space is primarily a concern for homeowners on their property, this Plan recognizes the importance of a managed vegetation beyond their property boundary to reduce flame length, fire progression, and embers before they reach the property line.
- **Invasive Species Management:** Invasive species can have a negative impact on natural areas by outcompeting native species and altering ecosystems. Effective strategic planning should include strategies for managing and controlling invasive species, such as early detection and rapid response, biological control, and education and outreach.
- **Climate Change Adaptation:** Climate change is having a significant impact on natural areas, affecting temperature, precipitation patterns, and the distribution of wildlife and vegetation. Strategic planning must consider the effects of climate change and incorporate strategies for adapting to these changes, such as restoring habitats and improving the resilience of ecosystems.
- **Future Funding and Resources:** Implementing a strategic plan for natural areas management requires funding and resources, including staff, equipment, and materials. Strategic planning should identify potential sources of funding and resources and prioritize the allocation of these resources to ensure effective implementation. The Plan provides a framework for grant applications and strategic allocation of resources. The City continues funding important maintenance activities in the HNA. However, many of actions listed in this Plan will be dependent on future grants. A major purpose of this Plan is to support the City’s applications for grant funding in the future.

What this Plan Does Not Include

- This Plan offers broad guidance on specific actions and priorities, but it does not include detailed prescriptions that may be needed to manage and implement individual projects. Project specific details will be developed in concert with contractors and in detailed bid specifications through the City's procurement process.
- While the City recognized the importance of ongoing maintenance to the Plan's successful implementation, this Plan does not contain specific descriptions of maintenance activities or intervals. It is anticipated that future maintenance will be subject to funding and resource availabilities.
- While the Plan acknowledges the role of private residence owners in reducing the risk around their dwelling structures, this Plan focuses on City-owned lands exclusively.⁵
- The City recognizes the role engaged volunteers can play in managing and monitoring the HNA. However, this Plan is limited to the actions and responsibilities of the City and its staff, which bear the ultimate responsibility for the management of the HNA.
- Finally, the Plan does not recommend how the City will integrate data, local knowledge, or volunteer work by citizen scientists and others who may conduct management or scientific studies of the HNA. The City has no control over these efforts but encourages stakeholder groups to share their knowledge and collaborate with City staff and consultants retained for future assessments and monitoring.

Plan Funding Acknowledgement

This Plan was developed with support from a \$166,750 State Coastal Conservancy grant. The Coastal Conservancy is a California State agency established in 1976 to protect and improve natural lands and waterways, to help people get to and enjoy the outdoors, and to sustain local economies along California's coast. It acts with others to protect, restore, and increase public access to California's coast, ocean, coastal watersheds, and San Francisco Bay Area. Its vision is of a beautiful, restored, and accessible coast for current and future generations of Californians.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process emphasized a collaborative effort with representatives of the community.

Planning Team

The City of El Cerrito has retained the services of LSA Associates, Inc. (LSA or Consultant) to provide technical expertise and engagement support to the City's Plan development. The team includes the following professionals.

⁵ Make El Cerrito Fire Safe (makeelcerritofiresafe.com) provides education for the public on how to fire-harden their structures and create defensible space around their homes.

City of El Cerrito

- **Yvetteh Ortiz** is the Public Works Director/City Engineer
- **Karineh Samkian** is a Senior Program Manager in the Public Works Department.
- **Stephen Prée** is the Environmental Programs Manager/City Arborist in the Public Works Department.
- **Eric Saylors** is the Fire Chief.
- **Chase Beckman** is the Battalion Chief for the El Cerrito-Kensington Fire Department.

Consultants:

- **Steve Kohlmann, Ph.D.**, is Project Manager and team lead for LSA.
- **Dan Sidle, MS**, is Assistant Project Manager/Associate Biologist with LSA.
- **Jason Coleman, M.A., R.P.A.**, is the Owner and Principal of Solano Archaeological Services LLC (SAS)
- **Carol Rice, MS**, is the Principal of Wildland Resilience Management, a Nevada Corporation.
- **Maddie Seibert, MMS**, is the lead outreach associate for Cascadia Consulting Group (Cascadia).

Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG)

The City sought early and frequent consultation with a select group of stakeholders, including experts and engaged community members. Their interest, enthusiasm, and helpful suggestions were crucial in developing this Plan. The SAG consisted of the following individuals:

Name	Representing
Austin, Pam	El Cerrito Trail Trekkers
Bialy, Fred	El Cerrito Environmental Quality Committee
Hrubes, Robert	El Cerrito Urban Forest Committee
Liese, Audrey	Friends of Five Creeks
Million, Holly	Diablo Fire Safe Council
Miner, Mark	El Cerrito Environmental Quality Committee
Mitchell, Robin	El Cerrito Urban Forest Committee
Richmond, Brian	Make El Cerrito Fire Safe
Schwartz, Susan	Friends of Five Creeks
Tyler, Troy	Park and Recreation Commission

Site Assessments

LSA coordinated all required studies pursuant to CEQA, including the identification of special-status species and their habitats, wetlands and other regulated waters, and other potential biological

resource constraints to discretionary actions, such as vegetation management and fuels reduction. LSA conducted biological field surveys and reviewed existing documents and databases, searching for evidence of special-status species presence, sensitive natural communities, rare plants, and the existence of other sensitive areas, such as wetlands. LSA produced the **Biological Resources Assessment** (Appendix A) to identify special-status species and their habitats, wetlands and other regulated waters, and other potential biological resource constraints to the Plan's development. The report also provides recommended mitigation measures to address potential impacts to biological resources.

The HNA and much of its environs are classified as a Very High Fire Risk Severity Zone by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)⁶. LSA's **Fire Risk Assessment** (Appendix B) identified and developed a map of the vegetative fuel types in the HNA and its immediate environs (expanding as much as 500 feet into adjacent neighborhoods). Using remotely sensed data, these maps show vegetation type, surface fuel model, canopy density, canopy height, ladder fuel index, and height of the tree canopy base. An experienced fire ecologist assessed the accuracy of remotely sensed data and maps of previous plans. The ignition sources and fire history around the HNA were also investigated, linking the uses of the area to potential ignition risks. Using the information on weather, topography, and fuel characteristics, fire behavior was modeled on a spatial basis to assess the locations of long flame lengths, where tree crown scorch is likely, and where the resulting embers would land. This information is a foundational consideration for the recommendations on vegetation treatments (both initial treatments and ongoing maintenance), need for access, or other improvements to the HNA. The results of fire modeling and expert opinions of the local fire department personnel were used to form conclusions regarding fire threat and risk, strategies, and opportunities. Vegetation management prescriptions were designed to be consistent with the overall goal of reducing fire risk and incorporating best management practices (BMPs) and procedures.

The **Cultural Resources Evaluation** (Appendix C) included the findings of the field survey, results from Native American consultation/outreach, and review of records of the California Inventory of Historic Resources, National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historic Places (CRHR), California Historical Landmarks, and California Points of Historical Interest. The report provides project-specific recommendations based on resource CRHR evaluations in conjunction with Native American concerns, as well as the potential effects of project implementation. In addition, the report also included protocols for the inadvertent discovery of cultural resources and appropriate mitigation measures for the avoidance of potentially significant occurrences. The City conducted outreach to the relevant tribal entities and held a meeting with the Confederated Villages of Lisjan on October 18, 2023, to discuss this planning process. The tribe's main concern was that further analysis would be needed if any ground disturbance occurs near creeks. The tribe commented that there may have been temporary camps near the water source.

⁶ Fire Hazard Severity Zones including both Local Responsibility Areas and State Responsibility Areas. Layer compiled by CCRCD /ACRCD using CAL FIRE FRAP produced data. Available online at https://alameda-and-contra-costa-county-regional-priority-plan-ccrcd.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/7a5b784db052402f94e50d528760b44c_0/explore?location=37.937104%2C-122.274266%2C15.00.

In addition to fire-relevant assessments, LSA also conducted an evaluation of the current conditions of the existing fire road and trails network, surface and access restrictions, maintenance needs and potential expansion of trails (refer to the **Fire Road and Trail Conditions Report** [Appendix D]).

Community Engagement

City staff provided updates and sought comments at the Urban Forestry Committee (UFC), the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC), and the Parks and Recreation Commission meetings. The City further planned an equitable and inclusive community engagement process with multiple opportunities for the SAG and the broader community to provide input at each key project phase. The community identified goals, priorities, and implementation considerations for the Plan's management activities. The engagement was divided into three phases, offering various opportunities to engage across platforms.

Stakeholder Advisory Group

The SAG served as a bridge between the broader community and City leadership in shaping the HNA Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan. The City hosted the first SAG meeting at Hana Gardens Senior Center on October 16, 2023. Attendees had the opportunity to contribute insights on vision, goals, and technical aspects while considering diverse perspectives from the outset. By leveraging the advantages of in-person engagement, the initial SAG meeting played a crucial role in building consensus and setting a positive tone for ongoing collaboration in the Plan's development. The SAG members in attendance consisted of members representing the following committees and organizations: Parks and Recreation Commission, EQC, UFC, El Cerrito Trail Trekkers, Friends of Five Creeks, and Make El Cerrito Fire Safe. A second SAG meeting was held virtually on April 24, 2024, where the recommended actions of this Plan were discussed.

Public Workshops

The first public workshop, attended by 33 participants in person, raised awareness of the Plan's planning process and gathered priorities. Through facilitated breakout group discussions, stakeholders vetted the proposed management activities and assessment results. During the second public workshop, attended by 24 participants in person, the planning team summarized the Plan's recommendations, answered questions, and encouraged participants to provide comments during the public comment period.

Online Public Survey

The public participated in an online survey administered through SurveyMonkey from November 15, 2023, to January 5, 2024, yielding 358 responses. The City's webpage for the planning effort provided a link to access the survey. In addition, City staff promoted the survey by placing signs at the entrances of the HNA, including it in the City newsletter and on the City's website, announcing it at events for senior citizens, and advertising it to various community groups, such as the Rotary Club of El Cerrito and local parent-teacher associations. The City also brought a printed version of the survey to senior citizen events at El Cerrito Community Center for attendees to fill out in person. The survey was provided in English, Spanish, and Simplified Chinese.

Project Website (<https://www.el-cerrito.org/1650/Hillside-Natural-Area-Plan>)

The City's project website provides community members and stakeholders with project-specific documents and information, including an overview of the Plan's purpose and progress, workshop dates and locations, access to the online survey, and the opportunity to directly engage with the planning team. During the public comment period, 24 individuals/organizations provided comments on the website.

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PART 1: THE HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA

PROJECT SITE DESCRIPTION

Location

The project site is located within El Cerrito, California (Figure 1), near North Berkeley and Oakland Hills. El Cerrito is located between the Tilden Park Nature Area and unincorporated Contra Costa County to the east, the cities of Albany and Berkeley to the south, the city of Richmond and the San Francisco Bay to the west, and the city of Richmond and unincorporated Contra Costa County to the north. The HNA is approximately 107.18 acres and is divided into three sections: Hillside Natural Area North ("Motorcycle Hill;" 24.22 acres), Madera Property (9.53 acres) and Hillside Natural Area South (73.43 acres). Elevations range from approximately 150 and 650 feet above sea level. The area surrounding the HNA is a primarily residential area. Outside the boundary, there is also an assisted living home, Stege Sanitary District, City and government offices, churches, schools, and various commercial businesses. A number of trails and service roads run through the HNA that are used for recreation, maintenance and emergency access. The HNA is the City's largest community-serving recreation facility.

Management Units

Previous management plans (e.g., LSA 1987, ESA 1994) identified up to 13 management zones. Additions to the HNA in recent years (e.g., the acquisition of the Madera property) made a revision of the management units necessary. In addition, the previous prescriptions for each of these units were often by vegetation community and therefore identical for several units, creating unnecessary complexity. In addition, the public trail system weaves through the entire HNA, with varying degrees of public use, and was not considered in the previous plans. To simplify the overall management, this Plan only recognizes three management units, which are based on general topography, vegetation characteristics, fire risk, and public access (Figure 1). Table A presents the Assessor's Parcel Numbers and lot sizes for each management unit.

- **Hillside Natural Area North/Motorcycle Hill:** This area lies at the end of Snowden Avenue and is often referred to as Motorcycle Hill, due to its historic use as a motorcycle hill racing area in the early 1900s (see Figure 9, provided later in this document). The HNA North Management Unit is approximately 24.22 acres. The area predominantly slopes to the south, with steep slopes prevailing throughout the management unit. The unit surrounds a former water storage tank site, previously operated by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), which is now a circular gravel lot. The management unit is bordered by residential areas on the south, east, and west. To the north lies a wooded, undeveloped parcel that is privately owned and not part of the HNA; this parcel contains a densely forested riparian corridor that is highly flammable. Due to the existence of an extensive stand of eucalyptus trees on the slopes and top of Motorcycle Hill, as well as grassland and smaller stands of native shrubs and oak trees, this parcel could pose a fire risk to adjacent properties. There is currently no fire break between the HNA North unit and the adjacent undeveloped 14.9-acre private parcel.

Table A: Parcel Sizes and APNs for the Management Units of the HNA

HNA North		Madera Property		HNA South	
APN	Size (acres)	APN	Size (acres)	APN	Size (acres)
505-040-004	11.16	505-421-020	1.45	505-403-018	0.85
505-040-005	4.36	505-142-012	0.42	505-130-002	6.35
502-154-014	0.35	505-142-013	0.06	505-070-035	8.03
505-050-004	4.15	505-142-014	7.61	505-080-013	2.91
505-061-024	0.18			505-080-015	3.17
505-061-025	0.17			505-080-010	3.38
505-061-026	0.17			505-122-025	3.54
505-061-027	0.16			505-080-004	2.33
505-061-028	0.16			505-080-005	2.38
505-061-029	0.22			505-090-017	4.93
505-401-014	3.15			505-090-016	5.07
				505-090-015	11.09
				503-160-029	7.66
				503-170-001	6.45
				505-110-003	5.30
Total	24.22	Total	9.53	Total	73.43
Total HNA					107.18

Source: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (LSA 2024).

APN = Assessor's Parcel Number

HNA = Hillside Natural Area

- Madera Property:** The Madera property is the smallest management unit (9.53 acres) and is located at the northeast corner of the HNA. The Madera Management Unit contains small stands of non-native pines, a 2-acre oak woodland, and extensive shrub and grasslands (including purple needlegrass [*Stipa pulchra*] patches). At its southeastern border, several woodrat houses are present.
- Hillside Natural Area South:** This area is the largest management unit, comprising 73.43 acres. This unit contains several large stands of native oak, a former quarry with steep slopes and exposed bedrock, and a large stand of non-native eucalyptus in the southeast corner. The Quarry Hill, Ken Smith, and Wildwood eucalyptus groves are also located in this management unit. The unit also has two major drainages with riparian forest corridors and is the centerpiece of the trail system. The City of El Cerrito Recycling and Environmental Resource Center (Recycling Center) is centrally located near the quarry. The unit is bordered by a 10.8-acre stretch of grassland to the south, where a Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) transmission line is located along Moeser Lane. With the exception of the transmission corridor and the recycling center, the HNA South unit borders residential lots and streets. Although not part of the HNA, the PG&E transmission line traversing the grassland parcel is perceived by the public as a risk factor, as a malfunction could lead to wildland ignitions.

History of Vegetation Management at the HNA

Historically, the El Cerrito Fire Department was primarily responsible for vegetation management for fuels reduction throughout the HNA, including limbing-up trees, tree removal, mowing, and ground

fuels reduction. Since at least 2010, volunteer groups like Friends of Five Creeks and the El Cerrito Green Teams have removed French broom (*Cytisus monspessulana*) and other invasive shrubs and plants such as Crofton weed (*Ageratina adenophora*) at various locations throughout the HNA, including the Madera Property, which was acquired by the City in 2015 with public and private grants after residents initiated the acquisition.

Service road maintenance has been managed by the City's Public Works Department, including repairs funded by a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant in 2018. In 2019, El Cerrito voters passed Measure H, a special tax that helps fund the maintenance of City parks and open space, vegetation management, and fire fuel reductions. This work has been managed primarily by the Public Works Department.

Current management activities include the routine removal of dead and dying Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) and Sudden Oak Death (SOD) infected coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) trees; mowing invasive grasses and broadleaf weeds along access roads; thinning of eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus spp.*) stands in the Wildwood and Quarry Hill eucalyptus groves periodically as funds are available; mastication of French broom and invasive woody plants at the Madera property; mastication of eucalyptus debris and poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*) at the Quarry Hill grove; and removal of storm-damaged/hazard trees throughout the HNA. In areas of limited access and steep terrain, such as Motorcycle Hill, invasive or dead trees have been felled and piled in place for future controlled burning. City staff and volunteers have participated annually in the SOD survey, aka SOD Blitz, since 2012. SOD was first detected near the HNA in 2015. As of the 2023 SOD survey, fewer than 12 trees in or near the HNA are known to be infected with the pathogen.

Environmental Conditions

Climate

Summer days in El Cerrito are moderately warm and often foggy or breezy; temperatures normally range from lows in the 40s and to highs in the 70s, with an occasional high reaching 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Humidity can drop to the single digits in the summer and fall. The annual average precipitation is 25 inches. The rainy period lasts from October to May. February is usually the wettest month, with an average rainfall of 3.9 inches. July is the only month with no rain. March through August is relatively windy, with average wind speeds of more than 8.0 miles per hour (mph). The windiest month of the year in El Cerrito is June, with an average hourly wind speed of 9.2 mph. The calmest month of the year in El Cerrito is October, with an average hourly wind speed of 6.9 mph. The HNA lies in a relatively protected area and can be subject to occasional episodes of still, stagnant air formed by stationary highs during summer months. This overall weather pattern—characterized by continuous high temperatures and low relative humidities—enhances the possibility of ignition, extreme fire behavior, and extreme resistance to fire control.

Wind and Topography

Topographic features—such as slope and aspect (orientation with respect to sun and wind) and the overall form of the land—have a profound effect on fire behavior. Topography affects a fire's intensity, direction, and rate of spread. An area's topography also affects local winds, which are either "bent" or intensified by topographic features. Topographic features can also induce daily

upslope and downslope winds (Figure 2). The speed, regularity, and direction of these winds (and other winds) directly influence the direction of fire spread and the shape of the flaming front. The topography of the HNA (Figures 3 and 4) is characterized as west-facing slopes that receive full afternoon sun when it is the hottest. The slopes are generally steep; a steeper slope will result in a faster-moving fire with longer flame lengths. Any slope can potentially increase the amount of heat a dwelling structure will be subject to during a fire. There are two drainages in HNA South, running from northeast to southwest, which can funnel heat up and down the hillside during a fire. Two very steep slopes (45–90 degrees) exist in the HNA; one is an exposed rock face in HNA South that rises up from the area near the Recycling Center on Schmidt Lane (formerly a quarry), and one is at Motorcycle Hill (HNA North) at the end of Snowden Avenue.

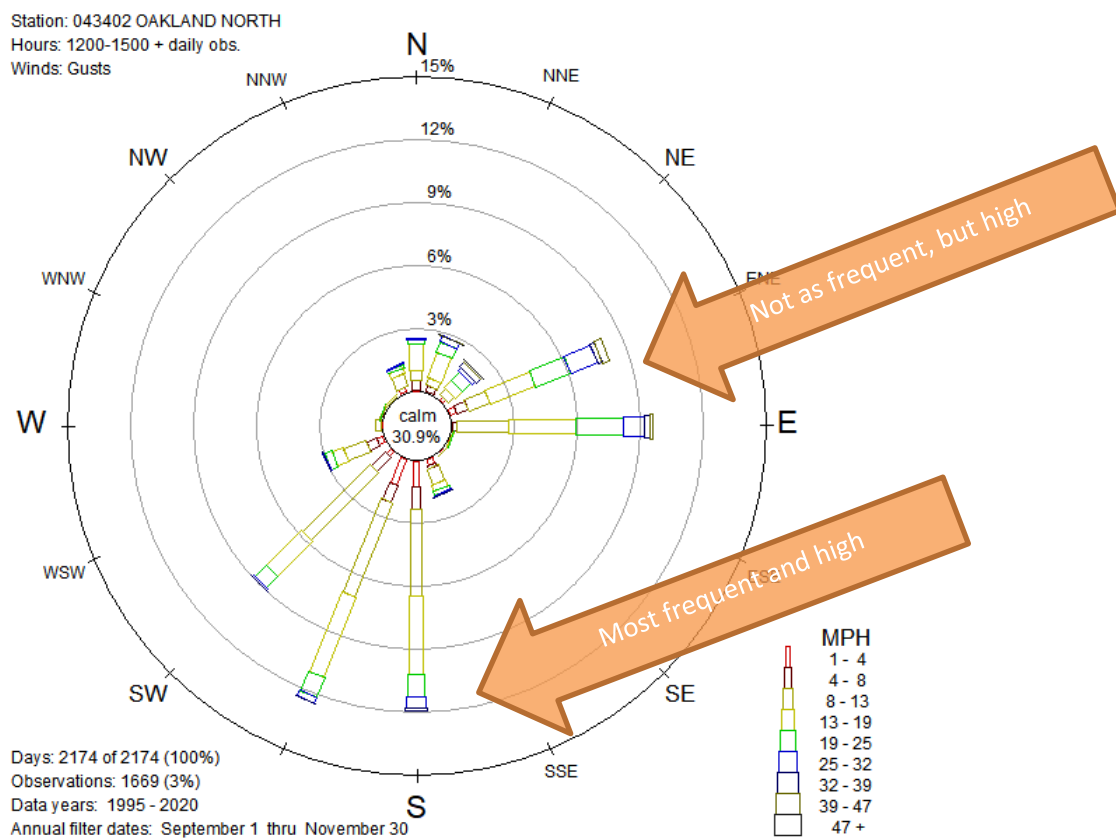


Figure 2: Wind Direction and Speed Frequency September through November, 1995-2020

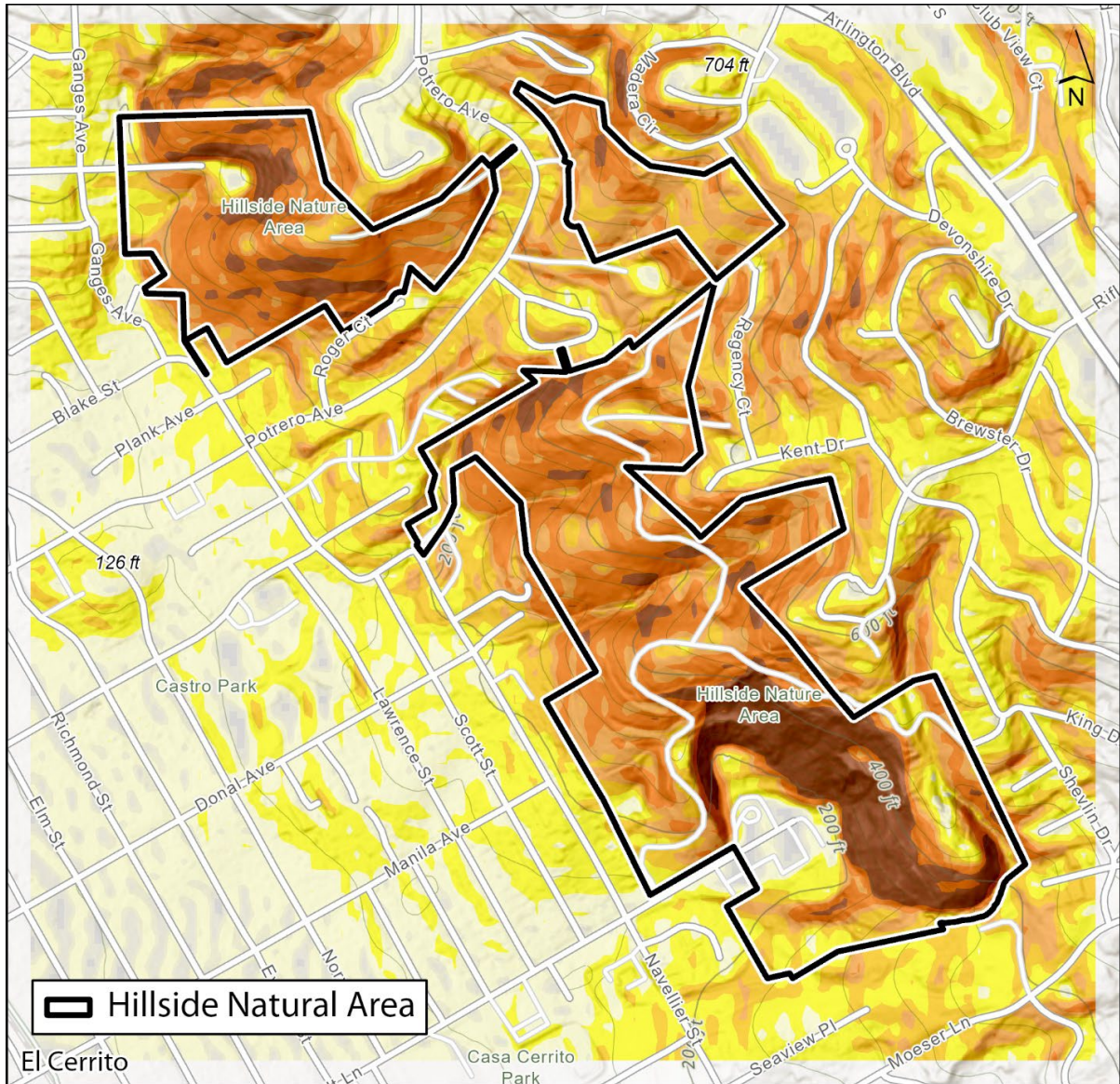


Figure 3: Slope Map

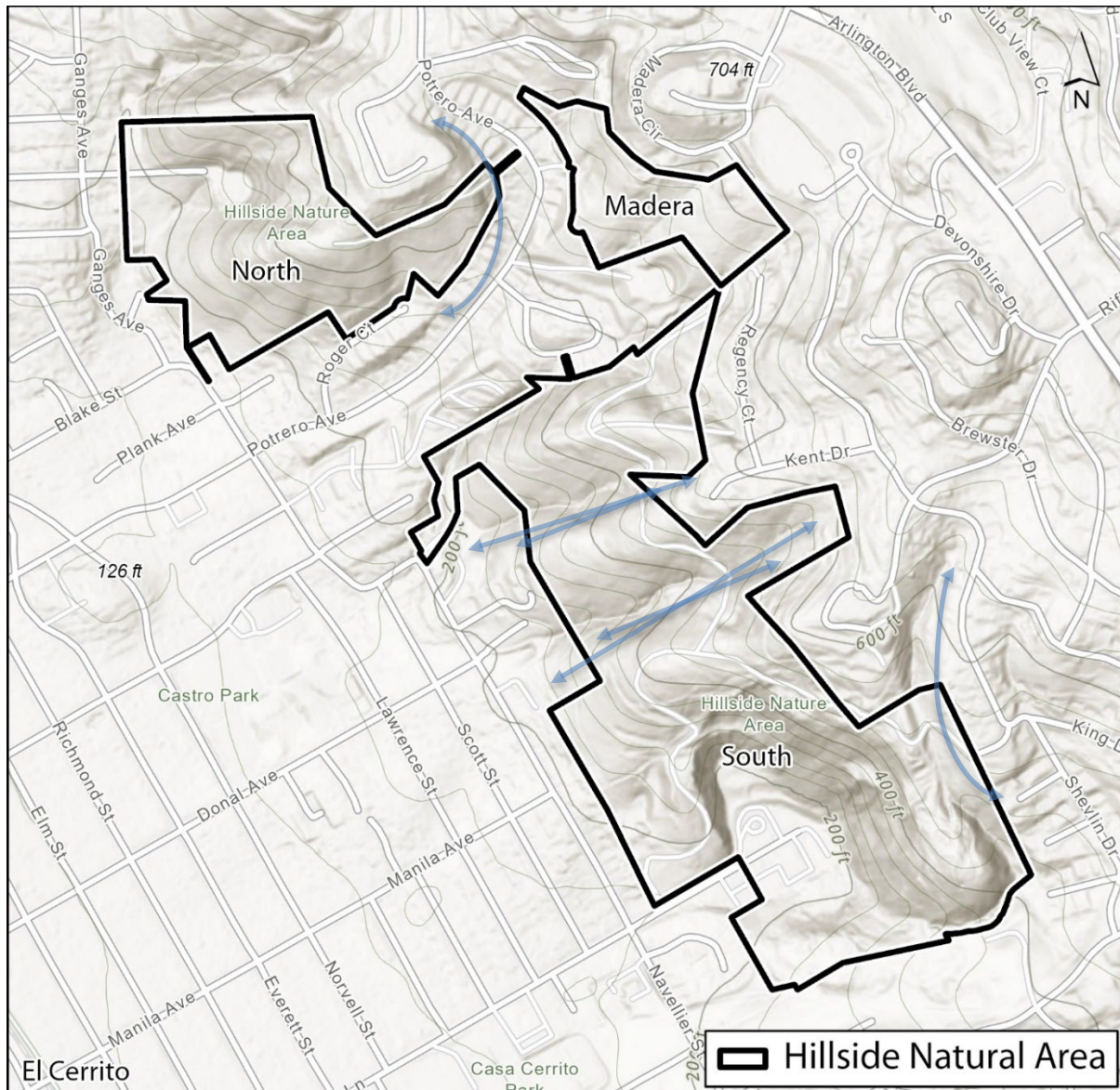


Figure 4: Topographic Map

Dominating westerly winds could produce strong upslope and erratic winds, as shown on Figures 2 and 4. For example, winds from the easterly direction occur slightly more than 10 percent of the days, but the speeds are relatively strong, averaging 32–39 mph. In contrast, winds from the south are more common, at roughly 12 percent and are similarly strong. However, winds from the south blow with speeds less than 20 mph, whereas winds from the east are greater than 20 mph slightly less than half the time. The winds that create the most severe fire danger typically blow from the north, usually in October. Winds from the east and north bring low humidity and elevated fire danger; winds from easterly or northerly directions occur less than 30 percent of the time.

Geology and Soils

The HNA's geology is a complex assemblage of metamorphic rock (blueschist, Tiburon melange, Angel Island nappe, and Alcatraz nappe), overlaid in areas by the Northbrae rhyolite, a lava layer. The HNA is also characterized by several landslides (e.g., Potrero Avenue, Moeser Lane). The Hayward Fault, a northwest-southeast-trending right-lateral strike-slip fault, runs just above the HNA. The Hayward Fault is part of the San Andreas Fault System.

Soils on the project site consist of approximately 50 to 75 percent Rock Outcrop-Xerorthents and 25 to 50 percent Xerorthents soils (USDA 2023; Figure 5). These soils are typically shallow (4 to 10 inches) and excessively drained, with a high potential for erosion where vegetation is removed. Given the relatively steep slope, exposure of bare soil could initiate surface erosion. Shrink-swell potential is generally low due to the low clay component within this Soil Map Unit. Permeability is moderate and the available water holding capacity is less than 1.5 inches. Vegetation controls much of the surface water through detention and absorption, thereby reducing the erosion potential.

The former quarry has little to no soil covering the bedrock. Cut and Fill Land-Los Osos Complex underlies the Madera property and HNA South; it is the result of mechanical manipulation of strongly sloping to moderately steep soils on uplands for urban use. Soils are either a heavy clay loam, silty clay, or clay. As much as 20 percent can be shale and sandstone; exposed cuts consist of interbedded shale and fine-grained sandstone. This complex is well drained and runoff is rapid, causing a significant potential for erosion.

Drainages

Several stream/drainage channels are present in the HNA (Figure 6). Some of these drainages occur within concrete v-ditches. Streams/drainages are likely to be considered jurisdictional features by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and subject to regulation under Section 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act and/or the California Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act. No other potential waters of the United States/State, such as seasonal wetlands or seeps, were observed during the reconnaissance-level field survey.

Vegetation Communities

Vegetation in the HNA is characterized by native and non-native grassland, riparian scrub and woodland, oak woodland, and other scrub and "soft" chaparral, in addition to extensive introduced landscaping and naturalized non-native species such as eucalyptus and pine. LSA inventoried over 190 plant species that have been reported to commonly occur in the HNA (see Appendix E for a complete plant list). The majority of those are native, but most of the non-native species are considered invasive. There are six major vegetation cover types within the HNA (Figure 6, Appendix A and B):

- **Eucalyptus and Pine Groves** are the most prevalent vegetation types at the project site, totaling over 36.2 acres (33.8 percent of the HNA). Eucalyptus groves are present in four locations at the HNA. The largest grove is located above and along the southeast rim of the quarry (Quarry Hill grove). The Ken Smith grove is northwest of the quarry. A linear grove of eucalyptus follows the



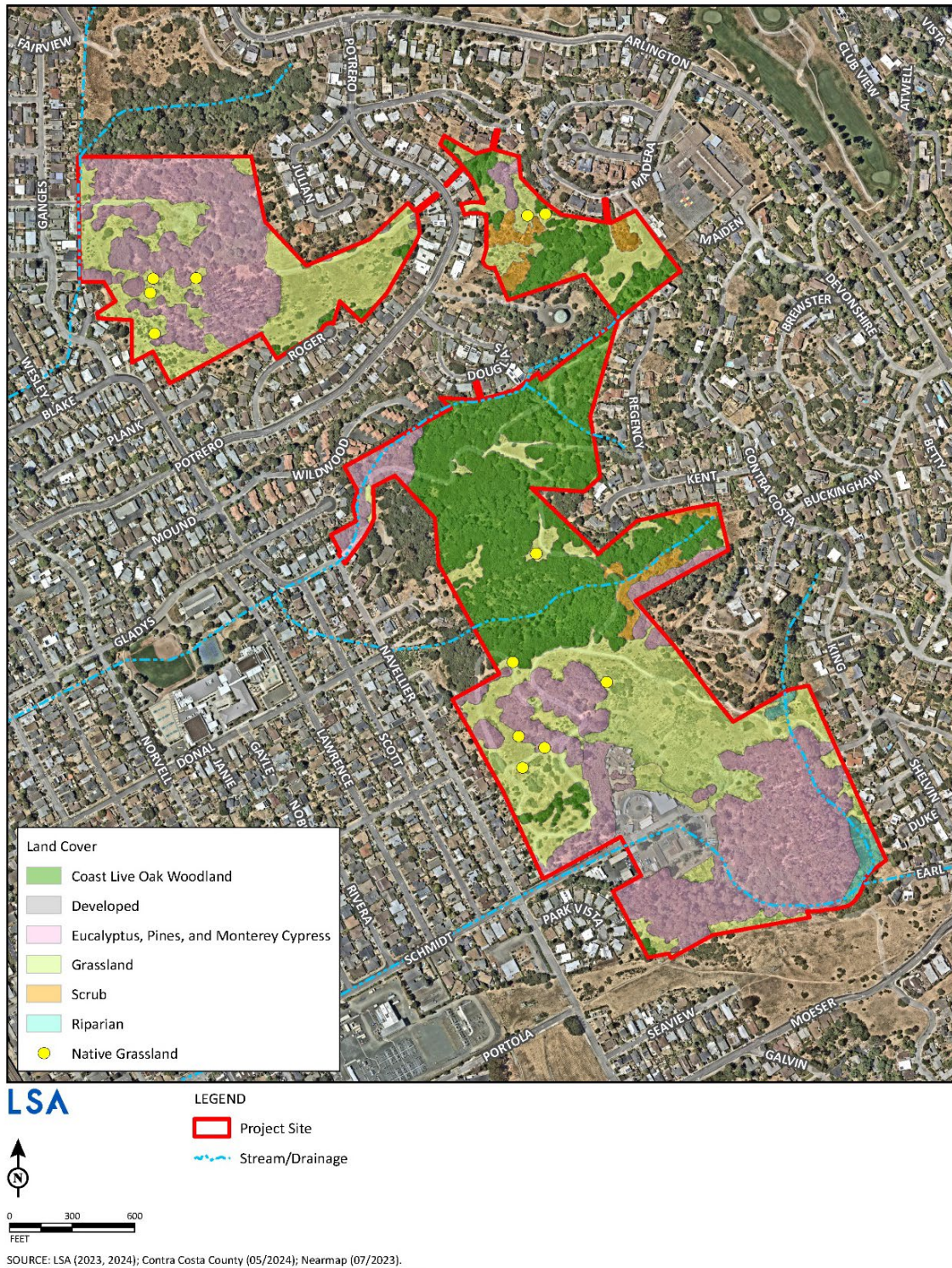


Figure 6: Land Cover Types and Major Drainages

drainage south of Wildwood Place. Finally, a large stand of eucalyptus is located southwest of Julian Court adjacent to the former EBMUD reservoir site at Snowden Avenue, north of Motorcycle Hill. Blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) and yellow gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) dominate the groves, followed by conifers and oaks. A few red ironbark eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus sideroxylon*) are scattered on the southwestern slopes of Motorcycle Hill and throughout the HNA. Monterey pine is the most common pine species at the HNA and occurs in scattered locations throughout the HNA.

Where openings in the canopy allow sufficient light to penetrate to the grove floor, understory plants may develop. Understory vegetation in eucalyptus stands is commonly restricted to poison oak, toyon, and a light cover of grasses, some herbs, and non-native thistles (see Nelson 2016 for a discussion of allelopathy in eucalyptus stands). Also, live ground cover is usually low beneath eucalyptus canopies due to the large amounts of leaf and bark litter deposited by the trees. Due to the high oil content of eucalyptus debris, decomposition is very slow and the resulting accumulated material produces high fuel volumes. The presence of high fuel volumes makes potential fire initiated in or carried into eucalyptus extremely hazardous in certain high-wind, high-temperature situations.

The Quarry Hill eucalyptus grove was planted around 1910 by the quarry operator to minimize slippage of quarry overburden. In 1972, uncommonly cold weather resulted in the death of eucalyptus tree crowns over hundreds of acres throughout the East Bay hills. Although the crowns of many trees were damaged at the HNA, few actually died, and resprouting from the trunk and branches occurred. Sprouting also occurred from the stumps of the trees that were cut. The result was an increased density of eucalyptus stands at the HNA.

- **Ruderal/Non-Native Grassland** (33.47 acres, 31.2 percent of the HNA) consists primarily of non-native annual grassland species, with patches of perennial grassland and ruderal plant species. Grassland vegetation consists primarily of introduced annuals such as wild oats (*Avena spp.*), soft chess (*Bromus mollis*), ripgut brome, (*Bromus diandrus*), Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), and foxtail barley (*Hordeum leporinum*). A variety of annual and perennial forbs are also a major component of the grassland. In some locations, the grassland cover type is dominated by invasive, exotic species such as Italian, star, and bull thistles (*Carduus dycnocephalus*, *Centaurea spp.*, and *Cirsium vulgare*, respectively), fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), burclover (*Medicago polymorpha*), cut-leaved geranium (*Geranium dissectum*), and mustards (*Brassica spp.*). French broom is frequent in grassland on the east-west ridges above Navellier Street, along the west border above Navellier Street, and in the grassland around the Madera connector.
- **Native Grasslands** consist of small, dispersed patches of native graminoids, including perennial bunchgrasses. These are generally rare but fairly common in certain areas, such as El Cerrito Memorial Grove and the Julian Fuel Break, which supports a healthy stand of purple needlegrass. Needlegrass grassland within the HNA is dominated by native perennial bunchgrasses such as purple needlegrass, foothill needlegrass (*Stipa lepida*), oatgrass (*Danthonia californica*), June grass (*Koeleria cristata*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), bent grass (*Agrostis spp.*), and creeping wild rye (*Elymus triticoides*). Native herbaceous species observed

within the native grasslands include soap root (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*), golden rod (*Solidago velutina*), hayfield tarweed (*Hemizonia congesta* subsp. *luzulifolia*), and bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*). Several other native grassland plant species, such as blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), narrowleaf mule ears (*Wyethia angustifolia*), and arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), have been observed at the project site (Friends of Five Creeks 2014). Native wildflowers commonly interspersed among the grasses include lupine species (*Lupinus* spp.), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), common fiddleneck (*Amsinckia intermedia*), blue dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*), Ithuriel's spear (*Tirteleia laxa*) and checkerbloom (*Sidalcea malvaeflora*). The presence and relative abundance of native annual and perennial herbs is influenced by the level of historic and recent disturbance at a particular site (LSA 1987). Most native grasslands are considered sensitive natural communities under CEQA.

- **Coast Live Oak Woodland** (28.7 acres, 26.8 percent of the HNA) is dominated by coast live oak, with California bay (*Umbellularia californica*) and California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) in the overstory and native shrubs, vines, and grasses in the understory. Dense stands of oak woodland are located in the drainages and on north-facing slopes. Stands of native oaks in the HNA appear to be of roughly the same age, with a uniform, dense canopy and, in places, little understory. As in many coast live oak forests in California, the HNA has relatively low numbers of coast live oak (seedlings and saplings, and the sapling size class is particularly underrepresented [Muick and Bartolome 1987; Bolsinger 1988]). Small numbers of elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*) are also present in the oak woodland. The primary driver of the woodland understory is the availability of water and sunlight. Poison oak, blackberry (*Rubus* spp.), hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta* var. *californica*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), and other shrubs are common. Common herbaceous species include wood fern (*Dryopteris arguta*), California polypody (*Polypodium californicum*), sword fern (*Polystichum munitum* [rare]), goldback fern (*Pentagramma triangularis*), soap root (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*), and honeysuckle (*Lonicera hispidula*). Melic grass (*Melica* spp.) is common along trails.
- **North Franciscan Coastal Scrub** comprises 2.6 acres (2.4 percent of the HNA) and is dominated by coyote brush. California sage (*Artemisia californica*), coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*), poison oak, and bush monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) can also be found intermixed within the coastal scrub habitat. Invasive French broom and localized Crofton weed are also major constituents throughout the HNA. Stands of northern Franciscan coastal scrub are found throughout the HNA, but they mainly occupy the steeper portions of the south- and west-facing slopes along the eastern boundary of the HNA.
- **Riparian Woodland.** Riparian woodland occurs along the streams and drainages and occupies a relatively small acreage in the HNA. Tree species observed include willows (*Salix* spp.), cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), alder (*Alnus* spp.), California bay, California buckeye, and coast live oak. Riparian woodland occurs in the drainages northwest of Earl Court, southwest of Kent Court, north of Buckingham Drive, east of Gladys Avenue, and in the upper portion of the Wildwood drainage. Other species occurring in the riparian woodland include arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), elderberry and non-native Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*). All of these species, with the exception of coast live oak, indicate the presence of water in the moist canyon bottom environment. Riparian woodland is characteristically wet. Ground fuels decay

quickly as a result of this moisture, thus reducing the fire hazard of riparian woodland vegetation. Riparian woodland is considered a sensitive plant community.

- **Rock Outcrops** are present in small areas throughout the HNA. Species observed at the outcrops include naked-stem buckwheat (*Eriogonum nudum*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), coyote mint (*Monardella villosa*), and various non-native plants (e.g., vetches [*Vicia* spp.], Pride of Madeira [*Echium candicans*], French broom, Monterey pine, and eucalyptus seedlings). The disturbed quarry walls have proven to be a hostile environment for the development of vegetative cover. Pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*) has sparsely covered the walls, with a density of approximately 25 percent.
- **Streams/Drainages** flow in the southwest direction into culverts beneath the adjacent residential area to the southwest. Common plants in these drainages are arroyo willow and non-native Himalayan blackberry. Some of the drainages occur within concrete v-ditches and become natural stream channels further downstream within the project site.

Canopy Cover and Tree Benefits

The i-Tree Canopy estimation methodology (i-Tree Canopy 2023) was used to estimate the change in average tree canopy cover from 1935 to 2023, based on aerial photographs. The canopy cover analysis was based on 100 randomly selected points distributed throughout the HNA. Each point was classified from the historical (1935) and current (2023) aerial image as either tree or non-tree ground cover. The HNA's overall canopy cover by trees was relatively low in 1935 (30 percent) and almost certainly included a large percentage of small trees and shrubs. These were, however, difficult to identify based on the grainy black-and-white imagery produced in 1935. By 2023, tree cover had almost doubled (i.e., 55 percent; Table B), and the majority of non-tree/shrub cover today is herbaceous vegetation.

**Table B: Vegetative Cover Comparison 1935 vs. 2023,
Hillside Natural Area**

Cover Class	percent Cover $\pm$ SE	
	1935	2023
Tree	30.00 $\pm$ 4.58	55.00 $\pm$ 4.97
Non-Tree	70.00 $\pm$ 4.58	45.00 $\pm$ 4.97
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: i-Tree Canopy. n.d. i-Tree Software Suite v7.0. Website:
<http://www.itreetools.org> (accessed January 19, 2024).

In 2013, the City conducted a canopy assessment of the HNA (City of El Cerrito 2013). Coast live oak (31.4 percent), blue gum (17.74 percent) and willow trees (6.55 percent) represent 55 percent of an overall estimated tree population of 13,307 trees. Over 19 different species were identified, including French broom, an invasive shrub that has an estimated 6,327 stems (+/- 193). Approximately 25 percent of all trees in the HNA belong to highly flammable species (e.g., pines, eucalyptus). According to that survey, trees in the HNA absorb an estimated 7,190 pounds (lbs) of air pollutants annually, at a value of \$26,606. The HNA is currently storing 2,688 tons of carbon,

valued at \$55,608. An additional 89 tons (\$1,833) of carbon is sequestered annually. Thus, the total value of ecosystem services provided by the HNA exceeds \$84,000 annually (Table C).

Table C: Hillside Natural Area Ecosystem Benefits

	Ecosystem Benefits	Units	Value
Pollution (lbs)	CO (lbs)	206	\$132.00
	NO ₂ (lbs)	1,200	\$5,134.00
	O ₃ (lbs)	3,000	\$13,430.00
	SO ₂ (lbs)	384	\$423.00
	PM ₁₀ (lbs)	2,400	\$7,497.00
	Subtotal	7,190	\$26,616.00
Carbon (tons)	Storage (tons)	2,688	\$55,608.00
	Sequestration (tons)	891	\$833.00
	Subtotal	3,579	\$56,441.00
Grand Total			\$84,047.00

Source: City of El Cerrito (2013).

CO = carbon monoxide

lbs = pounds

NO₂ = nitrogen dioxide

O₃ = ozone

PM₁₀ = particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter

SO₂ = sulfur dioxide

Canopy cover and canopy height also affect fire behavior. Canopy cover is closely related to the forest's ability to slow wind speeds close to the ground because of the friction the foliage and tree boles (trunks) provide. The canopy height influences the distance that embers are distributed across the landscape, with taller trees associated with longer ember-cast. The values and spatial patterns of each are shown in Figures 7 and 8, below.

Wildlife

Several common wildlife species inhabit the project site. Most of the bird species observed were foraging in the oak woodland and scrub habitats. A few birds, such as turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), and common raven (*C. corax*) were observed flying over the project site. No active bird nests were identified during the reconnaissance-level field surveys, which were conducted in the late summer and early fall of 2023, but a few inactive stick nests were found in trees. Numerous resident birds were observed foraging at the project site, suggesting that they likely nested on or near the project site. Non-native fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger*) nests were also observed in the oak trees. Foraging black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and Botta's pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*) burrows were observed in the non-native grasslands.

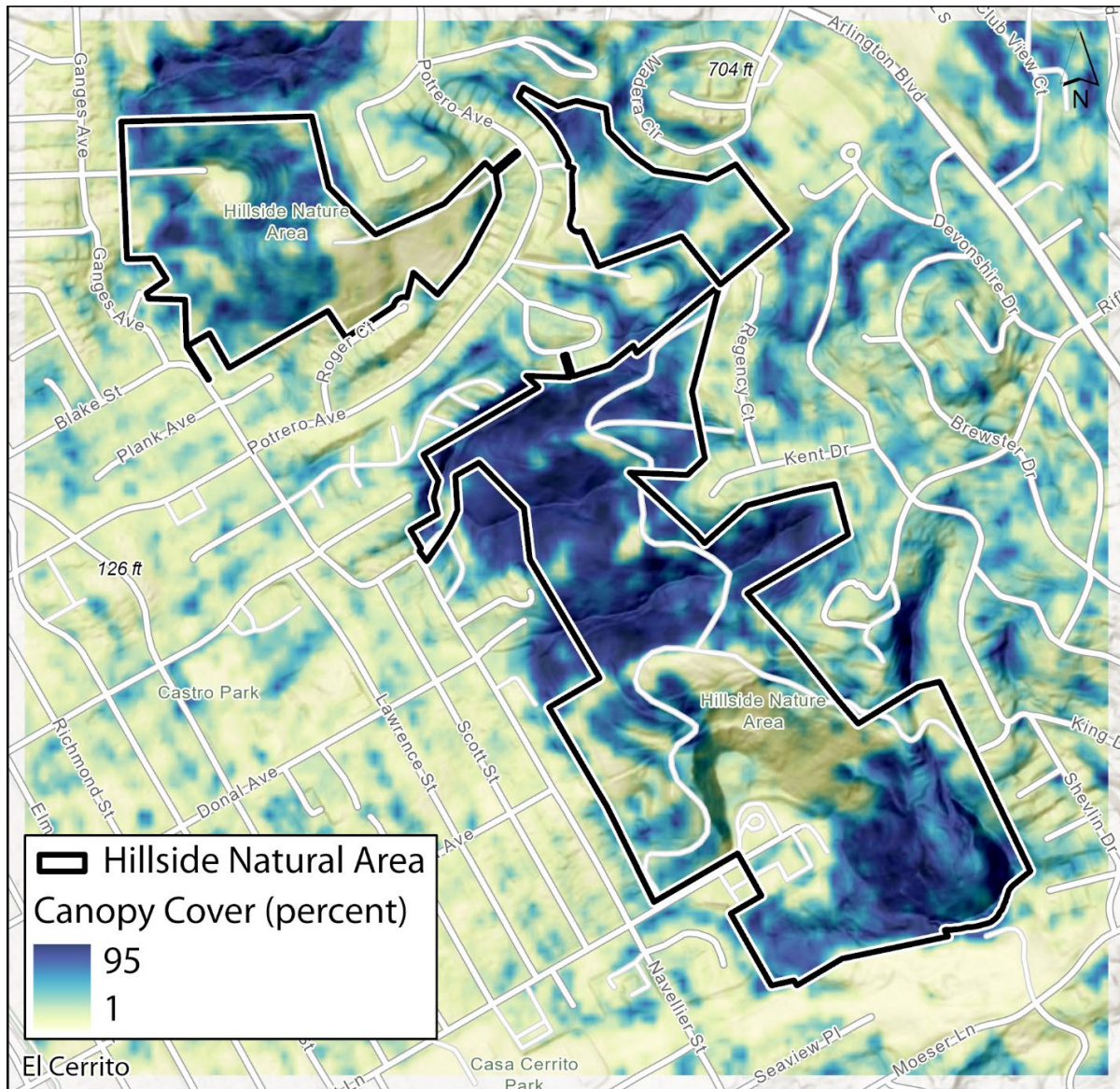


Figure 7: Canopy Cover Map

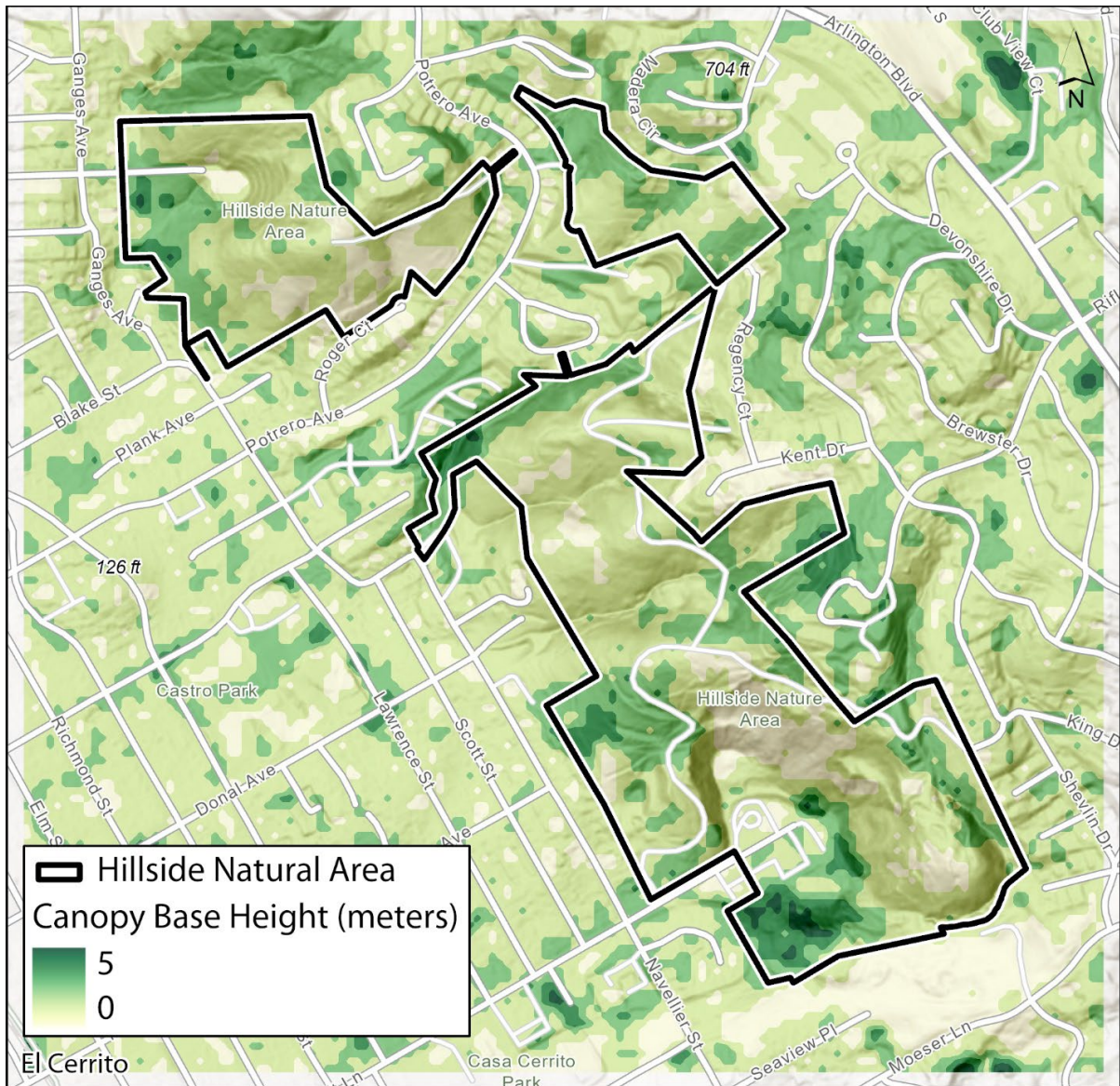


Figure 8: Canopy Height Map

Historical Conditions

Vegetation

Human habitation of the East Bay hillslopes and the vicinity of the HNA intensified approximately 4,000–5,000 years ago when sea levels receded and tidal marshes emerged. Woody vegetation consisted mainly of scrubby oaks and other hardwoods interspersed with patches of coastal scrub, chaparral, and native grasslands. The Spaniard Don José Canizares visited the San Francisco Bay in August 1775 and described the East Bay as “broken hill country with very little woodland, bay trees and oaks here and there making up what there is.” He characterized San Pablo Bay as “bordered by rough hill country without trees except for woodlands in two coves to the southwest, the rest is barren, irregular, and of melancholy aspect” (Cunningham 2010).

Ecological studies in the Californian coastal ranges have failed to uncover any clear soil or climate factors explaining the extensive grassland and shrubland distribution patterns. The low incidence of naturally occurring lightning fires suggest that the East Bay landscape would have been dominated by dense woody shrubland and forest cover. Woody communities of coastal California have weak resilience to high fire frequency and are readily displaced by annual grasses and forbs under high fire frequency. Natural fire frequencies are not high enough to maintain these landscapes in the mixtures of shrublands and grasslands that were observed in historical times. Rather, it is hypothesized that these landscape mosaics were readily produced with human ignitions (Keeley 2022). Cultural ecological research and archaeobotanical studies (Cuthrell 2013) suggest that a substantial fraction of the landscape was converted from shrubland to grassland by fire.

Indigenous Land Use

The people living in central coastal California at the time of Euro-American contact were grouped into the Costanoan language family (also referred to as Ohlone), which occupied the coastal area from San Francisco Bay to south of Monterey Bay. Intact shrublands provided limited resources for Native Americans, and thus there was ample motivation for using fire to reduce this vegetation to an open mosaic of shrubland/grassland. The Costanoans carefully managed the landscape to enhance wildlife habitat and plants through cultural burns. Fire was an important tool to reduce shrub encroachment on grasslands rich in edible seeds and bulbs, and to keep favorable habitat conditions for large grazers, such as black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and elk (*Cervus elaphus*). Cuthrell’s (2013) archaeobotanical studies suggest that during the late Holocene (ca. AD 1000–1300), Indigenous peoples relied heavily on grassland seed foods. At archaeological sites, culturally or ecologically fire-associated plants are often found in proportions higher than would be expected in the absence of anthropogenic burning. In addition, wood charcoal remnants are often composed of taxa that are compatible with low-intensity fire, in sharp contrast to the fire-susceptible trees and shrubs that dominate the landscape today. A synthetic interpretation of botanical data supports the hypothesis of frequent anthropogenic landscape burning.

The practice of cultural burning was well recorded. From his camp near the Presidio in October 1816, Adelbert von Chamisso, a German botanist appointed to a Russian expedition, reported that “all night, great fires burned on the back of the harbor; the natives are in the habit of burning the grass, to further its growth.” Cultural burning occurred primarily in the late autumn. This burning also eased the gathering of acorns, a staple food for the Costanoans. Other plants utilized

ethnographically include nuts of buckeye, laurel and hazelnut trees, seeds of various plants, numerous berries, and roots. Animals consumed by the Costanoan included deer, elk, antelope, grizzly bear, sea lion, whale, various small mammals, numerous species of birds and waterfowl, and several species of fish, including steelhead, salmon, and sturgeon. The Costanoan people traded mussels, abalone shells, salt, and dried abalone with neighbors to the east and obtained piñon nuts, obsidian, and other items in return (Levy 1978).

With the establishment of seven Spanish missions within traditional Costanoan territory beginning in 1769, native peoples experienced dramatic cultural changes. The introduction of Spanish administration led to the relocation of many native Californians from their villages to missions for the purpose of being “converted” and to serve as laborers. By 1810, the Indigenous people of present-day Contra Costa and surrounding counties had been entirely relocated to the missions. By 1935, for all practical purposes, the Costanoan language was extinct and, by 1968, fewer than 200 people could claim probable Costanoan/Ohlone descent (Levy 1978). Today, however, the Ohlone people are reinvesting in their culture and traditional lifeways. Through newfound political, economic, and social influence, Costanoan peoples constitute a thriving native community within the broader context of present-day California.

Grazing

The large expanse of grasslands supported vast herds of livestock kept during the Mission Era by the Spanish colonizers. For example, Mission San Jose in Fremont recorded 24,000 head of livestock on 20,000 acres of land in 1832. The territory of the Mission Dolores extended across the San Francisco Bay to where San Leandro, Alameda, Oakland, Berkeley, and El Cerrito are found today. Jedediah Smith reported that in 1827, the herds of cattle were nearly as numerous as the buffalo on the plains of Missouri (Burcham 1957). By 1834, estimates of the number of mission cattle were reported to be between 142,000 and 423,000 head (Burcham 1957). With the end of the Spanish period and the secularization of the missions in 1836, Spain began issuing land grants for private ranchers, initiating the Rancho period. By the 1840s, cattle ranching was well established throughout the coastal areas from San Francisco Bay southward.

As a result of the Gold Rush (1848–1860), the demand for beef was so high that local ranchers could not keep up with the demand and large herds were driven into California from Texas and other southwestern states, as well as Mexico. In addition, thousands of livestock were brought into California from the Midwest. More than 150,000 head of cattle entered the state from that area during 1852 and 1853 alone (Burcham 1957). The high stocking rates resulted in overutilization of rangelands and widespread degradation of the landscape. Year-long grazing and overstocking proved to be detrimental to native perennial grassland plants, which were replaced by non-native annuals that make up the majority of today’s grasslands in California. In the early 1900s, most of the hills around El Cerrito were bare (Figure 9), and very few trees existed due to the high level of livestock grazing and deforestation during the Gold Rush.



Photograph courtesy of the El Cerrito Historical Society. Note the absence of trees and shrubs on the Hillside Natural Area.

Figure 9: Photograph of Motorcycle National Hill Climb (1928)

Eucalyptus

The California Tree Culture Act of 1868 encouraged the planting of trees, paying landowners \$1 per tree planted and nurtured for 4 years. Eucalyptus trees were first introduced into California in 1853 as an ornamental species (Groenedaal 1983) but were soon planted throughout the East Bay hills as windbreaks and shade trees, along roadsides and in towns, to add beauty to a California landscape that was largely bare of trees. However, their main purpose was as a source of fast-growing lumber. The vast majority of eucalyptus species planted were blue gums, selected for their speed of growth.

Australian eucalyptus were promoted heavily as a source of high-quality hardwood and promised to ease the “Hardwood Famine,” which was caused by rebuilding efforts following the 1906 earthquake. In 1911, Frank Colton Havens’ “Mahogany Eucalyptus & Land Company” hailed eucalypts as “of more glorious hardness” than teak, mahogany, ebony, hickory, or oak, with wood suitable for cabinets, railroad ties, dock pilings, boats, paving blocks, telephone poles, and violins. However, it was soon discovered that blue gum made inferior lumber due to splitting and warping. Havens abandoned the tree plantations just 2 years later, in 1913, after planting 14 miles of the Berkeley-Oakland ridgeline with some 3 million trees. Today, the remnants of the plantations are over 100 years old, and some trees have reached impressive dimensions.

Cultural Resources

Archival research, outreach to the Native American community, and an intensive field survey did not document indications of prehistoric activities in the project area (see Appendix C). The Tribal Chair

of the Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation and the City met and discussed the Plan's development and anticipated outcomes. Although the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) noted that a culturally significant property was known to be present near the project area, none of the tribal contacts and representatives have expressed concerns regarding this possible site. In addition, an intensive field survey did not identify potentially sensitive landforms or significant level terrain in the project area, suggesting it retains a low level of sensitivity for containing traces of early Native American occupation. Concerning historic-period resources, historic mapping, aerial photographs, archival research, and the field survey indicated that no developments occurred in the project area. No work is planned near creek bottoms, where potentially undocumented artifacts could be disturbed. Consequently, there is a low level of sensitivity for the project area to exhibit potentially significant historic-era sites, features, or artifacts.

TRAIL CONDITIONS

The HNA has a network of existing roads and trails that support a variety of uses, including emergency access, hiking, dog walking, running, mountain biking,⁷ birdwatching, etc. Several trails are fire access roads maintained by the City. Portions of the trail system require upgrades to enhance their serviceability (Figure 10).

Existing and Potential Fire Roads

Based on mapped trail features and information provided by the El Cerrito Trail Trekkers, the AllTrails App,⁸ and Friends of Five Creeks, a brief description including the length and location of each existing and potential fire road that also acts as a trail is included below. Trail names were collected from El Cerrito Trail Trekkers and AllTrails. Figure 10 exhibits all trails and fire roads.

Hillside Natural Area North

- **Motorcycle Hill Trail:** The Motorcycle Hill Trail is a 0.57-mile one-way trail with steep switchbacks. The trail starts at Blake Street and ends at Potrero Avenue. The top of Motorcycle Hill, also accessible from Potrero Avenue using a relatively flat trail, provides scenic views of the East Bay cities and coast. This space may be appropriate to establish a landing and staging area for vegetation treatments and later as a picnic area. The fire road from Potrero Avenue to this space should be maintained for use as a fire road. Ice plant may also be removed from this upper area. A large eucalyptus grove is located south of the Motorcycle Hill Trail. The Motorcycle Hill Trail is very steep and likely challenging for the average hiker. Purple needle grass and soap root were observed along the trail and will need to be maintained as sensitive species. Eucalyptus trees to be removed can also be found along this trail.

⁷ While signage is currently inconsistent, mountain biking is allowed in the HNA as long as it is not motorized. Future plans may evaluate bicycle use on trails.

⁸ AllTrails. 2019. AllTrails: Hike, bike, and run (10.4.2) (mobile app). App Store. Website: <https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/alltrails-hike-bike-run/id405075943>.



LSA



0 300 600
FEET

LEGEND

- Project Site
- Vehicle Accessible Trail
- Foot+Bike or Foot-only Trail
- Recommended to be Modified for Improved Vehicular Access

SOURCE: LSA (2024); Contra Costa County (05/2024); USGS The National Map (04/2023).

Figure 10: Hillside Natural Area Trails and Fire Roads

- **Castro Trail (also known as Lower Snowden Trail):** This is a 0.14-mile, one-way, and approximately 2-foot-wide trail that starts at Snowden Avenue and connects to the Motorcycle Hill Trail. It is possible to expand for full fire apparatus access.

Madera Property

- There are no current or potential fire roads on this management unit.

Hillside Natural Area South

- **Ridge Fire Road:** This is a 0.75-mile, one-way road that starts at King Court and ends at Regency Court.
- **Navellier Fire Road:** This is a 0.35-mile, one-way road that connects Navellier Street to Regency Court and overlaps with the Ridge Fire Road. The trailhead is a paved road between 1432 and 1440 Navellier Street, turning into a fire road. The trail crosses Ridge Fire Road and Live Oak Trail and ends near the mouth of Regency Court.
- **Ken Smith Trail:** This is a 0.19-mile, one-way road that is approximately 10 to 15 feet wide at the start, near Ridge Fire Road, but dissipates into a dead end toward the south. The trail could be expanded to provide fire apparatus access but needs terminal turnaround.
- **Forest Brown Fire Road:** This is a 0.34-mile, one-way road that has an entrance on Schmidt Lane and climbs to Ridge Fire Road.

Trails

Hillside Natural Area North

- **Peralta Trail:** This is a 0.10-mile, one-way, and relatively unmaintained trail that starts at the former EBMUD tank site at the end of a 15-foot-wide paved fire road and connects to the Motorcycle Hill Trail.

Madera Property

- **Madera-Julian Trail:** This is a 0.21-mile, one-way trail that starts at the concrete steps at 1625 Julian Drive and ends at the Ridge Fire Road below Madera Circle. It is also accessible by a 0.1-mile trail starting at 1556 Madera Circle.

Hillside Natural Area South

- **Wildwood Creek Trail:** This is a 0.05-mile, one-way trail that branches off into a dead end from Navellier Fire Road alongside the partially channelized Wildwood Creek trailhead from Navellier Fire Road right after the first big turn going uphill.
- **The Lower Trail:** This is a 0.16-mile trail that connects Forest Brown Fire Road to the Live Oak Trail and the Little Hill Trail. The northern section past the Little Hill Trail splits the trail into one well-maintained segment and another segment not maintained as a public trail, which ends at a fenced-off area.

- **The Little Hill Trail:** This is a 0.05-mile, one-way trail that connects the Lower Trail to the Live Oak Trail.
- **Church Trail:** This is a 0.14-mile, one-way trail that connects Navellier Fire Road to the Live Oak Trail. Segments of this trail are as narrow as 1–2 feet wide with an eroded segment near the Live Oak Trail.
- **Live Oak Trail:** This is a 0.41-mile, one-way trail that connects Douglas Drive to Forest Brown Fire Road. The trailhead is at 1524 Douglas Drive. The trail crosses Navellier Fire Road and runs south, roughly parallel to Ridge Fire Road, to Forest Brown Fire Road. A portion of the trail includes the sign-posted Rotary Interpretive Trail and the trail is incorporated within the Memorial Grove Trail. Erosion of the trail occurs toward Douglas Drive.

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

For the purposes of this Plan, special-status species are defined as follows:

- Species that are listed, formally proposed, or designated as candidates for listing as threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (FESA);
- Species that are listed, or designated as candidates for listing, as rare, threatened, or endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA);
- Plant species that are on the California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) Lists 1A, 1B, and 2;
- Animal species designated as Species of Special Concern or Fully Protected by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW); or
- Species that meet the definition of rare, threatened, or endangered under Section 15380 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Plants

Special-status plant species for which extant or non-historic California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) (CDFW 2023) records exist in the vicinity consist of the following species:

- Bent-flowered fiddleneck (*Amsinckia lunaris*; CRPR List 1B)
- Pallid manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pallida*; Federal Threatened, State Endangered, CRPR List 1B)
- Franciscan thistle (*Cirsium andrewsii*; CRPR List 1B)
- Western leatherwood (*Dirca occidentalis*; CRPR List 1B)
- Fragrant fritillary (*Fritillaria liliacea*; CRPR List 1B)
- Diablo helianthella (*Helianthella castanea*; CRPR List 1B)

- Loma Prieta hoita (*Hoita strobilina*; CRPR List 1B)
- Santa Cruz tarplant (*Holocarpha macradenia*; Federal Threatened, State Endangered, CRPR List 1B).
- San Francisco owl's-clover (*Triphysaria floribunda*) CRPR List 1B

Several other special-status plants are also known to occur in the region (Diablo Fire Safe Council 2017). None of these or other special-status species, however, are likely to occur within the majority of project site due to: (1) prior disturbance in the project area; (2) the introduction of non-native plant species; and (3) the absence of suitable habitat and substrates such as wetlands and serpentine substrates. Less disturbed areas on the project site, such as the oak woodland, riparian woodland, scrub, and native grasslands, may provide suitable habitat for special-status plant species and locally rare plant species. Therefore, protocol-level plant surveys are recommended to be conducted where suitable habitat is present.

Sensitive Natural Communities

The CDFW has ranked California natural communities by their rarity and threat using the best and most recent scientific information available. Natural communities with ranks of S1–S3 are considered sensitive natural communities. While sensitive natural communities have not been mapped at the HNA, several potential sensitive vegetation communities, especially perennial grasslands and riparian habitats, may exist. Thus, before implementation of vegetation treatment activities, it is recommended that a qualified biologist identify and map the extent of sensitive natural communities in the treatment area pursuant to relevant protocols. Protocol-level surveys for sensitive natural communities should be timed to coincide with protocol-level special-status plant surveys whenever possible.

Wildlife

Special-status animal species that are known to occur in the vicinity of the project site and for which suitable habitat is present include the following:

- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*; Federal Candidate)
- Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*; State Candidate Endangered)
- Western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*; State Candidate Endangered)
- Alameda whipsnake (*Masticophis lateralis*; Federal and State Threatened)
- California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*; Federal Threatened, California Species of Special Concern)
- Western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*; Federal Threatened, California Species of Special Concern)
- White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*; California Fully Protected)

- Northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*; California Fully Protected)
- Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*; State Endangered, California Fully Protected)
- American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*; California Fully Protected)
- Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Vaux's swift (*Chaetura vauxi*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Olive-sided flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Purple martin (*Progne subis*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*; State Threatened, California Species of Special Concern)
- Yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Townsend's western big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Western red bat (*Lasiurus frantzii*; California Species of Special Concern)
- San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes annectens*; California Species of Special Concern)
- American badger (*Taxidea taxus*; California Species of Special Concern)

However, it should be noted that based on the habitat requirements and connectivity to occupied habitat, not all species are likely to occur at the HNA. Special status wildlife species that are either verified to be present or have a high likelihood of occurring at HNA are as follows:

- **Monarch Butterfly.** The monarch butterfly is a federal candidate listed species that could breed within the project site. Monarch butterflies breed from June to September and require their obligate larval host plant, milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.), for laying eggs, larval development, and metamorphosis. This species utilizes other flowering species for nectaring during the breeding season. No milkweed was observed during LSA's reconnaissance-level field surveys, and milkweed is not listed in the plant list (Appendix E); furthermore, milkweed has not been recorded at the HNA by the Western Monarch Milkweed Mapper (Xerces et al. 2023). However, individual monarch butterflies are frequently observed flying through the project site (LSA, unpublished data). Trees provide suitable overwintering roosting habitat for monarch butterflies. The project site is situated approximately 1.5 miles from the San Francisco Bay shoreline, which falls within

the distance in which monarchs overwintering roosts are known to occur (Leong et al. 2004). According to a monarch study completed for the project site in 1993 (ESA 1994), the project site may be situated at too high an elevation to allow monarchs to use the project site as an overwintering roost site. No CNDDDB occurrences for monarch butterfly have been recorded at the project site, while the closest CNDDDB occurrence for an overwinter roost is in Richmond, approximately 1.2 miles from the site. The project site is not listed as a location for Xerces Society's Thanksgiving Count for monarch butterflies.⁹ Surveys for existing overwintering roosts are recommended prior to removal of large eucalyptus trees, especially in lower elevations that are sheltered from prevailing cold winds. Measures to avoid and minimize impacts to monarch butterfly larval and adult foraging habitat will be required as part of the regulatory process.

- **Crotch and Western Bumble Bee.** The crotch and western bumble bees are Candidate State Endangered listed species. These species are known to occur in grassland and scrub habitat where suitable native nectar plants are present. These species historically occurred in the region but are now considered rare. Due to the presence of suitable flowering plant species, these species, although unlikely due to their rarity, could be present. Measures to avoid and minimize impacts to bumble bee species and their foraging habitat will be required as part of the regulatory process.
- **Alameda Whipsnake.** Alameda whipsnake is a federal and State listed threatened species that occurs in chaparral and rock outcrops and adjacent habitats, such as riparian woodland, oak woodland, and grasslands. Although very little high-quality chaparral habitat is present, the project site provides suitable habitat for this species. Focused habitat field surveys for Alameda whipsnake at the project site in 1993 (ESA 1994) determined that the site provides suitable habitat for this species. No Alameda whipsnakes have been recorded at the project site. The closest non-historic CNDDDB occurrence was recorded near the San Pablo Dam, approximately 2.7 miles from the project site. The likelihood that Alameda whipsnake occurs at the project site is low. Measures to avoid and minimize impacts to Alameda whipsnake and its foraging habitat will be required as part of the regulatory process.
- **Special-Status Birds and Other Nesting Bird Species.** Several special-status bird species are known to occur at or near the project site (Appendix A). These bird species could nest, winter, and/or migrate through the project site. Some of these bird species, such as the American peregrine falcon, could forage on the project site but are unlikely to nest at or adjacent to the site due to the lack of suitable nesting habitat. Special-status birds observed at the project site include white-tailed kite, olive-sided flycatcher, and Vaux's swift, among others (eBird 2023). Several other special-status birds have been recorded in the project vicinity (CDFW 2023, eBird 2023). Active nests of special-status and other native bird species are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and/or California Fish and Game Code. Measures to avoid and minimize impacts to nesting birds will be required as part of the regulatory process.
- **Special-Status Bats and Other Bat Species.** Several bat species, including special-status bat species, could roost and/or forage at the project site. All roosts of native bats, regardless of their status, are protected by California Fish and Game Code. Townsend's western big-eared bat

⁹ <https://westernmonarchcount.org/>.

(California Species of Special Concern) may briefly forage over the project site but would not roost on the project site due to the lack of suitable roosting habitat. Suitable habitat for pallid bat and western red bat (both of which are California Species of Special Concern) and other bat species exists; these species could roost in the on-site trees. Pallid bats may roost in tree cavities and in structures, while western red bats roost in trees. Western red bats typically roost in riparian habitats but could roost in the larger on-site trees. This species does not breed in the area but does occur in the spring and fall during migration. The western red bat has been observed approximately 1.5 miles from the project site near Jewell Lake (LSA pers. obs.). Surveys for bat roosts are recommended prior to the removal of large eucalyptus trees. Measures to avoid and minimize impacts to bat roosting and foraging habitat will be required as part of the regulatory process.

- **San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat.** The San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat is a California Species of Special Concern. This species occurs in riparian woodland, woodland/forests, and scrub habitat and has been observed at the project site. LSA observed woodrat houses in the northern portion of the site, but this species could occur throughout the project site where suitable habitat is present. Measures to avoid and minimize impacts to woodrat houses and foraging habitat will be required as part of the regulatory process.

RISKS AND THREATS

Wildfire in the Hillside Natural Area

Fire is a natural phenomenon that poses inherent hazards to the neighboring communities in the HNA due to the topography, proximity to vegetation that can burn, and prevailing wind patterns. The role and characteristics of fire in the HNA have been altered due to changes in vegetative succession, human uses, invasive species, and recreational demands. Climate change has changed the severity and length of fire seasons, increasing the risk of loss of residential and other structures. Secondary fire impacts, such as smoke exposure, visual blight, and loss of recreation opportunities affect a wide range of communities, not just those adjacent to the HNA. The HNA is surrounded by homes and businesses with several major roads leading away from its boundary (Moeser Lane, Arlington Boulevard, and Potrero Avenue). Many homes are located on long, winding roads and in cul-de-sacs with little access to quick evacuation in the event of a fire. Homes surrounding the HNA are at risk from fire for a number of reasons. Structures are generally older, dating to before the requirement for ignition-resistant construction. Most roofs are less flammable; however, wood siding, decks, and unprotected vents that are part of most homes can make buildings prone to ignition.

Fuels and Fire History

The East Bay hills' combination of warm and dry summers, conducive topography, flammable vegetation, dense urban development, limited firefighting access, and Diablo winds present significant risks to the public, dwelling structures, and property located along the wildland-urban interface. The HNA has been the location of many fires over the last 20 years. Historic fire ignitions in the East Bay hills have not been well documented but are almost all directly related to human activity.

On July 4, 2010, a fire started adjacent to the wildlands at the eastern end of Tamalpais Avenue and Fair View Drive and on April 18, 2012, a human-caused fire started at the entrance to the Recycling

Center. In 2020, a lightning strike started a fire south of Moeser Lane. The size or acreage impacted by fire has been relatively small. All fires have been contained to 2 acres or less but had the potential to burn into the HNA. Aggressive initial attack and strong mutual aid cooperation are paramount in these instances.

Fire history was compiled from newspaper articles, old fire planning studies, and recent fire perimeters collected by fire departments. The UC Berkeley Wildland Vegetative Management Plan indicates the fire history of the East Bay hills from 1905 to 2017. Of these fires, 11 fires that burned under Diablo wind conditions burned 9,840 acres of the East Bay hills between 1923 and 1998. Most of these losses occurred from two fires: the 1923 Berkeley Fire and the 1991 Oakland Tunnel Fire, which destroyed 2,843 single-family dwellings and 437 apartment and condominium units and killing 25 people, with financial losses of more than \$2 billion in current dollars. During the same period, three large west-wind fires burned 1,230 acres of grass, brush, and trees, as well as four homes in the East Bay hills. Additional smaller fires have also ignited near the Plan area, including, most recently, the 2017 Grizzly Fire.

Most of the burns have originated along the periphery of the HNA in flatter locations dominated by grasses. These areas are most easily accessed and most heavily traveled. Grass fuels are also easily ignited. The central portion of the HNA has experienced relatively few fires. This is probably due to denser woody vegetation and steeper slopes, both of which limit access. The brushland and woodland areas cannot be traveled through as easily as the grassland areas.

The triangular parcel north of Moeser Lane and the adjacent PG&E property have experienced fires more frequently than any other parcel within the HNA. Approximately nine fires have occurred in this area over the past 20 years. This area is gently sloping grassland with numerous trails leading to and from the residences to the south and east and the school district site to the west. It is also adjacent to Moeser Lane, which is a major thoroughfare.

The area west of Ken Smith Grove and east of the residences on Navellier Street has had at least four fires over the last 20 years. This area is adjacent to one of the main access points of the HNA. The steeper areas south of the former EBMUD water storage tank located off Ganges Street at the north border of the HNA has experienced at least six fires in the past 20 years. This area is easily accessed by the former EBMUD facility roads from Snowdon Avenue, and from the fire road south of Julian Court at Potrero Avenue. The area northeast of the EBMUD water storage tank off Potrero Avenue has had at least four fires in the past 20 years, the most recent of which occurred on November 2, 2023.

Flammability

Flammability is defined as the capacity of plant biomass to burn. It includes four components: ignitability (the ability of a material to ignite); sustainability (the ability of a material to sustain combustion and produce energy); combustibility (the rate at which a substance burns into flame); and consumability (the proportion of biomass consumed during combustion) (White and Zipperer 2010). Relationships between plant traits and flammability of tree species are an important aspect of fire risk. Studies show that three main types of plant traits are associated with different components of flammability:

- Moisture content;
- Structural and morphological features of leaves, litter, bark, and wood; and
- Chemical composition, and volatile and nonvolatile compounds.

Blue gum is highly flammable and resilient, resulting in a dangerous contribution to an already fire-prone landscape. Guerrero et al. (2022) studied the fire hazard of several exotic forest species (including blue gum and Monterey pine) in Chile. Although all of the studied species were highly flammable, blue gum was extremely flammable, as its leaves contain high concentrations of essential oils, monoterpenes, and sesquiterpenes, which can generate a flammable atmosphere. Moreover, the heat of combustion of *E. globulus* was positively correlated with its high essential oil contents. Studies of eucalyptus' crude fat content find that it ranges from about 10 to 20 percent of its dry weight (whereas tropical leaves typically have about 3 percent). Mutch (1970) noted "a high crude fat content ...sets the state potentially for a more intense fire with greater flame heights." Agee et al. (1973) measured the highest percentage of oil in gum trees among all plant species measured. Eucalyptus is predisposed to ignite in the presence of a heat source, releasing high amounts of energy during combustion, which contributes to the risk of the formation and spread of canopy fires among these tree formations.

The distribution in space of burnable biomass is an important factor in determining the fire hazard of any vegetation type. Eucalyptus branches, leaves, and bark slough off in large pieces that end up draped on one another, creating a near-optimum mixture of oxygen and fuel. This fluffy arrangement provides a "goldilocks situation"—not too dense and not too airy, but one that provides close enough contact for the fire to burn and transfer heat easily to the next particle. Management of fuels makes a crucial impact on both volume and structure. Removing surface fuels and shorter trees and pruning lower branches aids in preventing crown fires.

Once fuel ignites, another important factor in fire behavior is the volume of the fuel. Greater fuel volume results in fires that are hotter and harder to contain. Eucalypts are big plants that produce a lot of fuel. Wildfire burns small material most readily and almost disregards material larger than 3 inches in diameter. Beyond the trunks and larger branches, there is still a lot of volume in the tree's foliage, bark, and debris. Agee et al. (1973) measured approximately 29 tons/acre of fuel in Sibley Regional Park in Oakland, with roughly half consisting of a thick layer of decomposing leaf and organic material (duff). More recently, the National Park Service measured fuel loading (volume) in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (north of San Francisco, California) totaling approximately 31 tons/acre (not including duff but including larger-diameter branches).

Fire Behavior

A fine-scale analysis of potential fire behavior across the HNA is useful to determine the possible effects of wildfire, and the potential for spread and containment of a wildland fire. For this purpose, a worst-case scenario was used to reflect conditions during an event of high impact. Several fire behavior prediction software applications have been developed by the United States Forest Service. These include a wide variety of applications designed to specifically meet firefighting or fire prevention needs. For this analysis, we used the application FlamMap (version 6.1), a fire behavior mapping and analysis program that computes potential fire behavior characteristics (Finney 2006). The model describes potential fire behavior for constant environmental conditions (weather and

fuel moisture) at the pixel level (30 x 30 meters) within the landscape dataset. Potential fire behavior calculations include surface fire spread, flame length, crown fire activity type, crown fire initiation, and crown fire spread. Dead fuel moisture and conditioning of dead fuels in each pixel are based on slope, shading, elevation, aspect, and weather.

The compiled weather data from a nearby Remote Automatic Weather Station (RAWS) station (in Berkeley off Grizzly Peak Boulevard near Marlborough Terrace) reflects a fairly dry fuel moisture regime, a “worst-case” scenario, although not necessarily the most extreme case. These are conditions that occur in 90th and 97th percentiles of a 10-year dataset (January 1995 to May 2021). Due to climate change and other factors, a worst-case scenario that reflects the most extreme conditions has proven to be unpredictable. Two scenarios were developed: one with winds blowing from the northeast (under Diablo wind conditions) and another with winds from the northwest. The wind speeds are the same in both scenarios. The inputs into the FlamMap model scenarios (FlamMap n.d.), both the south/southwest and east/northeast (Diablo) scenarios, are presented in detail in Appendix B.

Topography, fuel, and weather are the factors that drive fire behavior. Because of the steep slopes and abundant fuel, along with warm, dry temperatures and occasional strong winds, the risk of fire in and around the HNA is high. Long flame lengths and tree torching are expected for most of the area in the HNA; these pose threats to the hillside residences and the community. Fortunately, the moderate fire spread rates expected in the HNA may assist fire containment when fire suppression efforts are not thwarted by long flames.

Flame Length

Flame length is often correlated to the ability to control a fire. A flame length of 4 feet is the limit of what can be attacked with hand crews, and 8 feet is usually treated as a cut-off point for strategic firefighting decisions on whether to attack the fire directly or instead attempt control through indirect methods (Andrews and Rothermel 1981). Indirect attack is a method of suppression in which the control line is located some considerable distance away from the fire’s active edge. Flame lengths in both scenarios are expected to be high (over 12 feet and, in some places, over 20 feet) in some areas of each of the three sections of the HNA due to heavy fuels, especially in the mixed forest and scrub/shrub lands. Where a well-developed understory is present under the oak canopies, fires are expected to burn with high intensity. Fires can be expected to burn fast when they are propelled by dry grass and scrub.

When comparing the impact of northeast winds and northwest winds on the fire behavior of the HNA, it is clear that in the northwest wind scenario, larger areas of the HNA have very high and extremely high flame lengths. The highest flame lengths predicted with the northwest wind are in the southeastern portion of HNA South, the northeastern quadrant of HNA North, and a section of the western part of the Madera property, as well as areas outside of all three sections of the HNA along boundaries with the surrounding community (Figure 11). These areas will be focal points of vegetation treatments.

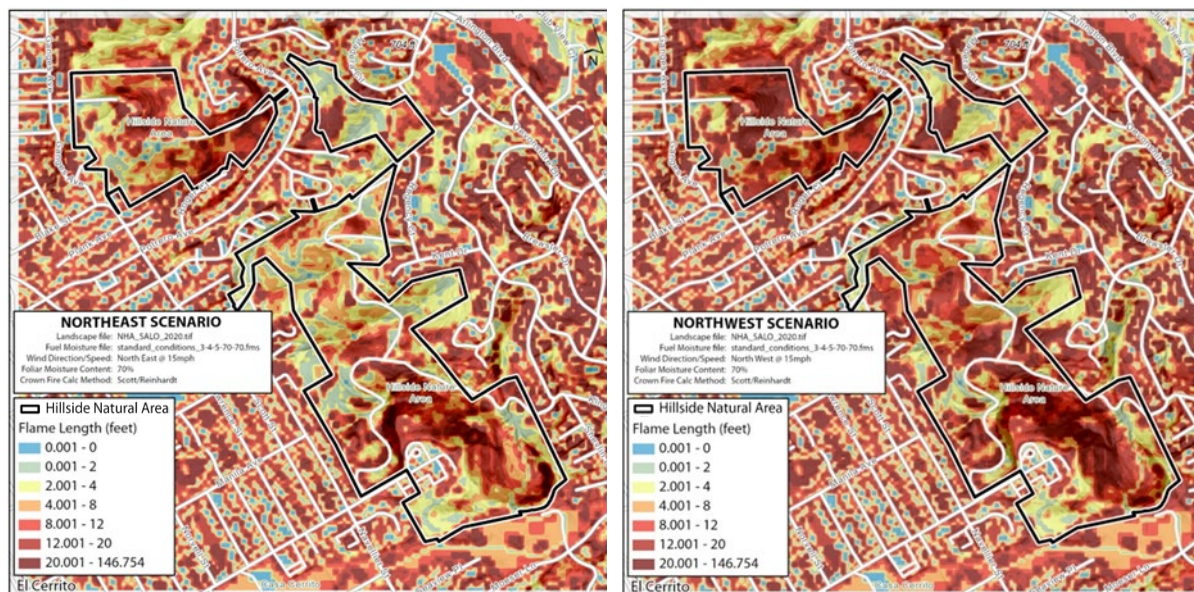


Figure 11: Flame Length Map Comparison

Rate of Spread

Rate of spread measures how quickly a fire moves across a landscape. Rate of spread is dependent on surface fuel types, moisture, wind, and slope. Fine fuels in flat, dry, windy areas will burn at a much faster rate than areas with thicker surface fuels, more rugged topography, more moisture, and less wind. The rate of spread is of concern when considering fire containment, response times, and evacuation. A slow-moving fire (for example, slower than 1/8 mile per hour, or 11 feet/minute) might be easily contained, whereas fast-moving fire (a fire moving faster than 1 mile per hour, or 88 feet/minute) challenges containment and has the potential to move into high-value, sensitive areas before containment can occur. While a fast rate of spread does not necessarily result in a problematic fire, a fast-moving fire coupled with high flame lengths cannot be suppressed with a hand crew. Rate of spread predictions in both a northeast wind scenario and a northwest wind scenario are presented below (Figure 12). The comparison between the wind scenarios for the rate of spread follows the same pattern as the comparison of the two wind scenarios for flame length. There are more areas of high rate of spread increase with a northeast wind. The greatest differences appear in the Madera property area, where more of the area burns faster. Rates of fire spread are also quite fast on HNA North, and the highest rates of spread appear on HNA South, above the Recycling Center. These areas will be focal points of vegetation treatments. Areas outside the HNA are predicted to burn with the same rates of spread with both wind directions, with the exception that the eastern neighborhood is expected to burn faster under a northeast wind scenario.

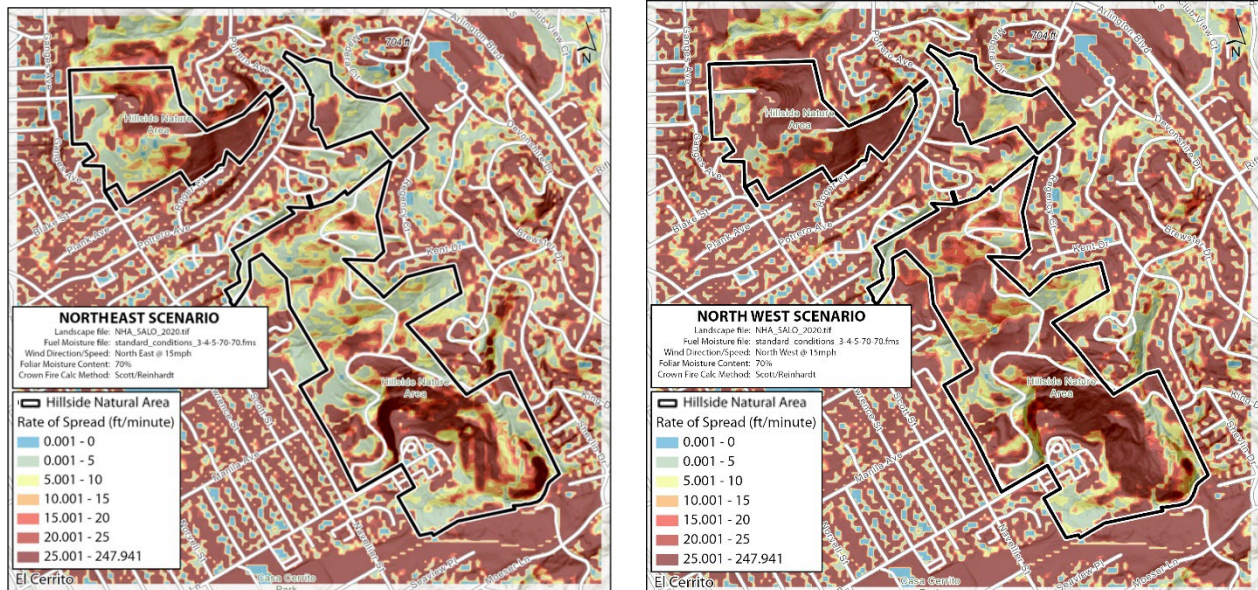


Figure 12: Rate of Spread Map Comparison

Predicted Crown Fire Activity

Crown fire activity includes four possible model outputs: surface fire, torching fire, crown fire, or no predicted fire. Surface fires are limited to fire burning in grass, short shrubs, and the understory of a treed environment, or locations with tall shrubs. The transition from a surface fire to the crowns of trees is known as torching, or “passive crown fire.” Trees are said to “torch” when a surface fire intermittently ignites the crowns of trees or shrubs as it advances and the foliage ignites and flares up, usually from bottom to top. Crown fire indicates locations where fire is expected to spread into and possibly consume the canopy of trees or shrubs (Figure 13). Fire spread from tree crown to tree crown is considered “active crown fire” and is based on the rate of fire spread, the density of the tree crown, and wind speed. It is important to keep in mind that crown fires and torching can occur only where there are trees and tall shrubs. Short shrub stands can burn intensely and still not torch.

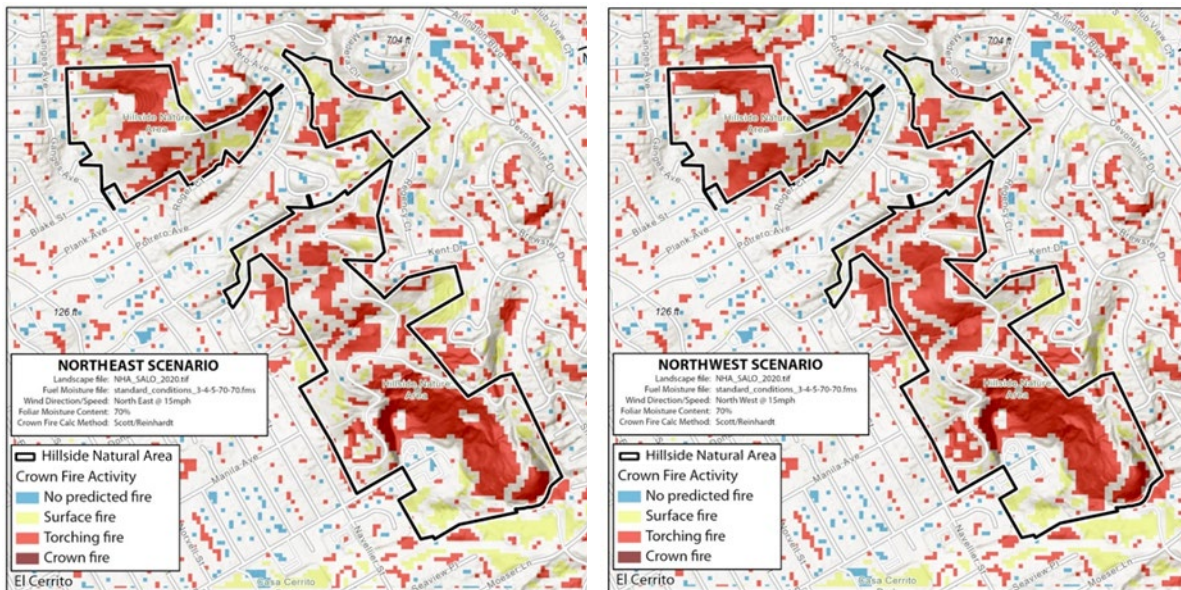


Figure 13: Crown Fire Activity Map Comparison

When a fire burns through trees or tall shrub crowns, countless embers are produced and are distributed, sometimes at long distances. These embers can start new fires called “spot fires,” which can each grow and confound the finest fire suppression forces. “Spotting potential” or “crowning potential” describes the propensity of vegetation to create and disperse embers that have the potential to start new fires well in advance of the main fire. In terms of ecological effects, prediction of torching or crown fire is highly correlated with fire severity and greater environmental impact. While the coniferous, eucalyptus stands, and oak forests can torch, oak forests are less likely to have fire reach to the tree crowns unless vegetation is burning underneath.

Most of the HNA is predicted to burn with torching fire. In the HNA, torching fire is predicted to be concentrated in the wooded and shrub areas of each of the three sections of the HNA, especially where a well-developed understory is present. Crown fire predictions in both a northeast wind scenario and a northwest wind scenario are presented in Figure 13. When comparing the impact of northeast winds and northwest winds on the crown fire activity of the HNA, we see that in the scenario of northwest winds, the presence of torching fire increases slightly. Crown fire, while remaining relatively low, is present in the northwest wind scenario in small patches in HNA South and HNA North, where it was not present at all in the northeast wind scenario. These patches of high torching probability associated with dense eucalyptus stands will be focal points of vegetation treatments.

Maximum Spot Distance

The maximum spot distance (Figure 14) is created from an extended set of outputs from FlamMap software. The distance embers can spread to start new fires is determined by the height of the tree, its position on the slope, and roughly, the shape and size of the particle. Spotting is simulated only from torching trees for passive and active crown fire. Maximum spot distances of embers are

calculated for each pixel that is predicted to torch. This metric is not intended to simulate the numbers of embers, exact locations where embers would land, or locations of resulting spot fires. The predicted spot distance is relatively high; however, only a small portion of the area is predicted to produce spot fires where tall, dense trees (eucalyptus) occur higher on the slope and where understory fuels are present. Eucalyptus is a tall tree species and is often located high on the slope, promoting long ember cast. The leaves, bark, or other particles are thin enough to be lifted but large or long enough to still be burning when they land. With a northeast wind, a smaller proportion of the HNA is expected to cast embers. With a northwest wind, a greater proportion of the HNA is expected to create spot fires; however, the average spot fire distance is shorter.

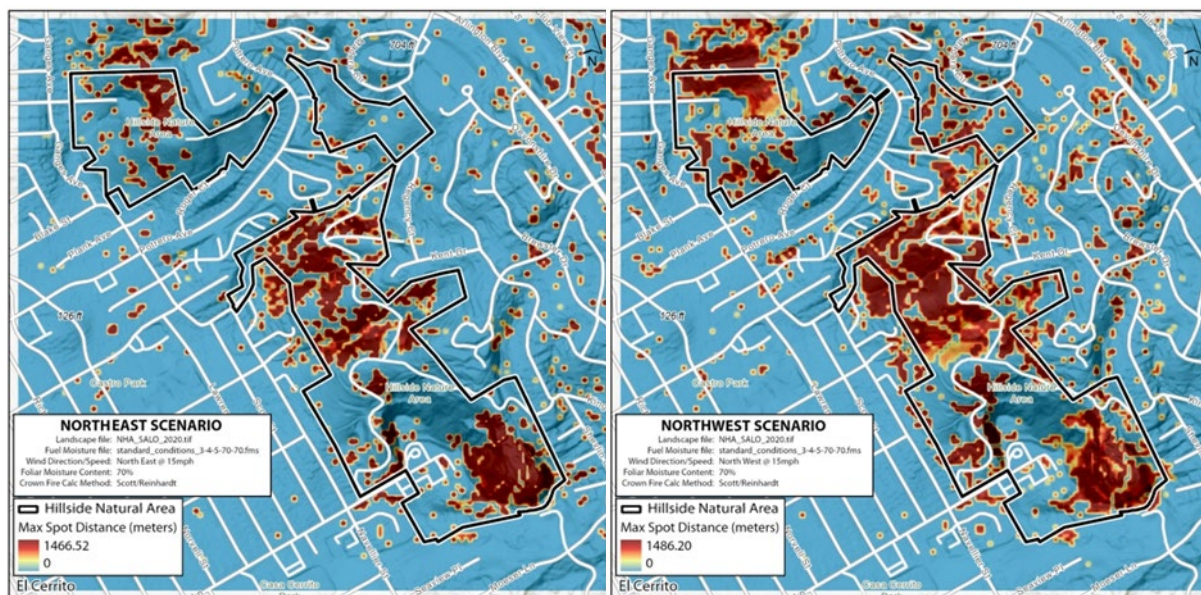


Figure 14: Maximum Spotting Distance Comparison

Forest Diseases and Pathogens

Much of the natural vegetation communities of the Bay Area have undergone substantial changes in their disturbance regimes, such as fire, drought, and disease. New pests and infectious plant diseases can be distributed by human transport and affect the vulnerability of plant communities to fire. Diseases that cause landscape-scale tree mortality may affect the regional fire risk. Recent studies have shown that fire history has contributed to patchy patterns of disease-related forest declines in California and that human caused changes in fire regimes may be an important factor in structuring infectious disease dynamics, contributing to future outbreaks and driving disease infection regimes (Simler-Williamsson et al. 2021).

Sudden Oak Death

SOD, caused by the non-native invasive pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum*, has killed tens of thousands of trees in coastal California (Rizzo and Garbelotto 2003). *Phytophthora* pathogens are known as the cause of significant forest disease in Europe (Braiser and Jung 2003). In California, SOD was first observed in 1995 in Mill Valley (Marin County, California) and originally appeared to affect

primarily tanoak (*Notholithocarpus densiflorus*). By May 1997, not only tanoaks, but also coast live oaks were dying in the Marin Municipal Water District lands and in China Camp State Park on San Francisco Bay (Svihra 2001). Other hosts for *P. ramorum* include California bay laurel and coastal redwood. The pathogen was also found in many nurseries¹⁰ in California, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. The distribution of *P. ramorum* as an introduced, nonnative species includes wildlands (only Oregon and California) and nurseries in North America, as well as several European countries (nurseries and limited outbreaks in parks and gardens/woodlands). In Coastal California, the organism infects many different species and nearly all woody plants can serve as hosts for *P. ramorum* (Rizzo et al. 2002a).¹¹ Typically, coast live oak-bay laurel forests indicate increased mortality of coast live oak. The HNA has approximately 29 acres of coast live oak-bay laurel forests that are at risk of SOD, which has been confirmed to occur at the HNA. Bay laurel is the largest producer of *P. ramorum* inoculum, while Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*) appears largely resistant to the disease. Elevated coast live oak mortality may lead to cascading effects in SOD-impacted ecosystems due to the oak's importance as a mast-producing species (i.e., providing acorn crops as forage for a variety of mammals and birds) and as nesting habitat (Apigian and Allen Diaz 2006; Apigian et al. 2006).

Oak Borers

The Goldspotted oak borer (GSOB; *Agrilus auroguttatus*) is an invasive pest that is native to Arizona and may be progressing northward in California due to climatic changes and increasing drought stress to native oaks. The GSOB currently causes severe live oak tree mortality in San Diego, Riverside, and Orange counties. GSOB attacks drought-stricken trees with lowered immunity. The pest is rapidly expanding its range northward and is expected to affect Northern California as the climate warms. GSOB poses a major threat to susceptible oak species throughout California and southern Oregon. Currently, there are no effective tools for saving trees once a major infestation occurs, although management and damage mitigation is possible in low-level infestations. The Mediterranean oak borer (MOB; *Xyleborus monographus*) is an introduced ambrosia beetle that was found infesting several valley oak (*Quercus lobata*) trees in Napa County in 2019. The insect was likely introduced on imported wood products. To date, it has also been detected in Lake, Sonoma, and Sacramento counties. MOB has been found in several of the oaks in the white oak group, including valley oak, blue oak (*Q. douglasii*), and Oregon white oak. The beetle also vectors the fungus *Raffaelea montetyi*, which has pathogenic properties. There are no known cases of either species occurring in the HNA as of this writing.

¹⁰ Since 2005, a federal order (USDA APHIS 2007a) requires that all nurseries in California, Oregon, and Washington that shipped host plant nursery stock interstate be inspected and certified free of evidence of *P. ramorum*. This Plan does not advocate outplanting of nursery stock. If, however, nursery-grown plant stock is to be used, it should originate from an accredited nursery that has adopted BMPs for the prevention of introducing *Phytophthora* species.

¹¹ The California Oak Mortality Task Force (COMTF) website (www.suddenoakdeath.org) contains the most up-to-date information available on regulated hosts, associated plants, and experimental hosts. See http://nature.berkeley.edu/comtf/html/host_plant_lists.html#AssociatedHosts for lists of regulated and associated hosts.

PART 2: VALUES, VISIONS, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

COMMUNITY VALUES

To gauge the community's interest, involvement, and values regarding the HNA and its management, the City and consultant team held meetings with an SAG and the broader public, conducted a public survey, and collected written comments by email. The consultant team measured the demographics of survey respondents to understand the representativeness of responses compared to the broader El Cerrito community. The results indicate that, in general, the respondents were representative of the community. Respondents were mostly from within El Cerrito City limits (89 percent), followed by outside El Cerrito but within Contra Costa County (6 percent) and then outside El Cerrito but within Alameda County (4 percent). The respondents were 49 percent women, 42 percent men, and 1 percent other genders, while 8 percent preferred not to say. Respondents born from 1950 to 1959 made up 23 percent of respondents, while 21 percent of respondents were born from 1970 to 1979. Another 17 percent were born from 1960 to 1969. Respondents were 70 percent White or Caucasian, 8 percent Asian or Asian American, and 5 percent Latino, Latina, or Latinx. Another 4 percent were multiracial, while both Black or African and Arab Americans were both 0.3 percent of respondents, respectively. Another 10 percent of respondents preferred not to say and 2 percent specified their ethnicity. Half of respondents (52 percent) had advanced degrees while more than a third (35 percent) had a 4-year degree. Another 6 percent of respondents had some college/2-year degree, and 5 percent preferred not to say. Other respondents said they had some high school or had a high school education. Compared with United States Census data from 2021, respondents were more frequently White and had a higher educational attainment than the average citizen of El Cerrito (United States Census Bureau 2021).

Overview of Community Priorities

The themes described below, regarding participants' favorite things about the HNA and key areas of support and concern with respect for the Plan, arose across engagement touchpoints.

Community's Favorite Aspects of the HNA

During the public workshop, attendees were asked, "What are your favorite things about the HNA?" Their answers, grouped into themes, follow.

- **Natural Beauty and Views:** Stunning views of the Bay and surrounding landscapes.
- **Open Space and Access to Nature:** Valuable natural open space within an urban area for various outdoor activities like hiking in the hills.
- **Wildlife and Habitat Conservation:** Habitat for wildlife, including owls, and diverse ecosystems.
- **Community Connection:** A shared space for community bonding and enjoyment.
- **Fire Danger Awareness:** Recognition of fire danger, emphasizing the need for caution and prevention.
- **Peace and Calm in Daily Life:** Peace, calm, and a haven for daily tranquility.

- **Climate Mitigation:** The HNA plays a role in climate mitigation.
- **Local Pride and Identity:** The HNA is considered one of El Cerrito's crown jewels, making living there worthwhile.

Key Areas of Support for the Plan

Across engagement touchpoints, the following key areas of support for the Plan emerged from the community:

- Reducing fire risk in the areas of the HNA where the risk of fire is traditionally and consistently the highest.
- Use of sustainable and cost-effective methods in tree removal and vegetation management. Minimized use of herbicides for health and climate-related reasons.
- Allocation of annual funds to maintain/treat vegetation in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the HNA.
- Preserved native oak woodlands and restore native plant and tree communities. Balanced short-term urgency with long-term health of the ecosystem.
- Improved roads and trails for better emergency response access and coordinated new foot trail development.
- Fire-resistant buildings, fuel breaks, and community education on fire prevention measures.
- A need for expertise in selecting and protecting native species, conducting controlled burns, and managing vegetation on steep slopes. Involvement of experts and collaboration with organizations for effective conservation practices.
- Strong support for community involvement, including youth engagement and a volunteer program.

Key Areas of Concern for the Plan

Across engagement touchpoints, the community expressed these key areas of concern with regard to the Plan:

- Up-front costs for native plant maintenance and fire-hardening measures.
- Challenges in effectively managing invasive species, particularly eucalyptus, and resprout growth.
- Spread of SOD and the potential necessity of removing bay trees.
- Identification of gaps in public education on fire protection, buffer zones, defensible spaces, and vegetation maintenance.

Community Priorities by Topic Area

At each community engagement touchpoint, participants were asked for their feedback within four categories of potential actions for the Plan: removing fire-hazardous and invasive trees, restoring native plant and tree communities, conserving native oak woodland, and fire protection. Key themes from community input within each category are detailed below (Table D), alongside any specific feedback that arose and a description of where the feedback was heard.

Table D: Key Community Concerns

Theme	Feedback	Where We Heard It
Removing Fire-Hazardous and Invasive Trees		
Areas of Support		
Funding	- Support for allocation of annual funds to manage vegetation to reduce fire risk in the HNA. - Specify how the City will fund and carry out shaded fuel breaks	SAG meeting, public workshop
Prioritization of Brush Removal and Eucalyptus Thinning	- Support for brush removal and thinning of eucalyptus trees for enhanced fire safety. - Support for urgent removal of tall, highly flammable trees from groves that could spread fire rapidly over large areas.	SAG meetings, public workshop, survey, written SAG comments
Adoption of Affordable Removal Methods	- Support for adopting cost-effective removal methods, with a focus on targeted removal of invasive weeds and eucalyptus. - Some support for sheep and goat grazing with care, since this method can be imprecise. - Participants highlighted that preservation of native understory may be cheaper and more likely to succeed than restoration. - Plan should reference a management standard and best management practices to protect species and protocols for formal notice before mowing.	SAG meeting, public workshop, written SAG comments
Consideration of Chemical Treatment and Alternative Options	Some support for chemical treatment, burial under plastic or chips, and using brush herbicides with dye as potential options for managing resprouting stumps. Non-chemical approaches are preferred.	Public workshop, online survey
Community Involvement	- Support for involving the community as volunteers and community scientists in the long-term maintenance of the HNA. - Support for involving youth as interns. - Participants encourage partnerships and projects with neighboring schools and other projects that would engage youth in learning about nature, caring for the earth, and experiencing the joys of outdoor work and the safe and effective use of tools. - The desirable native species and native grasslands to be retained in the fuel break should be accurately mapped and marked with flagging by expert volunteers.	SAG meeting, public workshop, survey, written SAG comments
Areas for Improvement		
Use of Herbicides	Minimize or avoid using chemical herbicides for health and climate-related reasons.	SAG meeting, public workshop
Other Considerations		
Integration with Existing Plans	Participants emphasized the importance of incorporating elements of California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan in developing El Cerrito's HFR Plan, El Cerrito Kensington Wildfire Action Plan (2017), and 1994 HNA Fire Hazard Reduction Plan.	SAG meeting, written SAG comments

Table D: Key Community Concerns

Theme	Feedback	Where We Heard It
Restoring Native Plant and Tree Communities		
Areas of Support		
Partnerships	Support for building partnerships to rehabilitate plants, specifically recommending collaboration with organizations like the CNPS, youth groups, and local volunteer activities focused on native plants.	SAG meeting, public workshop
Guidelines and Grants	Support for leveraging guidelines to transition to perennial and native bunch grasses, coupled with a call for pursuing grants to facilitate the process and make it more financially viable. Include monitoring when obtaining grants.	SAG meeting
Education	Support for more comprehensive education for community members, emphasizing connections between conservation activities and climate change, communicating long-term benefits, providing actionable guidelines, specifying mowing seasons, and understanding appropriate native plant communities.	SAG meeting, public workshop
Coordination and Defined Roles for Volunteers	- Support for involving the community, with a specific emphasis on defining clear guidelines and meaningful roles for volunteers in conservation activities. - Support for the City to take on volunteer coordination. Monitoring of invasives that have been removed is important and can be done by expert community scientists and reference groups (e.g., Friends of Five Creeks, Trail Trekkers, EQC, UC Berkeley scientists, CNPS, and Golden Gate Bird Alliance)	SAG meeting, public workshop, written SAG comments
Areas for Improvement		
High Costs	Participants highlighted concerns about the up-front planting costs and ongoing expenses associated with monitoring and managing native species. Want forbs and more grasses included in restoration and to make sure we are choosing natives that require less work.	SAG meeting, public workshop
Weed and Competing Plant Management	- Participants raised concerns about the challenges in managing weeds and competing plants, with a specific focus on curbing non-native grasses and protecting native grasses from tree encroachment. - Participants suggested scheduling mowing activities with flexibility based on existing vegetation and climate conditions to avoid disrupting native plant growth.	SAG meeting, public workshop, written SAG comments
Conserving Native Oak Woodland		
Areas of Support		
Community Education	- Support for educating people about the purpose of conservation activities and public education on oaks, including varieties, fire-resilient pruning, and SOD. - Suggestion to collaborate with homeowners. - Decision on what to do with diseases (i.e., SOD) should be based on studies, consultation with other agencies, and public education.	SAG meeting, public workshop
Expertise to Select and Protect Oaks	Participants voiced a need for expertise to choose the correct (climate-resilient) oak varieties, introduce controlled burns, and reference protocols regarding bay tree thinning. Want living document so if SOD management changes, it can be adapted.	SAG meeting, public workshop

Table D: Key Community Concerns

Theme	Feedback	Where We Heard It
Define “Native Oak Woodland”	Participants voiced a preference to balance healthy oak woodlands with open native grasslands and understand what an Indigenous-stewarded landscape looked like before non-native people arrived.	SAG meeting
Fire Protection		
Areas of Support		
Additional Funding	- Participants noted that funding (including grants and an annual budget) will help homeowners fire-harden their houses/properties; a budget is also needed to maintain vegetation. - Participants suggested the Plan should budget for long-term costs of removing, replacing, and maintaining fuel and fire breaks, considering the likelihood the City will maintain them.	SAG meeting, public workshop, written SAG comments
Community Education on Fire Protection	Support for education about buffer zones, fire hardening, defensible spaces, vegetation maintenance, and controlled burning.	SAG meeting, public workshop
Implement Fire Breaks and Support Fire-Resistant Buildings	- Participants supported fire-resistant buildings, infrastructure, fire breaks, buffer zones, and enforcement of the vegetation code. - Support for shaded fuel breaks, managed vegetation and defensible space around the perimeter of the HNA and fire breaks around all fire roads/emergency access roads. Highest priority is annual maintenance of defensible space within 100 feet of property lines	SAG meeting, public workshop, survey
Implement Controlled Burns in High-Priority Areas	- Participants supported controlled burns in the highest risk areas, and that communities need to be engaged. - Support for safe controlled burns and other Indigenous stewardship practices.	SAG meeting, public workshop, survey, written SAG comments
Areas of Improvement		
Timeline Considerations	- Participants emphasized a need to act quickly to address fire risk. - Interest in a system of prioritizing actions based on speed, cost, effectiveness, and long-term implications.	SAG meeting, public workshop
Improve Fire Road Access	Participants emphasized the need to improve access to the blind “arm” between Kent and Regency for maintenance and emergencies.	Written SAG comments

City = City of El Cerrito

CNPS = California Native Plant Society

EQC = Environmental Quality Committee (City of El Cerrito)

HFR = High Fire Risk

HNA = Hillside Natural Area

SAG = Stakeholder Advisory Group

SOD = Sudden Oak Death

Vision

Based on stakeholder feedback provided at the community workshops and through the public survey, the following vision for the HNA was developed.

El Cerrito's HNA is:

- A **premier recreational open space** offering multiple benefits of outdoor recreation to be enjoyed by residents and visitors.
- A **fire-resilient, healthy natural landscape**, where the risk of fire can be managed due to a lack of high fuels and effective, strategic shaded fuel breaks that enhance mitigation efforts in the event of a wildland fire situation.
- A **natural, native-dominated plant community** where non-native and invasive species are managed and natural ecosystem function is high, supporting a variety of native, endemic, and rare species.
- Embedded into **neighborhoods that are acutely aware of and responsive to risks of wildland fire** and who embrace defensive space and home hardening to make buildings and infrastructure more fire-resistant.
- **Maintained by joint efforts of the City and its community members** and supported by outside funding from local, State, federal, and private partnerships.
- **Managed adaptively to respond to changing conservation priorities and ecological conditions (due to climate change)**. This management supports the natural development of a climate- and fire-resilient natural landscape that provides crucial ecosystem services for the El Cerrito community.

Goals

Goal 1: Protect Residential Areas Surrounding the HNA From Wildfire

The HNA is surrounded by residential neighborhoods. Because of the steep slopes and abundant fuel, along with occasional strong winds during warm and dry conditions driving a potential fire uphill, threats to hillside residences are similar to Berkeley, Oakland, and other west-facing hillsides in the East Bay.

Objective 1.1: Establish Defensible Space on the HNA within 100 Feet of Residential Dwelling Structures¹²

Rationale: Numerous studies (Cohen 2000, Gibbons et al. 2012, Schmidt 2020, Knapp et al. 2021, Syphard et al. 2021) have confirmed that vegetation treatments near residential structures have the greatest effect on reducing the risk to dwelling structure ignition and damage. Treating vegetation adjacent to structures, including outbuildings and fences, reduces ignitability, and fire condition factors such as rate of spread and intensity would be minimized. California has established three

¹² This objective pertains only to the portion of HNA land that is within a 100-foot perimeter of an existing dwelling structure. Where the 100-foot perimeter around the structure is fully contained within privately owned parcels, the establishment and maintenance of defensible space is the responsibility of the homeowner as legally mandated.

zones of defensible space. AB 3074, passed into law in 2020, requires a new ember-resistant zone (Zone 0) within 0 to 5 feet of the home. This regulation is currently in process with the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection. The intensity of fuel management varies within the 100-foot perimeter of the home, with more intense fuel reduction occurring closer to the home in Zone 1 (0–30 feet). Zones 1 and 2 currently make up the 100-foot of defensible space required by law.

Objective 1.2: Establish Fuel Breaks

Rationale: Managing vegetation can constrain fire spread or reduce fire intensity by reducing flame lengths and the likelihood of torching or canopy fire. This may enhance fire suppression efforts and limit the extent of carbon losses during fire. By forcing a fire “to the ground,” flame lengths are dramatically shortened and the rate of spread slows down to where wildland firefighting crews can better protect residential structures and contain the fire. Near dwellings, firefighters are focused on keeping the structures from burning. This may be done by keeping fire from the residential structure at the wildland’s edge. Within a fuel break, vegetation is managed in a strip at least 100 feet wide that separates forest and other flammable vegetation from the adjacent properties or neighboring dwelling structures. It is, in essence, an extension of the defensible space on the residential property. Establishment and maintenance of this extended defensible space includes the removal of medium (light brush and small trees) and heavy (dense brush) fuels, leaving a vegetative ground cover of grass, forbs and small shrubs, with a possible overstory of widely spaced trees intact (shaded fuel break).

Objective 1.3: Reduce Abundance of High-Risk Invasive Trees

Rationale: As discussed above, eucalyptus trees and non-native pines are often extremely large, highly flammable, fast-growing and resilient to injury and cutting. This creates a challenging situation for forest thinning and ground fuels removal on Motorcycle Hill, Quarry Hill, the Wildwood and Ken Smith groves, and other patches of non-native flammable trees. Eucalyptus species and non-native conifers largely form monocultural groves, which can become densely stocked at 400 to 900 trees per acre and with tree heights exceeding 120 feet. These species have a tendency to dramatically explode when on fire, due to the high concentration of volatile oils in their bark, leaves, and wood. Eucalyptus and Monterey pines can produce up to 50 tons of flammable ground fuel per acre, compared to 1 to 5 tons of fuel per acre in grasslands or native live oak forest. Eucalyptus litter contains up to three times the energy of cellulose, so they burn hotter and faster. Blue gum eucalyptus leaves release volatile chemical gases at relatively low temperatures and ignite easily, earning them the Australian name “gasoline tree.” When wind-driven fire reaches eucalyptus tree crowns, it can spur flames that reach over 150 feet into the air, with burning embers blowing downwind beyond 0.5 mile. Eucalyptus embers stay lit longer than embers from other vegetation. Removing all non-native eucalyptus and pine trees from the HNA is the long-term goal to significantly reduce the risk of a fire.

Objective 1.4: Develop a Fire Roads and Trails Network

Rationale: Historically, access to the HNA has been challenging due to the steep terrain and the dense residential development surrounding the HNA, leaving little room for implementing fire roads or other vehicular access. Currently, access is limited to few access points, the majority of which are accessible by foot or small all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) only (see Figure 10). In addition, trails, fire roads (where they exist), and accessible open areas (grasslands) are in various conditions. Several

are unpassable by vehicles due to width and grade, vegetation overgrowth, washouts, or other unsafe surface conditions. In order to implement vegetation treatment projects (i.e., fuel reduction projects, eucalyptus removals) and to provide firefighting equipment and personnel access to various parts of the HNA, additional fire road improvements are needed. Thus, part of each vegetation treatment prescription will include access road maintenance and repair to ensure that vehicles can access the proposed treatment site safely. Improvements of existing roads to enhance emergency equipment response include widening, spaced turnouts, turnarounds, and road base application that supports a 75,000 GVWR (gross vehicle weight-rated) fire apparatus.

Goal 2: Increase Forest Health

Aside from wildfire resilience, an additional goal of this Plan is to improve the ecological health of the HNA. While ecosystem health can have multiple definitions, for the purposes of this Plan, a healthy HNA include woodlands, grasslands, shrublands, and related vegetation types that yield both ecological and community benefits. Healthy vegetation improves climate resilience, reduces the risk of fire, safeguards water and air quality, protects fish and wildlife habitat, enhances biodiversity, sequesters carbon, improves recreational opportunities, and avoids economic losses.

Objective 2.1: Actively Manage Threats to Native Oak Species

Rationale: The primary threat to native oaks at the HNA are stand-replacing fires and plant pathogens. This Plan aims to reduce the threat to oak woodlands by fire and to (1) create healthy stands of native oak woodlands that are self-sustaining by exhibiting sufficient seedling survival to replace adult tree mortalities, and (2) create a structure of an open, multi-aged forest stand or woodland that provides various habitats for other species. Such healthy stands will be more diverse, and, as a result, more resistant to fire and diseases or pathogens. The current spread and distribution of plant pathogens are a major management concern. This Plan outlines effective strategies to restrict and control the primary forest diseases at the HNA, wood boring insects (e.g., GSOB and MOB) and SOD.

Objective 2.2: Remove Invasive Species

Rationale: Invasive species are capable of causing extinctions of native plants and animals, reducing biodiversity, competing with native organisms for limited resources, and altering habitats. Managing and controlling invasive plants are important actions in managing resilient forests. The HNA has several invasive species, including eucalyptus and pine trees, a variety of shrubs (e.g., French broom, pittosporum) and herbaceous plants (fennel, pampas grass, artichoke and other thistles, and ivy). All invasive species compete with native species for water and space, and most can increase rapidly when allowed to proliferate unchecked. Managing invasive plants in ecologically and/or culturally significant places is often challenging due to the diverse public and their values. Focusing limited staff and volunteer time and fiscal resources where they can be most effective is key to successfully tackling the invasives problem at the HNA. The local nonprofit groups Friends of Five Creeks and Trail Trekkers have used volunteers to control invasive, fire-prone species in the HNA for over a decade. This Plan aims to address the following objectives when managing invasive species at the HNA:

- Prevent the spread of and strategically remove invasive plants throughout the HNA. Early detected, new infestations are targeted first, followed by spot treatments and follow-up maintenance projects.

- Develop and apply best practices to prevent the spread of invasive plants, including from vegetation treatment activities.
- Remove invasive plants mostly by hand. Mechanical treatments (grinding, shredding, chipping, mulching, or mowing) of understory shrubs or small trees may be used in some places.
- Prioritize invasive plant species removal in healthy native plant communities, fuel breaks, and recently cleared eucalyptus areas.
- Achieve wildland fuel reduction, ecosystem function, and recreational land management objectives.
- Prevent reinvasion of the targeted weed or invasion of other noxious species by intermittent weed monitoring and mapping and by implementing biosafety protocols (e.g., inspect and clean equipment and tools, prohibit transportation of firewood).
- In areas where sensitive native species or communities occur, breeding/flowering seasons and other vulnerable times must be avoided and other general or specific minimization or mitigation measures must be implemented.

Objective 2.3: Restore and Re-Establish Native Species

Rationale: Secondary to removing the extreme fire risk associated with flammable non-native trees, this Plan promotes healthy native ecosystems and biodiversity. Native plants and the site-adapted communities they form support a greater diversity of insects, birds, amphibians and reptiles, mammals, fungi, and other life forms. Restoration of native vegetation may also provide greater suitable habitat for special-status species, such as the Alameda whipsnake, San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat, and monarch butterfly. The Plan provides for specific activities and prescriptions to protect and enhance stands of native grasses and wildflowers. In particular, areas cleared of invasive trees and shrubs will be used to reestablish native plants, such as perennial grasses, wildflowers, and common native shrubs that support a wide variety of wildlife. Together with local stakeholders, the City will develop a native plant palette to be used when reestablishing native vegetation in cleared areas.

Goal 3: Measure Progress

Objective 3.1: Measure Progress Toward Vegetation Management Goals

Rationale: It is recommended that the City continues to engage in inventory and monitoring programs within the limits imposed by available funds and resources. Monitoring results will be used to understand the status of and trends within the natural communities within the HNA. Data gathered from these efforts are key inputs into understanding of the past, present, and future of forested and unforested vegetation communities, fire, and a changing climate in El Cerrito. The goal of monitoring is to gather the necessary data to understand what is happening, why it is happening, and how specific management adjustments will change the outcome. Regular, periodic monitoring can reveal new issues that were not addressed in the Plan (e.g., new invasive species), changed

circumstances that need to be addressed, and a potential necessary adaptive shift in vegetation treatments, methods, and locations.

Objective 3.2: Review the Plan Every 5 Years

Rationale: Actions and plans will need to be adjusted over time. By monitoring the HNA, information can be gathered to make these adjustments. This iterative process is called adaptive management. Adaptive management is a systematic, practical approach that includes a structured process for learning which actions best meet management objectives. It therefore reduces resource management uncertainty. Adaptive management further enables flexible decisions, which can be adjusted in the face of uncertainties. If monitoring reveals significant departures from the baseline of the management Plan, new management goals or objectives may be needed. Regular evaluation and revision of the Plan as part of the ongoing management process identifies when changes are needed before a crisis develops.

Objective 3.3: Maintain Community Engagement and Stakeholder Involvement

Rationale: Public engagement and community participation are crucial determinants of success of the HNA restoration. The Plan's successful implementation partly depends on a functioning community engagement and feedback process that allows the community and stakeholders to support the City's management. It is recommended that the City implement intermittent public information campaigns on relevant issues concerning the HNA and that the City support local groups in conducting educational events and volunteer workdays.

PART 3: ACTION PLAN

This section of the Plan presents a prioritized list of actions to reduce the risks and impacts of increasingly severe fire events in the HNA (Table E). All actions are directly linked to the goals and objectives of this Plan. Management actions decrease damage from fire by creating shaded fuel breaks, expanding defensible space into the HNA, altering forest structure or species composition, and removing highly flammable invasive species. The recommended actions are designed to minimize fire threats and vulnerabilities while at the same time protecting the recreational and ecological values the HNA offers. The recommended actions are based on current fire management standards and best practices to protect and improve ecosystem function, minimize soil erosion, and enhance recreational possibilities. The success of these actions will be enhanced with ongoing maintenance activities after each project is completed. In order to adequately plan for maintenance funding, it is recommended that the City develop a maintenance program that includes the relative costs of each action (e.g., cost per acre to maintain a fuel break).

While the Plan has considered the surrounding area as it relates to threat and vulnerability, recommendations of this Action Plan only pertain to City-owned parcels within the HNA, and its recommendations pertain solely to responsibilities of the various departments of the City of El Cerrito. Homeowners, volunteers, citizen scientists, and other local experts will have the opportunity to interact and engage with the City through the public relations, partnerships, and education component of this Plan.

Table E: Summary of Management Actions, Priorities, Locations, Prescriptions and Implementation Cost Categories

Action	Priority	Location	Prescription	Lead Department	Cost Category ¹³
1: Create Defensible Space (Objective 1.1)	Highest	Within 100 feet of dwelling structures immediately adjacent to the HNA.	Where dwelling structures are closer than 100 feet from the HNA, the City will manage portions of the HNA within this distance to create a defensible space by maintaining vegetation. The City will promote Contra Costa County Measure X as a funding source for private property owners to manage the portions of their properties within this distance.	El Cerrito Fire Department	\$\$ one-time \$ ongoing
2: Establish Shaded Fuel Breaks (Objective 1.2)	High	A 100 feet wide shaded fuel break along the entire perimeter of the HNA, beginning at the property boundary (where feasible i.e. the presence of a drainage or other topographic features may prohibit full 100 feet.)	Establish and maintain a shaded fuel break by removing or pruning trees, shrubs, brush, and other vegetative growth. A canopy of large native trees will be maintained where possible. All work will be accomplished by use of hand crews or mechanical equipment; supported by chippers and/or burning as determined appropriate on a case-by-case basis, while conserving native vegetation.	El Cerrito Fire Department El Cerrito Public Works Department	\$\$\$ one-time \$ ongoing
3: Remove Eucalyptus And Non-Native Conifers (Objective 1.3)	High-medium, depending on location and cost	1. The eucalyptus stand at Motorcycle Hill 2. The extensive eucalyptus stand at Quarry Hill	Stand removal involves the felling of all standing trees and prevention of resprouting from the stump. Landings are typically needed to sort, store, and chip cut trees into mulch and spread or remove the material.	El Cerrito Public Works Department El Cerrito Fire Department	\$\$\$\$ one-time \$ ongoing

¹³ Costs are expected to vary substantially. The categories represented here indicate a relative scale of costs from Low (\$, in the \$1,000s), to High (\$\$\$\$, exceeding \$100,000). Costs also depend on the size and slope of the treatment area, the size of trees to be removed, and additional considerations (equipment access) and slash treatments (including chipping and or burning). Individualized projects will be designed by the City based on input from contractors and other experts, and cost estimates will be available prior to contracting and implementation).

Table E: Summary of Management Actions, Priorities, Locations, Prescriptions and Implementation Cost Categories

Action	Priority	Location	Prescription	Lead Department	Cost Category ¹³
		3. Eucalyptus and other non-native trees between Kent Court and Buckingham Drive 4. Non-native invasive trees in the Madera property 5. The Ken Smith eucalyptus grove and potentially along riparian corridors (likely requires permit from CDFW)	Stump treatments may include herbicides and tarping. Small logs and branches may be burned or chipped. Include follow-up treatments for latent seedling and weed management.		
4: Manage A Sustainable System Of Fire Roads & Trails (Objective 1.4)	High-medium, depending on location	Improvements to the fire road access at Potrero Avenue and King Court, addition of service access to Motorcycle Hill, conversion of Ken Smith trail into a fire road with turnaround, and improvement of existing roads to enhance emergency equipment response.	Improved fire roads and trails are needed to facilitate implementation of vegetation treatment projects and provide firefighting equipment and personnel access to various parts of the HNA. Existing unimproved surface fire trails will be widened and recontoured where necessary to provide vehicle access to treatment areas as well as for emergency vehicle and maintenance access while preserving native vegetation and preventing weed spread where practicable.	El Cerrito Public Works Department El Cerrito Fire Department	\$\$\$ one-time \$ ongoing
5: Actively Manage Threats To Native Oak Species (Objective 2.1)	High-Medium	Throughout the existing oak woodlands at the HNA.	SOD is present in the HNA but has not reached a high level of infection. Disease monitoring and selective removals is a critical component of this Plan. Conduct complete inventory of all mature oak and bay laurel trees for monitoring the progression of SOD within the HNA. Best management practices include limiting the movement of host material or infested soil.	El Cerrito Public Works Department	\$\$ ongoing

Table E: Summary of Management Actions, Priorities, Locations, Prescriptions and Implementation Cost Categories

Action	Priority	Location	Prescription	Lead Department	Cost Category ¹³
6: Remove Invasives (Objective 2.2)	Medium	Throughout the HNA, wherever they are found. Single infestations are targeted first, followed by spot treatments and follow-up maintenance projects.	Remove invasive plants mostly by hand and prevent re-invasion where practicable. Mechanical treatments (grinding, shredding, chipping, mulching, or mowing) of understory shrubs or small trees in some places. Prioritize invasive species removal in healthy native plant communities	El Cerrito Public Works Department	\$\$ ongoing
7: Restore And Re-Establish Native Species (Objective 2.3)	Medium	Prioritize areas where invasive species removals are complete. This includes the removal of eucalyptus and conifer stands at Motorcycle Hill and Quarry Hill, but also shrub and grassland patches throughout the HNA where invasive species have been removed.	Promote passive restoration of plants from the existing native seedbank wherever possible. In some cases, active restoration of native plants is necessary following invasive plant control. Active restoration includes the initial reintroduction of the native, site-adapted species (grasses and shrubs). Conserving native grasslands and other Sensitive Natural Communities, enhancing, and expanding them is an important part of achieving this goal.	El Cerrito Public Works Department	\$\$\$ one-time \$ ongoing
8: Monitor Key Performance Indicators (Objectives 3.1 – 3.3)	Medium	Monitoring at the HNA will include the key indicators resiliency, recreation, plan review, and public relations.	Use monitoring to adapt management practices for each of these key indicators: • <u>Fire Behavior</u>: Inspect fuel breaks at the HNA annually. Inspections of defensible space is another metric of the neighborhood's resilience. • <u>Biodiversity</u>: Regularly monitor the HNA for the abundance and presence of key special status species, including monarch butterfly, and monitor native	El Cerrito Public Works Department El Cerrito Fire Department	\$ ongoing

Table E: Summary of Management Actions, Priorities, Locations, Prescriptions and Implementation Cost Categories

Action	Priority	Location	Prescription	Lead Department	Cost Category ¹³
			plant communities, weed cover, and wildlife populations as funding allows. • <u>Fire-Adapted Communities</u>: Conduct FlamMap (or equivalent) analysis of fire risk and behavior every 5–10 years as a means to pinpoint areas of deficiencies and target vegetation treatments. • <u>Trail Monitoring</u>: Inspect all trails at least once per year to evaluate surface conditions. • <u>Plan Review</u>: Provide a review and, if necessary, update to the Plan every 5 years. • <u>Public Relations</u>: Provide multiple avenues for a community engagement and feedback process that allows the community and stakeholders to support and be informed of the City's management of the HNA.		

CDFW = California Department of Fish and Wildlife

City = City of El Cerrito

HNA = Hillside Natural Area

SOD = Sudden Oak Death

ACTION 1: CREATE DEFENSIBLE SPACE WITHIN 100 FEET OF RESIDENTIAL DWELLING STRUCTURES IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA

Defensible space is a term used to describe the careful selection, location, and maintenance of vegetation and other combustible materials on the property. The purposes of a defensible space are to minimize fire pathways to the house and reduce potential heat exposures to structure components.

Where residential dwelling structures are closer to the HNA than the required 100 feet, the City will collaborate with homeowners to implement defensible space clearing on the HNA to the legal standards (Senate Bill 63¹⁴). These include the maintenance of defensible space of 100 feet, with more intense fuel reductions used between 5 and 30 feet around the structure (Figure 15).

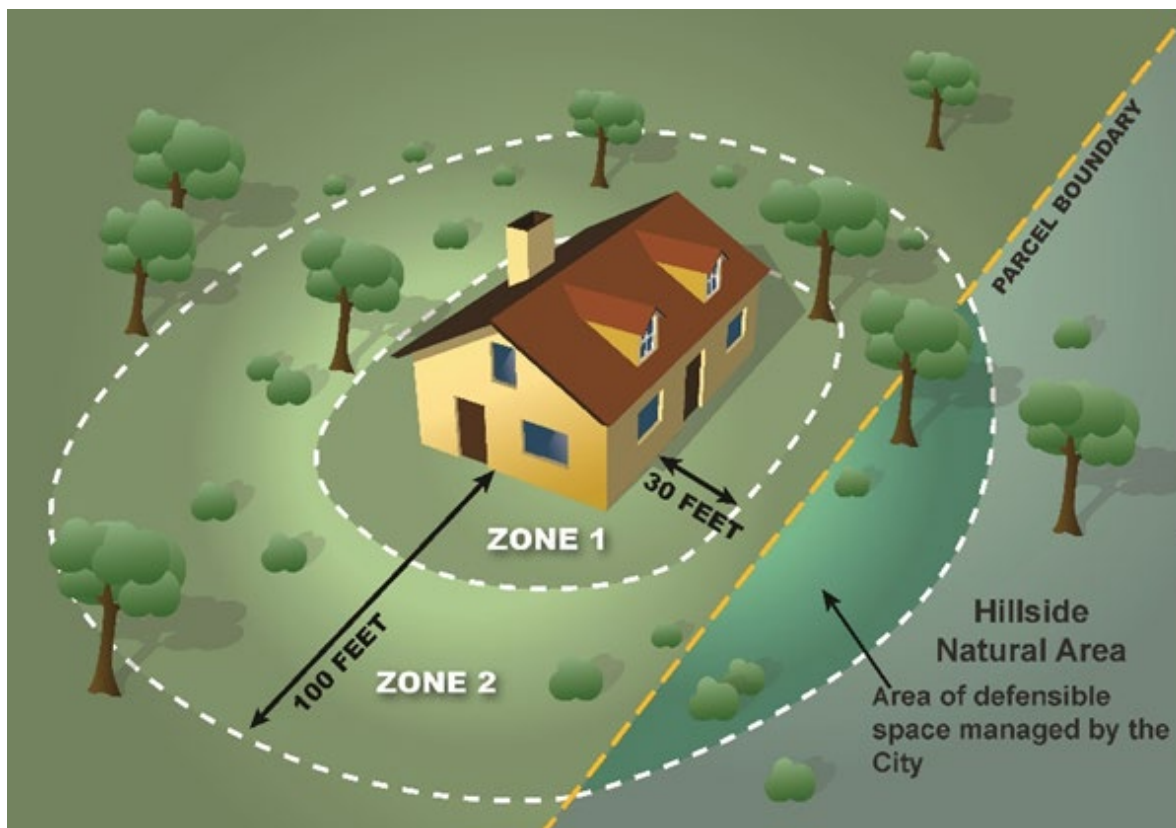


Figure 15: Defensible Space Diagram

Several private property owners adjacent to the HNA have requested funding through Measure X, a Contra Costa County fund that is intended to increase wildfire resiliency.¹⁵ Residents are offered the opportunity to identify and apply for projects that will reduce overall exposure to wildfire risk

¹⁴ https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB63.

¹⁵ <https://www.cccfpd.org/wildfire-mitigation-program/>.

countywide. Several landowners have implemented work in the HNA along the borders of their properties. These are located on the eastern side of the HNA, between King Court and Duke Court.

Implementation of this Action is led by the El Cerrito Fire Department. Anticipated costs are estimated to be medium.

Priority

Highest

Location

The highest flame lengths predicted with the northwest wind are in the southeastern portion of HNA South, the northeastern quadrant of HNA North, and a section of the western part of the Madera property, as well as areas outside all three sections of the HNA along boundaries with the surrounding community. Portions of the HNA where residential structures are closer than 100 feet from the HNA boundary will be the main target for creating extended defensible space (e.g., Kent Court, Douglas Drive, Wildwood Place, Navellier Street, and Park Vista).

Prescription

The City will manage defensible space clearing and vegetation management in those portions of the HNA that are 100 feet or less from a dwelling structure on an adjacent lot and will seek other funding opportunities where Measure X funds are not applicable. Work to be conducted includes (1) the removal of all dead plants and dry vegetation exceeding 4 inches in height,¹⁶ not including San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat nests; (2) removal of high-fuel-volume trees that are at risk of falling on buildings¹⁷; and (3) pruning of “legacy trees” that are structurally sound to a height of 8–10 feet above ground. All work will be confined to the City-owned HNA lands. In addition, the City will support and assist homeowners in applying for and implementing vegetation management on their parcels within 100 feet of residential structures. The City will promote Contra Costa County Measure X as a funding source for private property owners to manage the portion of their properties, including the replacement of combustible wooden fences with non-combustible material.

Appendix G details the types of work that should be accomplished to create defensible space within the HNA (and on privately owned parcels adjacent to the HNA).

ACTION 2: ESTABLISH SHADED FUEL BREAKS

Fuel breaks are a strip or block of land on which vegetation, debris, and detritus have been reduced and/or modified to control or diminish the risk of the spread of fire crossing the strip or block of

¹⁶ Excessive complete removal of ground-level vegetation could expose large areas of mineral soil, which are prone to invasion of undesired weeds. Nest structures of San Francisco dusky-footed woodrats will be flagged by the biologist in pre-activity surveys and shall not be removed.

¹⁷ Snags that do not pose a risk of falling on fences or structures may be retained as habitat for woodpeckers, bats, and cavity-nesting birds.

land. Fuel breaks provide opportunities for fire suppression resources to slow fire spread or halt the progression of a fire and are therefore an essential element in creating defensible space zones between homes and open space areas. Fuel breaks provide opportunities for firefighting success under less extreme fire weather conditions by providing areas of lower fire line intensities, improved firefighter access, and enhanced fire line production rate. Establishment of shaded fuel breaks along the entire perimeter of the HNA is the responsibility of the City. Where defensible space clearance (Action 1) extends from private property into the HNA, defensible space creation has priority over shaded fuel break establishment, as it requires vegetation management at a higher fire safety standard.

Priority

High

Location

Most of the HNA is predicted to burn with torching fire, especially where tall trees and a well-developed understory are present. Reducing the risk of torching and active crown fires through implementation of fuel breaks also reduces the ember cast. Fuel breaks are strips of managed vegetation that are most effective when they are located in places where the fire naturally slows down (e.g., along streams and ridgetops) or where vehicular access can increase the effectiveness of fire crews. Fuel breaks extend defensible space. They will be established around the entire perimeter of the HNA, beginning at the property line and extending inward, with priority given to areas where high fuel loads occur in close proximity to neighboring parcels. These include ridgetops at Motorcycle Hill, the Madera property, and HNA South within the wildland-urban interface. See Figure 16 for locations of potential fuel breaks.

Shaded Fuel Breaks and Managed Vegetation Areas

Shaded fuel breaks create defensible space to be used by fire suppression resources to reduce the hazard of wildland fires. Typically, shaded fuel breaks are coupled with access trails and roads to allow firefighters immediate vehicular access. In areas where there are no roads or fire trails due to steep terrain or other constraints, managed vegetation areas extend defensible space and can serve similar functions in slowing the progression of fire to residential structures. Whether there are fuel breaks or vegetation management areas, the intent of fuel treatment is to reduce the intensity of a fire as it burns into the managed area. The *Best Management Practices Guidebook for Hazardous Fuel Treatments in Contra Costa County* (Diablo Firesafe Council 2009) is an excellent resource for developing site-specific prescriptions for shaded fuel breaks and other vegetation management actions.

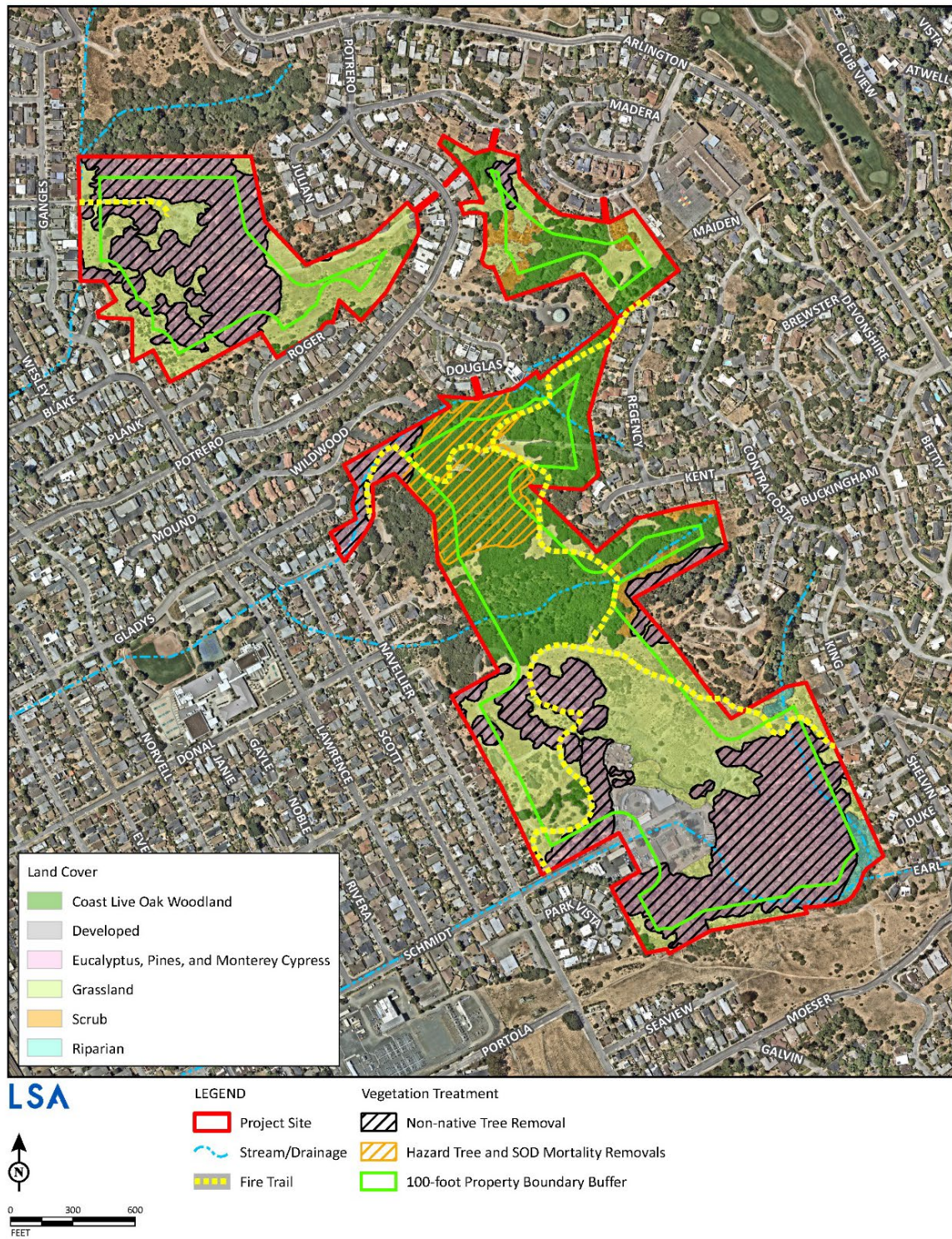


Figure 16: Vegetation Treatment Areas of the HNA

The desired fire behavior is a surface fire, burning low vegetation and leaf duff. To create this fire behavior, only trees with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of 6 inches or more are retained, ladder fuels (fuels that enable a fire to climb to an overstory tree or canopy) are removed, and tree or brush canopies are pruned or trimmed so that the contiguous fuels arrangement is interrupted. A shaded fuel break does not remove all vegetation in the treatment area. Instead, it retains a portion of the canopy of native tree species. Fuels that provide vertical continuity, thereby allowing a fire to spread from the ground to the canopy, are called “ladder fuels.” Shaded fuel break treatments remove ladder fuels and invasive species, such as eucalyptus. “Fuel breaks typical have well-spaced, large sized “dominate” trees; a low number of trees per acre (e.g. 50 trees/acre - < 100 sq. feet. of basal area); few understory smaller trees; high “height to live crown” distance; less than 10 percent cover of brush arranged in isolated groups; and low levels of snags and down logs”(NRCS 2020).¹⁸ The target horizontal distance between residual trees ranges from 20 feet between trunks up to 8–15 feet between tree crown drip lines. Larger overstory trees (> 6 inches DBH) count as residual trees. To reduce ladder fuels, low-growing native vegetation will be retained and kept to a height of 5 feet or less, provided there is horizontal separation between plants of three to five times the height of the residual plants and the residual plants are not within the drip lines of an overstory tree. It is recommended that the majority of the HNA have a 100 feet wide shaded fuel break from property lines, but widths will vary depending on the steepness of the terrain, the presence of a drainage, or other topographic features that may prohibit a full width of 100 feet. Especially on the steep, west-facing section along the boundary, shaded fuel breaks may reach up to 300 feet to account for potential extreme fire behavior on these steep slopes.

Prescription

Implementation consists of removing or pruning trees, shrubs, brush, and other vegetative growth as prescribed. All work will be accomplished by the use of hand crews and/or mechanical equipment, supported by chippers and/or burning as determined appropriate on a case-by-case basis. It is recommended that the work be done using contracted services. The preferred width of a shaded fuel break along a ridge top or adjacent to one is approximately 100 feet from property lines where vehicular access is available. Where eucalyptus trees of any size are located within a shaded fuel break, these will be removed by felling and subsequent stump treatments to prevent resprouting. Eucalyptus trees will be removed from the site to be burned, chipped, or used as logs elsewhere. All slash (small logs and branches) and cut material larger than 6 inches should be removed from the site.

Slash may be chipped or piled and burned during periods of low fire danger. Larger native overstory trees (> 6 inches DBH) count as residual trees and, in order to reduce ladder fuels, shall have vegetation within their drip lines removed. However, larger hazardous snags or heavily damaged trees may also be removed if their vitality is low. Trees up to the 6-inch DBH class can be removed under this prescription, although individual trees under 6 inches DBH may be retained for diversity if they do not endanger project objectives. It is advantageous to have an arborist decide which trees

¹⁸ Snags that do not pose a risk of falling on fences or structures may be retained as habitat for woodpeckers, bats, and cavity-nesting birds.

are to be removed; trees will be marked accordingly prior to the start of operations. Access to shaded fuel breaks will be on foot and by ATV where trails, slope, and soil conditions allow.

Shaded fuel break treatments allow managers to retain a high species diversity of individual younger, middle-aged, and older plants, which allows the opportunity for an unevenly aged vegetative type without compromising project objectives. For example, young saplings of individual oaks may be retained because, despite their smaller diameter, these trees do not contribute to undesired fire behavior effects. Understory fuels over 1 foot in height are to be removed, creating vertical separation and low horizontal continuity of fuels. However, grass need not be mowed in a fuel break. If mowed annually, native perennial grasses would not survive. Mowing heights for grasslands should not be lower than 4 inches to prevent “scalping” of native perennial bunchgrasses and desirable forbs. Mowing heights may need to be adjusted on a site-specific basis. Generally, they should range from 4 to 6 inches above ground level to favor native plants. Spot treatment (mowing of especially dense and tall patches of annual grasses) may be adequate to produce the desired fire behavior. Mowing can also reduce the seed drop of annuals if achieved prior to seed maturity and carried out over several years.

Individual specimens of rare or desirable native species (e.g., flowering/nectar sources, such as shrubs) may be retained within a shaded fuel break provided there is a horizontal separation between plants of three to five times the height of the residual plants and the residual plants are not within the drip lines of an overstory tree. Additionally, it may be necessary to cull individual stems over the desired diameter in order to improve forest health, especially where heavy leaf litter fall and dense canopies create risk of undesired fire behavior. Typically, managing vegetation in this manner also provides greater opportunities for pollinators through creation and maintenance of an open woodland with a variety of flowering vegetation.

Site-specific prescriptions may be developed for individual sections of the HNA. In non-forested areas (i.e., coastal scrub), it is desirable to remove as much brush as possible within the fuel break area (see the standards for expanded defensible space in Appendix G). However, if individual plants are desired to be left, the plants should be left with the following characteristics: young plants less than 5 feet tall and individual or pairs of plants that are no more than 5 feet wide. The distance between residual plants shall be three to five times the height of the residual plants: three times the height distance for slopes less than 30 percent, and five times for slopes equal to or greater than 30 percent. The width of the fuel break shall be 100–300 feet, where feasible. All grasses are to be maintained no lower than 4 inches in height near the access points, trails, and public recreation spots (picnic sites, benches, etc.). However, sites revegetated with native perennials or those containing native perennial grasses (e.g., needlegrasses) should not be mowed frequently. Shaded fuel breaks should be maintained to the above standards based on regular monitoring and inspection. It is anticipated that some shrub and sapling removal will be needed every 3–5 years. In addition, overstory trees may require pruning or removal based on hazard assessments.

Prior to implementing a shaded fuel break project, appropriately timed surveys for special-status species and important native plants shall be conducted. Fuel break projects shall not be implemented where:

- Nesting birds or bats may be using tree or shrub canopies;
- Monarch butterflies are potentially breeding or overwintering; and
- Threatened and endangered plant species may be adversely affected.

Mitigation measures for the timing of pre-activity surveys, BMPs, worker training, and activity implementation windows must be developed as part of the CEQA compliance document (IS/MND) and strictly enforced.

Where feasible and acceptable by stakeholders, prescribed broadcast burning can be an excellent tool in maintaining fuel breaks that have been established. Prescribed burns produce low-intensity surface fires that are intended to control vegetation in shaded fuel breaks by reducing fuel loads and/or maintaining a targeted vegetation community. The City has no intention of implementing prescribed burning at this time. However, it may provide an effective way of maintaining fuel breaks in the future. In a prescribed burn, the fire burns along the surface without significant movement into overstory vegetation, with short flame lengths. Typically, prescribed broadcast burning uses existing roads and trails as fire containment lines; otherwise, fire containment lines are constructed using manual or mechanical treatments. In some cases, vegetation may be trimmed, thinned, or removed manually by prescribed herbivory, hand crews, or mechanical equipment in advance of burning. Prescribed broadcast burning may be used where other activities are not feasible because of rocky soils, steep slopes, or irregular terrain. This activity is used only during conditions under which the risk of losing control of the burn is extremely low and when air quality conditions permit. However, given the amount of work and effort required to acquire a smoke permit and set up fire engines, a larger area should be burned, with the fuel break serving as the top line. The management of the fuel break itself is likely to be done with hand crews, grazers, or machinery since it will need to be done more often.

Required fire suppression equipment (e.g., fire engine[s] and a water tender) would be on site during a prescribed broadcast burn both to bolster already-existing control lines and quickly extinguish any fire that deviated from the burn prescription. The City currently has no plans to implement prescribed burning on a large scale but may consider it in the future. Prescribed burns in the HNA would require the approval of the El Cerrito Fire Department and the preparation of a Burn Plan that includes a Smoke Management Plan (SMP) approved by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). BAAQMD Regulation 5 requires all burn activity to only occur with written approval of an SMP by BAAQMD and to only be conducted on permissive burn days.

Slash and fuel load disposal can be challenging. Due to the risk of spreading forest diseases, wood from oak trees should not be removed from the HNA (eucalyptus logs and firewood may be hauled off site). GSOB larvae remain in cut oak logs and firewood from GSOB-killed trees or green-infested trees, and are a continual threat of further infestation. Transporting infested firewood is likely the most significant pathway for introducing SOD and forest pests into non-infested areas. For possible ways to manage slash and removed fuel loads by chipping or burning, see Action 3.¹⁹

¹⁹ Biomass accumulated as a result of vegetation treatment may be considered to be the treatment contractor's property. The City can require the contractor to propose how each type of material is disposed of and to verify that the oak wood is incinerated (e.g., in an air curtain burner or mobile pyrolysis unit).

Maintenance of grassy or brushy areas can also be accomplished with targeted herbivory. This entails the thoughtful use of livestock to remove foliage and grass to reduce fuel volumes. The type of livestock (usually goats), numbers, timing, and locations of livestock are specified, as is the amount of foliage and grass to be left upon completion. Protection against the spread of invasive species is provided with controlled diet prior to access to the site. Grazing by goats can often achieve significant biomass reduction on steep slopes. When managed well, targeted herbivory is an excellent tool for fuel reduction in areas where no sensitive species or communities exist. In concert with other methods, targeted herbivory is often the only way to effectively manage fine fuels in large areas.

ACTION 3: REMOVE EUCALYPTUS AND NON-NATIVE CONIFERS

It is recommended that the City remove all invasive, flammable tree species from the HNA, with special emphasis and priority on eucalyptus and Monterey pine.

Priority

High-Medium

Location

The areas of highest priority for eucalyptus and pine removal are in locations with the greatest flame lengths and torching risk (see Figures 11–14). As a guidance, the results of the Fire Risk Assessment (Appendix B) suggest that the highest risk emanates from the Quarry Hill and Motorcycle Hill eucalyptus groves (see Figures 11–13).

All existing eucalyptus groves at the HNA should be prioritized for removal as soon as practicable. These priorities include:

1. The eucalyptus stand at Motorcycle Hill;
2. The extensive eucalyptus stand at the southeast rim of the quarry (Quarry Hill grove),
3. Eucalyptus and other non-native trees between Kent Court and Buckingham Drive;
4. Non-native invasive trees on the Madera property; and
5. The Ken Smith eucalyptus grove.

Eucalyptus trees at the Ken Smith Grove are of a lower priority, due to their small stand size and relatively isolated location within the HNA. Planting of small patches of oak saplings under the current canopy of eucalyptus could provide a head start toward stand conversion if saplings can be protected during eucalyptus removal operations. See Figure 17 for the locations and extent of the removal locations. It is recommended to remove eucalyptus trees within 50 feet of watercourses (e.g., along Wildwood Creek) pursuant to a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement or a Routine Maintenance Agreement to be authorized by CDFW.

It is suggested to implement the first eucalyptus removal at Motorcycle Hill because it is easier to plan a selective cutting (leave oaks) while felling trees to the road. Placing an air curtain burner or pyrolysis unit at the former reservoir site could be advantageous in disposing of slash, bark, and midsized trees. Once the area has been cleared, removal of the remaining invasive trees at Motorcycle Hill (the south hillslope) is easier to accomplish. Trees could be skidded or winched



LSA

LEGEND

- Project Site
- Stream/Drainage
- Vehicle Accessible Trail
- Foot+Bike or Foot-only Trail
- Recommended to be made Vehicle Accessible
- Non-native Trees
- ★ Landing/Processing Site



0 300 600
FEET

SOURCE: LSA (2023, 2024); Wildland Res Mgt (02/2024); Contra Costa County (05/2024); Nearmap (07/2023).

Figure 17: Non-native Trees and Landings/Processing Sites

downhill, or some logs could remain on the slope. Slash could be burned on site or removed via air curtain burner or pyrolysis unit. In addition, all saplings or stump resprouts of any eucalyptus or pine species should be removed at any time.

In a second phase, all eucalyptus and pine trees at the quarry should be removed. Stands south and east of the Recycling Center at Quarry Hill are of the second-highest priority, as they are in steep terrain exposed to westerly winds. Starting from the existing fuel break and the grassland near the powerline, a selective cut (leaving all native trees) would progress uphill. Logs and slash could be skidded or winched downhill and removed/burned.

No removal of oaks or other native trees is anticipated unless they pose a hazard to logging crews or recreationists.

Prescription

The primary goal of eucalyptus and non-native conifer removal from the HNA is to reduce the extreme fire risk associated with these highly flammable species and to achieve a comprehensive site restoration toward native-dominated natural, vegetation communities. Eucalyptus groves and stands at the HNA consist of trees of many different ages. Removal strategies are complex, as they involve felling very tall, dense trees onto a forest floor littered with strips of bark, leaf debris, and often a field of stumps. Stand removal involves the removal of all standing trees and preventing resprouting from the stump. For each stand removal project, a detailed prescription will be required as part of the contract bid solicitation. It is recommended to consult with qualified logging and vegetation management operators prior to developing bid packets to ensure that prescriptions are cost-effective, feasible, and attractive to potential bidders. At a minimum, prescriptions shall entail the following considerations:

- **Equipment Staging and Landings:** Equipment would be staged, fueled, and maintained at landings or fire roads while contractors are mobilized (Figure 17). Additional landings may be created when the distance from a tree patch to an existing landing exceeds 1,000 feet. However, all material stockpiling and staging areas would be located in existing rights-of-way or at designated disturbed/developed areas. Landings are typically needed to sort, store, and chip cut trees into mulch and spread or remove the material. A flat landing area is typically used for yarding operations, temporary stacking, loading, and trucking logs or brush off the treated site. When possible, landings and skid trails will be located in areas that already provide vehicular access, along pre-existing grades or in areas that have been disturbed. As previously described, limited areas suitable for landings and skid roads exist in the HNA, possibly requiring new landings or access roads to be created. Minor grading and clearing would be required to establish the landings. It is anticipated that at least one landing each is needed at Motorcycle Hill and at Quarry Hill. As conditions permit, removals would be conducted throughout the year, taking into consideration specific avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures (e.g., nesting season, bat roosts). In steep areas (Motorcycle Hill and Quarry Hill) heavy wire cables powered by diesel-driven winches or a skyline high-lead system may be used to transport felled logs to a central landing site without the use of rubber-tired or tracked skidders. Alternatively, felled trees up to approximately 24 inches DBH would be hauled by rubber-tired or tracked skidders along paths/skid trails to landings in the project area.

- **Fell and Remove Standing Trees:** Felling different-sized trees requires specialized skills and equipment. Trees may need to be removed in stages. Smaller trees may be cut first to make room for felling the larger ones. The native understory would be protected by flagging or high-visibility fencing to indicate where a felling path should be avoided. While some limited damage to native understory is unavoidable, treatment contractors must ensure that roots of native shrub and grass species will remain in place to regrow.

The largest eucalyptus trees are 72" (6 feet) or more in diameter. Tree cutting will be achieved with chainsaws, using a directional dropping technique. Once trees are felled, they will be limbed (branches cut flush with the stem) to prevent projections hindering the skidding process. Felled trees would be either: (1) chipped or lopped and scattered on fire roads, and logs retained as a component of sediment/erosion control measures and to contribute to wildlife habitat and long-term soil productivity; (2) removed from the site to prevent contribution to excessive fuel buildup and future difficulty of control; or (3) combinations of these, as appropriate. Large trees may be cut into 6–12 foot sections when designated to remain on site or to facilitate ease of handling by smaller skidders. Some logs would be placed so that they help control sediment and erosion or support wildlife habitat. The branches would be lopped and scattered after felling. This method would also be used when it is impractical to skid a tree to the chipper. In these cases, the downed tree would be cut by chainsaws such that all portions of the tree would come into contact with the ground or within 24 inches of it.

Where some adult eucalyptus or non-native conifers are located too close to existing dwelling structures to be felled, and where sectional removal is not feasible, select individual eucalyptus may be retained as part of a shaded fuel break in rare occasions. In that case, stand thinning and extensive pruning of lower branches will be needed to accomplish the fuel reduction objectives. An example of such treatments exists at the end of King Court. By selectively removing smaller-diameter trees, the remaining large trees are widely spaced. All ladder fuels will be removed. Additional pruning of large retained trees may be required to provide the necessary ground clearance. Maintaining a shaded fuel break under mature trees requires frequent maintenance and removal of surface fuels, including shed bark and leaf litter.

Costs associated with maintaining fuel breaks where mature eucalyptus trees are present are anticipated to be higher due to the accumulation of leaf and bark litter and the frequent resprouting of eucalyptus seedlings. Thus, this plan recommends removal of all eucalyptus where possible to reduce recurring maintenance costs and intervals.

- **Erosion Control:** Trees within 50 feet of watercourses (e.g., along Wildwood Creek) would not be removed as part of this action. If control of non-native or hazard trees within the riparian buffer is required later, these will be accomplished pursuant to a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement or a Routine Maintenance Agreement to be authorized by CDFW. Erosion control BMPs, identified by the San Francisco Bay RWQCB,²⁰ would be implemented to control erosion during and after vegetation removal. Riparian areas shall be separated and protected from the

²⁰ See https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/planningtmdls/basinplan/web/bp_ch4c.html#4.19.

work area through silt fencing, amphibian/reptile-friendly fiber rolls (i.e., no monofilament mesh), or other appropriate erosion control material. Materials staging and all other project-related activity shall be located as far as possible from riparian areas, with no off-road driving or parking of vehicles or equipment within the drip line of a riparian tree.

- **Native Understory and Sensitive Natural Communities Protection:** Although native plants are typically sparse in the understory of eucalyptus, there are some native shrubs and herbaceous plants present within all eucalyptus stands at the HNA. Native vegetation shall not be removed, although some may be unavoidably damaged or destroyed in the tree removal process. The roots of native understory vegetation may serve as a binder to hold the soil in place after the removal of the overstory. A qualified biologist or arborist shall flag rare or otherwise important shrubs and herbaceous plants prior to tree removal activities and ensure the flagging remains throughout the duration of the project. These plants shall be avoided if feasible. To minimize disturbance to riparian habitat occurring adjacent to treatment areas, riparian areas shall be clearly delineated by a qualified biologist. If feasible, the proposed fuel treatments shall avoid/minimize impacts to the purple needlegrass grasslands and other sensitive natural communities.
- **Stump Treatments:** The initial cut is usually at 1 to 2 feet off the ground. All stumps are later “flush cut” as close to the ground as possible. To prevent resprouting, stumps will be ground to the tree root collar where accessible, to minimize the use of herbicides. Where inaccessible, a qualified licensed pest control applicator will apply an herbicide solution to the cambium layer of the freshly cut tree stump within a few minutes of felling. The herbicide mixture will likely consist of a combination of Garlon 4 Ultra (triclopyr), Stalker (imazapyr), and/or RoundUp (glyphosate²¹) in a solution of methylated seed oil, water, or other product as indicated and acceptable by the product label, and marking dye (e.g., Hi-Light). All chemical applications will be conducted per the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) pesticide guidance. All cut tree stumps would receive semiannual follow-up treatment of herbicides. Semiannual follow-up treatments would involve strictly controlled low-volume foliar spray mix applied to any resprouted foliage after the resprout reaches 3 feet in height but before it reaches 6 feet in height. In this maintenance phase, cut stubble or foliar application (by hand sprayer) would be made to resprouted stumps.

Where herbicide application is not recommended (e.g., riparian areas, near seeps or rare plants), tarping of stumps may be applicable. Tarping uses light deprivation and a physical barrier to prevent resprouting. This involves stapling heavy black plastic over the stump and burying it with duff, wood chips, and mulch on site. Any emergent sprouts must be cut by hand as soon as possible (at least every year) to deprive the stump of nutrients and prevent regrowth of the tree.

- **Slash and Log Chipping:** Where feasible, eucalyptus and pine logs will be removed from the treatment area, but it is possible that in some situations logs larger than 6 inches in diameter may be left on the ground to deteriorate naturally. Trees 24 inches in diameter or smaller can be chipped. Chipping involves grinding vegetation debris into small pieces that can be transported

²¹ Note that the City of El Cerrito has currently a moratorium on the use of glyphosate. Thus, any glyphosate use will require City approval under special circumstances.

off site for other uses such as composting or burning to produce electricity. At the landings, trees would be chipped using a grapple-fed chipper or a tracked chipper. The largest chippers can easily process 24-inch-diameter trees. Trees would be fed into the chippers whole and pulled through the masticating blades by means of a conveyor belt and feed wheel. Alternatively, the tracked chipper may be driven to downed trees on moderate slopes, rather than having the trees first moved to a landing area. Trees with diameters larger than 24 inches comprise the material that would be hauled.

The wood chips from the chippers are expected to be 1 to 4 inches in size. Retained chips may be scattered on the site to protect fragile soils during the operation. Chips may be spread with an average depth ranging from 4 to 24 inches, depending on site slope, proximity to watercourses, and viability of deposition from the chute of the chipper. The areal coverage of wood chips is not expected to exceed 20 percent of the project site (if a tracked chipper is used) and would be less than 15 percent if chipping is confined to roadways and landings. Chips spread over uneven terrain (such as in natural depressions or around stumps) may also have a greater depth when the finished surface is raked to follow the general contour of the slope.

However, CAL FIRE is typically opposed to deep chips in vegetation treatment areas and fuel breaks because once they ignite, they are hard to extinguish. However, chips could be used to advantage along hauling routes, fire trails and recreation spots at greater depths, where native grass and shrub restoration is not desired. Mulching on site often may also provide weed or erosion control by covering loose, recently disturbed soil. Chips generated by the vegetation treatments could also be used to create skid roads in lieu of cutting into the soil because the mechanical skidders can travel atop the level chip bed, thus avoiding excavation and soil disturbance in many locations. When the chips decompose (at an estimated rate of 4 to 7 inches per year), the contour of the slope is expected to reappear as it existed prior to logging, with less evidence of skid road creation and a more natural-appearing landscape. An alternative to chipping is the use of an air-curtain burner that reduces smoke and pollution during the burn process or a mobile pyrolysis unit that creates biochar, an effective fertilizer.

- **Repurposing of Logs:** Especially larger-diameter logs could be repurposed for outdoor, residential, or commercial uses. Repurposing is a sustainable urban forestry practice for felled trees to be managed for their whole of lifecycle to maximize the environmental, social, and economic returns. Tree repurposing enables the use of logs for habitat or milling them into lengths of timber for furniture making or mulching them to return nutrients to the soil and create habitat. Existing benches have been crafted from felled eucalyptus at the HNA in the past. There is a vibrant repurposing of eucalyptus wood currently ongoing in the Bay Area. For example, at the Tam Valley Community Services District between Mill Valley and Sausalito, a grove of 22 eucalyptus trees were removed for fire safety reasons and repurposed as hardwood flooring material, art pieces, and landscape timbers. A wood repurposing program by the City of Mill Valley used eucalyptus logs for the Dipsea Stairway replacement program. The Albany Hill Eucalyptus Project involves finding ways to reuse and repurpose eucalyptus removed from Albany Hill. In 2022, the City of Albany also contracted with a local Bay Area lumber operator to mill three large trees into over 2,000 linear feet of lumber, which was then used by the Urban Tilth Watershed Stewardship Field Crew to build retaining walls and railings along the oak

woodland trail. Even fallen branches were used to address erosion and trail maintenance. The project lowers greenhouse gas emissions and costs from transporting the logs and branches to waste collection centers.

- **Pyrolysis:** An alternative to chipping logs is the use of air curtain burners or mobile pyrolysis units that produce biochar. Biochar is a stable solid rich in carbon that is made from organic waste material or biomass that is partially combusted in the presence of limited oxygen. Designed as a pollution control device for open burning, these machines reduce smoke particles as they are trapped and reburned, reducing them to an acceptable limit per United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines. The greatest benefit of the air curtain burning is the removal of large logs, but slash can be included too.
- **Prescribed Burning:** Prescribed burning is the intentional application of fire in a pre-defined, specific location under prescriptive conditions of fuels, weather, and other variables. Prescribed burning includes broadcast burning of vegetation and pile burning. In pile burning, cut brush, tree branches, and tops are piled and burned under prescribed and permitted conditions. This is a very cost-effective way of removing slash. In situations where the mulch generated by chipping cannot be used on the site, pile burning is the preferred treatment of removing slash. Slash can also be loaded into an air curtain burner along with the boles of larger trees. Prescribed burning requires careful planning and controlled conditions. Smoke from controlled burns can be a nuisance to residents and businesses, and it can adversely impact community health by contributing to existing pollution. Controlling where the smoke will go is an important part of every prescribed burn. If not carefully managed, smoke may exceed air quality standards. California's smoke management program is based on the Smoke Management Guidelines adopted by the California Air Resources Board. In addition, BAAQMD²² requires the submission of an SMP through the Prescribed Fire Information Reporting System (PFIRS; <https://ssl.arb.ca.gov/pfirs>) at least 30 days prior to burning. If the SMP is approved, an approval letter will be uploaded to PFIRS and the land manager will receive an automatic notification email indicating that the SMP is approved. The SMP must be approved by BAAQMD prior to burning. In addition, a burn permit must be provided by the local fire agency and/or CAL FIRE prior to conducting a prescribed burn.
- **Seedlings:** Non-native tree seedlings emerging from the latent seed stock in the project area would be managed over time to prevent recolonization of these invasive species (see Action 6).

ACTION 4: MANAGE A SUSTAINABLE SYSTEM OF FIRE ROADS AND TRAILS

Paved public access roads to the HNA include several residential streets and courts surrounding the HNA (Figure 10). These provide the primary access routes used by vegetation treatment personnel for maintenance and emergency vehicle access during a fire or other public emergency. It is recommended to increase the City's capacity for emergency access and to effectively maintain firebreaks, manage fuel loads, and to enhance environmental benefits by maintaining a network of

²² More information regarding prescribed burning can be found on the BAAQMD website, <https://www.baaqmd.gov/permits/open-burn>, or by calling the Open Burn Line at (415) 749-4600.

vehicle-accessible fire roads. Having sufficient access for fire suppression equipment (e.g., fire engine[s] and a water tender) would be required prior to implementing prescribed broadcast burns. Many fire road improvements can be planned in parallel with implementing fuel treatments (and funded through implementation grants). While the primary goal is to provide service and emergency access, it is recommended that improvements also include enhancements of existing trails that are accessible to a broad audience, including some Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant sections and trails that may provide opportunities for education and interpretation.

Priority

High-Medium

Location

The current fire road and trail conditions report (Appendix 4) defines the quality and location of all trails in the system. The existing fire road and trail system have been captured on a base map that identifies access points, existing trail alignment, and proposed new fire roads and trails (Figure 10).

Prescription

- **Fire Access Needs and Priorities:** Existing fire roads should be widened and recontoured where necessary to provide vehicle access to treatment areas, as well as for emergency vehicle and maintenance access. Improved fire roads will be designed pursuant to applicable standards for wildland fire apparatus access roads (e.g., 75,000 lbs. Gross Vehicular Weight Rating [GVWR]). Dead-end roads are to be avoided, but turnarounds are necessary in a few locations. It is recommended that all fire access roads be gated and closed to public vehicular use, except for wheelchairs (where applicable) and bicycles. An access point shall be provided from a road or driveway and consist of transition by means of a curb cut. Details of each fire access road segment may also be developed in parallel with designing fuels treatments and eucalyptus removal activities. The main emphasis of fire road improvements are:
 - Improve/widen fire road access at the Potrero Avenue Motorcycle Hill entrance and the King Court HNA South entrance (Ridge Trail Fire Road).
 - Add vehicular access along the Lower Snowden (Castro) Trail alignment and provide a turnaround.
 - Convert the Ken Smith trail into a fire road with a turnaround.
 - Improve existing roads to enhance emergency equipment response, including widening, spaced turnouts, turnarounds, and road base application that supports a 75,000 lb apparatus (GVWR).
- **Recreational Trails.** It is recommended that the City work with different user groups (e.g., hikers, bikers, trail runners, wheelchair users) to ensure that trails serve the widest possible user spectrum (i.e., multi-use trails). Designation of the road and trail system and

subsequent management actions will occur through transparent and collaborative decision-making processes. Trail improvements will consider the following key elements:

- **Trail Classification:** The placement of trails into classes is determined with specific criteria that can be used to evaluate trails individually as well as comparatively. Classifying a trail system requires input from staff and the public that are knowledgeable about the facilities, transportation routes, circulation patterns, and trail usage. Trails may be categorized by the type of use allowed. In addition to “accessible” or “non-accessible,” trails are assigned a use designation as pedestrian, bicycle, multi-use and wheelchair-accessible. Design specifications for bike trails are used as the standard for construction and maintenance.
- **Segmentation:** Prior to assigning trail attributes (e.g., road or trail, use type, classification), trails on the base map are divided into segments based on trailheads, intersections, and trail ends. Segmenting the trail enables trail program managers to break the trail into manageable pieces and efficiently identify the unique characteristics of that portion of trail.
- **Trail Standards:** Trail construction and maintenance standards may vary with trail classification and use characterization. Visitor safety, resource protection, and trail investment concerns are primary considerations. The City may also designate wheelchair-accessible trail segments where slope and surface conditions permit. In general, all fire roads will have slopes not exceeding 10 percent. Stream crossings will be minimized and will require additional permitting. Recreational trail structures such as bridges and steps will require a minimum design standard and maintenance schedules, while trail beds along a steep slope or hazardous area should be wider to provide greater safety for users. Trail and road improvements will adhere to the following standards:
 - Impacts to the natural environment from the road and trail system will be avoided, minimized, or mitigated to acceptable conditions under CEQA and other applicable local, State, and federal environmental laws and regulations.
 - Trails will be situated at adequate distances from streams to protect riparian and aquatic habitat and wildlife corridors. New roads and road fill slopes will be outside riparian areas except at stream crossings. Spoil from road construction will be deposited outside riparian areas, and special care will be taken to stabilize soil surfaces.
 - Where possible, trails will use existing trail alignments to reach vista points and other scenic attractions of the HNA. Roads and trails will be designed so that their surfaces, grades, cross gradients, sight distances, width, curves, vegetation clearance, and other specifications are consistent with anticipated uses. The City will strive to provide multiple points of entry to the HNA, to maximize available parking capacity, and to avoid concentrating access.
 - Construction, maintenance, and enforcement responsibilities related to the road and trail system will be financially feasible.

- Management actions will include notifications for private property and adjacent property owners and land uses.
- **Recreation Infrastructure:** Recreation infrastructure, such as resting spots, benches, bicycle parking, and signage, facilitates both visitor enjoyment and management of public access. Consistency with the El Cerrito Trails Signage Plan (2016) should be maintained. Planned recreation infrastructure should be thoroughly discussed with local stakeholders. An adoption program for trails and infrastructure elements may provide additional community engagement and maintenance support.
- **Sustainability and Maintenance Needs:** Due to their location on the landform, some trails can be difficult to maintain or sustain in the future. These trails may be classified as temporary trails. Trail closures for certain uses and seasons should also be considered to reduce maintenance and public risk. Landings, skid trails, and other temporary access trails needed for removal of eucalyptus could be revegetated after the tree removal is complete and no further mechanized access is needed.²³ Trails required to provide continued access for vegetation maintenance, firefighting, and emergency vehicles are permanent trails. New permanent trails (and fire roads) should be designed and constructed so they do not adversely affect natural and cultural resources. Trails also should not disrupt or alter the natural hydraulic flow patterns of the landform. Finally, trails are designed and constructed to withstand the impacts of the intended uses and the natural elements (e.g., the impact of 25- to 50-year storms) while receiving only routine cyclical maintenance. Eroded segments occur on the Live Oak Trail, and the Forest Brown Fire Road, Navellier Fire Road, and Ridge Trail Fire Road require maintenance to ensure continued vehicular use.
- **Avoidance of Sensitive Resources.** Purple needlegrass, soap root, and other herbaceous and ephemeral species have been observed along the Motorcycle Hill Trail, Ridge Fire Road, Live Oak Trail, Lower Trail, and Madera-Julian Trail and will need to be avoided. San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat houses were observed to the north of the end of Snowden Avenue and just north of Regency Court. Drainages and creeks are regulated under RWQCB jurisdiction, and riparian areas are regulated under CDFW jurisdiction. Riparian trees such as alders and cottonwoods can be found along the Ridge Fire Road adjacent to the Forest Brown Fire Road. Riparian willows were observed nearby the 3 feet V-ditch at the Ridge Fire Road and at the southern edge of the HNA tree line, southwest of Earl Court. Riparian eucalyptus trees can be found north of the intersection between the Navellier Fire Road and the Wildwood Creek Trail.

²³ Temporary trails could be created entirely of wood chips (see Action 3).

ACTION 5: ACTIVELY MANAGE THREATS TO NATIVE OAK SPECIES

Priority

High-Medium

Location

Throughout the existing oak woodlands at HNA.

Prescription

Best Management Practices. There is currently no effective way to control SOD or eliminate it from an affected woodland. SOD is present at the HNA but has not reached a level of high infestation to date. However, with increasing climate stress, SOD could become an existential threat to the oak woodlands of the HNA. Implementing BMPs has been proven to effectively prevent or reduce the adverse effects of *P. ramorum*. BMPs in wildlands and urban-interface zones include limiting movement of host material or infested soil.²⁴ Possible treatments include manipulating forest stands by pruning, host removal, thinning, and other actions to reduce the incidence and impact of *P. ramorum*. California bay laurel removal (sporulating hosts of *P. ramorum*), in combination with pile and broadcast burning, has been suggested as a viable management practice (Valachovic et al. 2008). California bay laurel removals and burning of infected wood on site are proactive and precautionary measures intended to help reduce the spread of the pathogen by reducing inoculum. In infested areas, it is recommended to leave infested material on site, chipping the small material for use as ground cover and using larger pieces for firewood. Removing plant debris from the site is not recommended. Individual California bay laurel and coast live oak trees display differential levels of resistance to *P. ramorum* (Hüberli et al. 2002). Therefore, the complete removal of all bay laurel trees within the HNA is not recommended. As a precaution against spreading the pathogen, cleaning and disinfecting of all tools, boots, gloves, and vehicles after use on confirmed or suspected infested trees or in known infested areas is highly recommended.

Tree Inventory. Depending on the funding available, the complete inventory of all mature oak and bay laurel trees is an advantageous first step in monitoring the progression of SOD within the HNA. A tree inventory is conducted by a trained biologist, arborist, or forester and includes a record of the location and characteristics of each individual tree. At a minimum, attributes should include tree location, species, size, health condition, tree risk rating, and maintenance needs. All inventoried trees are permanently marked and numbered to facilitate individualized recording of infection and localization of diseased trees. Therefore, the inventory should be linked to a geographic information system (GIS) and updated regularly. If funding is limiting, a tree inventory can be completed over multiple years.

²⁴ The COMTF, at www.suddenoakdeath.org, has compiled BMPs for a number of activities and user groups on wildlands and in urban-interface zones.

ACTION 6: REMOVE INVASIVE SHRUBS AND HERBACEOUS SPECIES

The California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) defines invasive, non-native plant species as non-native to wildland ecosystems but able to spread into them and displace or hybridize with native species, alter biological communities, and alter ecosystem processes. The primary objective of this action is to eradicate or control invasive and/or noxious weeds in treatment areas. Common invasive species at the HNA include acacia, cape ivy, cardoon, cotoneaster, Crofton weed, fennel, French broom, *Hedera* species, thistle, pampas grass, pittosporum, and mayten, eucalyptus, and Monterey pine trees.

Physical control of weeds at the HNA is desirable and achievable. Physical methods of weed control generally are labor intensive and often are used for small populations or where other control methods are inappropriate, such as near sensitive water supplies or habitats. Physical methods can be highly selective, targeting only invasive species, but they can also disturb the soil or damage nearby vegetation, thereby promoting germination and establishment of weedy species. Physical control methods may also produce large amounts of debris, disposal of which is sometimes difficult.

Priority

Medium

Location

Invasive species are found throughout the HNA. It is recommended to design a multi-year process whereby single infestations are targeted first, followed by spot treatments and follow-up maintenance projects. The preferred approach is to work on a small set of species and obtain control on those species before targeting a different set. Prioritization of individual invasive species is dependent on location and therefore should be considered prior to each control action. Typically, prioritization of species will shift over time as site characteristics change, especially after stand removals. Prioritization of species must be carefully considered and should be periodically reevaluated.

Prescription

The most effective weed control matches treatment timing and type with the growth stage of the plant to maximize treatment efficiency. All control should be implemented before seed drop or regeneration happens. An understanding of the biology and ecology of the target species is necessary for long-term management. Invasive species management at the HNA will be implemented using a variety of methods as follows:

- **Hand Labor Treatment:** Hand labor treatment includes methods such as pulling, digging, scraping, cutting, girdling, frilling, or drilling the cambium layer of woody species or mowing grassy species with a string mower. Hand treatment is appropriate for small weed infestations or highly localized infestations. The local stakeholder group Friends of Five Creeks has used volunteer efforts incorporating hand labor treatment with considerable effectiveness, especially for French broom. However, for agencies relying on hired crews or agency staff labor, maintaining these efforts at the landscape scale and for a sustained duration has proven difficult.

The “Bradley Method” (Fuller and Barbe 1985) is a proven methodology for weed management. It works best when the area under control expands at a rate that allows previously treated areas to be monitored and kept in satisfactory condition. It also advocates minimizing damage to native plants and disturbance to the soil so that the natives can thrive and defend against reinvasion. Generally, weed control activities are initiated in stands of native vegetation with the least extent of weed infestation, and progress to stands with the worst weed infestation. Although this work would likely be contracted to a vegetation management firm, some limited supplemental hand work by volunteers is suited for the HNA. The City will continue to work with volunteer organizations interested in participating in weed control at the HNA.

- **Mechanical Treatment:** Mechanical treatments use mechanized equipment to remove above ground vegetation and include mowing and brush cutting, as well as the use of chainsaws, grinders, backhoes, or bulldozers. Mastication is the grinding, shredding, chipping, mulching, or mowing of understory shrubs or small trees, using a front- or boom-mounted rotary head attached to a wheeled or tracked vehicle. These methods are often non-selective in that all vegetation on a treated site is affected. Mechanical treatments are highly effective for controlling clumps of woody or shrubby vegetation on gentle topography with few obstacles such as rocks, stumps, or logs. Most mechanical equipment is not safe to operate on slopes over 30 percent. It is also of limited use where soils are highly susceptible to compaction or erosion or where excessive soil moisture is present. Mowing can prevent fuel buildup (thatch) and seed formation on tall annual and perennial weeds and deplete food reserves of these weeds, but it can also favor low-growing weeds or damage desirable native species. Timing of mowing must be carefully planned to ensure that weeds are mowed prior to seed maturity. Contractors must clean vehicles of contaminated soil, invasive plant seeds, or plant parts before entering the HNA, whenever moving equipment between areas within the HNA, and before leaving the HNA. Vehicle-cleaning areas will be established for this purpose.
- **Prescribed Burning:** Prescribed burning, as described earlier, includes broadcast burns to cover large areas or pile burns to remove cut debris. Cal-IPC has published a manual on the use of fire as a tool for controlling invasive plants.²⁵ The principle of burning to remove invasives is to reduce the seed production of invasives and kill seeds in the soil.
- **Chemical Control:** Herbicides are chemicals that kill or inhibit plant growth; they can be extremely effective tools when used to control certain species. However, the effectiveness of herbicides can vary among sites, species, and climatic conditions. Environmental risks posed by herbicide use include drift, volatilization, persistence in the environment, groundwater contamination, and harmful effects on insects and other animals. In order to minimize these environmental risks, the application of herbicides at the HNA is limited to direct application on eucalyptus tree stumps or other woody invasive species stumps and resprouts (i.e., brushed or injected into the inner bark, cut stems, and stumps [cut stumps]). Herbicide application for widely occurring herbaceous weeds is not recommended without specific cause and City-approved prescription. Application of herbicides in the HNA must be made under direct

²⁵ <https://www.cal-ipc.org/docs/ip/management/UseofFire.pdf>.

supervision and control of a Licensed Applicator pursuant to the CDPR regulations, site-specific methods, and pre-approved by the City Integrate Pest Management Coordinator.

- **Prioritization:** The Cal-IPC CalWeedMapper²⁶ was used to examine which invasive plants are present at the HNA that are a designated management priority by Cal-IPC for the San Pablo Watershed region. Statewide invasive species management priorities include eradication targets (plants that are rare in the region), containment targets (plants that are more widespread), and surveillance targets (plants not in the region but found nearby). Twenty-six invasive plants occurring at the HNA are listed in the Cal-IPC invasive plant priority database. Since all are widespread, they were identified as a containment priority. The highest priority according to Cal-IPC is the containment of jubata grass (*Cortaderia jubata*), pampas grass, and French broom. Only one species is on the watch list (Cootamundra or Bailey's wattle); all others are either of Moderate (n=15) or Limited priority (n=7). When addressing weed management at the HNA, it is recommended to prioritize species with a High to Moderate rating first. Also, it is recommended to prioritize invasive species removal in healthy native plant communities. Table F shows the occurring invasive species and their associated Cal-IPC Rating.

²⁶ <https://weedmap.cal-ipc.org/weedmapper/>.

Table F: Invasive Species Containment Prioritization

Species Name	Common Name	Cal-IPC Rating			
		High	Moderate	Limited	Watch
<i>Acacia baileyana</i>	Cootamundra wattle				1
<i>Acacia dealbata</i>	silver wattle		1		
<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	black acacia			1	
<i>Bellardia trixago</i>	bellardia			1	
<i>Bromus diandrus</i>	ripgut brome		1		
<i>Conium maculatum</i>	poison-hemlock		1		
<i>Cortaderia jubata</i>	jubata grass	1			
<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>	pampas grass	1			
<i>Cotoneaster franchetii</i>	orange cotoneaster		1		
<i>Cotoneaster pannosus</i>	silverleaf cotoneaster		1		
<i>Cynara cardunculus</i>	artichoke thistle		1		
<i>Ehrharta erecta</i>	erect veldtgrass		1		
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	redstem filaree			1	
<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	Tasmanian blue gum		1		
<i>Festuca arundinacea</i>	tall fescue		1		
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	fennel		1		
<i>Genista monspessulana</i>	French broom	1			
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	shortpod mustard		1		
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	rough catsear		1		
<i>Lythrum hyssopifolium</i>	hyssop loosestrife			1	
<i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i>	Bermuda buttercup		1		
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	English plantain			1	
<i>Polypogon monspeliensis</i>	rabbitfoot polypogon			1	
<i>Ricinus communis</i>	castor bean			1	
<i>Torilis arvensis</i>	hedge parsley		1		
<i>Vinca major</i>	big periwinkle		1		
Grand Total		3	15	7	1

Cal-IPC Rating

High: This notation indicates that a plant is included in the CCR Section 4500 list of California State Noxious Weeds. These species have severe ecological impacts on physical processes, plant and animal communities, and vegetation structure. Their reproductive biology and other attributes are conducive to moderate to high rates of dispersal and establishment. Most are widely distributed ecologically.

Moderate: These species have substantial and apparent-but generally not severe-ecological impacts on physical processes, plant and animal communities, and vegetation structure. Their reproductive biology and other attributes are conducive to moderate to high rates of dispersal, though establishment is generally dependent upon ecological disturbance. Ecological amplitude and distribution may range from limited to widespread.

Limited: These species are invasive, but their ecological impacts are minor on a statewide level or there was not enough information to justify a higher score. Their reproductive biology and other attributes result in low to moderate rates of invasiveness. Ecological amplitude and distribution are generally limited, but these species may be locally persistent and problematic.

Alert: An alert is listed on species with high or moderate impacts that have limited distribution in California but may have the potential to spread much further.

Watch: These species have been assessed as posing a high risk of becoming invasive in the future in California.

Source: Cal-IPC weed mapper application. Website: <https://weedmap.cal-ipc.org/weedmapper/>.

Cal-IPC = California Invasive Plant Council

CCR = California Code of Regulations

ACTION 7: RESTORE AND RE-ESTABLISH NATIVE SPECIES

Native plant species are best suited in ecological restoration because they are adapted to local climate and soil conditions, require less management during establishment, and support a broad variety of local animals, microorganisms, and other plants.

Priority

Medium

Location

Native vegetation restoration will be focused in areas where initial invasive species removals are complete and where the existing oak woodland canopy has been opened due to tree death. This includes areas where eucalyptus and conifers were removed, but also shrub and grassland patches throughout the HNA where invasive species and diseased or dead trees have been removed. It is crucial to first remove and control invasive species before attempting to reestablish native species, as broad application of weed control methods may be more difficult once native species have been established.

Prescription

This Plan promotes passive restoration²⁷ of vegetation communities from the existing native seedbank wherever possible. In some cases (e.g., after eucalyptus removals), active restoration of native plants is necessary following invasive plant control. Active restoration includes the initial reintroduction of the native, site-adapted species (grasses and shrubs). Costs of native vegetation community restoration can be high, depending on site characteristics and technical approaches. A list of native plants verified to occur at the HNA can be found in Appendix E. Prioritization of species to restore should be determined after the eucalyptus removal and weed control activities have been completed. Ease of establishment (e.g., seeding), site tolerance, availability of seeds or plugs, susceptibility to herbivory, and other factors may affect the prioritization of native species considered for restoration.

Potential restoration sites can be prioritized according to existing plant resources, site quality, project benefits, and long-term sustainability. These criteria take into account the relationship of the restored area to the landscape in which it exists, and how it will influence or be influenced by existing communities in the HNA.²⁸ The following criteria may be used in deciding restoration priorities:

²⁷ Passive restoration is allowing natural succession to progress in the absence of the previous environmental stressors, such as invasive weeds, eucalyptus overstory, etc. Passive restoration is generally less costly than active restoration.

²⁸ For a detailed plant list by natural community, see the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (2007) publication *Shoreline Plants - A Landscape Guide for The San Francisco Bay* (March 2007), available online at <https://bcd.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/354/2023/09/SPLG.pdf> (accessed July 3, 2024). Also refer to *Fire Resistant Plants for Bayside Areas in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, California*, available online at <https://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Fire-Resistant-Plants-for-Bayside-Areas-in-Alameda-and-Contra-Costa-Counties-California-Sheet1.pdf>.

- **Oak Woodland Canopy Structure:** The existing oak woodland east of the Hillside Community Church parcel is a relatively uniform, even-aged stand with a dense interlocking canopy. The prescription for this stand includes removing individual oaks that are rated as hazardous trees or are affected by SOD. Where the canopy has been opened to allow light to reach the soil, underplanting with native bunchgrasses and small flowering shrubs can provide pollinator habitat and reduce the risk that taller, fire-prone invasive species (e.g., acacia, fennel, French broom) will invade and provide ladder fuels. Annual maintenance of these gaps will require hand labor to ensure that bunch grasses are prioritized for retention and expansion. Over time, selective removal of individual oaks may create patches resembling an open-canopy savannah, where individual oaks are interspersed within a native grass/shrubland rich in wildflowers and scattered low-stature shrubs that provide nesting habitat and nectar for pollinators. Invasive species control will be the primary challenge in this restoration.
- **Acorn Sources:** Existing oak woodlands in and near restoration sites are a likely source of locally adapted acorns, as well as a potential reservoir of other organisms endemic to oak woodlands. The passive movement of native nonvascular plants, lichens, fungi, actinomycetes, and bacteria into the restoration site is also favored if oak woodlands adjoin or surround the restoration site. Therefore, any existing oak tree within eucalyptus removal areas should be retained. Reestablishing oak woodlands is a long-term investment and therefore requires long-term planning and funding, which is best reserved for the sites with the highest suitability and restoration potential.
- **Site Quality:** The reestablishment of deep rooting grass and shrubs is important to conserve soil moisture and shading of the soil surface. Thus, in drier locales or on shallow, steep soils, patches of coastal scrub and grassland habitat should be maintained instead of attempting to establish oak woodlands. When vegetation communities are reestablished or created in areas previously occupied by eucalyptus or conifers, prescribed burns may be necessary to remove the existing duff layer and prepare the seedbed. Even when competing species are absent, native grasses may not readily establish. Especially in dry areas on hilltops where soils are shallow, oaks may not be easy to establish. These sites should be managed as native grasslands with a scattered shrub component.
- **Pioneer Species and Seral Dynamics:** On degraded sites, the use of pioneer (early seral stage) plant species may be necessary to recolonize disturbed sites previously occupied by eucalyptus and conifers. Suitable species to serve as a pioneer species are those that establish quickly and create favorable soil and microclimate conditions for the desired late-seral community to take hold. Coastal scrub is often the climax community in drier sites but can also be seral to oak woodlands or oak-dominated grassland savannah, especially when fire has been absent for long periods. Most coastal scrub species do not need fire to reproduce but sprout vigorously after fire. Thus, prescribed fire can be used to enhance coastal scrub communities. Coyote brush is normally not killed by fire and is able to sprout from the root crown post-fire. Fire return intervals of less than 5 years will cause scrub communities to revert to grasslands. A list of suitable pioneer species includes the following species (note that all species, but especially forbs and herbs, will need to be selected based on soil characteristics and sun exposure):

- Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*)
 - Coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*)
 - California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*)
 - Blueblossom ceanothus (*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus*)
 - Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*)
 - Silver lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*)
 - California sage (*Artemisia californica*)
 - Coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*)
 - Poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*)
 - Bush monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*)
- **Grassland Restoration:** Native grassland restoration in California is expensive, mainly due to the cost of seeds and the variability in success. Innovative restoration method, such as strip seeding (Shaw et al. 2023), can provide a less-expensive method for grassland restoration. Strip seeding includes strategically planting native perennial grasses in strips, resulting in alternating seeded and unseeded areas to target efforts and reduce costs while achieving ecological outcomes similar to conventional methods of seeding entire sites. Seeded strips generally do not provide invasion resistance compared to unseeded strips, so management of weeds is still necessary. Preserving, enhancing, and expanding existing grasslands sites is an important part of achieving this goal. Annual seed collection and distribution on newly disturbed sites, such as burn piles or other bare soils, is a proven alternative method. Early, heavy grazing (removing approximately 60 percent of the standing crop of annual grasses during February and March) by goats while perennial grasses have not yet bolted may be advantageous to reduce the overall seed drop by annuals and control competition with native perennials. This type of targeted herbivory requires careful planning and acute observation of the plants' developmental stage.
 - **Site-Specific Benefits:** Ecological, societal, and economic benefits provided by native vegetation restoration can vary greatly between sites. Depending on soil type and topography, benefits such as erosion protection and soil stabilization may be significant or not. Since the HNA is heavily influenced by the urban context and public uses, recreation, modification of urban climate, and hydrologic effects may need to be considered. Aesthetic considerations (preserving or enhancing vistas) are often important in hilltop settings. Resistance to trespassing and off-trail travel may be important in certain areas to limit disturbances. Informal trails created by illegal users, trails with poor erosion-prone designs, or trails that threaten sensitive resources should generally be closed and rehabilitated with plant species that provide natural barriers to discourage users from off-trail wandering. Poison oak and coyote brush are suited as natural barriers.
 - **Likelihood of Long-Term Sustainability.** Restored native vegetation communities that require little or no maintenance after the original establishment are likely to provide maximum benefits for minimum cost. Overall, prospects for sustainability result from a combination of site qualities (e.g., existing populations of understory plants), management (e.g., weeding, thinning, burning, and grazing), and the frequency and severity of disturbance. It is anticipated that most native species will readily reestablish themselves when competition of non-native species is reduced or eliminated. Therefore, follow-up management of restoration sites (hand weeding or hand

mowing) around reestablished native species will likely be necessary. When planting shrubs and trees, trunk protection from rodents may be necessary. Deer browsing may also jeopardize the re-establishment of native species. Tree tubes, fencing, and caging are proven methods to protect native trees and shrubs from deer browsing. Goat grazing should not be implemented in areas where native species are in the process of reestablishing but can assist in restoration site preparation.

ACTION 8: MONITOR KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Tracking the effectiveness of ecosystem restoration and fire resilience projects is important to inform ongoing management, make adaptive decisions, and document progress toward individual restoration project goals. It is recommended that monitoring at the HNA includes the key indicators resiliency, recreation, review, and public relations.

Priority

Medium

Resiliency

The California Wildfire Task Force has adopted “The Pillars of Landscape Resilience” (Figure 18) to describe desired landscape outcomes that encompass the suite of social and ecological benefits provided by resilient systems across fire-prone landscapes. Each pillar has a core metric that measures its performance. Of particular interest in the context of the HNA fire resilience and forest conservation are the pillars of fire dynamics, biodiversity conservation, forest resilience, and fire-adapted communities.

Fire Dynamics

Desired Outcome: In a resilient HNA, prescribed fires would be allowed to burn across the landscape periodically at low to moderate severity in a mosaic pattern that provides substantial ecological benefits. Even in case of a fire, the HNA will burn in an ecologically beneficial and socially acceptable way that perpetuates landscape heterogeneity and that does not threaten human safety or infrastructure.

Monitoring: The HNA should be inspected annually for the following conditions: (1) ladder fuels are removed and tree or brush canopies will not sustain fire, and (2) the contiguous fuels arrangement is interrupted (i.e., no large fallen trees or other fuel accumulations). This is done by comparing the conditions on the site with the Vegetation Management Standards in Appendix F. This work is typically conducted either by fire professionals or vegetation management contractors.

The City will annually monitor eucalyptus regrowth as resources permit. Areas that have not been managed should be inspected every 5 years as part of the Plan update. Surface fuel models and canopy characteristics may be mapped using remotely sensed data and confirmed with field visits by a wildland fire specialist. Fuel loads can be quite variable; thus, application of surface fuel models is the best approach. LiDAR imagery is the best option for measuring canopy characteristics.



Figure 18: Pillars of Landscape Resilience

Biodiversity

Desired Outcome: The network of native species and ecological communities is sufficiently abundant and distributed across the landscape to support and sustain their full suite of ecological and cultural roles.

Monitoring: It is recommended that the City contract with a qualified biologist to periodically monitor the abundance and presence of key special-status species, including monarch butterfly and San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat. Every 10 years, the vegetation communities of the HNA should be mapped according to the CalVeg system standards (0.25-acre minimum mapping unit), identifying and verifying the presence and location of locally rare plants, special-status plant and animal species, and sensitive natural communities. In addition, general biodiversity surveys, such as

Christmas bird counts, plant lists, and bio-blitzes, are encouraged to monitor the biological diversity of the HNA.

Fire-Adapted Communities

Desired outcome: Neighborhoods surrounding the HNA have adapted to live safely near the HNA by embracing defensible space and home hardening. These communities are knowledgeable and engaged by taking action to reduce their vulnerability to fire. They are a valuable partner of the City in its effort to provide a low-fire-risk environment.

Monitoring: If funding and resources are available, the City will contract with a wildland fire specialist to conduct a FlamMap or similar analysis of fire risk and behavior every 10 years as a means to pinpoint areas of deficiencies, target vegetation treatments, and document its progress in making the HNA fire resilient. Inspections of defensible space are another metric of the neighborhood resilience. A summary of the percentage of inspections that are compliant with the City's regulations should be presented every year.

Recognition of the neighborhood as a National Fire Protection Association Firewise Community also indicates a level of resilience. The neighborhoods in this program commit to actions regarding structure retrofitting for ignition resistance, fuel management evacuation preparedness, and education and outreach. The number of residents nearby in this program is an appropriate additional metric about fire-adapted communities.

Forest Resilience

Disease Monitoring and Selective Removals. To detect and remove affected trees before they spread the disease, it is essential to know the distribution and incidence of the pathogen. Monitoring to detect *P. ramorum* presence is a critical component of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) national management strategy (Federal Regulations, 7 CFR 301.92–301.92-12). Thus, if funding is available, SOD monitoring should be conducted frequently (at least annually) to rapidly and accurately determine where the pathogen and disease are located within the HNA. One proven method of monitoring is the training of public employees and citizen scientists to look for the disease. Garbelotto et al (2020) conducted yearly surveys led by citizen scientists designed to map the distribution of *P. ramorum*. Monitored symptoms included branch cankers and associated canopy mortality and affected multiple individuals per species. Volunteer citizen scientists require recurrent training to ensure adequate standards of data collection.

Recreation

Trail Monitoring

Desired Outcome: The HNA has a network of functional, aesthetic trails that provide diverse recreation opportunities for the community members and visitors of El Cerrito. Most trails are multiuse trails, and safety issues are adequately addressed in the design, use restrictions, and maintenance schedules for each trail. Trail maintenance is timely, erosion is negligible, and hazards are identified early and removed.

Monitoring: The City will coordinate with stakeholder groups to conduct a trail inventory at least once per year, preferably toward the end of the rainy season, to address any erosion issues or fallen trees. This should involve taking detailed measurements and pictures of trail facilities (benches, kiosks, signs, etc.) and record maintenance defect locations with a Global Positioning System (GPS) device.

Review

Desired Outcome: The HNA Plan is an adaptive Plan that provides flexible management responses to a changing landscape. Monitoring may reveal significant departures from the desired outcome; therefore, new management goals or objectives may be needed. Thus, the Plan is subject to regular evaluation and revision as part of the ongoing management process, and required changes to the Plan are identified before a crisis develops.

Monitoring: It is recommended that the City review the Plan every 5 years and evaluate the need for an update. Given available funding and resources, this review shall be conducted by City staff in consultation with experts in the field and stakeholders.

Public Relations, Partnerships, and Education

Desired Outcome: The community is informed about the HNA Plan implementation and any review efforts, provides feedback about HNA Plan implementation, participates in maintenance activities within the HNA as possible, and contributes to reviews and any updates of the HNA Plan so that it continues to reflect community priorities.

Monitoring: Public engagement and community participation are crucial determinants of success of the HNA management. It is recommended that, given funding and resources, the City maintain a webpage related to the HNA Plan that includes updates on management activities and educational or recreational events organized by the City. In addition, it is recommended that the City Council and the Park and Recreation Commission (or other advisory body designated by the City Council) receive an update at least every 2 years on Plan implementation challenges, successes, and overall progress. The City will continue to consult stakeholders from local community organizations and City committees in order to monitor and adjust community engagement approaches, particularly in advance of the HNA Plan 5-year review. As the City develops and implements any new community engagement strategies, such as educational initiatives, volunteer opportunities, and/or partnerships related to management of the HNA, the City will develop appropriate monitoring approaches and metrics accordingly.

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APPENDIX A

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

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BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA



LSA

December 2024

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA

Submitted to:

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LSA

December 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The City of El Cerrito (City) proposes to develop and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and vegetation management plan for the City's Hillside Natural Area (HNA). The purpose of the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (Plan) is to:

- Identify and protect critical resource areas;
- Guide the City's fire fuel reduction, native forest conservation, and maintenance activities; and
- Evaluate fire road and trail network conditions.

This Biological Resources Report provides a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliant identification of special-status species and their habitats, wetlands and other regulated waters, and other potential biological resource constraints to the Plan's development. The report also provides recommended mitigation measures to address the requirements of CEQA.

PROJECT SITE DESCRIPTION

Site Characteristics

The project site is located within El Cerrito, California (Figure 1). The HNA is approximately 107.18 acres and is divided into three sections: Hillside Natural Area North ("Motorcycle Hill;" 24.22 acres), Madera Property (9.53 acres) and Hillside Natural Area South (73.43 acres). Elevations range from approximately 150 to 650 feet (ft) above sea level. The project site is characterized by steep hillslopes with predominantly western and southern exposures (Figure 2). There are six major vegetation cover types within the HNA (Figure 3). Soils on the project site consist of mostly rock outcrop-Xerorthents association with cut and fill land-Millsholm complex mapped along the western boundary and quarry mapped near the southern boundary of the project site (USDA 2023; Figure 4).

Vegetation Communities

The project site supports ruderal/non-native grassland, native grassland, coast live oak woodland, scrub, riparian woodland, and drainages (Figure 3).

- **Ruderal/Non-Native Grassland.** The ruderal/non-native grassland (33.47 acres) supports primarily non-native annual grassland species, with patches of perennial grassland and ruderal plant species. Non-native grasses are also abundant throughout the understory within all habitat types at the project site.
- **Native Grasslands.** Native grasslands (Figure 3) observed on the project site consist of small, localized patches of purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*), foothill needlegrass (*Stipa lepida*), bent grass (*Agrostis pallens*), and creeping wild rye (*Elymus triticoides*).
- **North Franciscan Coastal Scrub.** The scrub habitat within the project site comprises 2.6 acres and is dominated by coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) and French broom (*Genista monspessulana*). Other dominant to co-dominant species include orange bush monkey flower

(*Diplacus aurantiacus*). Stands of northern Franciscan coastal scrub are found throughout the project site, but they mainly occupy the steeper portions of the south- and west-facing slopes along the eastern boundary.

- **Coast Live Oak Woodland.** The coast live oak woodland (28.7 acres) on the project site is dominated by coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) with California bay (*Umbellularia californica*), California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), and toyon (*Hetreomeles arbutifolia*).
- **Riparian Woodland.** Riparian woodland occupies approximately 1.15 acres on the HNA, but that estimate is probably too low and will need to be evaluated by field mapping. It occurs along the streams and drainages and contains trees and shrubs, such as arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), Pacific willow (*S. lasiandra*), cottonwood (*Populus* sp.), alder (*Alnus* sp.), California bay, California buckeye, and coast live oak. Riparian woodland is considered a sensitive plant community under CEQA.
- **Eucalyptus and Pine Groves.** Eucalyptus groves are present in several areas within the project site. They are the most prevalent vegetation community at the project site, totaling over 36.2 acres. Eucalyptus are the dominant tree species within the groves. Both blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) and yellow gum (*E. viminalis*) are growing at the project site (LSA 1987).
- **Rock Outcrops.** Rock outcrops are present in small areas throughout the project site. Species observed at the outcrops include naked-stem buckwheat (*Eriogonum nudum*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), coyote mint (*Monardella villosa*), and various non-native plants.
- **Streams/Drainages.** Several intermittent and ephemeral streams/drainage channels are present in the project site (Figure 3). These streams/drainages appear to flow in the southwest direction and flow off the project site into culverts beneath the adjacent residential area to the southwest. Some of the drainages occur within concrete v-ditches and become natural stream channels further downstream within the project site. These streams/drainages are likely to be considered jurisdictional features by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and subject to regulation under Section 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act and/or the California Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne Act).

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

For the purposes of this assessment, special-status species are defined as follows:

- Species that are listed, formally proposed, or designated as candidates for listing as threatened or endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA);
- Species that are listed, or designated as candidates for listing, as rare, threatened, or endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA);
- Plant species that are on the California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) Lists 1A, 1B, and 2;

- Animal species designated as Species of Special Concern or Fully Protected by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW); or
- Species that meet the definition of rare, threatened, or endangered under Section 15380 of the CEQA guidelines.

Several special-status species could occur on the project site or in the vicinity (Table A). No special-status species were observed during the field survey.

SPECIES FOR WHICH AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION AND MITIGATION MAY BE REQUIRED:

- **Special-Status Plants.** If fuel reduction treatments are proposed within the native grasslands, riparian woodland, drainage channels, or the less disturbed portions of the oak woodland and scrub habitat (such as areas where French broom is not present), focused plant surveys for special-status plants should be conducted according to CDFW's *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Plant Populations and Natural Communities* (CDFW 2018).
- **Monarch Butterfly.** The monarch butterfly is a federal candidate listed species that could breed within the project site. No California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB; CDFW 2023) occurrences for monarch butterfly have been recorded at the project site, but the species was observed during field work on October 10, 2023, at Motorcycle Hill.
- **Crotch and Western Bumble Bee.** The Crotch and western bumble bees are Candidate State Endangered listed species. These species are known to occur in grassland and scrub habitat where suitable native nectar plants are present. These species historically occurred in the region but are now considered rare. Due to the presence of suitable flowering plant species, these species, although unlikely due to their rarity, could be present.
- **Special-Status Birds and Other Nesting Bird Species.** Several special-status bird species are known to occur at or near the project site (Table A; see list above). These bird species could nest, winter, and/or migrate through the project site. Some of these bird species, such as the American peregrine falcon, could forage on the project site, but are unlikely to nest at or adjacent to the site due to the lack of suitable nesting habitat. Special-status birds observed at the project site include white-tailed kite, olive-sided flycatcher, and Vaux's swift, among others (eBird 2023). Active nests of special-status and other native bird species are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and/or California Fish and Game Code.
- **Special-Status Bats and Other Bat Species.** Several bat species, including special-status bat species, could roost and/or forage at the project site. All roosts of native bats, regardless of their status, are protected by California Fish and Game Code. Townsend's western big-eared bat (California Species of Special Concern) may briefly forage over the project site but would not roost on the project site due to the lack of suitable roosting habitat. Suitable habitat exists for pallid bat and western red bat, both of which are California Species of Special Concern, and other bat species could roost in the on-site trees.

- **San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat.** The San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat is a California Species of Special Concern. This species occurs in riparian woodland, woodland/forests, and scrub habitat and has been observed at the project site. LSA observed woodrat houses in the northern portion of the site, but this species could occur throughout the project site where suitable habitat is present.

OTHER MITIGATION MEASURES

- **Waters of the United States/Waters of the State.** Potential impacts to potentially jurisdictional features, such as the on-site streams/drainages (and seasonal wetlands/seeps, if present), are subject to regulation by the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW. These features will be avoided during the fuel reduction activities, where possible. If these features are impacted, the City would need to obtain the required permits from the relevant regulatory agencies, including the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB.
- **Riparian Vegetation.** To minimize disturbance to riparian habitat occurring adjacent to the fuel reduction area, riparian areas shall be clearly delineated by a qualified biologist. Riparian areas shall be separated and protected from the work area through silt fencing, amphibian/reptile-friendly fiber rolls (i.e., no mono-filament), or other appropriate erosion control material. If impacts to riparian habitat within the project area cannot be avoided, a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) shall be prepared and implemented for all impacted riparian habitat.
- **Native Grasslands and Other Sensitive Natural Communities.** If feasible, the proposed fuel treatments shall avoid/minimize impacts to the purple needlegrass grasslands, other native grasslands, and other sensitive natural communities. The stands of native grasslands shall be avoided during fuel treatment activities. If the native grasslands cannot be avoided, the loss of native grasslands shall be mitigated by restoring an equivalent acreage of native grasslands on site. The City shall reseed temporarily disturbed areas of native grassland habitat that are disturbed by fuel reduction activities with an appropriate weed-free native seed mix that contains the particular native grass seed and/or plugs. Any restored native grassland areas shall be monitored and reported on an annual basis, as required by CDFW.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The City of El Cerrito (City) proposes to implement the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (project) to establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and vegetation management plan for the City's HNA. The Plan will:

- Identify and protect critical resource areas;
- Guide the City's fire fuel reduction, native forest conservation, and maintenance activities; and
- Evaluate fire road and trail network access.

Over the last few years, community concerns regarding fire risk in the City's HNA and surrounding residential communities have significantly increased. The City has responded with ongoing and increased vegetation maintenance activities, completing work largely based on planning efforts that were completed many years ago, including the 1994 City of El Cerrito HNA Fire Hazard Reduction Plan. However, the need for more robust, comprehensive, and balanced vegetation management practices became increasingly evident and was identified in the City's 2015 Urban Greening Plan. Additionally, in 2019, the El Cerrito Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan specifically called for action to "support the El Cerrito-Kensington Wildfire Action Plan goals and policies by creating defensible spaces, increasing weed abatement, and managing dead or diseased trees and other vegetation, especially in the Hillside Natural Area." El Cerrito voters passed a measure (Measure H) to further fund park maintenance activities that same year and the City has since increased its fire fuel reduction and vegetation management activities, in part with these park maintenance funds. Given the ongoing and historic drought, rising global temperatures and community concerns regarding the risk of wildfire, an updated plan with the required environmental site analysis is needed now to guide the City in performing and budgeting for the most effective, sustainable, and cost-efficient fuel reduction and forest conservation activities.

This Plan was developed with support from a \$166,750 State Coastal Conservancy grant in September 2022. The Coastal Conservancy is a California State agency established in 1976 to protect and improve natural lands and waterways, to help people get to and enjoy the outdoors, and to sustain local economies along California's coast. It acts with others to protect and restore, and increase public access to California's coast, ocean, coastal watersheds, and the San Francisco Bay Area. Its vision is of a beautiful, restored, and accessible coast for current and future generations of Californians.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Biological Resources Report is to provide a CEQA-compliant identification of special-status species and their habitats, wetlands and other regulated waters, and other potential biological resource constraints to the Plan development. The report includes a description of the project; an explanation of the methods used to conduct the analysis; the results of field surveys, including documentation of plant and wildlife species observed; and a list of special-status species (plants and animals) that could potentially occur at the site (and the likelihood of occurrence). The

report also provides recommended mitigation measures to address the requirements of CEQA (50 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] §402.12).

METHODS

LSA reviewed available background information/literature, such as the Friends of Five Creeks' *Native Plants of the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area*, and the *El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Vegetation Management Plan* (LSA 1987) and *Biological Resources Report for the Madera Property Fuel Reduction Project* (LSA 2014), and searched the records of the CDFW's CNDDDB (CDFW 2023), the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS; 2023) Information for Planning and Consultation online system, the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Inventory of Rare Plants (CNPS 2023), and eBird's online system (eBird 2023) for the occurrence of special-status plant and/or wildlife species on or near the project site.

An LSA senior biologist conducted a biological field survey at the project site on August 11, September 27, and October 3, 2023. The survey involved walking throughout the project site to search for biological resources, such as the presence of special-status plants, wildlife, and their habitats, and sensitive habitats, such as wetlands and drainage channels. The potential presence of special-status species was based on an evaluation of the habitat types present on the site, the CNDDDB records, and other occurrence information from the vicinity of the site. During the field survey, the biologist also investigated the presence of waters of the United States/waters of the State (including wetlands and drainages).

The scientific and vernacular nomenclature for the plant and wildlife species used in this study are from the following standard sources:

- Plants (Baldwin et al. 2012) and updates listed on the Jepson Herbarium website (<http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/eflora/>)
- Amphibians and Reptiles (Crother 2017)
- Birds (American Ornithologists' Union 1998) and supplements through 2023
- Mammals (Bradley et al. 2014)

PROJECT SITE DESCRIPTION

LOCATION AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS

The project site is located within El Cerrito, California (Figure 1). The HNA is approximately 107.18 acres and is divided into three sections: HNA North ("Motorcycle Hill"; 24.22 acres), the Madera Property (9.53 acres), and HNA South (73.43 acres). Elevations range from approximately 150 and 650 ft above sea level. The project site is characterized by steep hillslopes with predominantly western and southern exposures (Figure 2). There are six major vegetation cover types within the HNA (Figure 3). Soils on the project site consist of mostly rock outcrop-xerorthents association with cut and fill land-Millsholm complex mapped along the western boundary and quarry mapped near the southern boundary of the project site (USDA 2023; Figure 4).

VEGETATION

Vegetation in El Cerrito is characterized by native and non-native grassland, riparian scrub and woodland, oak woodland, salt marsh near the San Francisco Bay, and other scrub and "soft" chaparral, in addition to extensive introduced landscaping and naturalized nonnative species such as eucalyptus, pine, and French broom (*Genista monspessulana*). LSA inventoried over 150 plant species that commonly occur in the HNA. The majority of those are native (n=82), but most of the non-native species are considered invasive. In addition, Friends of Five Creeks (2014) produced a plant list containing 129 native species. The heavily vegetated, undeveloped San Pablo and Sobrante ridges occur northeast of El Cerrito. The project site supports ruderal/non-native grassland, native grassland, coast live oak woodland, scrub, riparian woodland, and drainages (Figure 3).

Ruderal/Non-Native Grassland

The ruderal/non-native grassland (33.47 acres) supports primarily non-native annual grassland species, with patches of perennial grassland and ruderal plant species. Dominant annual grass species include wild oats (*Avena fatua*) and riggut brome (*Bromus diandrus*). The dominant grass in the perennial grassland is veldt grass (*Ehrharta erecta*). Associated species observed in the annual grassland include rattlesnake grass (*Briza minor*), wild mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), bristly ox-tongue (*Helminthotheca echinoides*), English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), field hedge parsley (*Torilis arvensis*), and willow leaf lettuce (*Lactuca saligna*). Non-native grasses are also abundant throughout the understory within all habitat types at the project site.

Native Grasslands

Native grasslands observed on the project site consist of patches of purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*), foothill needlegrass (*Stipa lepida*), bent grass (*Agrostis pallens*), and creeping wild rye (*Elymus triticoides*). Native herbaceous species observed within the native grasslands include soap root (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*), golden rod (*Solidago velutina*), hayfield tarweed (*Hemizonia congesta* subsp. *luzulifolia*), and bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*). Several other native grassland plant species, such as blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), narrowleaf mule ears (*Wyethia angustifolia*), and arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), have been observed at the project site (Friends of Five Creeks 2014).

North Franciscan Coastal Scrub

The scrub habitat within the project site comprises 2.6 acres and is dominated by coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) and French broom. Other dominant to co-dominant species include orange bush monkey flower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), coffeeberry (*Frangula californica*), and poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*). Stands of northern Franciscan coastal scrub are found throughout the project site, but they mainly occupy the steeper portions of the south- and west-facing slopes along the eastern boundary.

Coast Live Oak Woodland

The coast live oak woodland on the project site (28.7 acres) is dominated by coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) with California bay (*Umbellularia californica*) and California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*). This woodland supports an abundance of mature native shrubs, vines, and grasses, including toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), pink honeysuckle (*Lonicera hispidula*), California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), California aster (*Aster chilensis*), Pacific pea (*Lathyrus vestitus*), California bee plant (*Scrophularia californica*), blue witch (*Solanum umbelliferum*), coyote brush, bush monkey flower, poison oak, and bent grass. Non-native species observed within the oak woodland included pittosporum (*Pittosporum* sp.), Bailey acacia (*Acacia baileyana*), blackwood acacia (*Acacia melanoxylon*), pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*), orange cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster franchetii*), Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*), English ivy (*Hedera canariensis*), plum (*Prunus* sp.), and non-native grasses. Understory species include beaked hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta*), wood fern (*Dryopteris arguta*), western sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*), soap root, pink honeysuckle (*Lonicera hispidula*), poison oak, California blackberry, coffeeberry, and coyote brush.

Riparian Woodland

Riparian woodland occurs along the streams and drainages. This community occupies approximately 1.15 acres on the HNA, but that estimate is probably too low and will need to be evaluated by field mapping. Tree species observed include arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), Pacific willow (*S. lasiandra*), cottonwood (*Populus* sp.), alder (*Alnus* sp.), California bay (*Umbellularia californica*), California buckeye, and coast live oak. Associated species observed include common lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina* var. *cyclosorum*), western chain fern (*Woodwardia fimbriata*), California blackberry, Himalayan blackberry, blue elderberry, English ivy, and French broom.

Eucalyptus and Pine Groves

Eucalyptus groves are present in several areas within the project site. They are the most prevalent vegetation community at the project site, totaling over 36.2 acres. Eucalyptus are the dominant tree species within the groves. Blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*), red ironbark (*E. sideroxylon*), and yellow gum (*E. viminalis*) are growing at the project site (LSA 1987). Conifers, primarily Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) and coast live oaks, also occur within the groves. Dense shade created by the eucalyptus canopy, combined with volatile chemicals contained in the large amount of bark and leaf litter deposited by eucalyptus, create poor growing conditions for most herbaceous and woody understory species. Consequently, the understory of these woodlands is often devoid of vegetation and may consist of a thick layer of bark and leaves. Where openings in the canopy allow sufficient

light to penetrate to the grove floor, patches of poison oak, toyon, other shrubs and annual grasses can occur.

Rock Outcrops

Rock outcrops are present in small areas throughout the project site. Species observed at the outcrops include naked-stem buckwheat (*Eriogonum nudum*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), coyote mint (*Monardella villosa*), and various non-native plants.

Streams/Drainages

Several intermittent and ephemeral streams/drainage channels are present in the project site (Figure 3). These streams/drainages appear to flow in the southwest direction and flow off the project site into culverts beneath the adjacent residential area to the southwest. Some of the drainages occur within concrete v-ditches and become natural stream channels further downstream within the project site.

WILDLIFE

Several common wildlife species inhabit the project site. Most of the bird species observed were foraging in the oak woodland and scrub habitats. A few birds, such as turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), and common raven (*C. corax*), were observed flying over the project site. No active bird nests were identified during the reconnaissance-level field surveys, which were conducted in late summer and early fall 2023, but a few inactive stick nests were found in the on-site trees. Numerous resident birds were observed foraging at the project site, suggesting that they likely nested on or near the project site. Non-native fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger*) nests were also observed in the oak trees. Foraging black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and Botta's pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*) burrows were observed in the non-native grasslands.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

For the purposes of this assessment, special-status species are defined as follows:

1. Species that are listed, formally proposed, or designated as candidates for listing as threatened or endangered under FESA;
2. Species that are listed, or designated as candidates for listing, as rare, threatened, or endangered under CESA;
3. Plant species that are on CRPR Lists 1A, 1B, and 2;
4. Animal species designated as Species of Special Concern or Fully Protected by the CDFW; or
5. Species that meet the definition of rare, threatened, or endangered under Section 15380 of the CEQA guidelines.

Several special-status species could occur on the project site or in the vicinity (Table A). No special-status species were observed during the field survey.

Special-Status Plants

Special-status plant species for which extant or non-historic CNDDDB (CDFW 2023) records exist in the vicinity consist of the following species:

- Bent-flowered fiddleneck (*Amsinckia lunaris*; CRPR List 1B)
- Pallid manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pallida*; Federal Threatened, State Endangered, CRPR List 1B)
- Franciscan thistle (*Cirsium andrewsii*; CRPR List 1B)
- Western leatherwood (*Dirca occidentalis*; CRPR List 1B)
- Fragrant fritillary (*Fritillaria liliacea*; CRPR List 1B)
- Diablo helianthella (*Helianthella castanea*; CRPR List 1B)
- Loma Prieta hoita (*Hoita strobilina*; CRPR List 1B)
- Santa Cruz tarplant (*Holocarpha macradenia*; Federal Threatened, State Endangered, CRPR List 1B).

Several other special-status plants are also known to occur in the region (Diablo Fire Safe Council 2017). None of these or other special-status species, however, are likely to occur within the majority of project site due to: (1) prior disturbance in the project area; (2) the introduction of non-native plant species; and (3) the absence of suitable habitat and substrates such as wetlands and serpentine substrates. Less disturbed areas on the project site, such as the oak woodland, riparian woodland, scrub, and native grasslands, may provide suitable habitat for special-status plant species; therefore, protocol-level plant surveys are recommended to be conducted where suitable habitat is present (see Recommendations section).

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Plants			
<i>Amsinckia lunaris</i> Bent-flowered fiddleneck	1B	Occurs in coastal bluff scrub, cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland; openings. Elevation: 3-500 m. Blooms: March-June	Although suitable habitat is present, the potential for this species to occur is low due to the density of invasive plants. Nearest occurrence is near San Pablo Ridge approximately 2.4 miles from the project site.
<i>Arctostaphylos pallida</i> Pallid manzanita	FT/CE/1B	Broadleaved upland forest, close coned coniferous forest, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and chaparral. Grows on siliceous shale, sandy, or gravelly substrates in uplifted marine terraces. Elevation: 185-465 m. Blooms: December-March	Although woodland habitat is present, suitable substrates are absent. Nearest CNDDDB occurrence is in Sobrante Ridge Regional Preserve approximately 3.0 miles from the project site.
<i>Astragalus tener</i> var. <i>tener</i> Alkali milk-vetch	1B	Playas and vernal-pools in freshwater wetlands, alkali sink, valley grassland, wetland-riparian. Elevation: 0-90 m. Blooms: March-June	No suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a possibly extirpated 1900 record from an unknown location near the Stege Marsh in Richmond.
<i>Cirsium andrewsii</i> Franciscan thistle	1B	Northern coastal scrub, mixed evergreen forest, wetland-riparian. Elevation: 0-160 m. Blooms: March-July	Although woodland habitat is present, the potential for this species to occur is low due to the density of invasive plants. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is near Tilden Regional Park approximately 3.3 miles from the project site.
<i>Dirca occidentalis</i> Western leatherwood	1B	Broad-leaved upland forest, chaparral, closed-cone coniferous forest, cismontane woodland, north coast coniferous forest, riparian forest, and riparian woodland on brushy slopes, mesic sites. Elevation: 30-395 m. Blooms: January-March	Suitable woodland habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from an unknown location in Wildcat Canyon Regional Park approximately 0.4 mile from the project site.
<i>Fritillaria liliacea</i> Fragrant fritillary	1B	Northern coastal scrub, coastal prairie, valley grassland, wetland-riparian. Elevation: 0-360 m. Blooms: February-April	Although woodland habitat is present, the potential for this species to occur is low due to the density of invasive plants. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a possibly extirpated 1938 record from an unknown location near the Mira Vista Country Club, near the north end of Wildcat Canyon Regional Park.

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
<i>Gilia millefoliata</i> Dark-eyed gilia	1B	Coastal strand. Elevation: 0-30 m. Blooms: April-July	No suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from an 1863 record at unknown location in Oakland estimated at approximately 3.6 miles from the project site.
<i>Helianthella castanea</i> Diablo helianthella	1B	Broadleaved upland forest, chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, riparian woodland, valley and foothill grassland, usually within rocky azonal soils. Elevation: 60–300 m. Blooms: April-June.	Suitable habitat present within the woodland and scrub habitat, but species likely not to occur due to prior disturbance and the introduction of invasive species. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from a presumed extant population near the San Pablo Reservoir approximately 2.2 miles from the project site.
Loma Prieta hoita <i>Hoita strobilina</i>	1B	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, and riparian woodland on mesic serpentine sites. Elevation: 30-860 m. Blooms: May- October	Although woodland is present, serpentine is absent from the project site. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from a presumed extant population in El Sobrante approximately 2.0 miles from the project site.
Santa Cruz tarplant <i>Holocarpa macradenia</i>	FT/CE/1B	Occurs in sandy-clay soil in coastal prairie, coastal scrub, and in valley and foothill grassland. Elevation: 10-220 m. Blooms: June-October	Although valley and foothill grassland is present, this species is known to occur on sandy soils, which are absent from the project site. All extant populations of this plant have been reintroduced. The closest CNDDDB occurrences are northeast of the project site in Wildcat Canyon Regional Preserve approximately 0.7 mile from the project site.
Insects			
Monarch butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	FC/Sensitive Winter Roosting Sites	Winter roosts along the coast from northern Mendocino to Baja California, Mexico in wind-protected tree groves (eucalyptus, Monterey pine, cypress) with nectar and water sources nearby. Uses milkweed (<i>Asclepias</i> spp.) as host plants.	Suitable sheltered groves of trees present, but project site is likely located at too high of an elevation to provide suitable roost sites. Suitable breeding habitat present in on-site patches of milkweed; milkweed has been recorded on the project site (Xerces et al. 2023). Suitable nectar plants present. Individual monarch butterflies observed flying through project site during the October field survey. Closest CNDDDB occurrence of

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
			an overwintering roost is at the University of California Richmond Field Station, approximately 1.2 miles from the project site.
Crotch bumble bee <i>Bombus crotchii</i>	–/ Candidate CE	Open grassland and scrub habitats supporting flowering plants, such as <i>Asclepias</i> sp., <i>Chaenactis</i> sp., <i>Lupinus</i> sp., <i>Medicago</i> sp., <i>Phacelia</i> sp., and <i>Salvia</i> sp.	Suitable habitat present. Closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1933 and 2015 record from Berkeley, approximately 2.4 miles from the project site.
Western bumble bee <i>Bombus occidentalis</i>	–/ Candidate CE	Variety of habitat types, supporting native flowering plants. Species has declined precipitously perhaps from disease.	Suitable habitat present. Closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1992 record from Berkeley Richmond Field Station, in Richmond, approximately 1.2 mile from the site.
Fish			
Steelhead (central California coast Distinct Population Segment) <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	FT/CSC	Pacific Ocean, San Francisco estuary, Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and tributaries.	No suitable habitat present. On-site stream and drainages do not provide suitable habitat. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.
Amphibians			
California tiger salamander <i>Ambystoma californiense</i>	FT/CT	Breeds in vernal pools, ponds, and stock ponds. Spends summer and early Fall in uplands surrounding breeding sites, taking refuge in small mammal burrows or other underground cover.	Although suitable upland habitat is present in grasslands, no suitable breeding habitat present at or near the site. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.
California red-legged frog <i>Rana draytonii</i>	FT/CSC	Found in lowlands and foothills in or near permanent ponds and streams with dense, shrubby, or emergent riparian vegetation.	Suitable non-breeding aquatic, upland, and dispersal habitat present in on-site streams, but species not known to occur at or near the project site (CDFW 2023). The closest extant CNDDDB occurrence is from near the San Pablo Dam approximately 2.2 miles from the project site. The CNDDDB also includes a 1956 record approximately 1.5 miles from the project site at Jewell Lake in Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley, but due to the presence of introduced predators, such as bullfrogs and fish, this occurrence is likely extirpated.

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Foothill yellow-legged frog Central Coast Distinct Population Segment <i>Rana boylei</i>	FT/CE	Partly shaded, shallow streams and riffles with a rocky substrate.	No suitable habitat present. No extant CNDDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site.
Reptiles			
Northwestern pond turtle <i>Emys marmorata</i>	FC/CSC	Ponds, marshes, rivers, streams, and irrigation ditches with aquatic vegetation. Requires basking sites and adjacent grasslands or other open habitat for egg-laying.	Suitable aquatic habitat present in on-site streams, but lack of deep plunge pools and high quality basking sites likely precludes the species from occurring. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from Jewell Lake in Tilden Regional Park approximately 1.5 miles from the project site.
Alameda whipsnake <i>Masticophis lateralis euryxanthusi</i>	FT/CT	Chaparral and rock outcrops. Also occurs in riparian woodland, forests, and grasslands where chaparral and rocky outcrops are present nearby.	Suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is approximately 1.6 miles from the project site.
Birds			
American white pelican <i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>	–/CSC	Occurs in shallow inland and coastal marine habitats, marshes, lakes, and rivers.	No suitable habitat present. Species does not breed in the project area but may fly over the project site. Species observed at the project site (eBird 2023). Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.
Long-eared owl <i>Asio otus</i>	–/CSC	Woodlands and forests that are open or adjacent to grasslands, meadows, or shrublands.	Suitable nesting habitat present in trees on or adjacent to the site. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the site.
Short-eared owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	–/CSC	Open grasslands, meadows, and marshes with few trees. Requires dense ground vegetation for both roosting and nesting.	Suitable habitat present. Wintering/migrating individuals observed in Point Pinole Regional Park (eBird 2023). No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the site.
Burrowing owl <i>Athene cunicularia</i>	–/CSC	Nests in burrows in grasslands and woodlands; often associated with ground squirrels. Will also nest in artificial structures (culverts, concrete debris piles, etc.)	Suitable habitat present, but not known to nest in the project area. During the time of the field surveys, no ground squirrel burrows were observed and the grass within the grassland was too tall for burrowing owl burrows. Species is known to winter along the San Francisco Bay shoreline in Richmond, Albany, and Berkeley (eBird 2023). Closest CNDDDB occurrences is in

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
			Richmond, approximately 1.5 miles from the project site.
White-tailed kite <i>Elanus leucurus</i>	–/CFP	Nests in shrubs and trees in open areas and forages in adjacent grasslands and agricultural land.	May nest and forage on the project site. Species observed at the project site (eBird 2023). Closest CNDDDB occurrences is approximately 3.2 miles from the project site.
Northern harrier <i>Circus hudsonius</i>	–/CSC	Nests and forages in meadows, grasslands, open rangeland, and fresh or saltwater marshes.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from the Berkeley Meadow near the Berkeley Marina approximately 3.2 miles from the project site.
Golden eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	–/CFP	Forages in rolling foothill or coast-range terrain, with open grassland and scattered large trees. Nests in large trees, on cliffs, and occasionally on power line poles.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. No CNDDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site.
Bald eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Delisted/CE; CFP	Winters at lakes, reservoirs, river systems, and some rangelands and coastal wetlands throughout most of California. Breeds in mountainous habitats near reservoirs, lakes and rivers, mainly in the northern two-thirds of the State, in the Central Coast Range, and on Santa Catalina Island. Nests generally built in the upper canopy of large trees.	No suitable habitat present, but species could fly over the project site. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is approximately 3.2 miles from the project site.
American peregrine falcon <i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	Delisted/ Delisted/ CFP	Forages in open country, mountains, and seacoasts. Nests on high cliffs, bridges, and buildings.	No suitable nesting habitat present, but grasslands provide suitable foraging habitat.
Loggerhead shrike <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	–/CSC	Found in grasslands and open shrub or woodland communities. Nests in dense shrubs or trees and forages in scrub, open woodlands, grasslands, and croplands. Frequently uses fences, posts, and utility lines as hunting perches.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present, but species is rare in the project vicinity (eBird 2023). No CNDDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site.
Vaux's swift <i>Chaetura vauxi</i>	–/CSC	Grasslands and agricultural fields; nests in dense vegetation in large hollow trees near open water; forages in most habitats but prefers rivers and lakes.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. Species observed at the project site (eBird 2023). Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Olive-sided flycatcher <i>Contopus cooperi</i>	–/CSC	Coniferous forests with open canopies.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. Species observed at the project site (eBird 2023). Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.
Purple martin <i>Progne subis</i>	–/CSC	Occurs in woodlands; nests in tree snags and abandoned woodpecker cavities and human-made structures.	Suitable nesting habitat present, but species is rare in the County (Glover 2009). No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.
Grasshopper sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	–/CSC	Occurs in grasslands with coyote brush and other shrubs.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present. Species not tracked in the CNDDDB.
Tricolored blackbird <i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	–/CT, CSC	Nests in dense vegetation near open water, forages in grasslands and agricultural fields.	No suitable nesting habitat present, but site provides suitable foraging habitat. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles of the project site.
Yellow warbler <i>Dendroica petechia</i>	–/CSC	Nests in extensive willow riparian woodlands.	Suitable nesting and foraging habitat present, but species is a rare breeder in the County (Glover 2009). May forage on the site during migration. Species observed during migration at the project site (eBird 2023). No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles.
Mammals			
Townsend's big-eared bat <i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	–/CSC	Found in wooded areas with caves or old buildings for roost sites.	No suitable roosting, hibernating habitat present, but could forage over the project site. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is from Strawberry Canyon approximately 3.4 miles from the project site.
Pallid bat <i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	–/CSC	Occupies a wide variety of habitats at low elevations. Most commonly found in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting.	Suitable roosting, hibernating, or foraging habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1943 record from an unknown location in El Cerrito.
Western red bat <i>Lasiurus blossevillii</i>	–/CSC	Often roosts and forages on or near riparian habitat. Roosts primarily in trees, 2-40 feet above ground, from sea level up through mixed conifer forests. Prefers habitat edges and mosaics with trees that are protected from above and open below with open areas for foraging.	Suitable roosting habitat present in trees and foraging habitat present. Species does not breed in the project area. No CNDDDB occurrences recorded within 5 miles of the project site. Species observed near Jewell Lake in Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley (LSA pers. obs.).

Table A: Special-Status Species Evaluated for the Project

Species	Status (Federal/ State/CRPR)	Habitat	Potential for Occurrence
Big free-tailed bat <i>Nyctinomops macrotis</i>	–/CSC	Typically in deserts and arid grasslands where rocky outcrops, canyons, or cliffs occur for roosting. Occasionally roosts in buildings, caves, and tree cavities.	No suitable habitat present. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is a 1916 record from an unknown location in Berkeley estimated at approximately 2.4 miles from the project site.
San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat <i>Neotoma fuscipes annectens</i>	–/CSC	Primarily along riparian areas within chaparral and woodlands. Feeds mainly on woody plants but also eats acorns, grasses, and fungi. Builds conspicuous stick houses in trees and on the ground.	Suitable habitat and species present within the riparian woodland, scrub, and trees on and adjacent to the site. Woodrat houses observed during the field surveys. The closest CNDDDB occurrence is approximately 4.2 miles from the project site.
American badger <i>Taxidea taxus</i>	–/CSC	Grassland, scrub, and woodland with loose-textured soils.	Suitable grassland habitat present, but site's proximity to residential development and isolation from large open space area likely preclude this species. No CNDDDB occurrences within 5 miles.

Source: LSA 2023 (CDFW 2023, eBird 2023, Glover 2009, Xerces et al. 2023)

Status Codes:

FT = Federal threatened.

FC = Federal candidate.

CE = California endangered.

CT = California threatened.

CFP = California fully protected.

CSC = California Species of Special Concern.

List 1B = California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) List 1B: plant considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.

– = No status

^a Nearest records are based on CNDDDB (CDFW 2023) occurrences unless otherwise noted.

Special-Status Wildlife

Special-status animal species that are known to occur in the vicinity of the project site and for which suitable habitat is present include the following:

- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*; Federal Candidate)
- Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*; State Candidate Endangered)
- Western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*; State Candidate Endangered)
- Alameda whipsnake (*Masticophis lateralis*; Federal and State Threatened)
- California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*; Federal Threatened, California Species of Special Concern)
- Northwestern pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*; Federal Candidate, California Species of Special Concern)
- American white pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Long-eared owl (*Asio otus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*; California Fully Protected)
- Northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*; California Fully Protected)
- Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*; State Endangered, California Fully Protected)
- American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*; California Fully Protected)
- Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Vaux's swift (*Chaetura vauxi*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Olive-sided flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Purple martin (*Progne subis*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*; California Species of Special Concern)

- Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*; State Threatened, California Species of Special Concern)
- Yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Townsend's western big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*; California Species of Special Concern)
- Western red bat (*Lasiurus frantzii*; California Species of Special Concern)
- San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes annectens*; California Species of Special Concern)
- American badger (*Taxidea taxus*; California Species of Special Concern)

Monarch Butterfly

The monarch butterfly is a federal candidate listed species that could breed within the project site. Monarch butterflies breed from June to September and require their obligate larval host plant, milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.), for laying eggs, larval development, and metamorphosis. This species utilizes other flowering species for nectaring during the breeding season. Although no milkweed was observed during LSA's reconnaissance-level field surveys and milkweed is not listed in the Friends of Five Creeks (2014) plant list, milkweed has been recorded at the HNA by the Western Monarch Milkweed Tracker (Xerces et al. 2023). Therefore, monarch butterflies could breed. Individual monarch butterflies were observed flying through the project site during the October 3, 2023, field survey.

Trees do provide suitable overwintering roosting habitat for monarch butterflies. The project site is situated approximately 1.5 miles from the San Francisco Bay shoreline, which falls within the distance in which monarchs overwintering roosts are known to occur (Xerces et al. 2023). According to a monarch study completed for the project site in 1993 by Entomological Consulting Services, Ltd. (ECHNA 1993), the project site may be situated at too high an elevation to allow monarchs to use the project site as an overwintering roost site. No CNDDDB occurrences for monarch butterfly have been recorded at the project site, while the closest CNDDDB occurrence for an overwinter roost is in Richmond, approximately 1.2 miles from the site. The project site is not listed as a location for Xerces Society's Thanksgiving Count for monarch butterflies (Xerces Society Western Monarch Count 2022).

Crotch and Western Bumble Bee

The crotch and western bumble bees are Candidate State Endangered listed species. These species are known to occur in grassland and scrub habitat where suitable native nectar plants are present. These species historically occurred in the region but are now considered rare. Due to the presence of suitable flowering plant species, these species, although unlikely due to their rarity, could be present.

California Red-Legged Frog

The California red-legged frog is not expected to occur on site due the lack of suitable aquatic habitat on or adjacent to the project site (the streams/drainages on-site carry minimal water flow and are isolated from other aquatic habitat, such as ponds and lakes). This species has not been recorded at the project site, but it does occur at Jewell Lake, approximately 1.5 miles from the site (CDFW 2023).

Alameda Whipsnake

Alameda whipsnake is a federally and State listed threatened species that occurs in chaparral and rock outcrops and adjacent habitats, such as riparian woodland, oak woodland, and grasslands. Although very little high-quality chaparral habitat is present, the project site provides suitable habitat for this species. Beeman and Associates (1993) conducted focused habitat field surveys for Alameda whipsnake at the project site in 1993 and determined that the site provides suitable habitat for this species. No CNDDDB occurrences have been recorded at the project site. The closest non-historic CNDDDB occurrence was recorded near the San Pablo Dam, approximately 2.7 miles from the project site. The likelihood that Alameda whipsnake occurs at the project site is low.

Northwestern Pond Turtle

The northwestern pond turtle is not expected to occur on site due the lack of suitable aquatic habitat on or adjacent to the project site (the streams/drainages on site carry minimal water flow and are isolated from other natural aquatic habitat). The stream channels that convey larger amounts of water could support northwestern pond turtles; therefore, this species could be present during periods of high flows.

Special-Status Birds and Other Nesting Bird Species

Several special-status bird species are known to occur at or near the project site (Table A; see list above). These bird species could nest, winter, and/or migrate through the project site. Some of these bird species, such as the American peregrine falcon, could forage on the project site, but are unlikely to nest at or adjacent to the site due to the lack of suitable nesting habitat. Special-status birds observed at the project site include white-tailed kite, olive-sided flycatcher, and Vaux's swift, among others (eBird 2023). Several other special-status birds have been recorded in the project vicinity (CDFW 2023, eBird 2023). Active nests of special-status and other native bird species are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and/or California Fish and Game Code.

Special-Status Bats and Other Bat Species

Several bat species, including special-status bat species, could roost and/or forage at the project site. All roosts of native bats, regardless of their status, are protected by California Fish and Game Code. Townsend's western big-eared bat (California Species of Special Concern) may briefly forage over the project site but would not roost on the project site due to the lack of suitable roosting habitat. Suitable habitat for pallid bat and western red bat, both of which are California Species of Special Concern) and other bat species could roost in the on-site trees. Pallid bats will roost in tree cavities and in structures, while western red bats roost in trees. Western red bats typically roost in riparian habitats but could roost in any of the larger on-site trees. This species does not breed in the

area but does occur in the spring and fall during migration. The western red bat has been observed approximately 1.5 miles from the project site near Jewell Lake (LSA pers. obs.).

San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat

The San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat is a California Species of Special Concern. This species occurs in riparian woodland, woodland/forests, and scrub habitat and has been observed at the project site. LSA observed woodrat houses in the northern portion of the site, but this species could occur throughout the project site where suitable habitat is present.

American Badger

Grasslands present on the site may be suitable for the American badger, but this species is not likely to occur due to the project site's proximity to urban development and isolation from larger open grassland habitat. In addition, the soil characteristics of the rock outcrop-Xerorthents limit burrowing activities in the majority of the project area.

STREAMS/DRAINAGES

Several stream/drainage channels are present on the project site (Figure 3). Some of these drainages occur within concrete v-ditches. These streams/drainages are likely to be considered jurisdictional features by the USACE and RWQCB and subject to regulation under Section 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act and/or the California Porter Cologne Act.

No other potential waters of the United States/State, such as seasonal wetlands or seeps, were observed during the reconnaissance-level field survey, but the survey was conducted during the dry season when wetlands and seeps are less identifiable. Therefore, additional jurisdictional features, such as wetlands and seeps, could be present at the project site.

RIPARIAN HABITAT AND SENSITIVE PLANT COMMUNITIES

Riparian Woodland

As described above, riparian woodland vegetation is present along the stream and drainage channels. The on-site riparian habitat contains both native and non-native trees and shrubs, including willows (*Salix* spp.), acacias (*Acacia* spp.), coast live oak, alder, and cottonwood. Riparian woodland is considered a sensitive plant community under CEQA.

Native Grasslands

As discussed above, scattered patches of native grasslands are present within the non-native grassland habitat. Species observed during LSA's 2023 reconnaissance-level field survey include purple needlegrass, but several native grasses have been identified at the project site (Friends of Five Creeks 2014, LSA 1987). Most native grasslands are considered sensitive natural communities under CEQA.

WILDLIFE MOVEMENT CORRIDORS

The project site provides a movement corridor for several wildlife species. The stream and riparian channels provide movement habitat for aquatic species during the wet season. Numerous species of birds, amphibians, reptiles, insects, and mammals also move through the project site. Wildlife movement within the streams, drainages, riparian, woodland, and grassland habitat will not be permanently impacted by the proposed fuel management activities. Wildlife that currently inhabit the project site are expected to continue to move through the site after the fuel reduction activities have been implemented.

WILDLIFE NURSERY SITES

The project site is not known to support important wildlife nursery sites, such as heron rookeries, but several species of birds and bats could breed at the project site. The recommended mitigation measures for nesting birds, roosting bats, and other wildlife species would protect wildlife nursery sites, if present.

HABITAT CONSERVATION PLANS

The project site is not situated within the limits of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES

Based on the field investigation, literature review, and database search, LSA makes the following recommendations.

GENERAL AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION MEASURES

The following general avoidance measures shall be implemented to avoid potential direct and indirect impacts to special-status wildlife species during all fuel reduction treatment activities:

- Biological surveys appropriate to special-status wildlife species potentially present shall be conducted by the qualified biologist within 5 to 7 days prior to initiation of fuel reduction treatments. All special-status wildlife species observed during surveys shall be reported to the CNDDB.
- Before any fuel reduction treatments activities begin on the project, the qualified biologist shall conduct a training session for fuel reduction workers and other personnel present during vegetation treatment activities. The training shall include a description of each special-status species that might occur and its respective habitat, as well as the general measures that are being implemented to protect each of the species as they relate to the project, and the physical boundaries within the project shall be accomplished. The training shall also provide instruction in the appropriate protocol to follow in the event that a special-status species is found on site, including contact telephone numbers.
- A qualified biologist or biological monitor shall be present to observe fuel reduction treatment activities and shall have the authority to halt work as necessary if special-status species are in harm's way or permit conditions or mitigation measures are being violated. If special-status wildlife species are found within or near fuel reduction treatment areas, all fuel reduction activities shall cease in the vicinity of the animal until the animal moves on its own outside of the project area (if possible). The wildlife resource agency(ies) with jurisdiction over the species shall be contacted if permits issued for the project do not address relocation of the species regarding any additional avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures that may be necessary if the animal does not move on its own. The daily monitoring report prepared by the qualified biologist shall document the activities of the animal within the site; exclusion fence construction, modification, and repair efforts; and movements of the animal once again outside of the treatment area. This report shall be submitted to the City and the appropriate regulatory agency with jurisdiction over the wildlife species.
- Before starting ground-disturbing activities within fuel reduction treatment areas, the City and its contractors shall clearly delineate the boundaries of the fuel reduction treatment area with fencing, stakes, or flags. Contractors shall be required to restrict fuel reduction treatment-related activities to within the fenced, staked, or flagged areas. Contractors shall maintain fencing, stakes, and flags until the completion of fuel reduction activities in that area. Fencing stakes and flags shall be removed upon completion of work. Sensitive habitat areas, including

special-status wildlife species habitat, known plant populations, and jurisdictional wetlands, shall be clearly indicated on the fuel reduction treatment plans.

- Vehicles shall pass and turn around only within the delineated work area boundary or existing local road network. Where new access is required outside of existing roads or the work area, the route shall be clearly marked (i.e., flagged and/or staked) prior to being used, subject to review and approval of the qualified biologist.
- Where wildlife exclusion fencing is not installed and ground-disturbing activity (e.g., road or trail construction) is occurring, the qualified biologist shall approve the proposed disturbance in advance and clear the area prior to the start of ground disturbance activity.
- The introduction of exotic plant species shall be avoided first through prevention, followed by physical methods. All equipment shall arrive at the project area free of soil, seed, and vegetative debris to reduce the likelihood of introducing new weed species. Mechanical seeding equipment shall be inspected for residual seeds and cleaned prior to use on site. Equipment operators shall ensure that clothing, footwear, and equipment used during vegetation treatment and road construction are free of soil, seeds, vegetative matter, or other debris or seed-bearing material before entering the project site or from an area with known infestations of invasive plants and noxious weeds. Weed populations introduced into the site during treatment or construction shall be eliminated by mechanical means approved by the qualified biologist.
- Vehicles and equipment shall be in proper working condition to ensure that there is no potential for fugitive emissions of motor oil, antifreeze, hydraulic fluid, grease, or other hazardous materials. Contractor equipment shall be checked for leaks daily prior to operation and repaired when leaks are detected. Fuel containers shall be stored within appropriately sized secondary containment barriers. The qualified biologist shall be immediately informed of any hazardous spills and not more than 24 hours of the incident occurrence. Hazardous spills shall be immediately cleaned up and the contaminated soil shall be properly disposed of at an appropriate facility. If vehicle or equipment maintenance is necessary, it may be performed in the designated staging areas, as shown on the treatment or construction plans or approved by the qualified biologist.
- Temporarily disturbed areas shall be returned to pre-project conditions or better.
- Herbicide will only be administered by Qualified Applicator Certificate holders (minimum qualification) from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation using best practices including from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (2018b). Applicators must be trained by a biologist to recognize milkweed, monarch butterflies, and special-status bumble bees and their habitat.
- No herbicide application will take place within 125 ft of active monarch or bumble bee breeding sites (eggs, larvae, or active adult nectaring sites) when these insects are present (adults or larvae) based on Natural Resources Conservation Service and Monarch Joint Venture guidance (2022a). If herbicide application must occur within 125 ft of occupied monarch or bumble bee breeding and nectaring habitat, then application will only be conducted using targeted spraying,

cut stump, and wiping by a trained and licensed applicator and will be no closer than 2 ft to milkweed and other important nectar sources.

- Herbicide application by qualified applicators is only allowed to occur when the Qualified Applicator Certificate holder determines it is appropriate forecasted weather (e.g., no heavy winds above 15 miles per hour [mph] or any precipitation) and that the herbicide activities will not damage soil and/or vegetative cover. No herbicide application will be permitted 12 hours before or after a storm.

Special-Status Plants

If fuel reduction treatments are proposed within the native grasslands, riparian woodland, drainage channels, or less disturbed portions of the oak woodland and scrub habitat (such as areas where French broom is not present), focused plant surveys for special-status plants should be conducted according to CDFW's *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Plant Populations and Natural Communities* (CDFW 2018).

Nesting Birds

The following general avoidance measures shall be implemented to avoid potential direct and indirect impacts to nesting birds during all fuel reduction treatment activities:

- Prior to fuel reduction treatment activities occurring during the nesting bird season (February 1 through August 31), a preactivity activity surveys for nesting birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no nests will be disturbed during project implementation. Surveys will be conducted no more than 7 days prior to the initiation of fuel reduction treatment activities. During this survey, the biologist shall inspect all trees and other potential nesting habitats (e.g., shrubs, ground and structures) in the impact area plus a surrounding 300 ft buffer for nests. If removal of potential nesting substrate or project grading will occur during more than one nesting season, or in different parts of the site in phases over the course of a single season, then additional pre-activity surveys must be performed within 7 days prior to initiation of work in any particular area. If the preactivity activity survey does not identify the presence of any active nests on or within 300 ft of the site, construction or vegetation treatment activities may proceed.
- If nests known to have eggs or young, or that cannot be confirmed to be inactive or to lack eggs or young, are found, or adults are demonstrating nesting behavior, a qualified biologist shall establish an appropriate fuel reduction-free buffer around each nest. Generally, buffers of 300 ft for raptors and 100 ft for songbirds are adequate to avoid causing nest abandonment. The buffer shall remain in place until the qualified biologist has confirmed that the nest is no longer active.
- If less than a 100 ft nest buffer is necessary and determined to be appropriate for a particular nest or nests, a qualified biologist shall monitor the nest(s) before the activity to document baseline nesting behavior and monitor the nest during vegetation treatment or road construction to ensure nesting birds are not exhibiting signs of stress and territorial behavior. If signs of stress are observed during the monitoring, treatment or construction activities shall cease or the buffer shall increase, as determined by a qualified biologist, to a sufficient distance where the nesting birds are longer exhibiting signs of stress.

- To prevent encroachment, the buffer shall be clearly marked for avoidance. The established buffer shall remain in effect until the young have fledged or the nest is no longer active as confirmed by the biologist.

Roosting Bats

The following general avoidance measures shall be implemented to avoid potential direct and indirect impacts to bat species during all fuel reduction treatment activities:

- Prior to any tree removal during the maternity roosting period (April 15 through August 31) or hibernation period (October 15 through February 28), a focused tree habitat assessment shall be conducted by a qualified biologist of all trees that will be removed or impacted by vegetation treatment activities. Trees containing suitable potential bat roost habitat features would then be clearly marked. The habitat assessments should be conducted enough in advance to allow preparation of a report with specific recommendations, and to ensure tree removal can be scheduled during seasonal periods of bat activity if required. If it is determined that day-roosting bats are unlikely to occur, the tree may be removed as described below. If the absence of roosting bats cannot be confirmed, then the removal of trees providing suitable maternity or hibernation roosting habitat should only be conducted during seasonal periods of bat activity, including:
 - Between March 1 and April 15; or
 - Between September 1 and October 15.
- Appropriate methods will be used to minimize the potential of harm to bats during tree removal. Such methods may include but are not limited to using a two-step tree removal process. This method is conducted over 2 consecutive days and works by creating noise and vibration by cutting nonhabitat branches and limbs from habitat trees using chainsaws only (no other heavy machinery) on Day 1. The noise and vibration disturbance, together with the visible alteration of the tree, is highly effective in causing bats that emerge nightly to feed to not return to the roost that night. The remainder of the tree is removed on Day 2. A biologist qualified in two-step tree removal is required on Day 1 to supervise and instruct the tree-cutters who will be on the site conducting the work, but only for a sufficient length of time to train all tree cutters who will conduct two-step removal of habitat trees. The biologist is generally not required on Day 2, unless a very large cavity is present and a large colony is suspected. Fallen branches and trees should be left on site overnight to allow any bats that may be present to fly away during the nighttime hours.
- Removal of native oaks and riparian trees will be avoided where possible.

San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat

- A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-activity survey for San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat nests prior to the start of project activities. Surveys will be conducted in the immediate work area and a 25 ft buffer around those areas. If woodrat nests are present, the nests will be flagged in the field and delineated on project site maps in order to avoid potential impacts to woodrat nests during vegetation treatment activities. For any woodrat nests that cannot be

avoided, a woodrat nest relocation plan shall be prepared and submitted to CDFW for approval. At a minimum, the plan shall include the phased dismantling and relocation of the nest materials to a suitable location, and the installation of artificial shelters at a ratio of 1:1 per dismantled nest to provide readily accessible refugia for dispersing individuals. If breeding woodrats are present, relocation of houses shall be delayed until the breeding season is over or the qualified biologist otherwise determines that young are no longer present.

Monarch Butterfly

The project site is not known to support wintering monarch butterflies; therefore, winter roosts (which are considered sensitive habitat by CDFW) would likely not be impacted by fuel reduction activities. While it is possible that milkweed plants could be used by breeding monarchs, related impacts would be minimal because of the large area of open space maintained relative to project-related habitat alteration, and because winter roosts would not be disturbed. The following avoidance and minimization measures shall be observed:

- Prior to fuel treatment activities, appropriately timed field surveys (generally June through September) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to identify, map, and estimate (a) stand sizes, densities, and number and species of milkweed (*Asclepias* spp. and others); (b) number and species of adult nectar plants in the entire project site; and (c) record any observations of monarch activity.
- Vegetation control activities may occur between December 1 and March 14 without special restrictions. The following restrictions are applicable from March 15 to November 30 for vegetation control practices (e.g., ground disturbance, tree removal, mowing, grazing, herbicide application, or hand removal) during the monarch breeding season in areas containing milkweed and nectar plants:
 - a. During the monarch breeding season from March 15 through November 30, the City and its contractors may conduct vegetation control activities and other management actions provided:
 - 1) Site specific buffers are established by a qualified biologist around patches of milkweed and associated nectar plants where no vegetation control may occur.
 - 2) If milkweed and associated nectar plants cannot be avoided, a qualified biologist shall complete pre-activity surveys. If no monarch breeding activity is identified, contractors may proceed with vegetation control activities subject to conditions below. If monarch breeding activity is identified, the milkweed stand shall be avoided until a qualified biologist implements a salvage and relocation plan that has been reviewed and approved by the applicable resource agency.
 - 3) Unoccupied growing milkweed will be avoided by a minimum of 2 ft during the application of herbicides (target spray, cut stump, wiping and wicking). Herbicide application within 125 ft of a milkweed plant will be conducted with a low-pressure backpack sprayer to reduce the risk of drift.

- 4) No broad-spectrum herbicide application will take place within 125 ft of occupied monarch habitat when wind speeds exceed 10 mph or temperatures exceed 85 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) to minimize potential for drift and volatilization.
- 5) No persistent or pre-emergent herbicides will be used within 125 ft of milkweed or other occupied monarch habitats.
- 6) No prescribed fire treatment will occur within 125 ft of habitat occupied by monarchs during the active monarch season.
- 7) Mowing will not be conducted within 125 ft of active monarch breeding habitat (adults or larvae) during the breeding season of March 15 through November 30. Mowing projects affecting nectar plants any time of year within 125 ft of active monarch habitat shall only be conducted when temperatures are above 55°F on a sunny day and 60°F on cloudy days to avoid injuring adult monarchs (Monarch Joint Venture 2022b).
- 8) If mowing occurs from March to June near areas where breeding occurs, mowing height will be set to a minimum of 10–12 inches to avoid cutting newly emerged milkweed plants.

Crotch's and Western Bumble Bees

A minimum of two preactivity surveys shall be conducted within 30 days during appropriate activity periods (i.e., March through September) prior to the start of ground disturbing activities to identify bumble bee activity. The preactivity surveys shall occur when temperatures are above 60°F and not during wet conditions (e.g., foggy, raining, or drizzling). The survey shall be conducted at least 2 hours after sunrise and 3 hours before sunset, and shall occur at least 1 hour after rain subsides. Preferably, the survey should be conducted during sunny days with low wind speeds (less than 8 mph), but surveying during partially cloudy days or overcast conditions is permissible if the surveyors can still see their own shadow.

If western bumble bees, or potential Crotch or western bumble bees (since bumble bees can be difficult to identify in the field), are observed within the project site, a plan to protect Crotch and/or western bumble bee nests and individuals shall be developed and implemented in consultation with CDFW and USFWS. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following measures:

- Specifications for fuel treatment timing and sequencing requirements (e.g., avoidance of raking, mowing, tilling, or other ground disturbance until late March to protect overwintering queen bumble bees);
- Establishment of appropriate no-disturbance buffers for bumble bee nest sites to avoid impacts to the bees and monitoring by a qualified biologist to ensure compliance if bumble bee nests are identified;

- Restrictions associated with fuel treatment practices, equipment, or materials that may harm bumble bees (e.g., avoidance of pesticides/herbicides, best management practices to minimize the spread of invasive plant species);
- Provisions to avoid western bumble bees, or potential western bumble bees if observed away from a bumble bee nest during project activity (e.g., ceasing of project activities until the animal has left the active work area on its own volition); and
- Prescription of an appropriate restoration seed mix targeted for the western bumble bee, including native plant species known to be visited by native bumble bee species and containing a mix of flowering plant species with continual floral availability through the entire active season of the western bumble bee (March through September).

Waters of the United States/Waters of the State

Potential impacts to potentially jurisdictional features, such as the on-site streams/drainages (and seasonal wetlands/seeps, if present), are subject to regulation by the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW. These features will be avoided during the fuel reduction activities, where possible. No fill, including plant cuttings, rocks, or soils will be placed in these jurisdictional features without the appropriate permits from the regulatory agencies. If these features are impacted, the City would need to obtain the required permits from the relevant regulatory agencies, including the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB. These permits would include conditions and BMPs that the City would implement during fuel reduction activities. These permits may also specify mitigation, which the City would provide as specified by the regulatory agencies.

Riparian Vegetation

To minimize disturbance to riparian habitat occurring adjacent to the fuel reduction area, riparian areas shall be clearly delineated by a qualified biologist. Riparian areas shall be separated and protected from the work area through silt fencing, amphibian/reptile-friendly fiber rolls (i.e., no mono-filament), or other appropriate erosion control material. Material staging, and all other project-related activity shall be located as far as possible from riparian areas with no driving or parking of vehicles or equipment within the dripline of a riparian tree.

Native Grasslands and Other Sensitive Natural Communities

If feasible, the proposed fuel treatments shall avoid/minimize impacts to the purple needlegrass grasslands, other native grasslands, and other sensitive natural communities. The stands of native grasslands shall be avoided during fuel treatment activities.

If the native grasslands cannot be avoided, the loss of native grasslands shall be mitigated by restoring an equivalent amount of native grasslands on site. The City shall reseed temporarily disturbed areas of native grassland habitat that are disturbed by fuel reduction activities with an appropriate weed-free native seed mix that contains the particular native grass seed and/or plugs. Any restored native grassland areas shall be monitored and reported on an annual basis, as required by CDFW.

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APPENDIX A

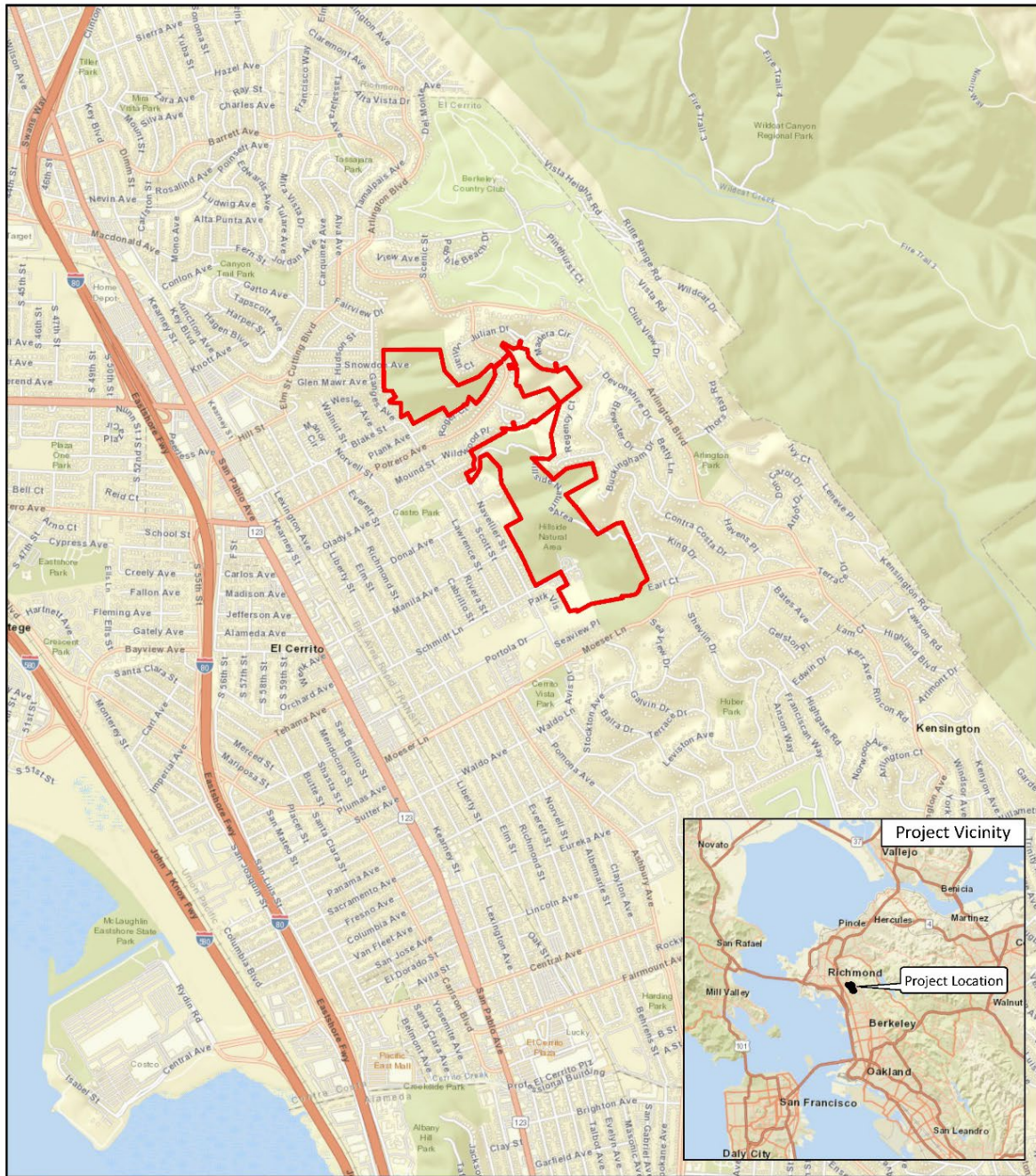
FIGURES

Figure 1: General Location

Figure 2: Project Site

Figure 3: Vegetation Communities

Figure 4: Soils



LSA

LEGEND

Project Site



0 1000 2000
FEET

SOURCE: Contra Costa County (05/2024); Esri (2024).

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FIGURE 1

*Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California
Regional Location*

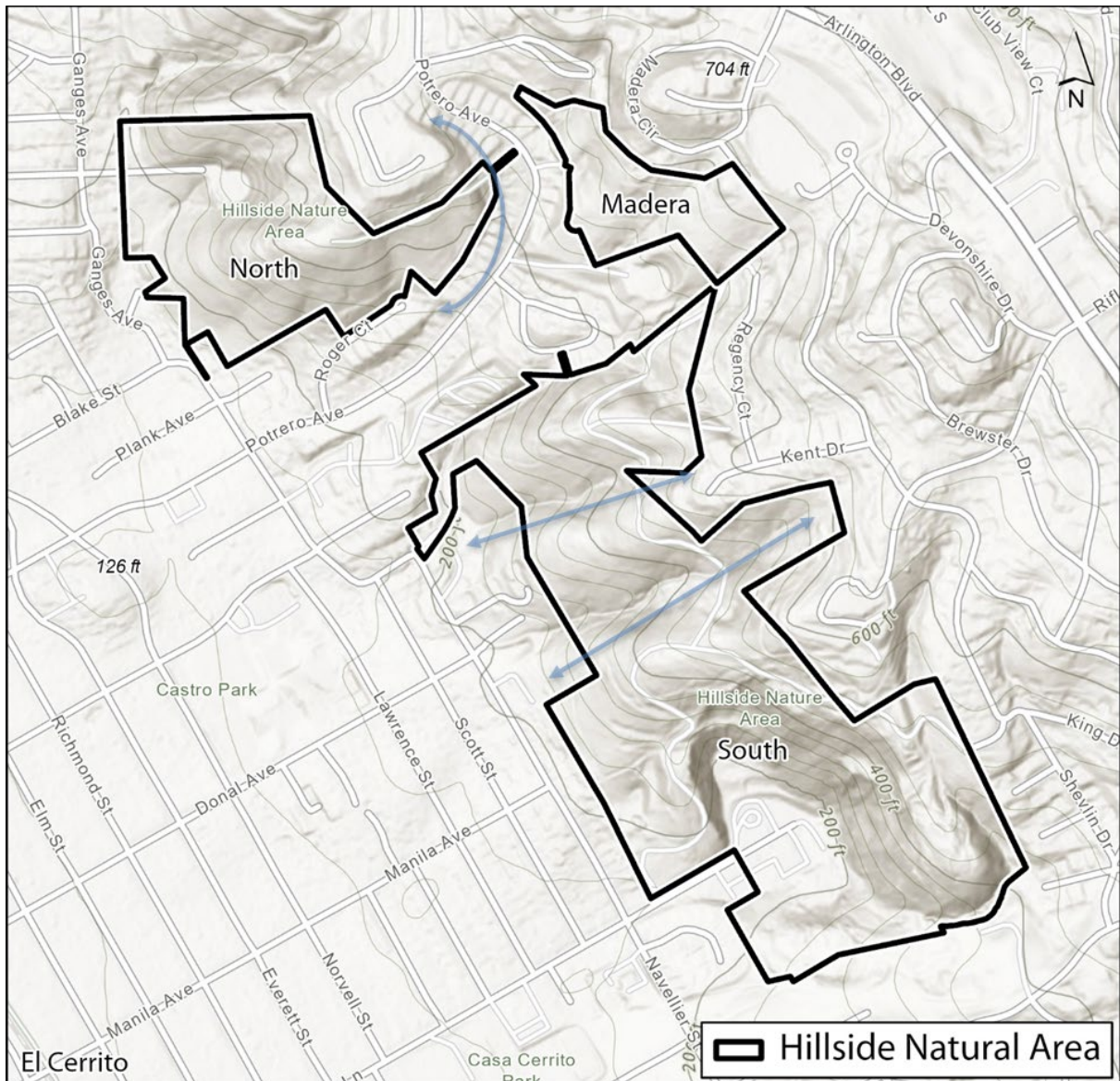
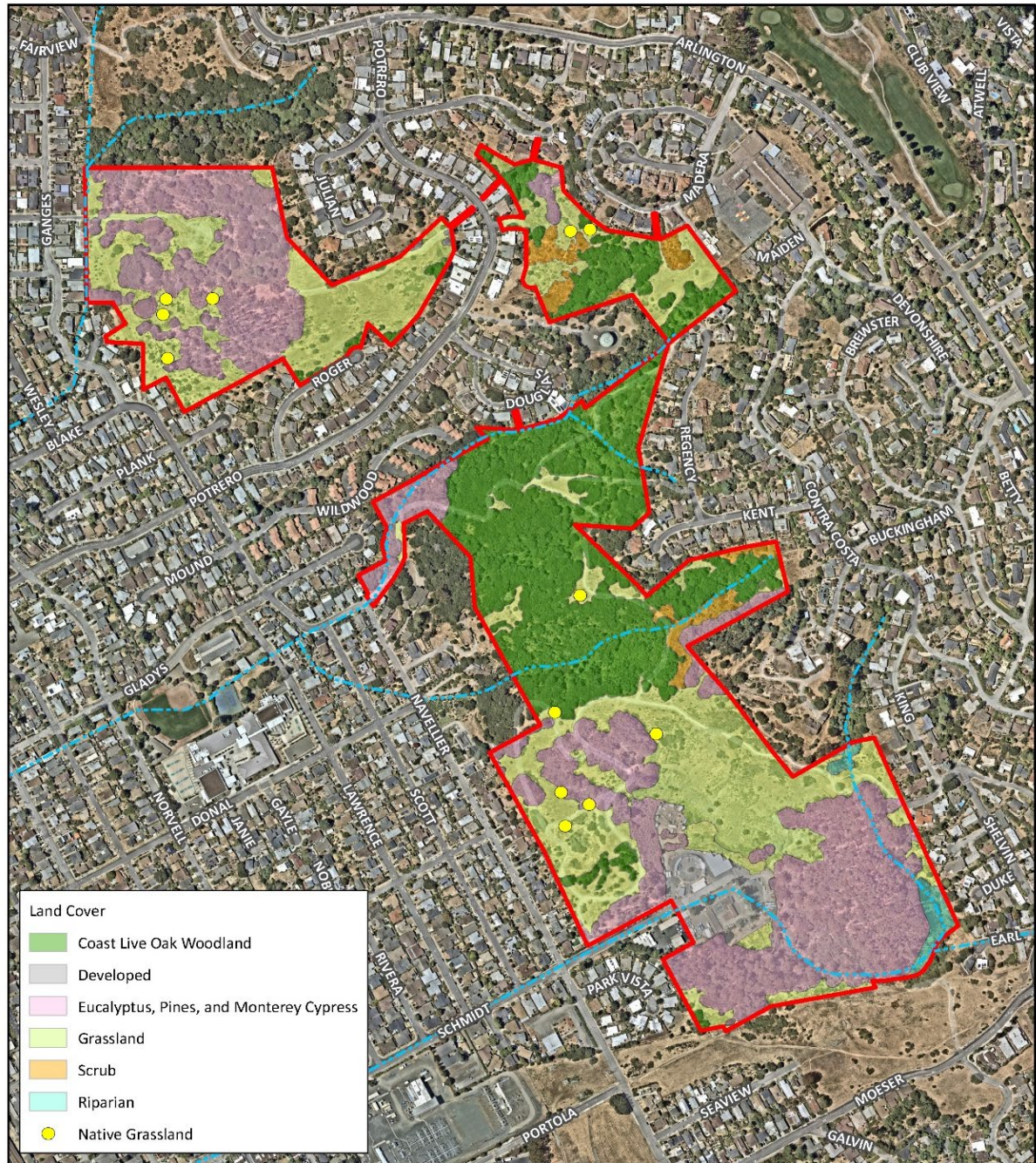


Figure 2: Project Site Topography (blue arrows indicate major drainages).



LSA

LEGEND

Project Site

Stream/Drainage



0 300 600
FEET

SOURCE: LSA (2023, 2024); Contra Costa County (05/2024); Nemap (07/2023).

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FIGURE 3

Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California

Land Cover



FIGURE 4

LSA

LEGEND

- Project Site
- Soil Map Units



SOURCE: NRCS (10/2023); Contra Costa County (05/2024); Nearmap (07/2023).
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Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California
Soil Types

APPENDIX B

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

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FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

**HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND
FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN**

EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA



DRAFT

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA

City of El Cerrito
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, California 94530

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Wildland Resource Management

(510) 502-4737

Project No. 20231296

Funding provided by:



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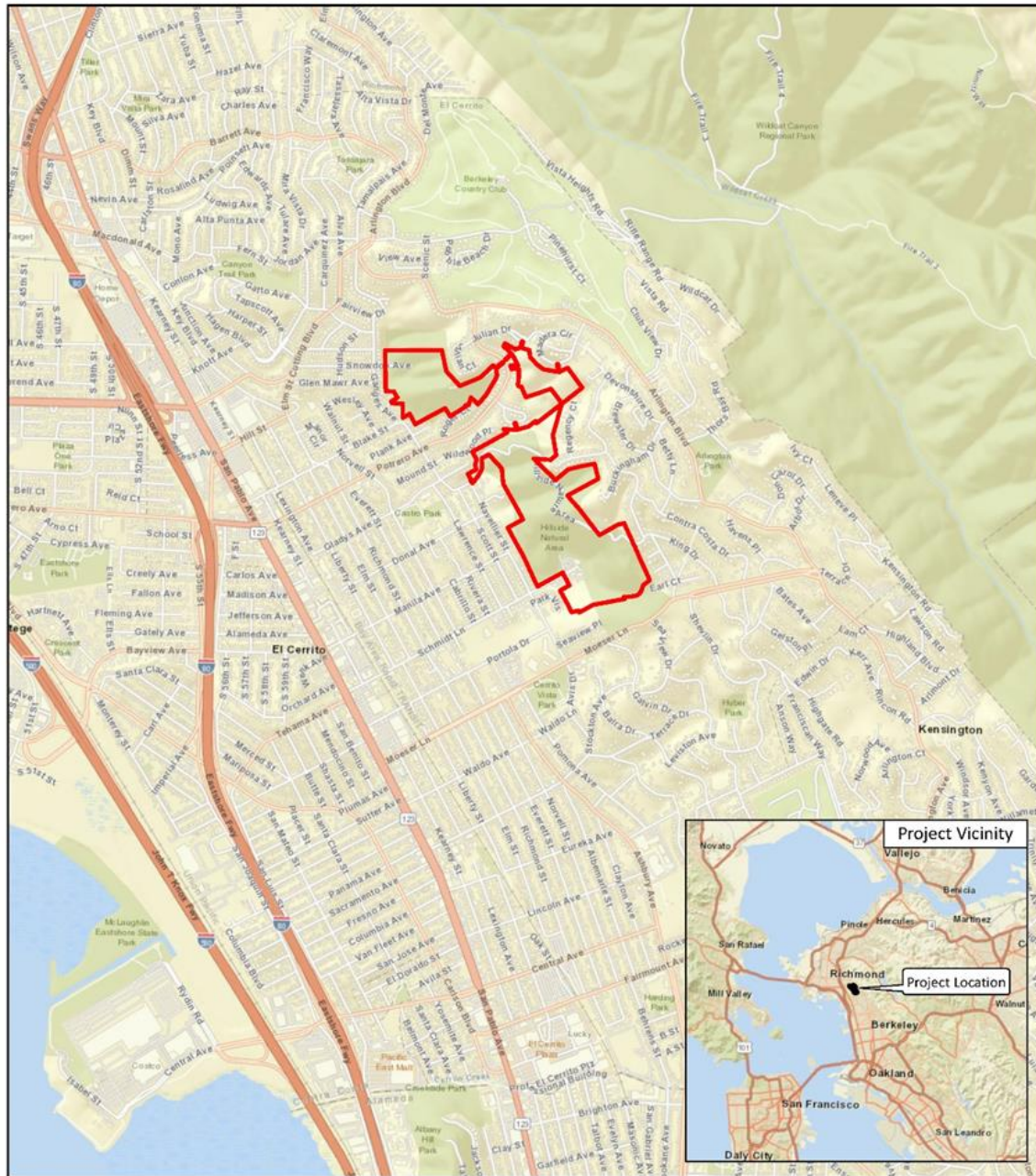
Executive Summary

Fire hazards are a special concern in the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area (HNA), a community-serving park and recreation facility located in the center of El Cerrito, California (Figure 1). The area is located in the interface between wildlands and developed areas where fires may spread from wildlands to homes, possibly damaging structures or creating risk to public health. These wildlands are also subject to increased ignition potential and fire spread from elevated levels of human activities because most fires in the coastal mountains are human-caused.

This evaluation uses fire behavior modeling to assess fire risk in the HNA. It serves as a platform for recommendations to minimize threat to life, safety, and damage from wildfire to homes and natural resources. It is based on a review of the terrain, weather, fuels, and fire history of the area compared to the values at risk and likely scenarios of fire ignition and spread.

Because of the steep slopes and abundant fuel, along with moderately warm temperatures and occasional strong winds, the risk of wildfire in and around the El Cerrito HNA is significant. Long flame lengths and tree torching are expected for most of the area in the HNA; these pose threats to the hillside residences and the community. Fortunately, the moderate fire spread rates expected in the HNA may assist fire containment when fire suppression efforts are not thwarted by long flames. The level of risk (based on flame lengths, rate of fire spread, and values at risk) are among the highest in the East Bay Hills, similar to Oakland and Berkeley.

Fire risk can be reduced by three actions: vegetative fuel management (including removal of highly flammable invasive species) in the HNA and, in residential yards, retrofitting structures to be ignition-resistant and diligence in ignition prevention. The areas of highest priority for vegetative fuel management are those nearest homes (both above and below the HNA) and those locations with greatest flame lengths. Ignition prevention involves the entire community focusing on fire-safe behaviors, along with creation and maintenance of fuels (both vegetative and structural) that are ignition-resistant.



LSA **LEGEND** Project Site

0 1000 2000
FEET

SOURCE: Contra Costa County (05/2024); Esri (2024).

FIGURE 1

*Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California*

Regional Location

Figure 1: Regional Location

Introduction

Area of Interest

Topography

The HNA has undulating contours, encompassing a broad range of slopes and aspects. There are two drainages in HNA South, running from northeast to southwest. Two very steep slopes (45–90 degrees) exist in the HNA: one is an exposed rock face in HNA South that rises up from the area near the City of El Cerrito (City) Recycling and Environmental Resources Center (Recycling Center) on Schmidt Lane (formerly a quarry), and one is at Motorcycle Hill (HNA North) at the end of Snowdon Avenue.

Topographic features, such as slope and aspect (orientation with respect to sun and wind) and the overall form of the land, have a profound effect on fire behavior. Topography affects a wildfire's intensity, direction, and rate of spread. An area's topography also affects local winds, which are either bent or intensified by topographic features. Topographic features can also induce daily upslope and downslope winds. The speed, regularity, and direction of these winds (and other winds) directly influence the direction of wildfire spread and the shape of the flaming front.

The topography of the site is characterized as west-facing slopes that receive full afternoon sun, when it is the hottest. The slopes are generally steep; a steeper slope will result in a faster-moving fire, with longer flame lengths. Any slope can potentially increase the amount of heat a structure will be subject to during a wildfire. Within the slopes, several drainages run east to west and can funnel heat up and down the hillside during a wildfire, as shown on Figure 2.

Slope

Slope is the degree of incline of a hillside. Fire usually spreads faster uphill than downhill because fuels are more efficiently preheated by uphill spreading of heat and flames. A steeper slope will result in a faster-moving fire, with longer flame lengths. Any slope can potentially increase the amount of heat a structure will be subject to during a wildfire. Throughout the HNA, slopes range from essentially 0 degrees (flat) to over 90 degrees (very steep). The steeper slopes (over 30 degrees) are concentrated in areas along either side of the dominant northeast-to-southwest aligned ridges and canyons found in HNA North and South (Figure 3), with the steepest slopes being found along an exposed rock face that rises up from the area near the Recycling Center on Schmidt Lane (formerly a quarry) in HNA South and rising from the area at the end of Snowdon Avenue in HNA North.

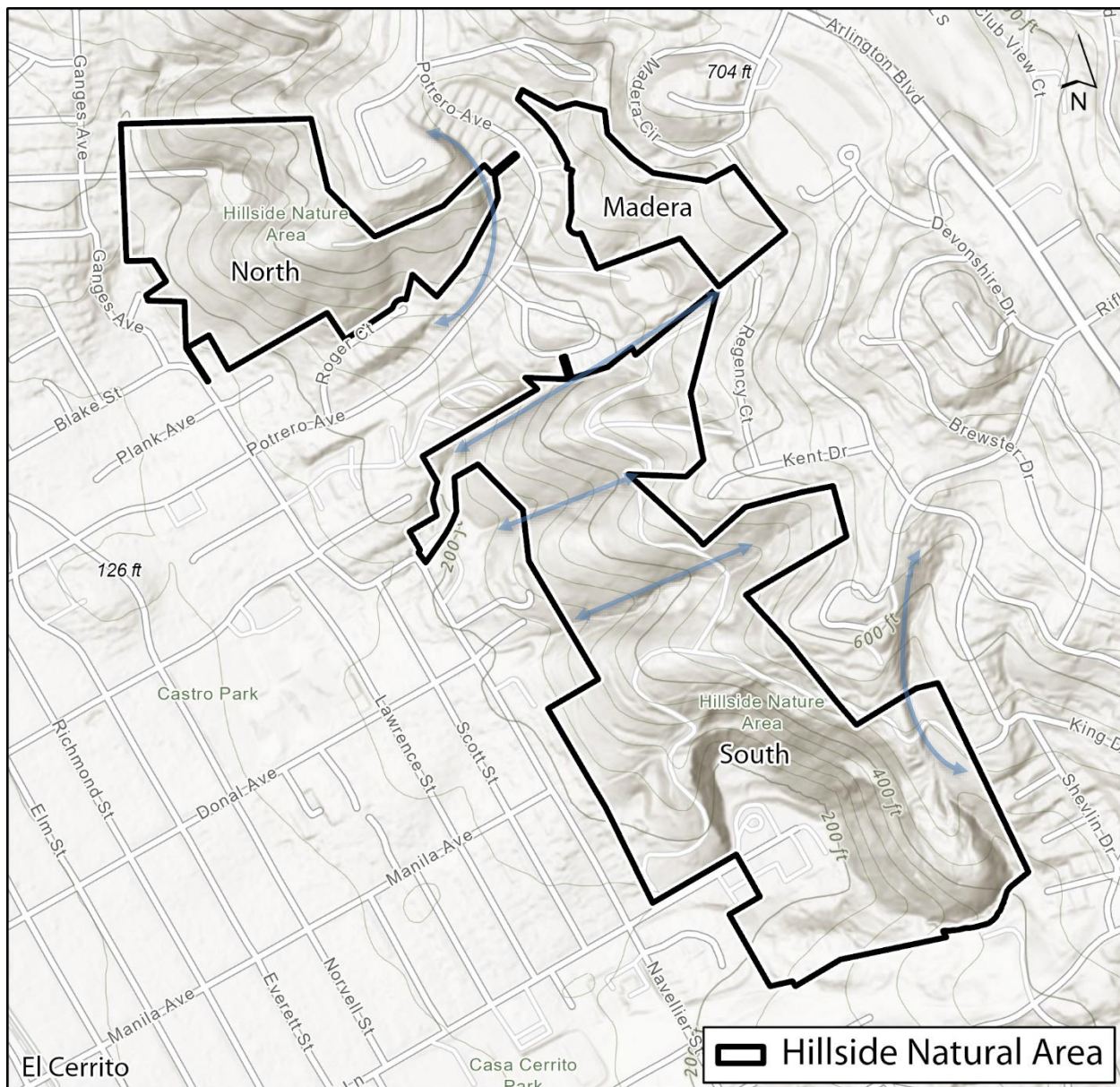


Figure 2: Topographic map. HNA boundary is shown in black, and canyons that may funnel winds shown in blue.

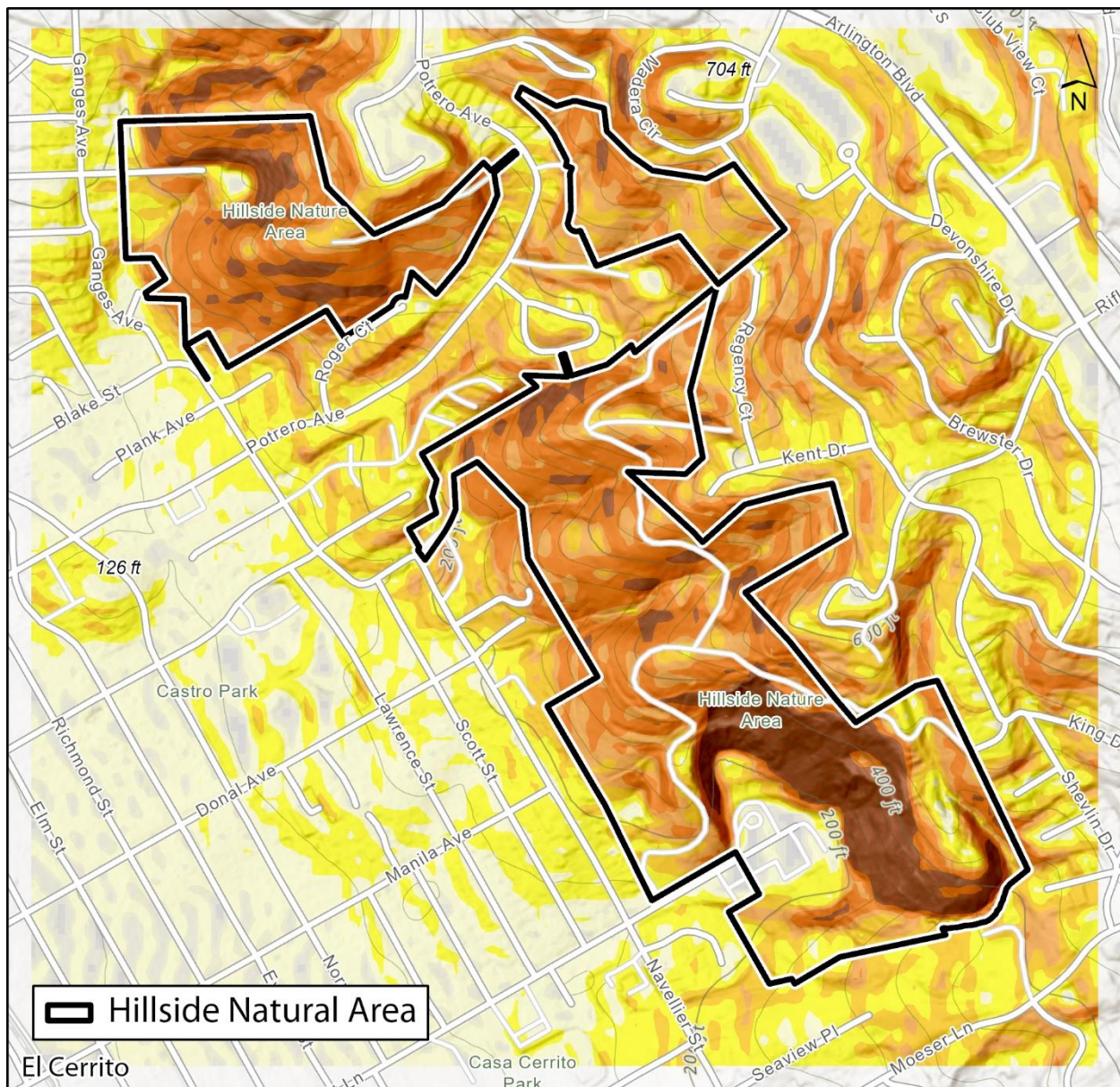


Figure 3: Slope map. HNA boundary is shown in black, and darker shading represents steeper slopes.

Aspect

The aspect toward which a slope faces (i.e., north, south, east, or west) has an effect on fire behavior and intensity. South-facing slopes tend to dry out faster resulting in more frequent opportunities for ignition. South-facing aspects also have hotter, drier fuels, which usually burn with greater heat output. In contrast, north-facing slopes tend to have denser vegetation because more moisture is available. Although north slopes tend to burn less frequently than south slopes, they can burn with more intensity due to the higher fuel volume.

Most of the forest and woodlands in the HNA are on north-facing slopes and in protected canyons (Figure 4).¹ In contrast, grass is found on south-facing slopes.

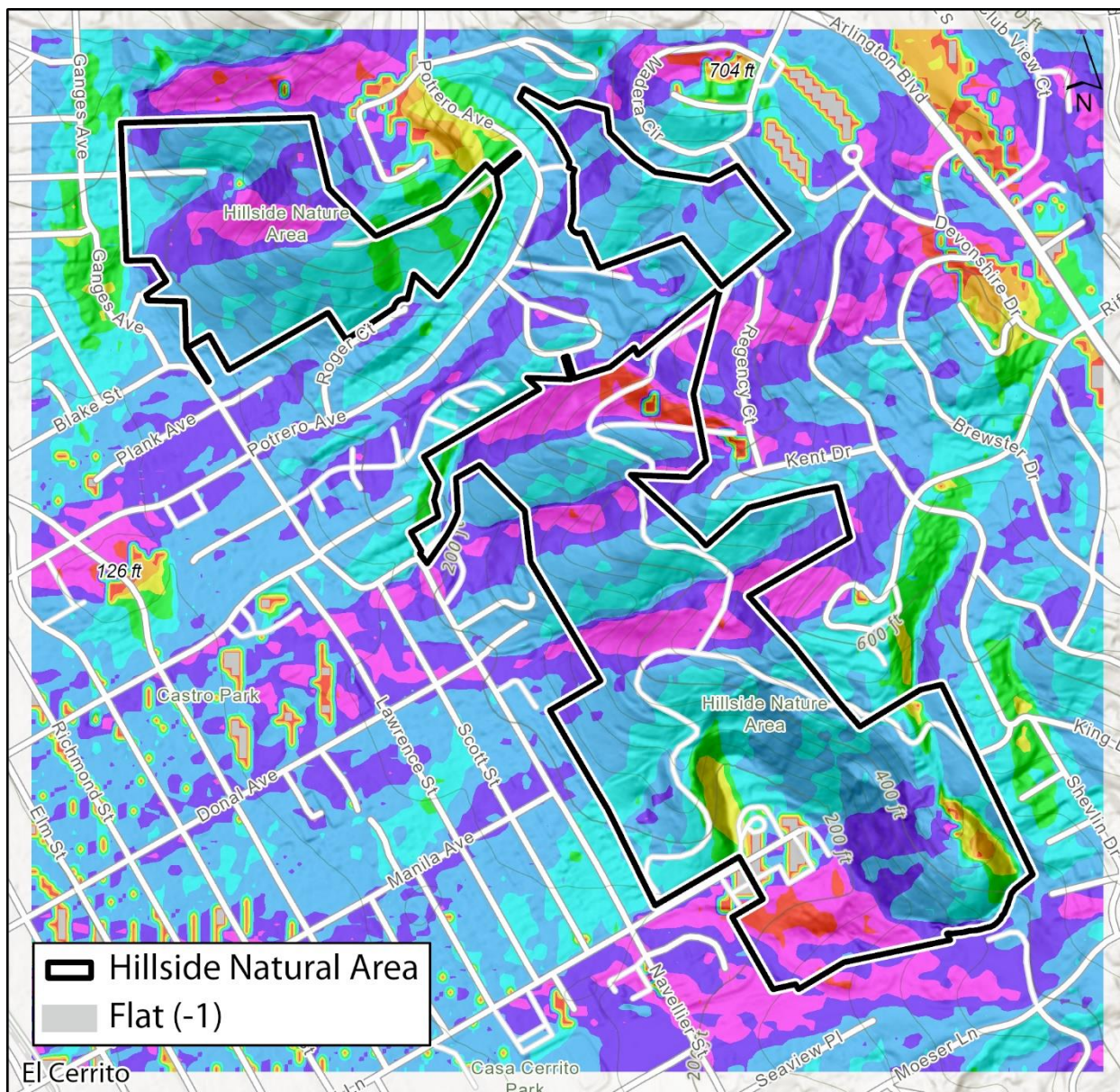


Figure 4: Aspect map. HNA boundary is shown in black; grey areas are flat; and prevailing main aspects are west (blue), south (yellow), north (pink) and east (green).

¹ "Trees of Hillside Natural Area" by El Cerrito Tree Committee (n.d.) – website: <https://www.ectrailtrekkers.org/uploads/1/4/2/8/142875193/trees-of-hillside-natural-area.pdf>.

Weather

Summer days in El Cerrito are usually warm but comfortable; temperatures normally range from lows in the 40s degrees Fahrenheit (°F) to highs in the 70s°F, with an occasional high reaching 80°F. Humidity can drop to the single digits in the summer and fall.

The HNA area of interest lies in a relatively protected area and would be subject to occasional episodes of still, stagnant air formed by an area of stationary high pressure during summer months. This overall weather pattern, characterized by continuous high temperatures and low relative humidities, enhances the possibilities of ignition, extreme fire behavior, and extreme resistance to fire control.

Weather conditions significantly impact both the potential for ignition and the rate, intensity, and direction in which fires burn. The most important weather factors used to predict fire behavior are wind, temperature, and humidity.

The most important influence on fire behavior is wind. Wind can greatly affect the rate of a fire's spread and the output of a fire. Wind increases the flammability of fuels both by removing moisture through evaporation and by angling the flames so that they preheat the fuels in the fire's path. The direction and velocity of winds can also control the direction and rate of the fire's spread. Winds can carry embers and firebrands downwind that can ignite spot fires ahead of the primary front. Gusty winds cause a fire to burn erratically and make it more difficult to contain. Wind will tend to follow the path of least resistance and is therefore frequently deflected and divided by landforms. Canyon slopes produce pronounced daily up-canyon and down-slope winds caused by differential heating and cooling of air during the day. This occurs region-wide and on a local scale.

Most of the area is characterized by northeast-to-southwest aligned ridges and canyons. These ridges can act as funnels for the dominating westerly winds and could produce strong up-slope and erratic winds, as shown in Figure 2. The winds that create the most severe fire danger typically blow from the north, usually in October. Winds from the east and north bring low humidity and elevated fire danger and can hasten fire spread in the forested and chaparral-covered areas.

Surface Fuels and Vegetation

Fuels are classified into surface fuels and canopy fuels. Surface fuels are those that will carry the fire near the ground, generally below 12 feet in height. Surface fuels can be comprised of grass; foliage of both herbaceous and woody plants; and various sizes of dead twigs, branches and logs. Canopy fuels are those in the tree canopy, comprised of living and dead foliage and branches and bark attached to the tree trunk.

The forest structure metrics were initially derived directly from airborne light detection and ranging (LiDAR) data,² hosted by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 3D Elevation Program. Information from LiDAR enables measurements of canopy characteristics as well as vegetation density and spatial arrangement under the tree canopy. These forest structure patterns were identified from a statewide 3D Elevation Program

The surface fuel models are represented in the database as numbers. These fuel types and their corresponding numbers are:

- Nonburnable (NB) – from 91 to 99
- Grass (GR) – 100s
- Grass-Shrub (GS) – 120s
- Shrub (SH) – 140s
- Timber-Understory (TU) – 160s
- Timber Litter (TL) – 180s
- Slash-Blowdown (SB) – 200s

The names of the fuel types include a reference to “Timber,” which also applies to the woodlands found in the HNA, as shown on Figure 5.

Surface fuels, along with elevation, slope, aspect, and other canopy characteristics, form the basis of the fire behavior predictions in this assessment. The majority of the surface fuels in all three sections of the HNA are classified as Moderate Load Humid Climate Forest-Shrub (shown as light green in Figure 5) and Forest-Grass-Shrub (shown as darker green in Figure 5). There are also smaller patches of Low Load Humid Climate Grass (shown as yellow in Figure 5) scattered throughout all three sections. A swath of High Load Conifer Litter (shown as blue in Figure 5) and Very High Load Broadleaf Litter (shown as dark teal in Figure 5) crossed HNA South in an east-west direction. A small number of barren rock outcrops and developed areas also exist in the HNA. Each vegetation type burns differently based on the amount of biomass available to burn, the distribution of biomass in the vegetation, and the moisture and oil content of the foliage and dead material. The vegetation in the HNA includes forests, woodlands, shrubs, grasslands, and riparian areas. Over half of the area is wooded, with coast live oak being the predominant species. Other trees and shrubs that are common in the area include: eucalyptus, willow, toyon, coyote bush, ceanothus, and coast sagebrush. Pine and redwood trees can be found in the Memorial Grove area.

² LiDAR is an acronym of "light detection and ranging" or "laser imaging, detection, and ranging." Laser light is sent from a transmitter and reflected from objects. The reflected light is detected by the system receiver and the time of flight is used to develop a distance map of the objects.



Figure 5: Surface fuels map. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Canopy Fuels

Canopy fuels are not categorized into different models. Instead, they are measured in terms of canopy base height, canopy bulk density, and canopy cover. Each of these measurements influences fire behavior in distinctly different ways, as explained in the following sections. The values and spatial patterns of each are shown in Figures 6–9.

Canopy Height

Canopy height describes the average height of the top of the forest canopy. Canopy height is an influence in the distance embers can be distributed, with taller trees enabling longer ember cast.

The tallest trees are the eucalyptus trees, found west of Wildwood Place and southeast of the Recycling Center. Most of the HNA has a high canopy cover, indicating a dense forest, where tree crowns touch each other and are intermingled.

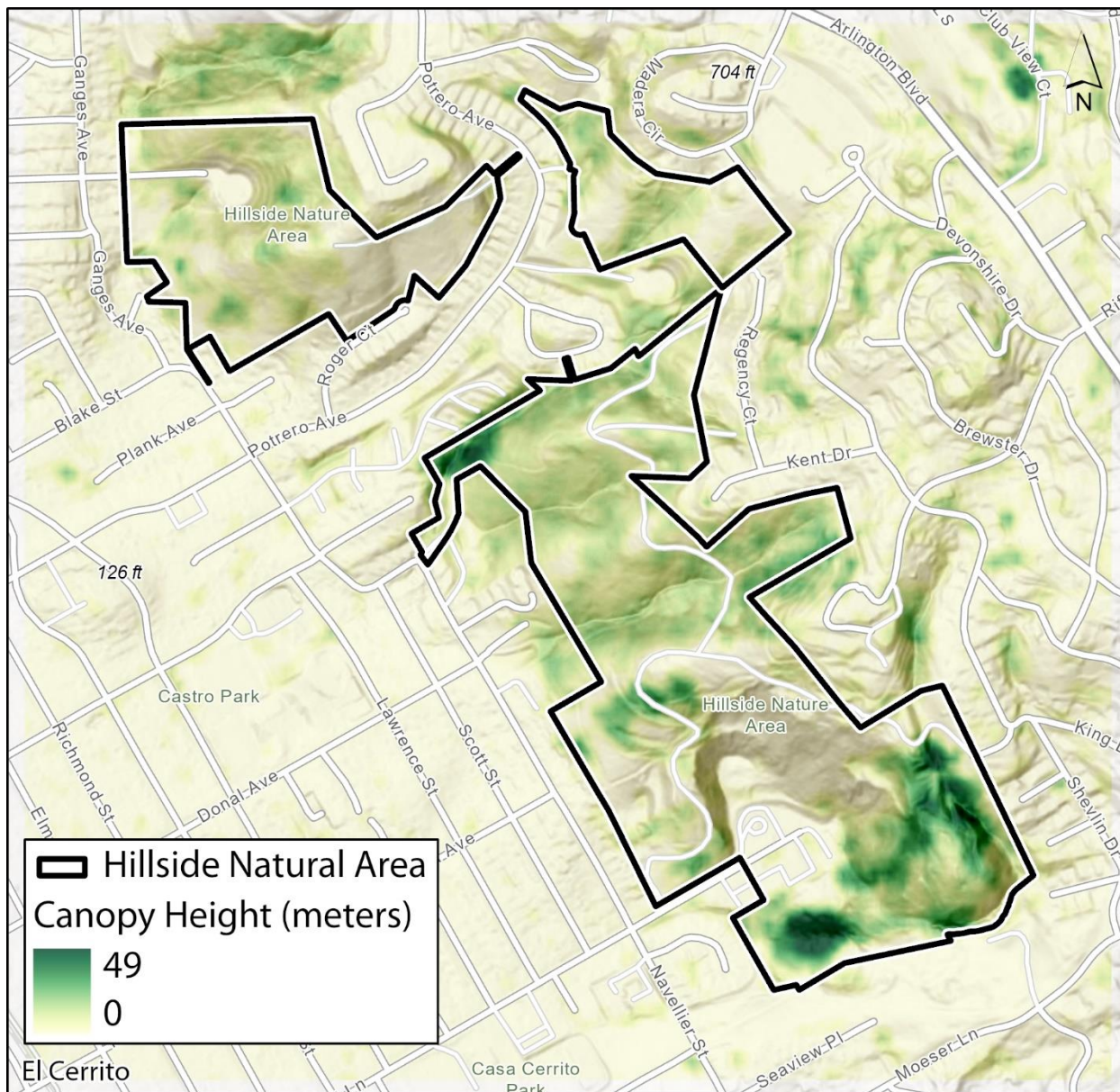


Figure 6: Canopy height map. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Canopy Base Height in the HNA

Canopy base height is the height at which there is enough fuel to spread fire up into the canopy. Usually, it is foliage; however, it could also be tree bark, shrubs, small trees, or an accumulation of dead twigs in the tree canopy. This characteristic indicates the presence of ladder fuels (the volume of vegetation under the tree canopy that leads fire into the canopy).

Because the canopy base height influences the likelihood of torching, it is important to note that it is quite low throughout the HNA, with the exception of the northwest corner of City property, in the drainage south of Wildwood Place, and immediately northwest and southeast of the Recycling Center (Figure 7).

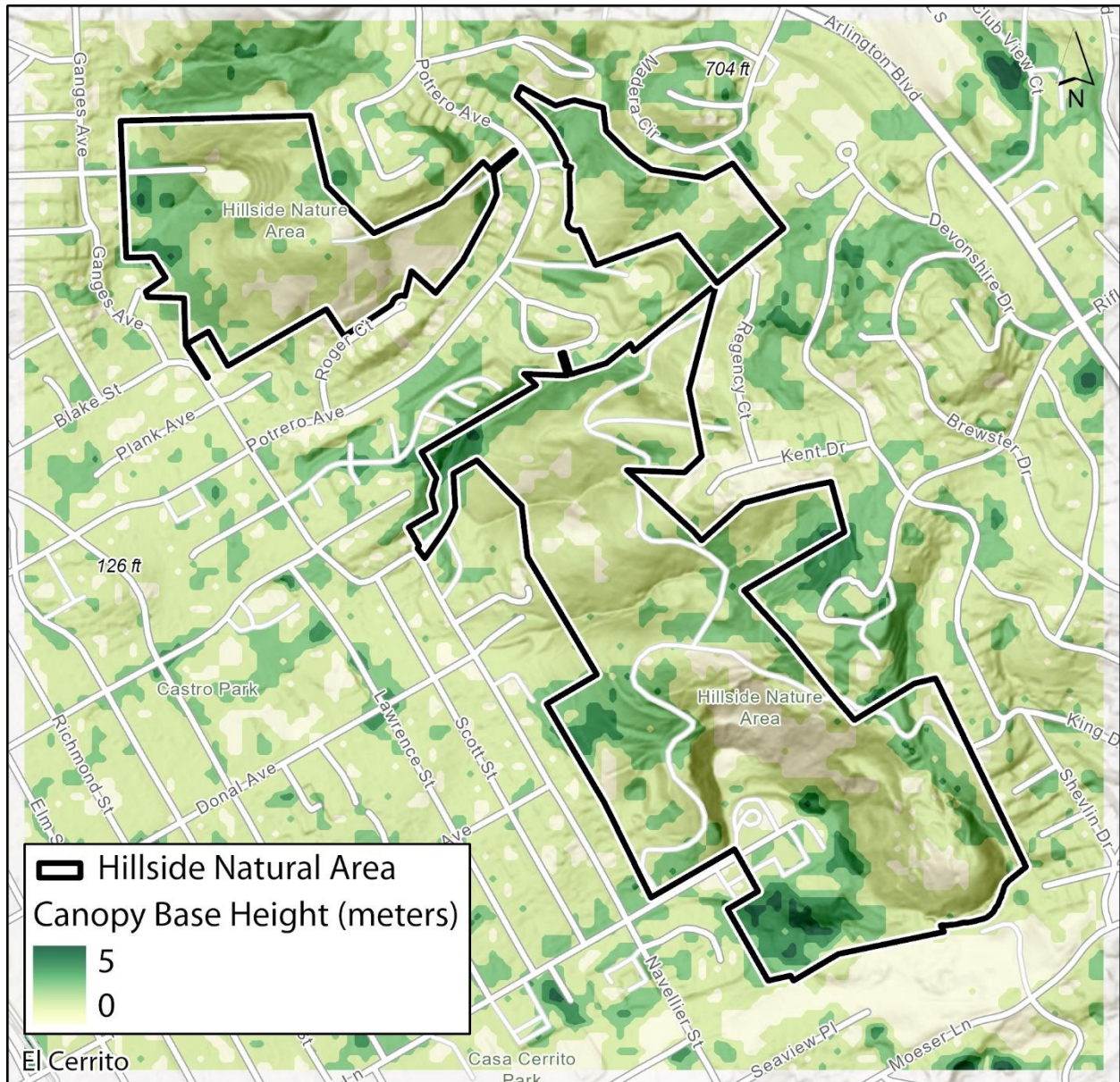


Figure 7: Canopy base height map. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Ladder Fuel Density

Ladder fuel density (Figure 8) describes how dense the understory vegetation is. The understory may be comprised of lower branches or shrubs. Both provide a fire's path to the tree canopy. A majority of the forested areas at the HNA have a high ladder fuel index, in both native hardwood and eucalyptus stands; locations without trees have very low values for ladder fuel density.

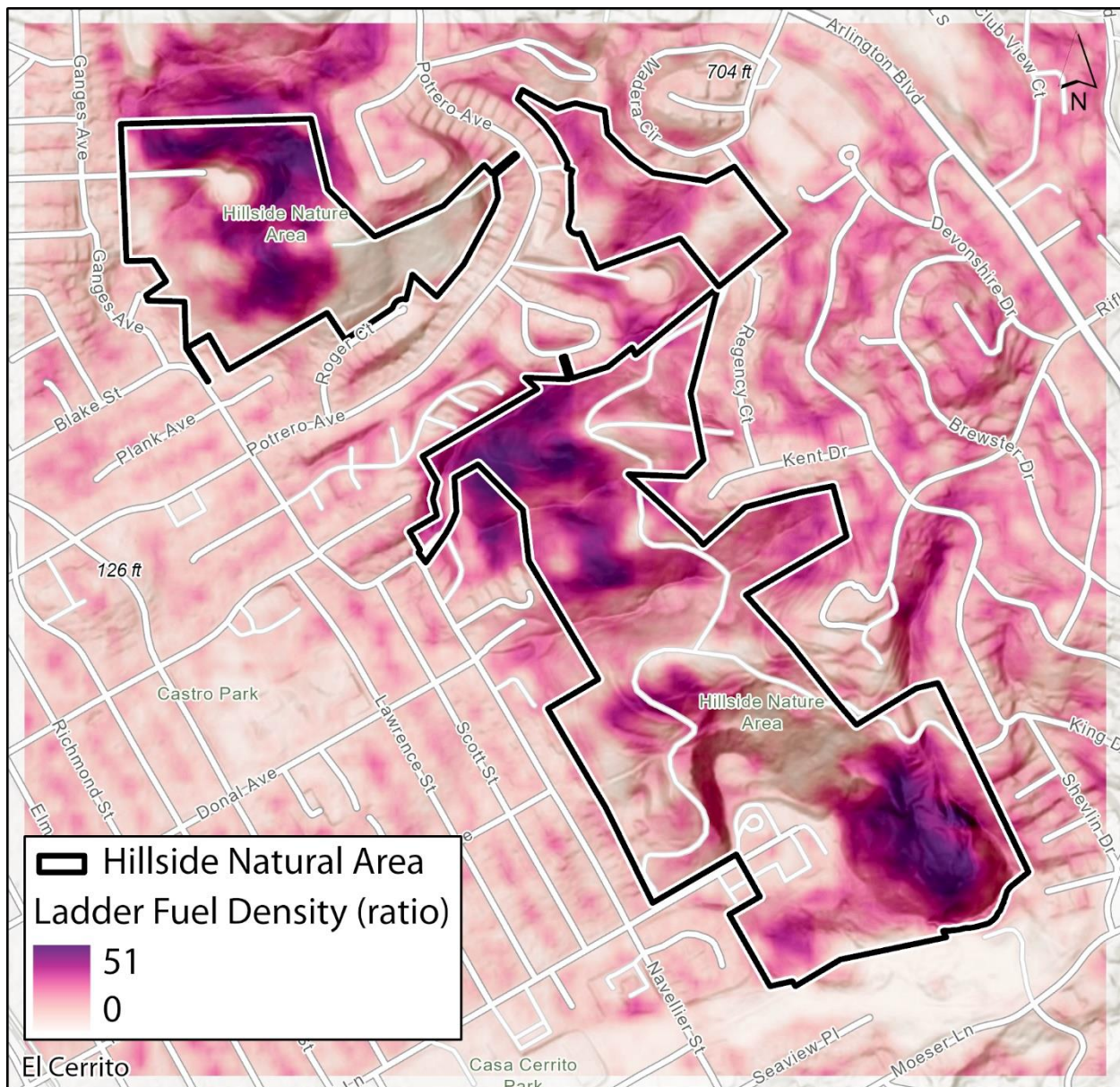


Figure 8: Ladder fuel density map. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Canopy Cover in the HNA

Canopy cover (Figure 9) is the percent of the area covered with tree canopy. Canopy cover factors into the possibility of fire traveling from one tree crown to another without the support of a surface fire. Most of the HNA has a high canopy cover, indicating a dense forest, where tree crowns touch each other and are intermingled. The same places with low ladder fuel density (in grasslands and shrublands) also have low canopy cover. The locations of the densest canopy cover are at the base of the HNA above Navellier Street and east and above the Recycling Center.

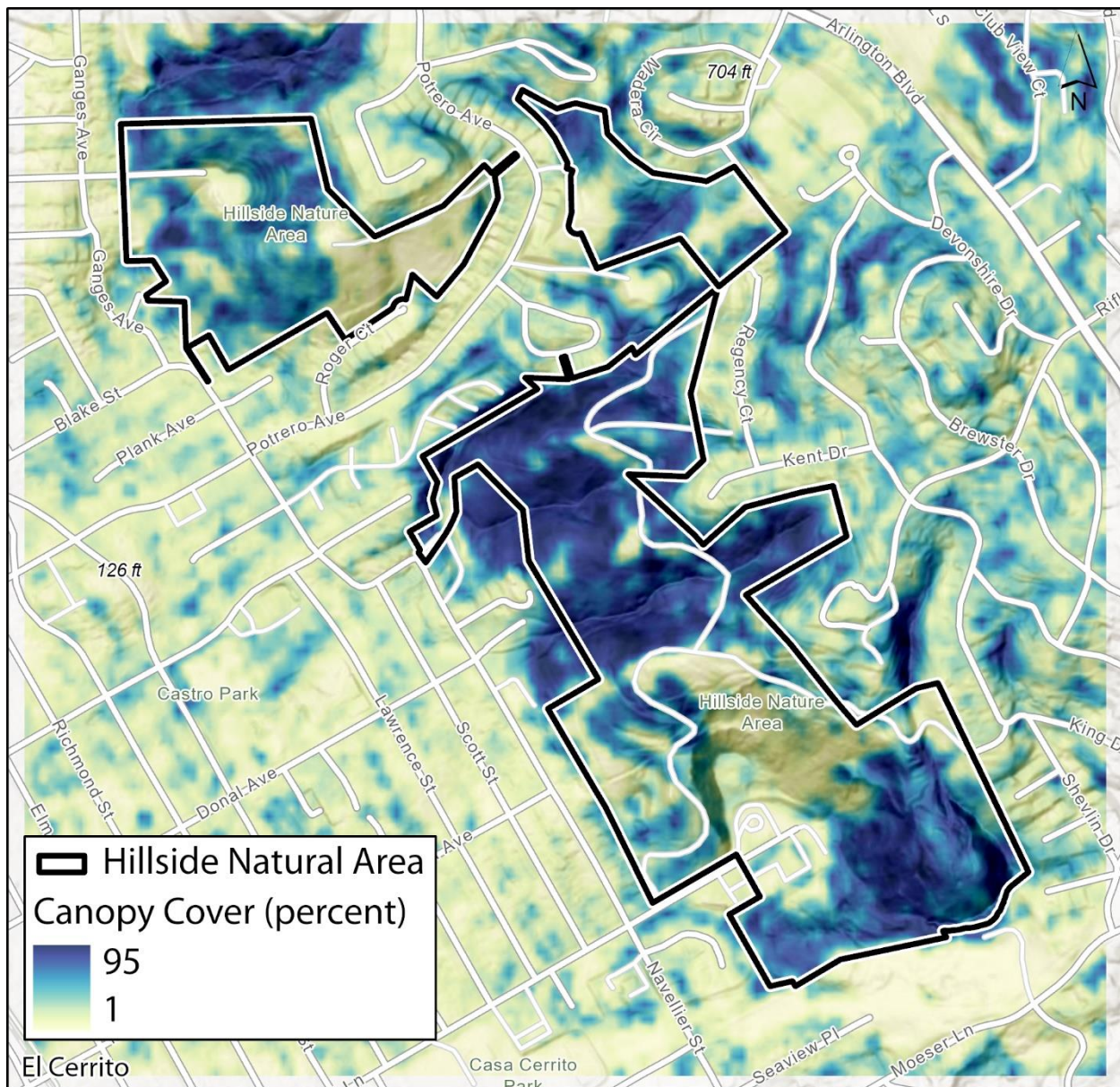


Figure 9: Canopy cover map. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Values At Risk

The most important values at risk are life safety, then improvements to property (residential structures), then natural resources. The HNA is surrounded by homes and businesses with only a few major roads leading away from the park boundary (Moeser Lane, Arlington Boulevard, and Potrero Avenue). Many homes are located on long, winding roads and in culs-de-sac with little access to quick evacuation in the event of a fire. Because the area surrounding the HNA is a densely populated residential area, the threat to human life is significant. A number of trails and service roads run through the HNA, which are used for recreation and service access. Just outside the park boundary, there is an assisted living center, Recycling Center, sanitary district,

both City and other government offices, churches, meditation center, schools, and various other businesses.

Homes surrounding the HNA are at risk from wildfire for a number of reasons. Structures are generally older, dating before the requirement for ignition resistant construction. Most roofs are less flammable; however, wood siding, decks, and unprotected vents that are part of most homes, all make the buildings prone to ignition. Wooden fences are the norm and present the driest fuels (along with wooden parts of structures) in the area. These wooden fences currently abut vegetation that is outside the area required for defensible space and are therefore more prone to ignite and burn intensely. In terms of natural values at risk, the HNA offers a network of trails through wildlife habitat, native vegetation, and riparian corridors with views of San Francisco, Oakland, the Golden Gate Bridge, Mount Tamalpais, and the San Francisco Bay. The park is of great value to the community.

Past Fire Occurrence

The East Bay hills' combination of hot dry summers, conducive topography, flammable vegetation, dense urban development, limited fire-fighting access, and Diablo winds present significant risks to the public, structures, and property located along the wildland-urban interface. Historic wildfire ignitions in the East Bay hills have not been well documented but are almost all directly related to human activity. Since 2005, several fires have burned in the area. All of these were started outside the HNA boundary, and all but one (in August of 2020) were human-caused. In 2020, a lightning strike started a wildfire south of Moeser Lane.

Fire history is compiled from newspaper articles, old fire planning studies and recent fire perimeters collected by fire departments. A University of California, Berkeley, Wildland Vegetative Management Plan reported the wildfire history of the East Bay hills, south of the City of El Cerrito from 1905 to 2017 and indicates a potential for wildfire in the area. Of these fires, 11 fires that burned under Diablo wind conditions burned 9,840 acres of the East Bay hills between 1923 and 1998. Most of these losses occurred from two fires: the 1923 Berkeley Fire and the 1991 Oakland Tunnel Fire, which destroyed 3,542 homes and killed 26 people, with more than 2 billion dollars in financial loss in current dollars. During the same period, three large west-wind fires burned 1,230 acres of grass, brush, trees, and four homes in the East Bay hills.

Fire Behavior Modeling

A fine-scale analysis of potential fire behavior across the HNA is useful to determine the possible effects of wildfire and the potential for spread and containment of a wildland fire. For this purpose, a worst-case scenario was used to reflect conditions during an event of high impact. Several fire behavior prediction software applications have been developed by the United States Forest Service. These include a wide variety of applications designed to specifically meet firefighting or fire prevention needs. For this analysis, the application FlamMap (version 6.1) was used.

FlamMap is a fire behavior mapping and analysis program that computes potential fire behavior characteristics. The FlamMap fire mapping and analysis system³ describes potential fire behavior for constant environmental conditions (weather and fuel moisture). Flame length, rate of fire spread, crown fire potential, and maximum spotting distance are presented in this report. The FlamMap fire mapping and analysis system calculates fire behavior for each pixel within the landscape file independently, so FlamMap does not calculate fire spread across a landscape. FlamMap assumes the entire area is on fire under the same weather and fuel moisture conditions, with no active firefighting activities. Outputs are well-suited for landscape level comparisons of fuel treatment effectiveness because fuel is the only variable that changes. Outputs and comparisons can be used to identify combinations of hazardous fuel and topography, aiding in prioritizing fuel treatments.

Scenarios

Weather data from a nearby remote automated weather station (in Berkeley off Grizzly Peak Boulevard near Marlborough Terrace) was compiled to reflect a fairly dry fuel moisture regime (i.e., a worst-case scenario, though not necessarily the most extreme case). These are conditions that occur in 90th and 97th percentiles of a 10-year dataset (January 1995 to May 2021). Due to climate change and other factors, a worst-case scenario that reflects the most extreme case has proven to be unpredictable. Regardless, to predict fire behavior, the three following essential data categories are needed:

1. Fuel model characteristics
2. Weather conditions
3. Fuel moisture conditions

Two scenarios were developed: one with winds blowing from the northeast, under Diablo wind conditions, and another with winds from the northwest. The wind speeds are the same in both scenarios. Two different wind scenarios were used to analyze potential fire behavior because not all fires burn under the same wind directions. Winds from the northeast are associated with hot, dry weather and damaging fires. These winds, known as Diablo winds, commonly occur in the fall, sometimes as frequently as a third of the days in October. Winds from the west can also be damaging; they occur most often and are usually faster than northeasterly winds but are usually associated with higher humidities. In El Cerrito, a fire driven by a westerly wind will also be sped by the upward trending slopes, with the wind and slope combining to pre-heat and dry fuels in advance of the flaming front. The inputs into the FlamMap scenarios, both the south/southwest and east/northeast (Diablo) scenarios, are summarized in Table A. Fuel moisture conditions used for fire behavior predictions are shown in Table B.

³ Finney, M. A. 2006. [An overview of FlamMap fire modeling capabilities](#). In: Fuels management—how to measure success: conference proceedings. 2006 March 28-30; Portland, Oregon. Proceedings RMRS-P-41. Fort Collins, CO: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station: 213-220. (647 KB; 13 pages)

TABLE A. WIND DIRECTION AND SPEED USED FOR FIRE BEHAVIOR PREDICTION SCENARIOS

Scenario	Wind Direction	Wind Speed
South/Southwest	205 degrees	20 mph
East/Northeast	68 degrees	20 mph

Source: Compiled by Coastal Conservancy (2024).

mph = miles per hour

TABLE B. FUEL MOISTURES USED FOR FIRE BEHAVIOR PREDICTIONS BASED ON FIREFAMILY PLUS⁴ ANALYSIS

Fuel Model	1 hr time lag class	10 hr time lag class	100 hr time lag class	Live herbaceous fuel moisture	Live woody fuel moisture
All models	3	4	5	70	70

Source: Compiled by Coastal Conservancy (2024).

hr = hour

Flame Length

Flame length is often correlated to the ability to control a fire. A flame length of 4 feet is the limit of what can be attacked with hand crews, and 8 feet is usually treated as a cut-off point for strategic firefighting decisions on whether to attack the fire directly or instead attempt control through indirect methods.⁵ Indirect attack is a method of suppression in which the control line is located some considerable distance away from the fire's active edge.

Flame length is closely related to structural damage—the higher the flame length, the more likely structures surrounding the HNA could be lost. Flame lengths are also often highly correlated with natural resource impacts. Long flame lengths can be expected in shrublands and forests where understory is present. Flame length predictions for the HNA in both a northeast wind scenario (Figure 10) and a northwest wind scenario (Figure 11) are presented below. Flame lengths in both scenarios are expected to be high (i.e., over 12 feet and, in some places, over 20 feet) in some areas of each of the three sections of the HNA due to heavy fuels, especially in the mixed forest and chaparral. Where a well-developed understory is present under the oak canopies, fires are expected to burn with high intensity. Fires can be expected to burn fast when they are propelled by dry grass and chaparral.

⁴ FireFamily Plus is a software package used to calculate fuel moistures and indices using hourly or daily fire weather observations primarily from remote automated weather stations.

⁵ Andrews, Patricia L. and Richard C. Rothermel. 1981. Charts for Interpreting Wildland Fire Behavior. Gen. Tech. Rep INT-131. Ogden, UT. September 1982. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station 8440. 21 p.

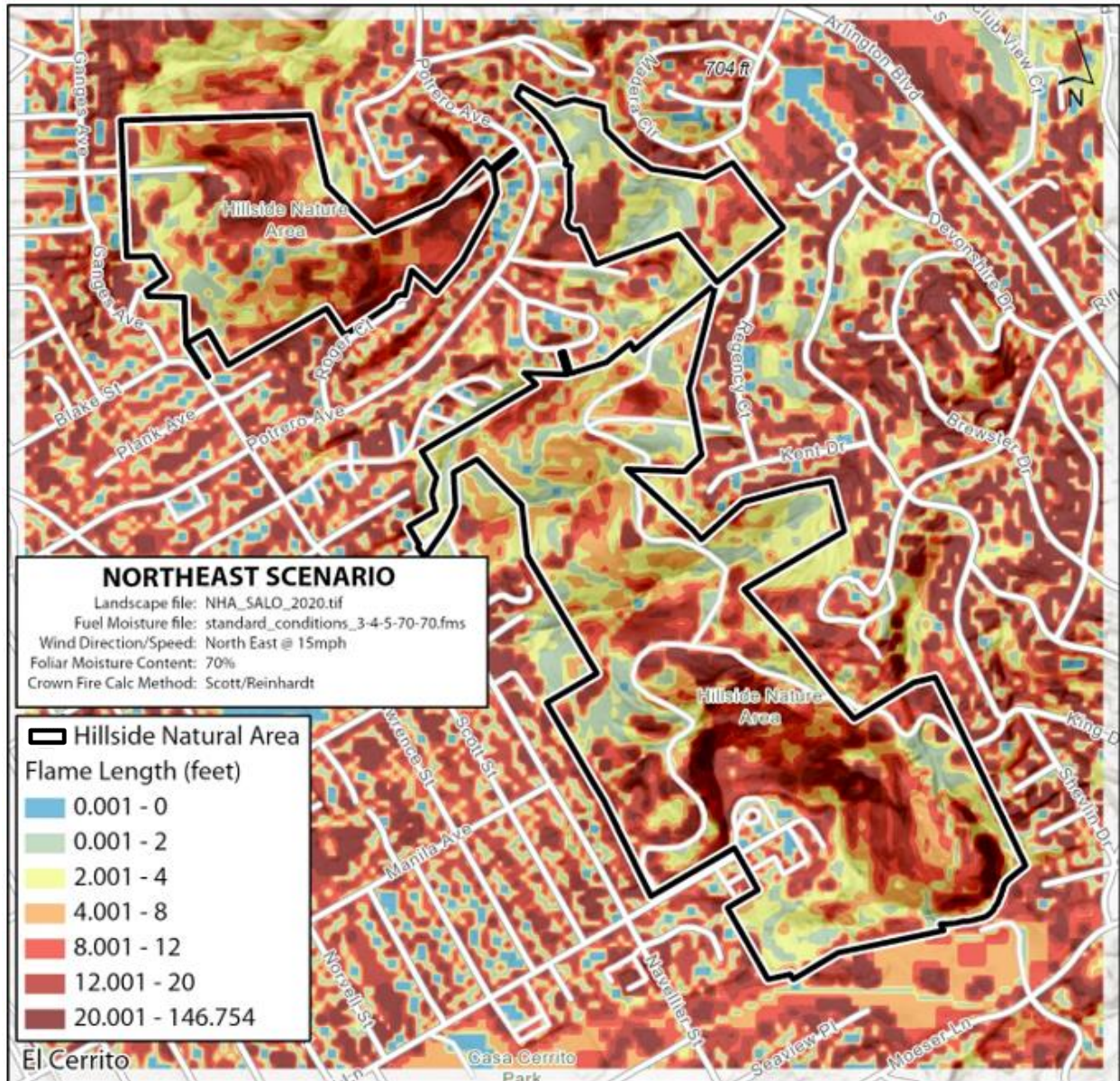


Figure 10: Flame length map – northeast wind scenario. HNA boundary is shown in black.

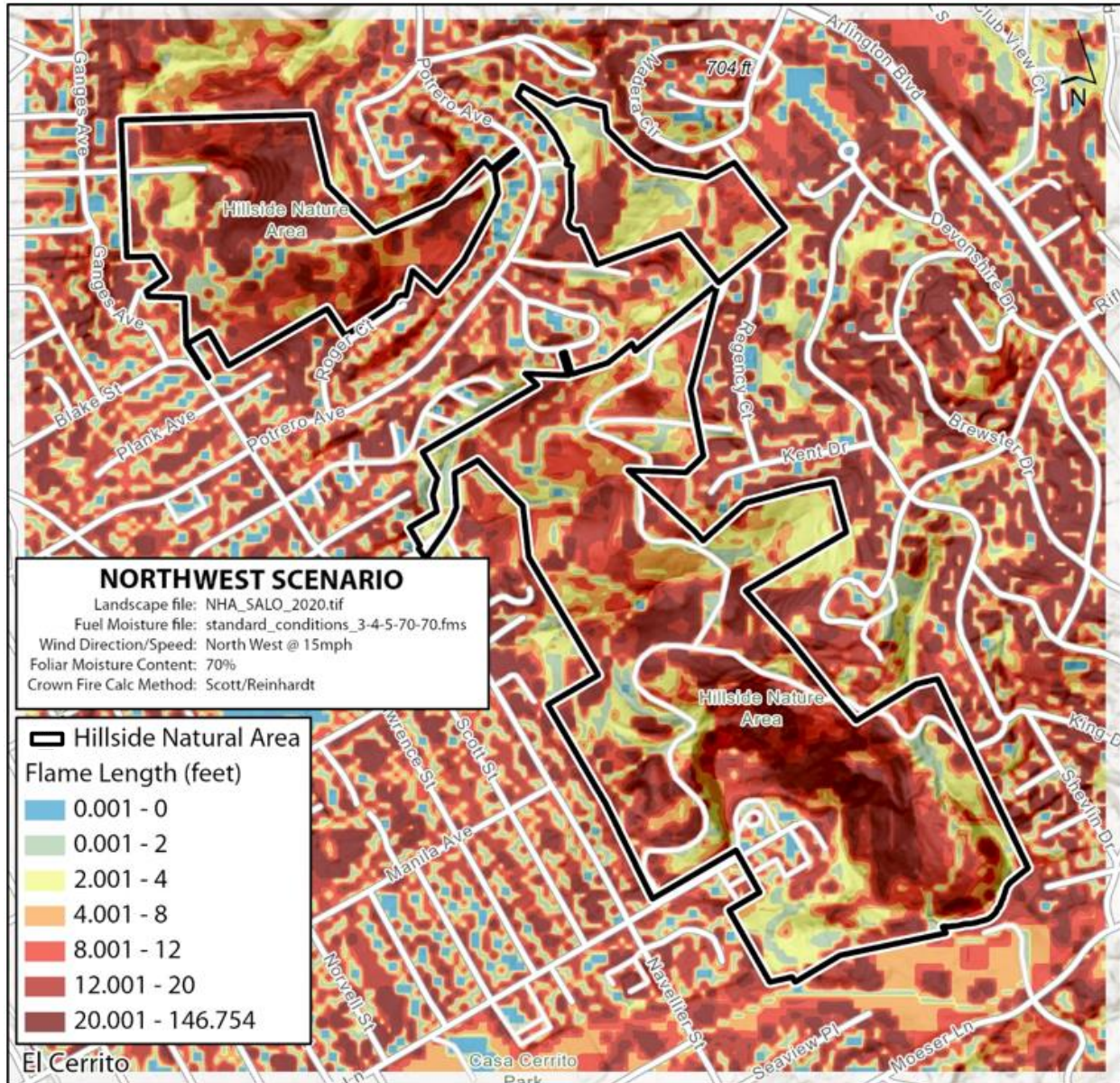


Figure 11: Flame length map – northwest wind scenario. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Northeast Wind Scenario

HNA South

In HNA South, there are areas of very high flame lengths predicted in the northeast wind scenario, concentrated in the center and southeastern portion of the HNA. Extremely high flames (over 20 feet) and very high flames (over 12 feet) are predicted in the forest-shrub areas on the steep slopes above the Recycling Center and across the rocky grass-shrub and forest-grass-shrub areas, continuing toward the southeastern corner of the park.

Moderate flame lengths (less than 8 feet) are predicted in the northern half and the southwestern corner of HNA South (in the oak woodlands), although smaller pockets of high

flame lengths also occur in those areas. In the residential areas along the boundary of HNA South, there are several areas where very high and extremely high flame lengths are predicted, including along Navellier Street on the western boundary and in the area near Regency Court and Kent Drive on the north-eastern boundary, as well as pockets along the eastern boundary below Shevlin Drive and King Drive.

HNA North

In HNA North, both extremely high flame lengths and very high flame lengths (12–20 feet) are predicted, concentrated above the eastern end of Snowdon Avenue and southeast of Motorcycle Hill. Lower flame lengths (less than 4 feet) are predicted in the western half of HNA North near the residents, although smaller pockets of high flame lengths also occur in those areas. Extremely high and very high flame lengths are predicted along the boundaries between HNA North and the surrounding residential area, particularly along the north side of Roger Court, with pockets on the western boundary of the HNA. Much of the area between Potrero Avenue and the park is expected to burn with flames at 12–20 feet and over 20 feet.

Madera Property

Lower flame lengths (less than 4 feet) are predicted in both the wooded center portion and the northeastern corner of the Madera Property section of the HNA. Between these two areas is a predicted area of very high and extremely high flame lengths, both within the park boundary and to the west, between the park and Potrero Avenue in the shrubby vegetation. Another predicted area of very high flame lengths is outside the park along the northern boundary just south of Madera Court and Madera Elementary School. Small patches of high flame lengths are also predicted in the eastern portion of the Madera property.

Northwest Wind Scenario

HNA South

In the northwest wind scenario, both extremely high flame lengths (over 20 feet) and very high flame lengths (over 12 feet) are predicted throughout much of HNA South. Although concentrated in the center and across the southeastern portion above the Recycling Center, areas of very high and extremely high flame lengths are also predicted throughout the remainder of the HNA South area.

Patches of moderate flame lengths (less than 8 feet) and low flame lengths (less than 4 feet) that are interspersed with patches of higher flame lengths are predicted throughout the western and northwestern portions of HNA South in the northwest wind scenario. As in the northeast wind scenario, there are several areas in the northwest wind scenario where very high and extremely high flame lengths are predicted along the boundary between HNA South and the surrounding community.

HNA North

Both extremely high flame lengths and very high flame lengths are predicted throughout most of HNA North in the northwest wind scenario, with concentration in the eastern two-thirds (most

particularly the center and northeastern portions) of HNA North. A small area of moderate flame lengths is predicted in the western part of HNA North just south of Snowdon Avenue, and very small pockets are mixed in with much higher flame lengths in the southwestern part of the property. Extremely high and very high flame lengths are predicted along the boundaries between HNA North and the surrounding community, particularly the northern, eastern, and southern boundaries.

Madera Property

When the winds blow from the west, extremely high flame lengths and very high flame lengths are predicted in the vegetation comprised of a grass/shrub mix located northwest of the East Bay Municipal Utility District water tank. There are also some small areas mixed in with more moderate flame lengths predicted along the eastern boundary of the property, below Madera Circle. As in the northeast wind scenario, moderate flame lengths are predicted in the central, southeast, and far northwest portions of the property in the northwest wind scenario. Extremely high and very high flame lengths are predicted below and west of the Madera boundary to the west as well as along Madera Circle.

Comparison (Northeast versus Northwest winds)

When comparing the impact of northeast winds and northwest winds on the fire behavior of the HNA (Figure 12), it is clear that in the northwest wind scenario, larger areas of the park have very high and extremely high flame lengths. The highest flame lengths predicted with the northwest winds are in the southeastern portion of HNA South, the northeastern quadrant of HNA North, and a section of the western part of Madera, as well as areas outside of all three sections of the park along boundaries with the surrounding community.

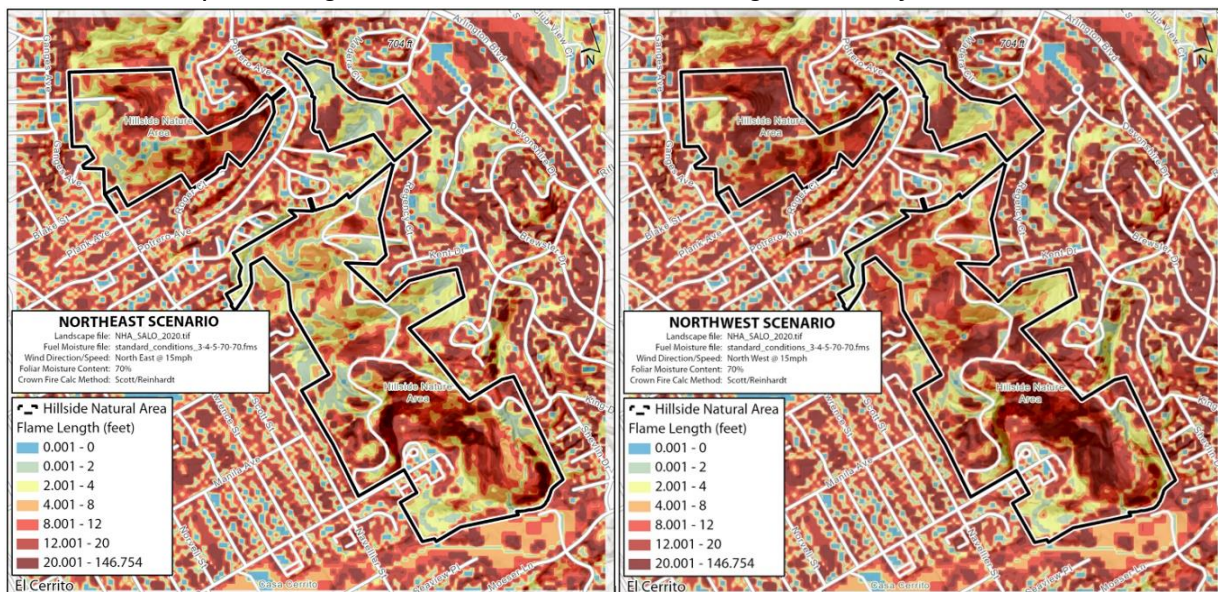


Figure 12: Flame length map comparison – northeast wind scenario is on the left and northwest wind scenario is on the right side of page. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Rate of Spread

Rate of spread measures how quickly a fire moves across a landscape. Rate of spread is dependent on surface fuel types, moisture, wind, and slope. Fine fuels and flat, dry, windy areas will burn at a much faster rate than areas with thicker surface fuels, more rugged topography, moisture, and less wind. The rate of spread is of concern when considering fire containment, response times, and evacuation. A slow-moving fire (e.g., slower than 0.125 mile per hour or 11 feet per minute) might be easily contained, whereas a fast-moving fire (e.g., faster than 1 mile per hour or 88 feet per minute) challenges containment and has the potential to move into high value sensitive areas before containment can occur. Although a fast rate of spread does not necessarily result in a problematic fire, a fast-moving fire coupled with high flame lengths cannot be suppressed with a hand-crew. Rate of spread predictions in both a northeast wind scenario (Figure 13) and a northwest wind scenario (Figure 14) are presented below.

Northeast Wind Scenario

Although based on the worst-case modeling much of the HNA is expected to burn at a low to moderate rate of spread (0 to 10 feet per minute), when the wind blows from the northeast, there is also a considerable amount of the HNA that is expected to burn at a high rate of spread (over 10 feet per minute). These areas are concentrated in more exposed, grassy areas on south-facing slopes in each of the three sections of the park (Figure 13).

HNA South

Roughly half of HNA South is expected to burn at a moderate rate of spread and the other half at a high rate of spread. Areas of high rate of spread are scattered throughout the center of HNA South and are concentrated in the southeast portion of the property on the exposed grassy areas surrounding the Recycling Center. The area just south of the HNA South boundary is of great concern, with winds blowing from the northeast, and is expected to also burn at a high rate of spread.

HNA North

The grassy areas in the central and southeastern portions of HNA North are expected to burn at a high rate of spread, whereas the northern, western, and southwestern portions of HNA North are expected to burn at a moderate rate of spread. Some small sparsely vegetated sections of Motorcycle Hill are expected to burn at a low rate of spread.

Madera

The Madera property is expected to burn at a slightly lower rate of spread than the rest of the HNA. A majority of the area is expected to burn at a moderate rate of spread, including the northeast corner, southeast corner, and the center. Higher rates of spread are located in steep grassy patches in the western and easternmost sections of the property.

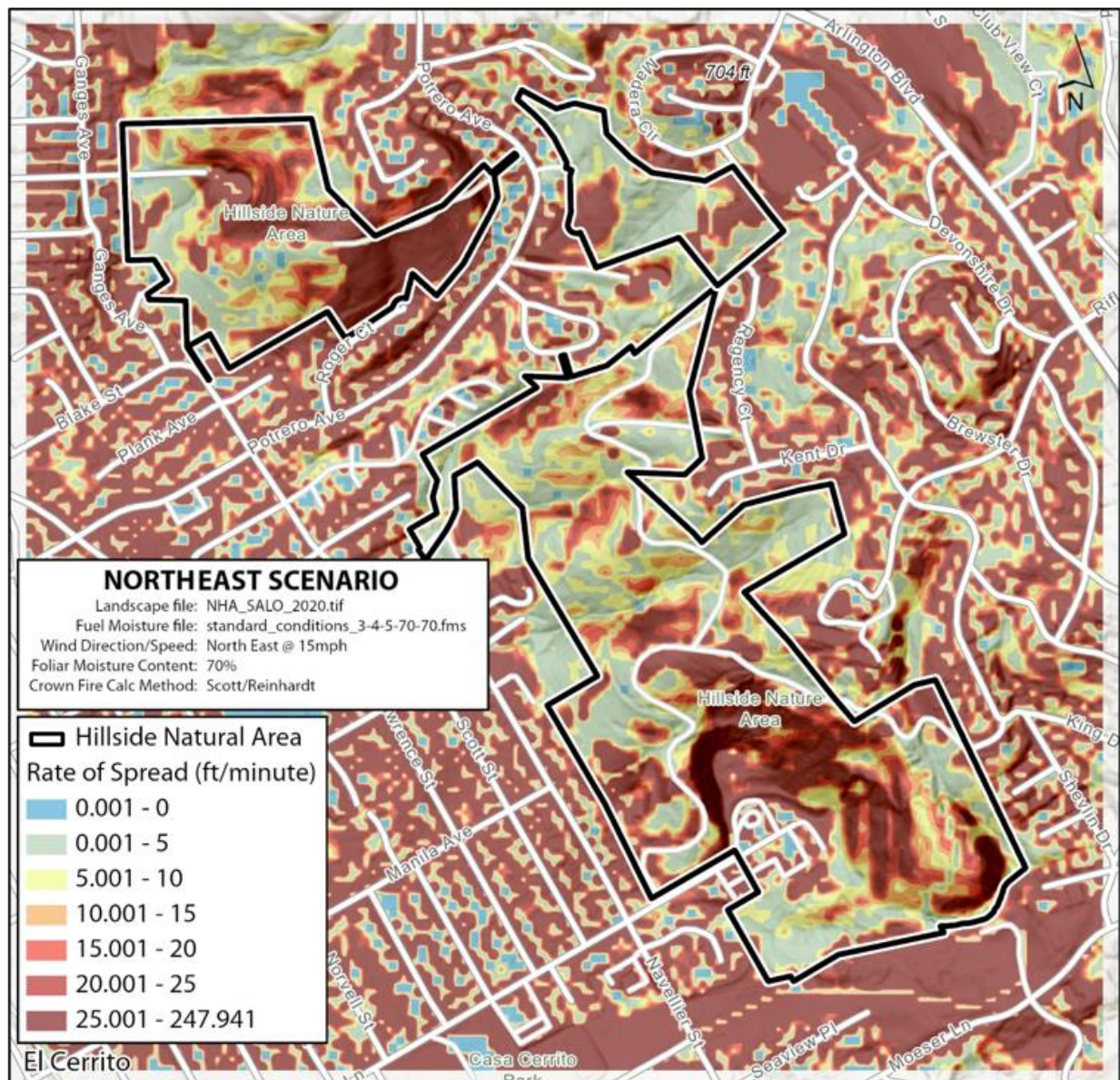


Figure 13: Rate of spread map – northeast wind scenario. HNA boundary is shown in black.

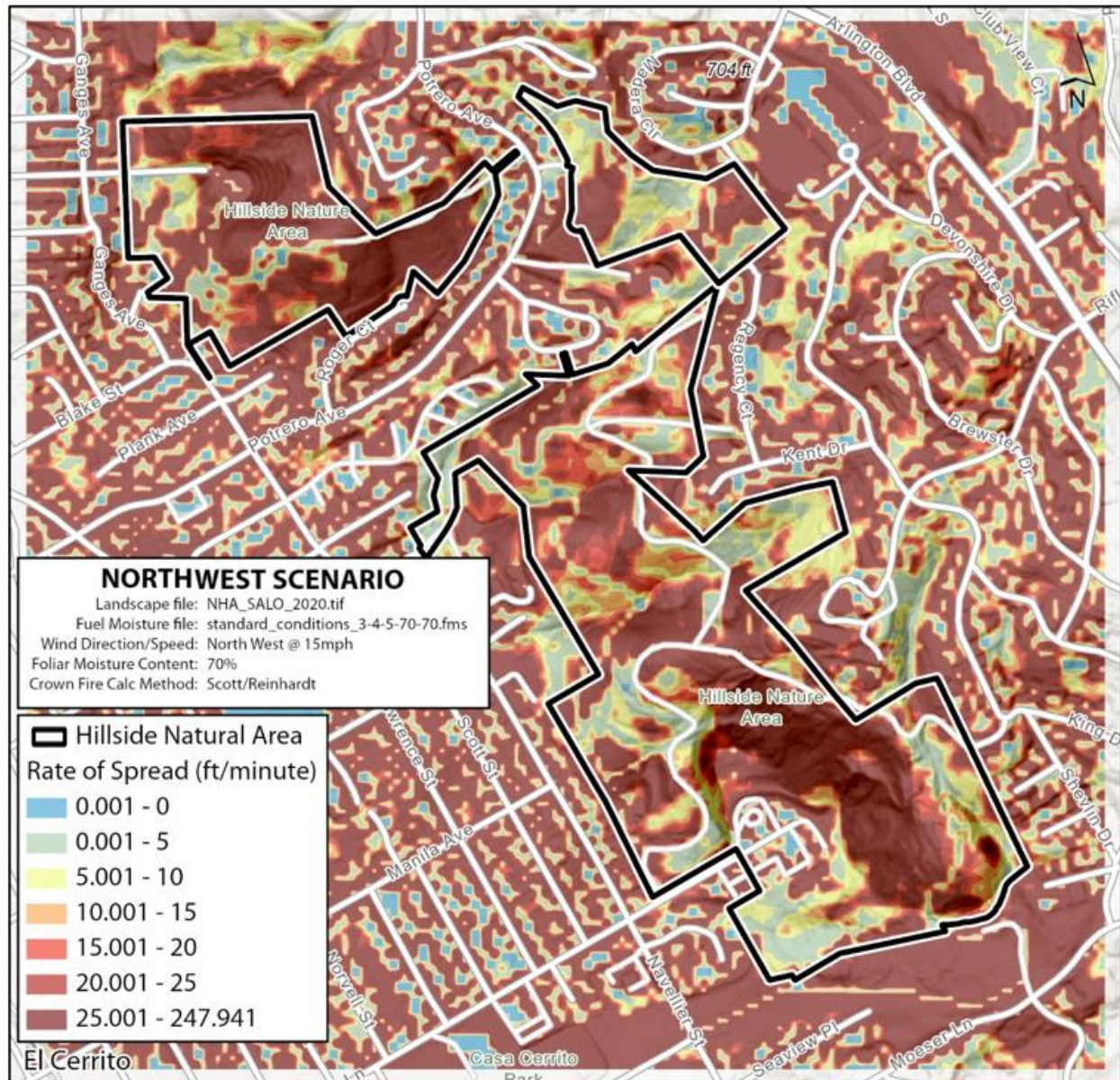


Figure 14. Rate of spread map – northwest wind scenario. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Northwest Wind Scenario

In the northwest wind scenario, the majority of the HNA is expected to burn at a high rate of spread (over 10 feet per minute), with smaller pockets throughout the HNA predicted to burn at a moderate rate of spread (5 to 10 feet per minute). Even smaller pockets are expected to burn at a low rate of spread, most of which are located in areas of urban/developed lands.

HNA South

Most of HNA South is expected to burn at a high rate of spread, especially the central and southeastern portions. The southeast portion of the property surrounding the Recycling Center is expected to burn at the highest rate of spread. Areas of low and moderate rate of spread are

interspersed with areas of higher rates of spread throughout the rest of HNA South. Although the southwest corner within the HNA south boundary is predicted to burn at a moderate rate of spread, the area outside the park on the entire southern boundary is of great concern and is expected to burn at a very high rate of spread.

HNA North

In the northwest wind scenario, most of HNA North is expected to burn at a high rate of spread. There are small, scattered sections of HNA North predicted to burn at moderate or low rates of spread, some of which are urban/developed lands. The high rates of spread continue into the community on both the northern and southern boundaries of HNA North, and these areas are of concern.

Madera

The Madera property is expected to burn at a slightly lower rate of spread than the rest of the HNA. Roughly half of the area is expected to burn at a moderate rate of spread and the other half at a high rate of spread, with patches to the east and west expected to burn at a high rate of spread and the north, south, and center patches expected to burn at a more moderate rate of spread.

Comparison (Northeast versus Northwest winds)

The comparison between the wind scenarios (Figure 15) for rate of spread follows the same pattern as the comparison of the two wind scenarios for flame length. There are more areas of high rate of spread, which increase with a northwest wind. The greatest differences appear in the Motorcycle Hill and Madera area, where more of the area burns faster. Rates of fire spread are also quite fast in HNA North, and the highest rates of spread appear in HNA South, above the Recycling Center. Areas outside the HNA are predicted to burn at the same rates of spread with both wind directions, with the exception that the eastern neighborhood is expected to burn faster under a northwest wind scenario.

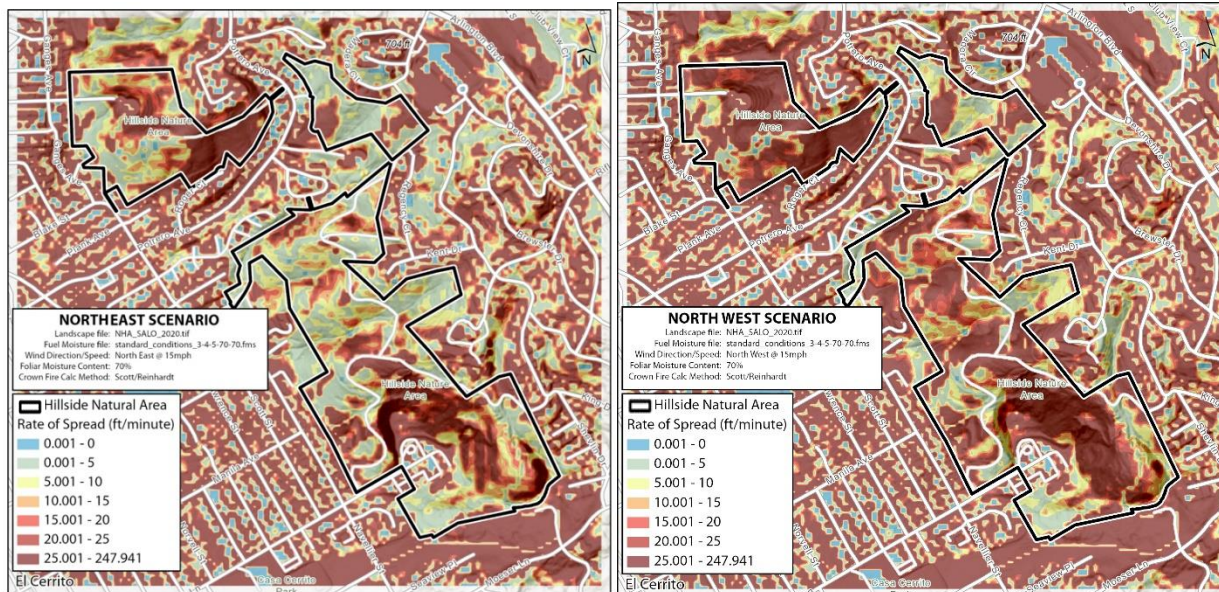


Figure 15: Rate of spread map comparison – northeast wind scenario on the left and northwest wind scenario on the right side of page. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Predicted Crown Fire Activity

The description of crown fire activity includes four possible model outputs: surface fire, torching fire, crown fire, or no predicted fire (Figure 16). Surface fires are limited to fire burning in grass, short shrubs, and the understory of a wooded environment or locations with tall shrubs. The transition from a surface fire to the crowns of trees is known as torching or passive crown fire. Trees are said to torch when a surface fire intermittently ignites the crowns of trees or shrubs as it advances, and the foliage ignites and flares up, usually from bottom to top. Crown fire indicates locations where fire is expected to spread into and possibly consume the canopy of trees or shrubs. Fire spread from tree crown to tree crown is considered active crown fire and is based on the rate of fire spread, the density of the tree crown, and wind speed.

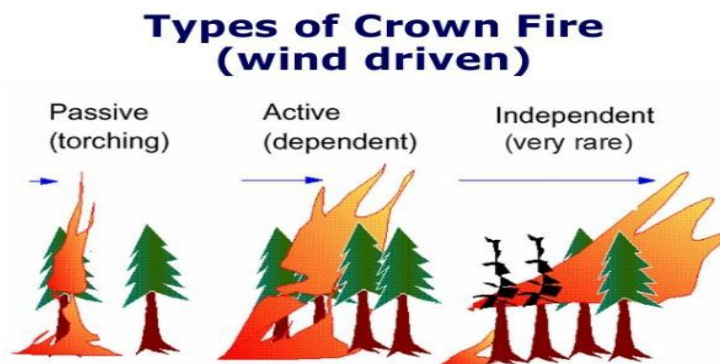


Figure 16: Three types of crown fire

It is important to keep in mind that crown fires and torching can occur only where there are trees and tall shrubs. Short shrub stands can burn intensely and still not torch. When a fire burns through trees or tall shrub crowns, countless embers are produced and distributed, sometimes

at long distances. These embers can start new fires called spot fires, which can each grow and confound the finest fire suppression forces. Spotting potential or crowning potential describes the propensity of vegetation to create and disperse embers that have the potential to start new fires well in advance of the main fire. In terms of ecological effects, prediction of torching or crown fire is highly correlated with fire severity and greater environmental impact. Although coniferous, eucalyptus and oak forests can torch, oak forests are less likely to have fire reach to the tree crowns unless vegetation is burning underneath.

Most of the HNA is predicted to burn with torching fire (Figure 17). In the HNA, torching fire is predicted to be concentrated in the wooded and shrub areas of each of the three sections of the park, especially where a well-developed understory is present. Crown fire predictions in both a northeast wind scenario and a northwest wind scenario are presented below.

Northeast Wind Scenario

In the northeast wind scenario, the majority of both HNA South and HNA North are predicted to burn with torching fire; torching in the Madera Property is concentrated in the west. Some of the HNA is predicted to burn with surface fire. Small patches of surface fire are expected along the outskirts of HNA North and HNA South, and a large swath through the center of the Madera Property is predicted to burn with surface fire.

Along the HNA borders, in the interface between residential and wildland areas, primarily torching fire is predicted with some patches of surface fire. Areas with a higher density of eucalyptus forests are the most at risk of crown fires. In the northeast wind scenario, none of the HNA is expected to burn with a tree-to-tree crown fire.

Northwest Wind Scenario

Like in the northeast wind scenario, in the northwest wind scenario (Figure 18) most of the HNA is predicted to burn with torching fire. In HNA South, torching is predicted throughout most of the area, with a few small patches on the edges of the park that are expected to burn with surface fire. There is a small patch outside the park, near the central east boundary, that is expected to burn within the tree canopy (i.e., crown fire).

In HNA North, torching is again expected throughout most of the area, with a few small patches expected to burn with surface fire in the west and southeast. In the northwest wind scenario, three small patches in the north and west portions of HNA North are expected to burn as a crown fire, as well as a small patch outside of the HNA North boundary to the west.

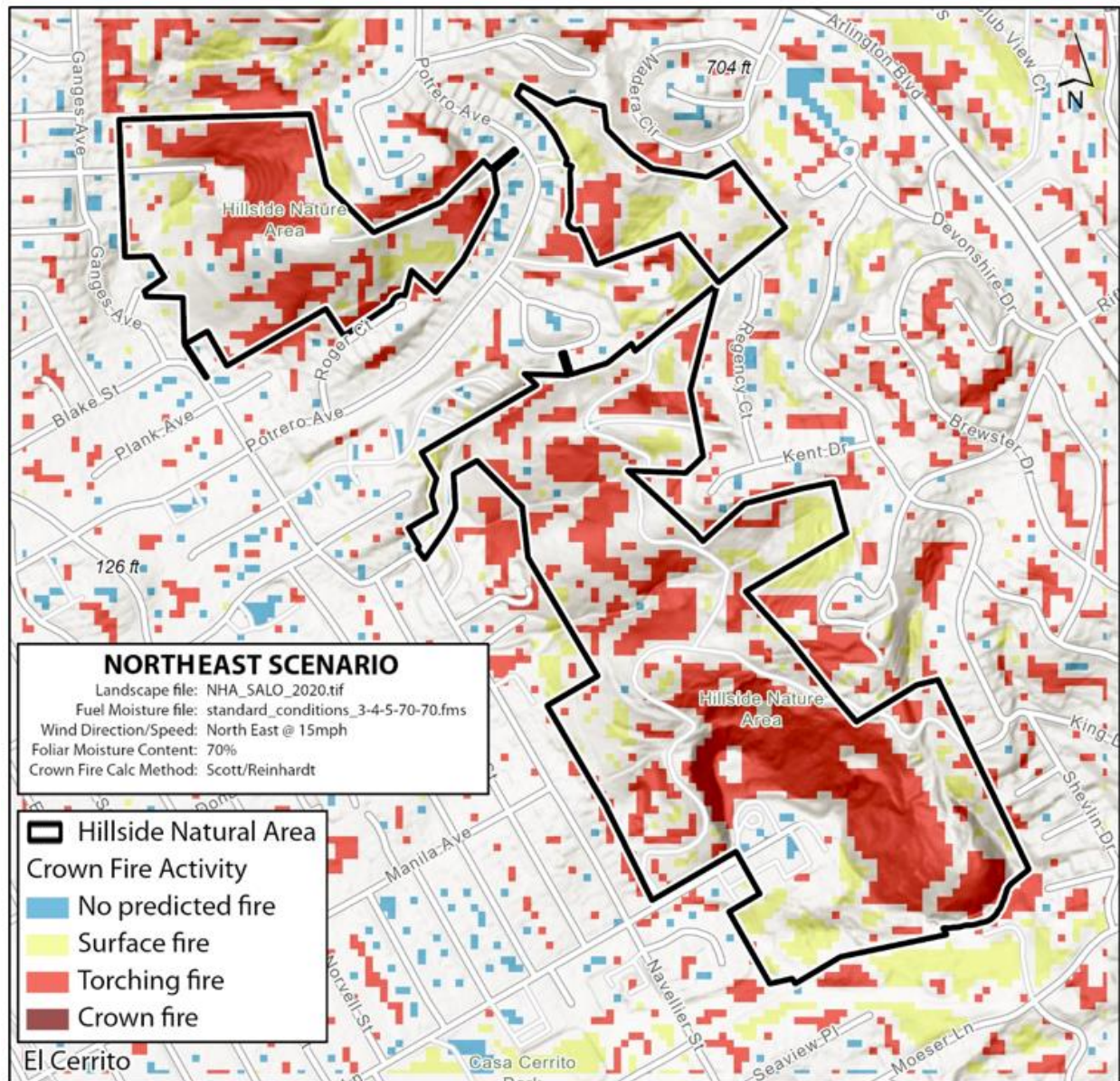


Figure 17: Crown fire activity map – northeast wind scenario. HNA boundary is shown in black.

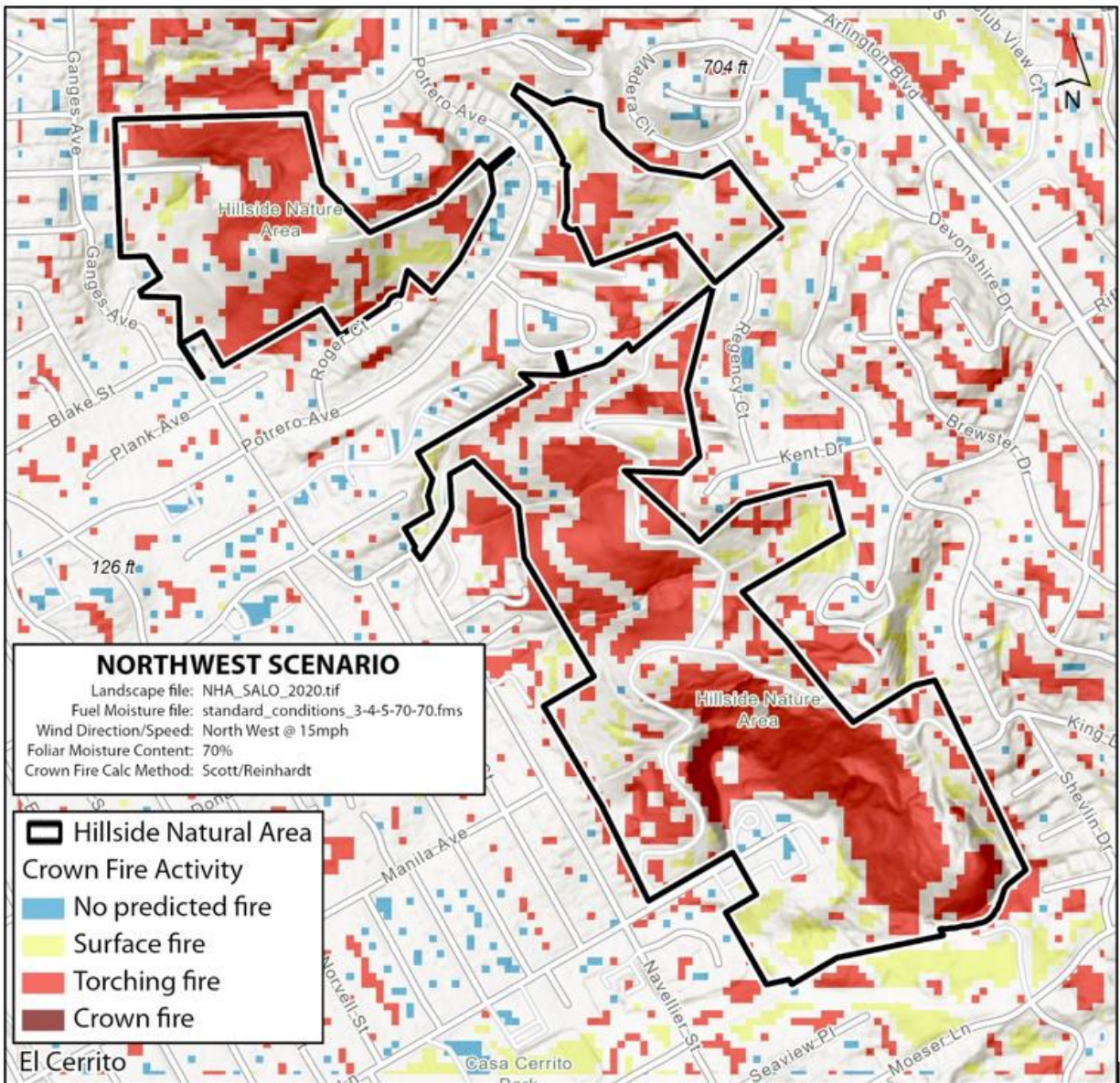


Figure 18: Crown fire activity map – northwest wind scenario. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Torching is predicted throughout the Madera Property in the northwest wind scenario interspersed with small patches that are expected to burn with surface fire. None of the Madera property is expected to burn with a tree-to-tree crown fire. Along the HNA borders, in the interface between residential and wildland areas, primarily torching fire is predicted with some patches of surface fire and very small patches of crown fire (outside the park boundary).

Comparison (Northeast versus Northwest winds)

When comparing the impact of northeast winds and northwest winds (Figure 19) on crown fire activity in the HNA, the presence of torching fire increases slightly in the northwest wind scenario. Crown fire, while remaining relatively low, is present in the northwest wind scenario in

small patches in HNA South and HNA North, whereas it was not present at all in the northeast wind scenario.

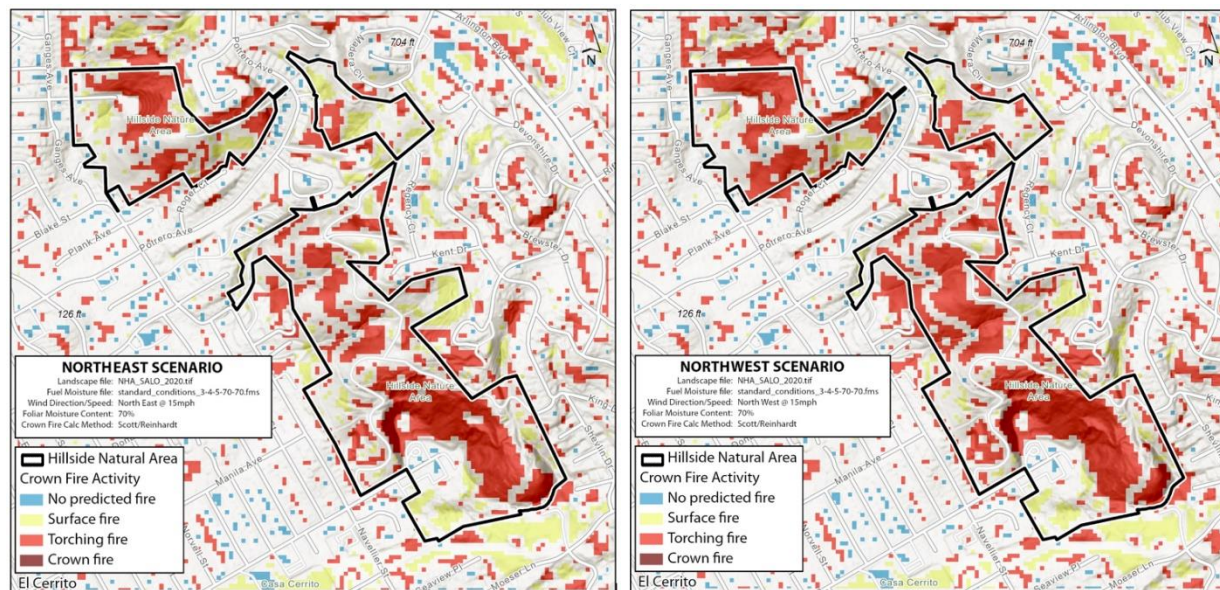


Figure 19. Crown fire activity map comparison – northeast wind scenario on the left and northwest wind scenario on the right side of page. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Maximum Spot Distance

The maximum spot distance is created from an extended set of outputs from FlamMap.⁶ The fire behavior is calculated for each landscape node (nodes are defined as a fixed grid equal to the landscape spatial resolution). If a node experiences passive or active crown fire, embers are lofted and followed to determine the maximum spotting distance and direction. Spotting is simulated only from torching trees for passive and active crown fire. Maximum spot distances of embers are calculated for each pixel that is predicted to torch. This metric is not intended to simulate the numbers of embers, exact locations embers would land, or locations of resulting spot fires. The predicted spot distance is relatively high; however, only a small portion of the area is predicted to actually produce spot fires (Figure 20). These areas are located in the central portion of the study area (i.e., in the eucalyptus stands south of Wildwood Place and in the oak woodlands below Kent Court) as well as the wooded area north of Motorcycle Hill and in the eucalyptus trees southeast of the Recycling Center.

Northeast Wind Scenario

The locations where spot fires are expected to travel the farthest are located in HNA South, at the northeastern corner of the HNA. The Madera site is predicted to cast embers from much of the forest; however, the distance the embers are predicted to cast is not as far as those in HNA South. The HNA North site is also expected to distribute embers far, produced in the location of

⁶ FlamMap. n.d. Spotting documentation for FlamMap. Accessed on August 25, 2021 at: <http://flammaphelp.s3-website-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/>.

the eucalyptus stand at the top of Motorcycle Hills. The area north of the HNA is also expected to cast embers, as are small areas sprinkled throughout the neighborhoods above the HNA.

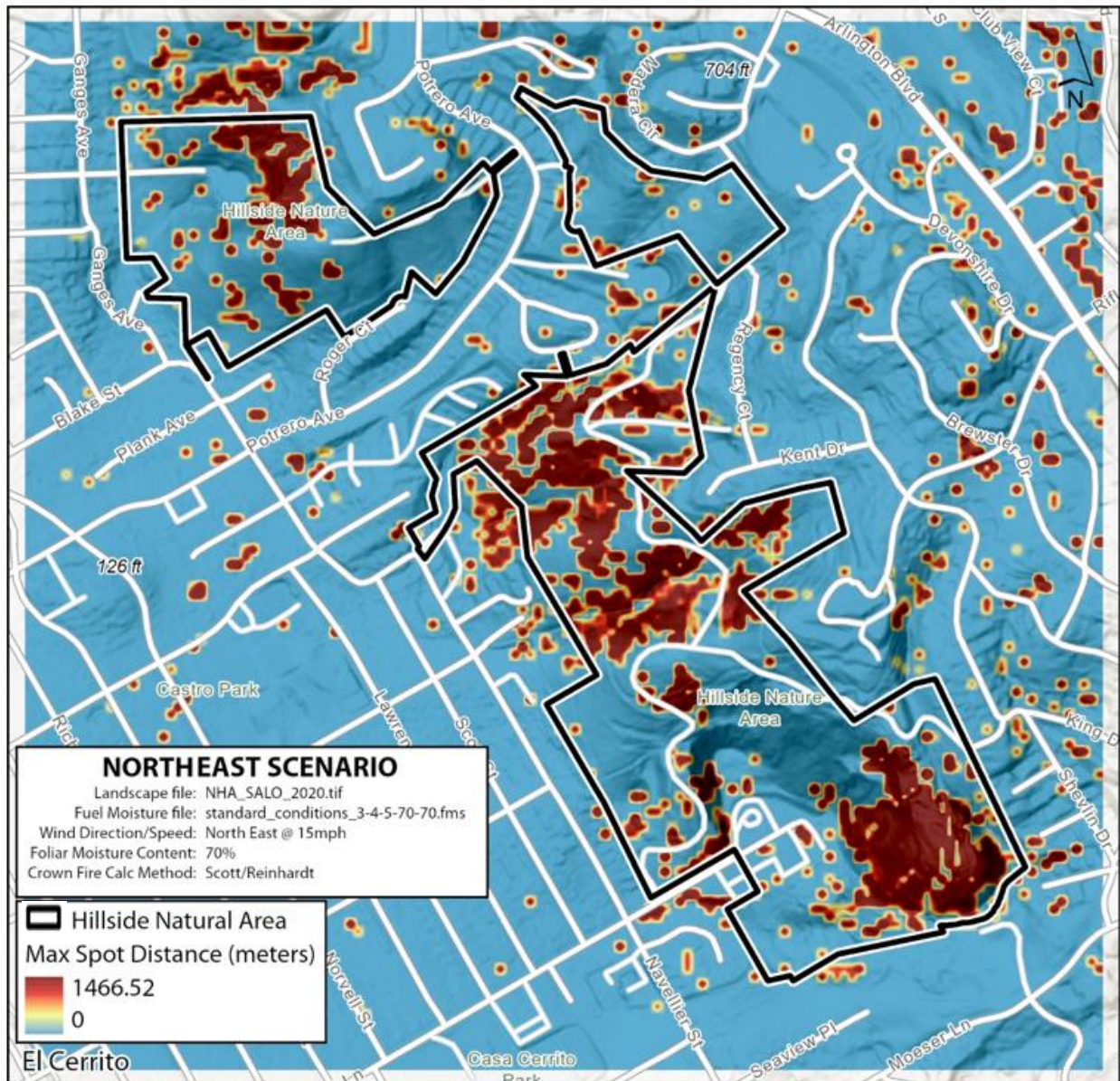


Figure 20: Maximum spot distance map under a northeast wind scenario. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Northwest Wind Scenario

Almost all of the forested areas are expected to distribute embers under a northwest wind scenario. HNA South is predicted to distribute embers well into the residential community, produced by the oak woodlands and the eucalyptus stands and by the woodlands at the base of the slope and top of the slope (Figure 21). The Madera site is an exception in that it is not expected to have many locations that will spread embers; however, in the locations it is expected to spread embers, the ember distance is quite far.

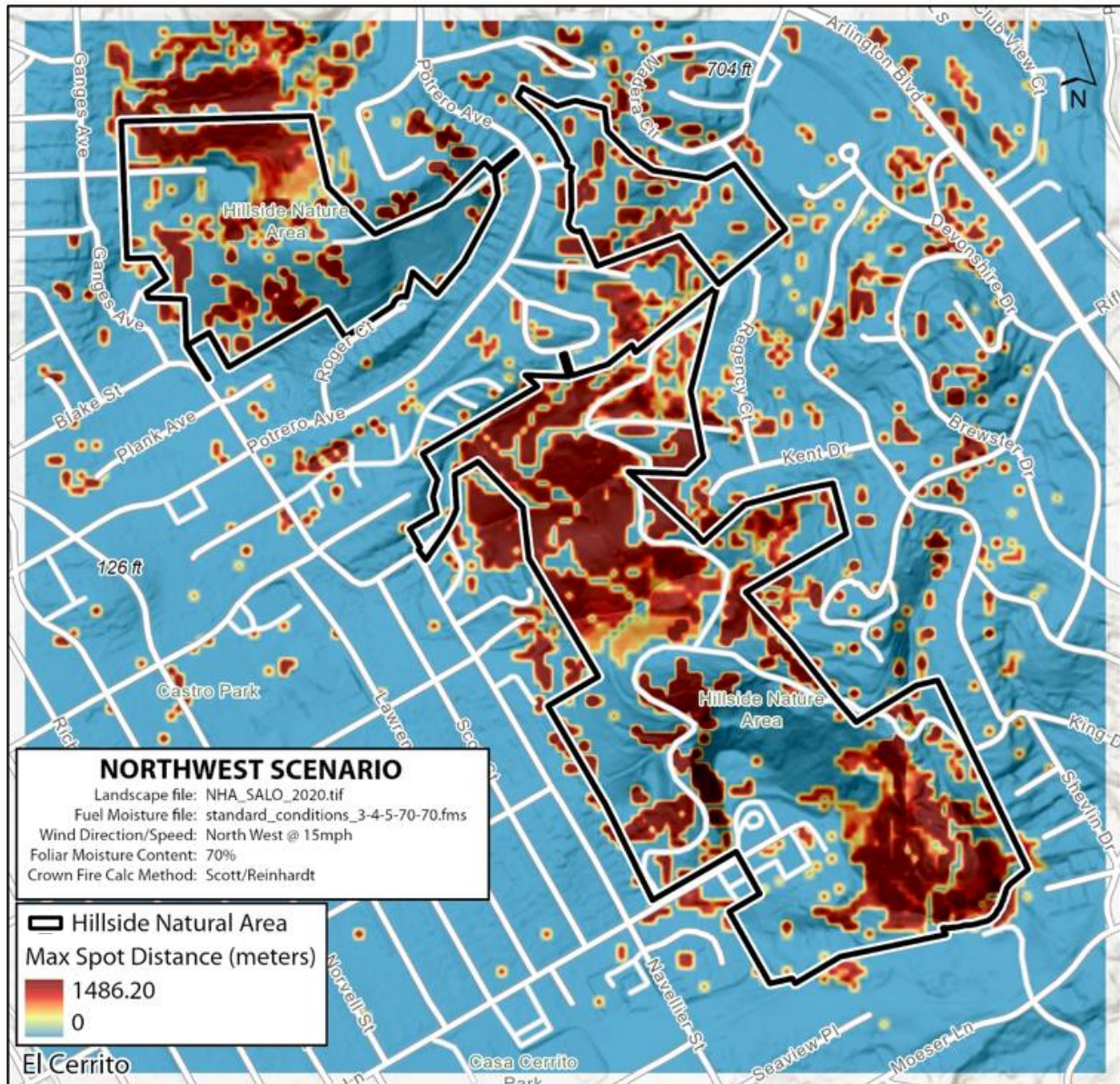


Figure 21: Maximum spot distance map under a northeast wind scenario. HNA boundary is shown in black.

Comparison of the Northwest and Northeast Wind Scenarios

With a northeast wind, a smaller proportion of the HNA is expected to cast embers. With a northwest wind, a greater proportion of the HNA is expected to create spot fires; however, the average spot fire distance is shorter (Figure 22).

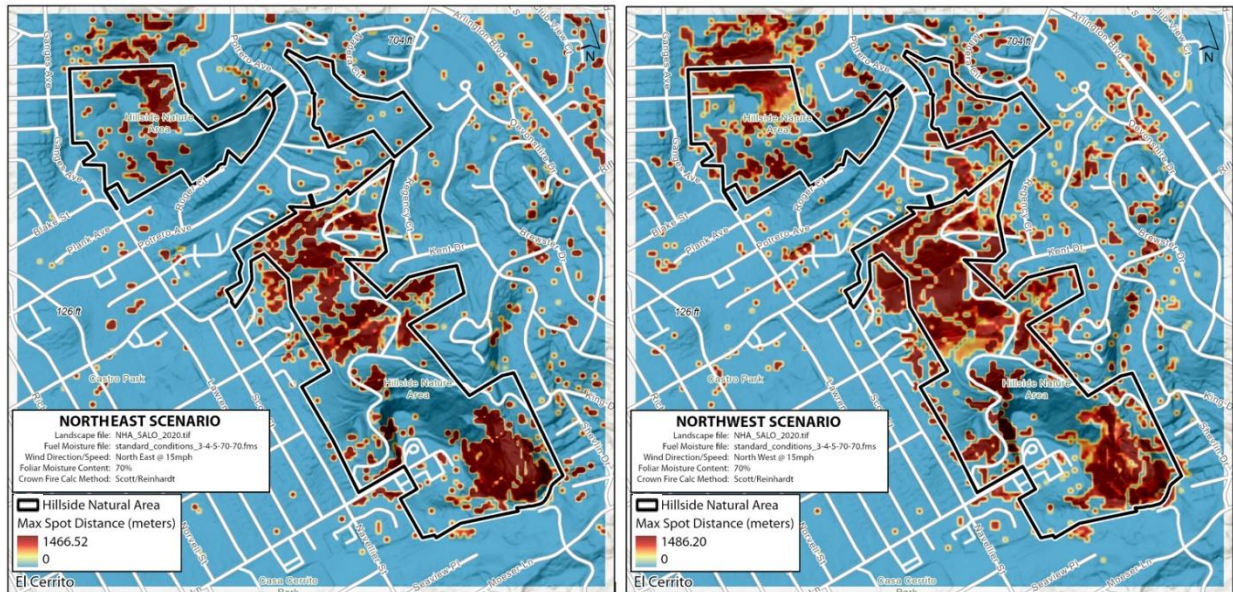


Figure 22: Comparison of maximum spotting distance, comparing a northeasterly wind scenario with a northwesterly wind scenario.

Conclusion

Because of the steep slopes and abundant fuel, along with hot dry temperatures and occasional strong winds, the risk of wildfire in and around the El Cerrito HNA is quite high. Long flame lengths and tree torching are expected for most of the area in the HNA, which pose threats to the hillside residences and the community. Fortunately, the moderate fire spread rates expected in the HNA may assist fire containment when fire suppression efforts are not thwarted by long flames. The level of risk (based on flame lengths, rate of fire spread, and values at risk) are among the highest in the East Bay Hills.

Most wildfire assessments consider worst-case scenarios; because almost all damaging fires in the East Bay have been when the winds blow from the northeast, this wind direction is normally considered the worst-case conditions. However, in regard to the HNA, steep slopes trend upward to the east, and residences and other valued assets at risk are located uphill from those slopes. The slopes themselves are covered with abundant fuels of various types. A dense population is located west of the HNA; because ignitions are associated with human activity, the chance of an ignition west of the HNA should not be discounted. Should a fire originate west of the HNA when winds blow from the west, the wind would facilitate spread up the slopes to assets above the HNA. Containment within the HNA is hampered by lack of access, abundant fuels, and steep terrain. Thus, this assessment included wind from the west as well as from the northeast, so that a fuller suite of conditions could be considered.

The results influence management decisions in the following ways:

1. Fuel management should acknowledge risks uphill from the HNA and point to creation and maintenance of fuel breaks along the eastern portion of the HNA.
2. Management recommendations should emphasize the importance of defensible space for properties along the entire perimeter of the HNA, not just the residences that would be most vulnerable from a fire that burns with winds from the northeast (those that abut the western boundary of the HNA).
3. Public education regarding fire-safe behavior as a way to prevent ignitions should encompass the neighborhoods west of the HNA.

The risk assessment indicates:

1. Flame lengths are predicted to be very long and extreme (more than 12 feet) in more locations under a westerly wind than an easterly wind. The rates of fire spread follow the same pattern; more locations burn at extremely fast spread rates with westerly winds, and the same locations are affected more by westerly winds. Not surprisingly, the areas of greatest potential to torch (and distribute embers) are in the same locations that are predicted to burn intensely.
2. Steep grassy and shrubby slopes in all parts of the HNA can be expected to burn intensely and faster under any wind direction. These are located in areas:
 - a. Surrounding the Recycling Center;
 - b. Uphill from the eastern end of Snowden Drive;
 - c. On the grassy slope above Roger Court and Potrero Avenue;
 - d. In the eucalyptus stand south of Wildwood Lane; and
 - e. On the steep grass/shrub slope below Madera Circle.
3. The oak woodlands and most of the eucalyptus groves are expected to burn with less intensity than grasslands under a northeasterly wind.

Most of the HNA boundary abuts residences, and a fire in the areas would directly affect and be affected by the condition of those residential properties. A property adjacent to and near the HNA should be included in all efforts to promote defensible space and structure retrofitting to be ignition resistant. Priority should be placed on parcels that immediately abut the HNA and then nearby parcels. For those segments of the HNA boundary that touch other wildlands, the City should work with those landowners to ensure that neighboring parcels also address the hazards.

In summary, this level of risk can be reduced by three actions: vegetative fuel management in the HNA and in residential yards, retrofitting structures to be ignition-resistant, and diligence in ignition prevention. The areas of highest priority for vegetative fuel management are the nearest homes to the HNA (both above and below the HNA) and locations with greatest flame lengths. Ignition prevention involves the entire community focusing on fire-safe behaviors, along with creation and maintenance of fuels (both vegetative and structural) that are ignition-resistant.

Appendix A: Terms Used in This Report

1h Fuel Class – Group of fuels possessing common characteristics. Dead fuels are grouped according to 1-, 10-, 100-, and 1000-hour time lag, and living fuels are grouped as herbaceous (annual or perennial) or woody.

10h Fuel Class – Group of fuels possessing common characteristics. Dead fuels are grouped according to 1-, 10-, 100-, and 1000-hour time lag, and living fuels are grouped as herbaceous (annual or perennial) or woody.

100h Fuel Class – Group of fuels possessing common characteristics. Dead fuels are grouped according to 1-, 10-, 100-, and 1000-hour time lag, and living fuels are grouped as herbaceous (annual or perennial) or woody.

Active crown fire – A fire in which a solid flame develops in the crowns of trees.

Canopy base height – A property of a plot, stand, or group of trees, not of an individual tree. For fire modeling, canopy base height is an effective value that incorporates ladder fuel, such as tall shrubs and small trees.

Canopy bulk density – A bulk property of a plot, stand, or group of trees, not of an individual tree. The most basic methods for estimating canopy bulk density use a tree list in conjunction with allometric equations to predict individual tree biomass. The biomass data are then summarized by any of several methods to provide an estimate of bulk density or to create a vertical profile of bulk density in horizontally thin layers.

Canopy cover – The percent of a fixed area covered by the crown of an individual plant species or delimited by the vertical projection of its outermost perimeter; small openings in the crown are included.

Canopy height – The height of the foliage above ground for any point of the canopy. For example, tree height is the height of the tree apex (topmost point) above ground.

Crosswalk – A crosswalk is any system or table designed to assist a user in cross-referencing one vegetation classification to another; in this case, a fuel model classification.

Crown fire – A fire that advances from top to top of trees or shrubs more or less independent of a surface fire. Crown fires are sometimes classed as running or dependent to distinguish the degree of independence from the surface fire.

Crown fire activity – See crowning potential. The presence of a crown fire or torching in any one area.

Crown fire activity (or potential) – Results from a fire prediction software. Predictions are either Non-burnable, Surface Fire, Passive Crown Fire, and Active Crown Fire.

Crowning potential – A probability that a crown fire may start, calculated from inputs of foliage moisture content and height of the lowest part of the tree crowns above the surface. See also “spotting potential.”

Fire behavior – The manner in which a fire reacts to the influences of fuel, weather, and topography.

Fire hazard severity – Fire hazard severity zones are based on the combination of vegetation, topography, weather, crown fire potential, ember production and movement, and the likelihood of an area burning. Buildings constructed in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are required to be built using fire-resistive features.

Fireline intensity – The product of the available heat of combustion per unit of ground and the rate of spread of the fire, interpreted as the heat released per unit of time for each unit length of fire edge. The primary unit is Btu per second per foot of fire front. The rate of heat release per unit time per unit length of fire front. Numerically, it is the product of the heat yield, the quantity of fuel consumed in the fire front, and the rate of spread.

Flame length – The distance between the flame tip and the midpoint of the flame depth at the base of the flame (generally the ground surface) and an indicator of fire intensity.

FlamMap – A software program that simulates potential fire behavior characteristics (spread rate, flame length, fire line intensity, etc.), fire growth and spread, and conditional burn probabilities under constant environmental conditions (weather and fuel moisture).

Flaming front – The zone of a moving fire where the combustion is primarily flaming. Behind this flaming zone combustion is primarily glowing or involves the burning out of larger fuels (greater than about 3 inches in diameter). Light fuels typically have a shallow flaming front, whereas heavy fuels have a deeper front.

Foliar moisture content – The weight of water compared with the weight of cellulose, expressed as a percentage. A 100 percent moisture content is found when that portion of a plant has equal weights of water and cellulose.

Fuel – Any combustible material, especially petroleum-based products and wildland fuels.

Fuel bed – An array of fuels usually constructed with specific loading, depth, and particle size to meet experimental requirements; also, commonly used to describe the fuel composition.

Fuel continuity – A description of the spacing between individual fuel elements. For example, tree crowns touching the crowns of all its neighbors or tree crowns moderately, or even widely, spaced.

Fuel characteristics – Factors that make up fuels such as compactness, loading, horizontal continuity, vertical arrangement, chemical content, size and shape, and moisture content.

Fuel model – Simulated fuel complex for which all fuel descriptors required for the solution of a mathematical rate of spread model have been specified.

Fuel moisture – The quantity of moisture in fuel expressed as a percentage of the weight when thoroughly dried at 212 degrees Fahrenheit.

Fuel type – An identifiable association of fuel elements of distinctive species, form, size, arrangement, or other characteristics that will cause a predictable rate of spread or resistance to control under specified weather conditions.

Ladder fuels – Vegetative fuels that provide a pathway for fire to move from the surface to the tree canopy.

LANDFIRE – The LANDFIRE program produces geo-spatial products and databases covering the United States of America. LANDFIRE is a partnership between the wildland fire management programs of the United States Department of Interior, the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, and the Nature Conservancy.

Live Herbaceous Fuel Class – Group of fuels possessing common characteristics. Dead fuels are grouped according to 1-, 10-, 100-, and 1000-hour time lag, and living fuels are grouped as herbaceous (annual or perennial) or woody.

Live Herbaceous Fuel Moisture (LiveH) – Fuel moisture for the Live Herbaceous Fuel Class.

Live Woody Fuel Class – Group of fuels possessing common characteristics. Dead fuels are grouped according to 1-, 10-, 100-, and 1000-hour time lag, and living fuels are grouped as herbaceous (annual or perennial) or woody.

Live Woody Fuel Moisture (LiveW) – Fuel moisture for the Live Woody Fuel Class.

Moisture of Extinction (X Moist) – The fuel moisture content, weighed over all the fuel classes, at which a fire will not spread.

Passive crown fire – A fire in the crowns of trees in which trees or groups of trees torch, ignited by the passing front of the fire.

Pixel – A picture element that reflects the same characteristics over a specified size of the surface.

Rate of spread – The relative activity of a fire in extending its horizontal dimensions. It is expressed as rate of increase of the total perimeter of the fire, as rate of forward spread of the fire front, or as rate of increase in area, depending on the intended use of the information. Usually it is expressed in chains (66 feet) or acres per hour for a specific period in the fire's history.

Relative humidity – The ratio of the amount of moisture in the air to the maximum amount of moisture that air would contain if it were saturated.

Residence time – The length of time a wildfire burns at a single location. This behavior characteristic is typically defined by the fuel size categories that are present and dominant.

Surface fire – A fire that burns on the surface of the ground and is primarily fueled by short vegetation and twigs or dried leaves. Surface fires range from low to high intensity depending on the conditions. While they may scorch a tree canopy, surface fires will not consume its foliage. Surface fires often spread slowly but can begin to spread rapidly when they occur in an area that has a steeply sloped landscape or are pushed by wind. That said, most surface fires ultimately die out before they are able to develop into the next level of classification: crown fires.

Spotting – Behavior of a fire producing sparks or embers that are carried by the wind and start new fires beyond the zone of direct ignition by the main fire. Large glowing firebrands are carried high into the convection column and then fall out downwind beyond the main fire, starting new fires. Such spotting can easily occur 0.25 mile or more from the firebrand's source.

Time lag – Time needed under specified conditions for a fuel particle to lose about 63 percent of the difference between its initial moisture content and its equilibrium moisture content. If conditions remain unchanged, a fuel will reach 95 percent of its equilibrium moisture content after four time lag periods.

Torching – The burning of the foliage of a single tree or a small group of trees, from the bottom up.

Appendix B: Fuel Model Parameters for All Standard Fuel Models

This table describes the fuel characteristics used as inputs to the FlamMap fire behavior prediction software and includes fuel loads (volumes) by time lag/size class.

Fuel model code	Fuel load (t/ac)					Fuel model type ^a	SAV ratio (1/ft) ^b			Fuel bed depth (ft)	Dead fuel extinction moisture (percent)	Heat content BTU/lb ^c
	1-hr	10-hr	100-hr	Live herb	Live woody		Dead 1-hr	Live herb	Live woody			
GR1	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.00	dynamic	2200	2000	9999	0.4	15	8000
GR2	0.10	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	dynamic	2000	1800	9999	1.0	15	8000
GR3	0.10	0.40	0.00	1.50	0.00	dynamic	1500	1300	9999	2.0	30	8000
GR4	0.25	0.00	0.00	1.90	0.00	dynamic	2000	1800	9999	2.0	15	8000
GR5	0.40	0.00	0.00	2.50	0.00	dynamic	1800	1600	9999	1.5	40	8000
GR6	0.10	0.00	0.00	3.40	0.00	dynamic	2200	2000	9999	1.5	40	9000
GR7	1.00	0.00	0.00	5.40	0.00	dynamic	2000	1800	9999	3.0	15	8000
GR8	0.50	1.00	0.00	7.30	0.00	dynamic	1500	1300	9999	4.0	30	8000
GR9	1.00	1.00	0.00	9.00	0.00	dynamic	1800	1600	9999	5.0	40	8000
GS1	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.65	dynamic	2000	1800	1800	0.9	15	8000
GS2	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.60	1.00	dynamic	2000	1800	1800	1.5	15	8000
GS3	0.30	0.25	0.00	1.45	1.25	dynamic	1800	1600	1600	1.8	40	8000
GS4	1.90	0.30	0.10	3.40	7.10	dynamic	1800	1600	1600	2.1	40	8000
SH1	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.15	1.30	dynamic	2000	1800	1600	1.0	15	8000
SH2	1.35	2.40	0.75	0.00	3.85	N/A	2000	9999	1600	1.0	15	8000
SH3	0.45	3.00	0.00	0.00	6.20	N/A	1600	9999	1400	2.4	40	8000
SH4	0.85	1.15	0.20	0.00	2.55	N/A	2000	1800	1600	3.0	30	8000
SH5	3.60	2.10	0.00	0.00	2.90	N/A	750	9999	1600	6.0	15	8000
SH6	2.90	1.45	0.00	0.00	1.40	N/A	750	9999	1600	2.0	30	8000
SH7	3.50	5.30	2.20	0.00	3.40	N/A	750	9999	1600	6.0	15	8000
SH8	2.05	3.40	0.85	0.00	4.35	N/A	750	9999	1600	3.0	40	8000
SH9	4.50	2.45	0.00	1.55	7.00	dynamic	750	1800	1500	4.4	40	8000
TU1	0.20	0.90	1.50	0.20	0.90	dynamic	2000	1800	1600	0.6	20	8000
TU2	0.95	1.80	1.25	0.00	0.20	N/A	2000	9999	1600	1.0	30	8000
TU3	1.10	0.15	0.25	0.65	1.10	dynamic	1800	1600	1400	1.3	30	8000
TU4	4.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	N/A	2300	9999	2000	0.5	12	8000
TU5	4.00	4.00	3.00	0.00	3.00	N/A	1500	9999	750	1.0	25	8000
TL1	1.00	2.20	3.60	0.00	0.00	N/A	2000	9999	9999	0.2	30	8000
TL2	1.40	2.30	2.20	0.00	0.00	N/A	2000	9999	9999	0.2	25	8000
TL3	0.50	2.20	2.80	0.00	0.00	N/A	2000	9999	9999	0.3	20	8000
TL4	0.50	1.50	4.20	0.00	0.00	N/A	2000	9999	9999	0.4	25	8000
TL5	1.15	2.50	4.40	0.00	0.00	N/A	2000	9999	1600	0.6	25	8000
TL6	2.40	1.20	1.20	0.00	0.00	N/A	2000	9999	9999	0.3	25	8000
TL7	0.30	1.40	8.10	0.00	0.00	N/A	2000	9999	9999	0.4	25	8000
TL8	5.80	1.40	1.10	0.00	0.00	N/A	1800	9999	9999	0.3	35	8000
TL9	6.65	3.30	4.15	0.00	0.00	N/A	1800	9999	1600	0.6	35	8000
SB1	1.50	3.00	11.00	0.00	0.00	N/A	2000	9999	9999	1.0	25	8000
SB2	4.50	4.25	4.00	0.00	0.00	N/A	2000	9999	9999	1.0	25	8000
SB3	5.50	2.75	3.00	0.00	0.00	N/A	2000	9999	9999	1.2	25	8000
SB4	5.25	3.50	5.25	0.00	0.00	N/A	2000	9999	9999	2.7	25	8000

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APPENDIX C

CULTURAL RESOURCES EVALUATION

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CULTURAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Date: October 18th, 2023
To: LSA Associates, Inc.
From: Solano Archaeological Services, LLC
Subject: Cultural Resources Investigation – Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan, City of El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California

INTRODUCTION

This technical memorandum summarizes the background research, Native American community outreach, archaeological survey, and study findings for the proposed Hillside Natural Area (HNA) Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan in the City of El Cerrito (the City), Contra Costa County, California (the Project). As a discretionary effort, the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements, and Solano Archaeological Services, LLC (SAS) has prepared this report to support compliance with the cultural resources provisions of CEQA.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project area consists of approximately 107.18-acre (ac.) on three discontinuous but adjacent lots generally located to the northwest, and southeast of Potrero Avenue. (Attachment A, Figure 1). The project area is depicted on the *Richmond, California* U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic 7.5 minute quadrangle in Township 1 North, Range 4 West, sections 15, 16, 21, and 22 (Attachment A, Figures 2, 3).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Community concerns regarding fire risk in the City's HNA and surrounding residential communities have significantly increased. The City has responded with ongoing and increased vegetation maintenance activities, completing work largely based on planning efforts completed in the 1990s. However, the need for more robust, comprehensive, and balanced vegetation management practices was identified in the City's 2015 Urban Greening Plan. Additionally, in 2019, the El Cerrito Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan specifically called for action to "support the El Cerrito-Kensington Wildfire Action Plan goals and policies by creating defensible spaces, increasing weed abatement, and managing dead or diseased trees and other vegetation, especially in the Hillside Natural Area". El Cerrito voters passed a measure (Measure H) to further fund park maintenance activities that same year and the City has since increased its fire fuel reduction and vegetation management activities, in part with these park maintenance funds. Given the ongoing and historic drought, rising global temperatures and community concerns regarding the risk of wildfire, an updated plan with the required environmental site analysis is needed now to guide the City in performing and budgeting for the most effective, sustainable, and cost-efficient fuel reduction and forest conservation activities. To assist in this effort, the City of El Cerrito was awarded a \$145,000 State Coastal Conservancy grant in September 2022 to complete the Plan by September 2024.

The purpose of this project is to establish and adopt a comprehensive fire hazard reduction and vegetation management plan for the City's HNA. The proposed plan will:

- identify and protect critical resource areas,
- guide the City's fire fuel reduction, native forest conservation, and maintenance activities, and
- evaluate fire road and trail network conditions.

REGULATORY SETTING

CEQA requires that public agencies having authority to finance or approve public or private projects assess the effects of those projects on cultural resources. Cultural resources include buildings, sites, structures, objects, or districts, each of which may have historical, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or scientific significance. CEQA states that if a proposed project would result in an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a significant cultural resource (termed a "historical resource"), alternative plans or mitigation measures must be considered. Because only significant cultural resources need to be addressed, the significance of cultural resources must be determined before mitigation measures are developed.

CEQA §5024.1 (Public Resources Code [PRC] §5024.1) and §15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] §15064.5) define a *historical resource* as "a resource listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources." A historical resource may be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources if it:

- 1) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage
- 2) Is associated with the lives of persons important to our past
- 3) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction represents the work of an important creative individual; or possesses high artistic values; or
- 4) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history

In addition, CEQA also distinguishes between two classes of archaeological resources: archaeological sites that meet the definition of a historical resource, and "unique archaeological resources." An archaeological resource is considered unique if it:

- Is associated with an event or person of recognized significance in California or American history or of recognized scientific importance in prehistory
- Can provide information that is of demonstrable public interest and is useful in addressing scientifically consequential and reasonable research questions
- Has a special or particular quality such as oldest, best example, largest, or last surviving example of its kind
- Is at least 100 years old and possesses substantial stratigraphic integrity; or
- Involves important research questions that historical research has shown can be answered only with archaeological methods (Public Resources Code §21083.2)

According to the CEQA Guidelines, a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, or a unique archaeological resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR §15064.5[b]). CEQA further states that a substantial adverse change in the significance of a resource means the physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL SETTING

The project area lies within the east bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area, where warm, dry summers are complemented by cool, wet winters with rainfall averaging 25–50 inches per year. This climate is complemented by a diverse topographic landscape bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean, to the east by low coastal mountains and the Central Valley, and to the south by the southern coast mountain ranges. Accordingly, this region has a rich and diverse natural environment with lush stands of redwood, pine, and fir trees, as well as grassland, oak, and chaparral zones. Large expanses of these varied vegetation zones form extensive, highly productive interfaces where prehistoric people exploited staples, such as acorns. Moreover, these widespread verdant areas support abundant species of wildlife, also a staple resource for prehistoric people (Baumhoff 1978).

The geologic legacy of the San Francisco Bay area also proved important to local Native American groups. Rocks and minerals for tool production and other uses were abundant in the general region. Sources of obsidian continue to be present at Napa Mountain and Anadel, and Franciscan chert can be found in local streambeds. Equally important were deposits of asphaltum (a tar-like substance originating from natural oil seepage) in Marin County and hematite and cinnabar in Sonoma County. The geology of the project area vicinity is also an important consideration when evaluating factors that affect archaeological site visibility. The geomorphic setting of the project area and vicinity includes alluvial, colluvial, and estuarine environments that actively deposited sediments during the Holocene epoch. The region has also been subject to widespread filling during the historic and modern periods (Rice et al. 2002; Wagner et al. 2002) which may have buried prehistoric and early historic-period archaeological sites and remains.

Prehistoric Setting

The prehistoric cultural chronology for the Bay Area was developed over a century of organized archaeological survey, from N. C. Nelson in 1906 to the present day. Since the 1950s, archaeological work in Marin, San Francisco, and Contra Costa Counties has led to identification and refinement of a cultural sequence of early Native American occupation. This sequence consists of the Early Holocene (*Lower Archaic*), Early Period (*Middle Archaic*), Lower Middle Period (*Initial Upper Archaic*), Upper Middle Period (*Late Upper Archaic*), Initial Late Period (*Lower Emergent*), and Terminal Late Period.

The Early Holocene or Lower Archaic (8,000 B.C. – 3,500 B.C.) is characterized as a mobile forager pattern, with milling slabs, handstones, and a variety of large, wide-stemmed and leaf-shaped projectile points, largely composed of local Franciscan chert dominating archaeological assemblages (Hylkema 2002:235; Milliken et al. 2007:114). During the Early Period or Middle Archaic (3,500 B.C. – 500 B.C.), several technological and social developments emerged including new groundstone technology and the first cut shell beads in mortuaries suggest new levels of sedentism and increased regional trade in the Bay Area (Vellanoweth 2001). The Lower Middle Period or Initial Upper Archaic (500 B.C. – A.D. 430) is marked by a “major disruption in symbolic integration systems” (Milliken et al. 2007:115) and new bone tools appeared for the first time, including barbless fish spears, elk femur spatulas, tubes, and whistles, as well as coiled basketry manufacture (Bennyhoff 1986:70; Bieling 1998:218). During the Upper Middle Period or Late Upper Archaic, (A.D. 430 – 1050), many sites from the previous period were abandoned, and single-barbed bone fish spears, ear spools, and large mortars were developed (Milliken et al. 2007:116).

Following the Archaic Period, the Initial Late Period or Lower Emergent (A.D. 1050 – 1550) is marked by an increase in sedentism, status ascription, and ceremonial integration in lowland Central California (Fredrickson 1973). Increased social stratification throughout the Bay Area after 1250 A.D. is expressed in mortuary practices through the quality of goods in high-status burials and cremations (Fredrickson 1994). The Terminal Late Period is defined by changes in artifact types and mortuary objects including toggle harpoons, hopper mortars, plain corner-notched arrow-sized projectile points, clamshell disk beads, magnesite tube beads, and secondary cremation in the North Bay (Bennyhoff 1994:54; Wickstrom 1986).

Ethnographic Context

During the early decades of the 20th century, pioneering anthropologists including Alfred Kroeber of the University of California at Berkeley, laid the groundwork for understanding the cultures of California's indigenous peoples (Lightfoot 2005). Due to the extensive cultural diversity that existed within pre-colonial California, Kroeber and other early anthropologists created a framework to organize populations into language groups. The people living in central coastal California at the time of Euro-American contact were grouped into the Costanoan language family (also referred to as Ohlone), which occupied the coastal area from San Francisco Bay to south of Monterey Bay. Eight separate language groups are believed to have been within this family. Around fifty politically autonomous groups referred to as tribelets ranged in population from 50 to 500 individuals (Levy 1978). Linguistically, the Costanoan people were divided into large groups consisting of sets of tribelets that spoke a common dialect within a particular geographical area. The dialect spoken amongst the tribelets that occupied the Palo Alto area is believed to have been *Chochenyo*, one of the eight linguistically separate groups within the Costanoan family (Levy 1978). The closest documented village to the project area where Chochenyo was likely spoken was *Huchiuñ*, several miles to the northwest of the HNA. According to (Bennyhoff 1977:142), *Huchiuñ Costanoan is firmly established in the Point San Pablo-Richmond region. The tribelet center was probably CCO-270, in the present town of San Pablo.*

The Costanoan carefully managed the landscape within their territory with wildlife habitat and desirable fauna being enhanced through controlled burns. This burning also eased the gathering of acorns; a staple food for the Costanoans. Other plants utilized ethnographically include nuts of buckeye, laurel and hazelnut trees, seeds of various plants, numerous berries, and roots. Animals consumed by the Costanoan included deer, elk, antelope, grizzly bear, sea lion, whale, various small mammals, numerous species of birds and waterfowl, and several species of fish including steelhead, salmon, and sturgeon. The Costanoan people traded mussels, abalone shells, salt, and dried abalone with neighbors to the east, and obtained piñon nuts, obsidian, and other items in return (Levy 1978).

With the establishment of seven Spanish missions within traditional Costanoan territory beginning in 1769, native peoples experienced dramatic cultural changes. The introduction of Spanish administration led to the relocation of many native Californians from their villages to missions for the purpose of being “converted” and to serve as laborers. The exact timing and nature of the relocation of the Chochenyo speakers is difficult to determine. Mission Santa Clara began converting Native Americans in 1777 but prior to 1806 their records are problematic for determining tribal group affiliation. In 1797, Mission San Jose de Guadeloupe (Mission San Jose) began converting native peoples, yet their registers provide no tribal names until 1803 (Milliken 1995). Despite this information gap, more than likely, the Chochenyo group was brought under Spanish administration sometime between 1801, and 1806 in the Santa Clara, and San Jose Missions (Milliken 1995), and possibly Mission San Francisco de Asís (Mission Dolores) when other Costanoan groups were subjected to the same fate.

At the missions, native groups were subjected to a daily routine of agricultural labor and a regimented lifeway. By 1810, the indigenous people of present-day Contra Costa and the surrounding counties had been entirely relocated to the missions. With notable exceptions, such as the village of *Alisal* (in present-day Alameda County) where the traditional native social system persisted into the 20th century, the indigenous mode of existence had largely disappeared by 1810. By 1935, for all practical purposes the Costanoan language was extinct and, by 1968, less than 200 people could claim probable Costanoan/Ohlone descent (Levy 1978). Today, however, the Ohlone people are reinvesting in their culture and traditional lifeways. Through new-found political, economic, and social influence Costanoan peoples constitute a thriving native community within the broader context of present-day California.

Historic Period Setting

Although Spanish expeditions to the California coastline date to the 16th and early 17th centuries (e.g., Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542, Sebastian Rodriguez Cermeño in 1595, and Sebastián Vizcaino in 1602), the conventional date for the beginning of the Spanish Period in California is 1769, the date of the founding of the first mission in California, *Mission San Diego de Alcalá*. Spanish exploration of the San Francisco Bay Area and surrounding lands also began in 1769 when Gaspar de Portola led his expedition into Alta California to locate Monterey Bay. In 1774, Don Fernando de Rivera y Moncada headed another party to identify potential mission sites, and Juan Bautista de Anza followed with an expedition in 1776 (Beck and Haase 1974).

The Franciscans eventually established 21 missions and four presidios (military bases) between Sonoma and San Diego between 1769, and 1823 (Beck and Haase 1974). The missions were situated so that they could be reached within a day's ride of each other. The presidios were spread out evenly among the missions although some missions also housed soldiers within their walls. Most missions included a Convento (padre's residence), housing for the neophytes, and various other facilities such as school rooms, shops, mills, tanneries, storehouses, sheds, and livestock corrals. Other amenities, such as gardens, vineyards, orchards, cultivated fields, and grazing land were developed in and around the missions (Blackmar 1976) that were self-sustaining as they raised a variety of grains and crops as well as sheep and cattle.

Mexico achieved independence from Spain in 1821 at which time Alta California was declared a territory of the Mexican republic. In 1834, the Mexican government secularized the missions and divided their land holdings into ranchos including Rancho San Pablo within which the NHA is located. Rancho San Pablo was a 17,938-ac. land grant given to Francisco María Castro, a former soldier at the San Francisco Presidio and one-time *alcalde* of the Pueblo of San José, in 1823 (Beck and Haase 1974). With the cession of California to the United States following the Mexican–American War, the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo provided that the land grants would be honored. As required by the California Land Act of 1851(9 Stat. 631), a claim for Rancho San Pablo was filed with the Public Land Commission by Joaquín Ysidro Castro in 1852, and the grant was patented to Joaquín Ysidro Castro in 1878.

El Cerrito

The most notable Euro-American to settle in what would become the City of El Cerrito was Wilhelm F. Rust, a native of Hannover (Germany) who immigrated to California in 1883. He leased property, built a blacksmith shop and his business grew supporting the local cattle ranches, dairies, and farms. As a community grew around his shop and a hardware store he later purchased, the settlement was named Rust in his honor. The town remained generally quiet and unremarkable until 1906 when the San Francisco earthquake destroyed much of the city and refugees fled to the east side of the San Francisco Bay and quickly settled in. The town of Rust essentially became official in 1909 when a post office was established in Rust's hardware store, and he took on the role as the Postmaster.

The town rapidly grew and was formally incorporated at El Cerrito (*little hill* in Spanish) in 1917 with a population of 1,500 residents. One of the first orders of business after the City was incorporated was to impose a license fee for each of the saloons in town to pay the wages of marshal, clerk and treasurer, and for other needs of the City. As there were nearly twenty saloons scattered about the community, mostly along San Pablo Avenue, the revenue was significant and for the first time, fire and police protection were also available to the new city's residents. Priority was given to a street paving program and soon after the incorporation the driving of cattle down San Pablo Avenue to a slaughterhouse on Central Avenue was stopped (El Cerrito Historical Society 2023).

Being just across from San Francisco, El Cerrito grew quickly, reaching a population of 3,852 in 1930, and 7,000 in 1940. During the World War II years, the population sky-rocketed to over 16,000 and with the post-war housing boom, to over 18,000 in 1950. Today, El Cerrito has a population of 24,000 and serves as an economic and cultural hub for the Bay Area.

Chung Mei Home

In 1923, Dr. Charles R. Shepard founded the Chung Mei Home for Chinese Boys after seeing dozens of hungry, abandoned Chinese boys in San Francisco's Chinatown. Shepard noted that "No other orphanage would take in children of color or Asiatic races." The home was first located in an old wooden building in Berkeley, but in part due to the efforts of the boys themselves, money was raised to build a larger facility and the location in El Cerrito was eventually chosen. The home (Chung Mei Home Historic District) was built in 1935 on a hillside bordered by Elm Street to the west and by existing residential housing to the north, east, and south. The home consisted of a main building, a maintenance building, an art studio, an L-shaped classroom building, a gymnasium, a library/classroom building, and numerous additional structures, buildings, and features. From 1935 to 1954, the home provided residential care, guidance, and structure for neglected and abandoned Chinese boys. The present-day Chung Mei Home for Chinese Boys Historic District (the District) still reflects its institutional design and integrity. LSA Associates of Richmond, California completed a Historical Resources Evaluation of the district in 2007. The evaluation concluded that the District appeared eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources for its association with the Chinese experience in California and the San Francisco Bay Area.

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 21080.1, 21080.3.1, and 21080.3.2 require public agencies to consult with the appropriate California Native American tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purpose of mitigating impacts to cultural resources. To meet PRC requirements, on August 15th, 2023, SAS emailed a letter and a map depicting the project area and surrounding vicinity to the NAHC requesting a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search, and a list of Native American community representatives who might have an interest in, or concerns with the proposed Project. The NAHC responded to SAS on August 24th stating that the search of the SLF was positive, indicating that a culturally sensitive property had been identified within or near the project area (Attachment B).

The NAHC also provided a list of appropriate local tribal organizations and individual contacts each of which SAS by mailed letter on August 30th, 2023, informing them of the proposed Project and inquiring if they had any knowledge of cultural properties within or near the project area. On September 11th, Francis Ranstead, Tribal Administrator for the Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation (Lisjan Nation), emailed SAS and noted that:

The Tribe would like to consult for this project. You can find our Calendly link below to schedule a consultation at your earliest convenience. Please make sure to include the project name in the notes section when scheduling the consultation to help us prepare for our meeting.

Francis Ranstead, in a separate email, also requested:

...a copy of the final CHRIS, Sacred Lands File and EIR for this project, along with the SLF from Native American Heritage Commission and any additional archeological reports. Our physical address is: PO BOX 6487 Oakland CA 94603 or if you would prefer to send them electronically, please send them to this email address.

Since SAS cannot directly engage in Consultation and requests for Project documentation have to go through the City, SAS forwarded these requests to the City for further action. No other requests have been forwarded from any of the contacts suggested by the NAHC. If additional outreach or requests for Consultation are received, SAS will forward them to the City and prepare an addendum to this report if necessary.

The Lisjan Nation also engaged directly with the City in a meeting on October 18th, 2023. At this meeting, the Lisjan Nation representatives requested confirmation that ground disturbances would not occur near creek bottoms and that the City would notify them if the scope changed. The representatives also requested a copy of this report which the City provided.

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL RESOURCES INFORMATION SYSTEM RECORDS SEARCH

The Northwest Information Center (NWIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System provided the results of a record search request to SAS on September 18th, 2023 (NWIC File No. 23-0215). This search included a review of the NWIC archives for previously known or recorded cultural resources, studies, and isolates within the project area and a half-mile (mi.) radius. The search also included, but was not necessarily restricted to, a review of the following sources:

- The *National Register of Historic Places* (Historic Properties Directory, California Office of Historic Preservation)
- The *California Register of Historic Places* (Historic Properties Directory, California Office of Historic Preservation)
- The *California Historical Landmarks* (California Office of Historic Preservation)
- The *California Points of Historical Interest* (California Office of Historic Preservation)
- The *California Inventory of Historic Resources* (California Department of Parks and Recreation).

The NWIC record search indicated that one cultural resource, a house built in 1898 on Navellier Street (P-07-000995), was located immediately adjacent to the project area. NWIC also reported six additional cultural resources within one half-mi. of the project area:

- P-07-002714: Prehistoric shell midden at 8420 Buckingham Ave.
- P-07-002910: Chung Me Home for Chinese Boys District / Windrush School
- P-07-002911: Main building - Chung Me Home for Chinese Boys
- P-07-002912: Maintenance building - Chung Me Home for Chinese Boys
- P-07-002913: Windrush School classroom building
- P-07-003064: Indian mound at Navellier Street

The NWIC also noted that two previous cultural resources investigations included at least a portion of the current project area and an additional five studies have been conducted within the half-mi. search area.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

In order to ascertain patterns of public-private land ownership within the project area and identify potential undocumented cultural resources and sensitive landforms, SAS conducted additional archival research focused on historic mapping and federal land transfer records. This research consisted of reviews of the Bureau of Land Management's General Land Office (GLO) archives including patent records, historical USGS topographic quadrangle maps, and aerial photography.

USGS mapping showing the project area and surrounding region dates to as early as 1895 with regular modifications and re-prints throughout the 20th century. The early topographic quadrangle (1895) does not show any developments within the project area other than a possible building at the current-day intersection of Arlington Boulevard and where Scenic Drive would be constructed in the mid-late 1940s (outside the HNA). This building appears on USGS mapping between 1895, and 1947 after which time development was clearly shown encroaching on the area where the HNA would eventually be established. Historic aerial photography, which only dates to as early as 1946, does not show any indications of a structure or building at the Arlington Boulevard/Scenic Drive location. The duration of its depiction on USGS mapping well into the 1940s suggests the symbol for the building on the USGS mapping was an error simply transferred onto later printings long after the actual building or structure was gone.

Aerial photography generally confirms a lack of buildings, structures, or substantial road alignments in the HNA parcels. However, a clear picture of encroaching urban/suburban development can be seen during the latter half of the 20th century.

A review of GLO land patent records detailing the transfers of public land to private individuals and companies (or the State of California) shows that only one patent was issued for lands encompassing the project area. This was for the 17,938-ac. Rancho San Pablo which, under the California Land Act of 1851, was formally patented to Francisco Maria Castro, Juakin Isidro Castro, and Juakin Y. Castro. The 1867 GLO plat map of Township 1 North, Range 4 West shows the boundaries of the Rancho San Pablo but no other developments, natural features, or survey markers are depicted which was common practice at the time for Mexican land grant properties.

FIELD SURVEY

Methods

On September 27th, 2023, SAS archaeologists conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of the project area utilizing pedestrian transects spaced no greater than approximately 10 meters apart. A sub-meter accurate Trimble GPS unit was utilized to verify project area boundaries and to record locations of landscape features and cultural resources. In areas where extremely steep hillsides and/or impenetrably dense vegetation were present, opportunistic survey techniques were employed as necessary using existing trails within the HNA.

Results

The project area consists of a rugged landscape of slopes, drainages, and dense woodlands on a series of steep-sided hills with a western aspect towards San Francisco Bay. Ground surface visibility was poor throughout the project area due to heavy vegetation with the exception of small erosional areas along established trails, and in rodent burrows. One previously documented historic-era resource, the 1898 house on Navellier Street (P-07-000995) was noted by the SAS field team. No other historic-era or early Native American sites, features, sensitive landforms or soil types (e.g., midden) or artifacts were recorded. Representative photographs of the overall project area as encountered in the field survey are included as Attachment C.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Archival research, outreach to the Native American community, and an intensive field survey did not document indications of prehistoric activities in the project area. Although the NAHC noted that a culturally significant property was known to be present within or near the project area, none of the tribal contacts and representatives have expressed any concerns regarding this possible site. In addition, an intensive field survey did not identify any potentially sensitive landforms or significant level terrain in the project area, suggesting it retains a low level of sensitivity for containing traces of early Native American occupation. Concerning historic period resources, historic mapping, aerial photographs, archival research, and the field survey indicated that no developments of any kind occurred in the project area although P-07-000995 is located immediately adjacent. Consequently, SAS proposes a low level of sensitivity for the project area to exhibit potentially significant historic-era sites, features, or artifacts. As P-07-000995 would not be affected by the proposed Project, no Native American representatives or groups have expressed concerns regarding the Project, and research did not identify any cultural resources or sensitive landforms, SAS recommends that the Project would have *no impact on historical resources* per CEQA.

If human remains or any associated funerary artifacts are discovered during construction, all work must cease within the immediate vicinity of the discovery. In accordance with the California Health and Safety Code (Section 7050.5), the Contra Costa County Sheriff/Coroner must be contacted immediately. If the Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which will in turn appoint a Most Likely Descendent (MLD) to act as a tribal representative. The MLD will work with the City and a qualified archaeologist to determine the proper treatment of the human remains and any associated funerary objects. Construction activities will not resume until either the human remains are exhumed, or the remains are avoided via Project construction design change.

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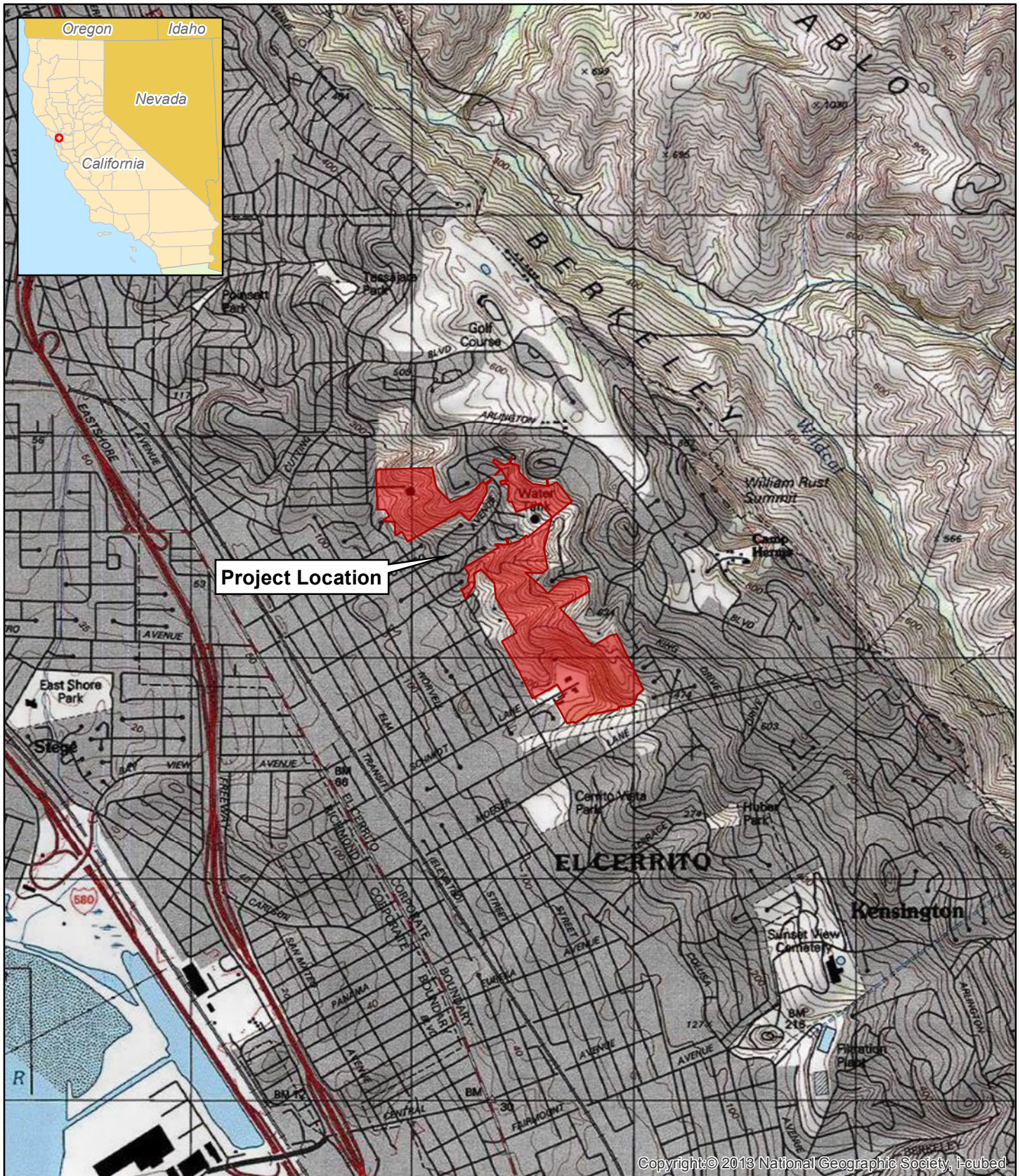
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ATTACHMENT A

Figures



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Figure 2. Project Location Map.

1:24,000

Hillside Natural Area Plan Project Area

0.5

San Pablo Land Grant (Presumed T01N, R04W, Secs 15, 16, 21 and 22).
Richmond 7.5' Series Quadrangle, USGS, 1980.

Miles

1

Kilometers





Figure 3. Project Area Map.

Hillside Natural Area Plan Project Area

Total Acres: 106.22

1:10,000

0 500 Feet

0 250 Meters



ATTACHMENT B

Native American Community Outreach



NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

August 24, 2023

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Solano Archaeological Services

Via Email to: brian@solanoarchaeology.com

CHAIRPERSON
Reginald Pagaling
Chumash

VICE-CHAIRPERSON
Buffy McQuillen
Yokayo Pomo, Yuki,
Nomlaki

SECRETARY
Sara Dutschke
Miwok

PARLIAMENTARIAN
Wayne Nelson
Luiseño

COMMISSIONER
Isaac Bojorquez
Ohlone-Costanoan

COMMISSIONER
Stanley Rodriguez
Kumeyaay

COMMISSIONER
Vacant

COMMISSIONER
Vacant

COMMISSIONER
Vacant

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
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Miwok, Nisenan

NAHC HEADQUARTERS
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nahc@nahc.ca.gov
NAHC.ca.gov

Re: Native American Tribal Consultation, Pursuant to the Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), Amendments to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014), Public Resources Code Sections 5097.94 (m), 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2 and 21084.3, Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, Alameda County

To Whom It May Concern:

Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1 (c), attached is a consultation list of tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the above-listed project. Please note that the intent of the AB 52 amendments to CEQA is to avoid and/or mitigate impacts to tribal cultural resources, (Pub. Resources Code §21084.3 (a)) ("Public agencies shall, when feasible, avoid damaging effects to any tribal cultural resource.")

Public Resources Code sections 21080.3.1 and 21084.3(c) require CEQA lead agencies to consult with California Native American tribes that have requested notice from such agencies of proposed projects in the geographic area that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the tribes on projects for which a Notice of Preparation or Notice of Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration has been filed on or after July 1, 2015. Specifically, Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1 (d) provides:

Within 14 days of determining that an application for a project is complete or a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, the lead agency shall provide formal notification to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, which shall be accomplished by means of at least one written notification that includes a brief description of the proposed project and its location, the lead agency contact information, and a notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation pursuant to this section.

The AB 52 amendments to CEQA law does not preclude initiating consultation with the tribes that are culturally and traditionally affiliated within your jurisdiction prior to receiving requests for notification of projects in the tribe's areas of traditional and cultural affiliation. The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) recommends, but does not require, early consultation as a best practice to ensure that lead agencies receive sufficient information about cultural resources in a project area to avoid damaging effects to tribal cultural resources.

The NAHC also recommends, but does not require that agencies should also include with their notification letters, information regarding any cultural resources assessment that has been completed on the area of potential effect (APE), such as:

1. The results of any record search that may have been conducted at an Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), including, but not limited to:

- A listing of any and all known cultural resources that have already been recorded on or adjacent to the APE, such as known archaeological sites;
- Copies of any and all cultural resource records and study reports that may have been provided by the Information Center as part of the records search response;
- Whether the records search indicates a low, moderate, or high probability that unrecorded cultural resources are located in the APE; and
- If a survey is recommended by the Information Center to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.

2. The results of any archaeological inventory survey that was conducted, including:

- Any report that may contain site forms, site significance, and suggested mitigation measures.

All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum, and not be made available for public disclosure in accordance with Government Code section 6254.10.

3. The result of any Sacred Lands File (SLF) check conducted through the Native American Heritage Commission was positive. Please contact the tribes on the attached list for more information.

4. Any ethnographic studies conducted for any area including all or part of the APE; and

5. Any geotechnical reports regarding all or part of the APE.

Lead agencies should be aware that records maintained by the NAHC and CHRIS are not exhaustive and a negative response to these searches does not preclude the existence of a tribal cultural resource. A tribe may be the only source of information regarding the existence of a tribal cultural resource.

This information will aid tribes in determining whether to request formal consultation. In the event that they do, having the information beforehand will help to facilitate the consultation process.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from tribes, please notify the NAHC. With your assistance, we can assure that our consultation list remains current.

If you have any questions, please contact me at my email address: Cody.Campagne@nahc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Cody Campagne

Cody Campagne
Cultural Resources Analyst

Attachment

Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
Contra Costa County
8/24/2023

County	Tribe Name	Fed (F) Non-Fed (N)	Contact Person	Contact Address	Phone #	Fax #	Email Address	Cultural Affiliation	Counties	Last Updated
Contra Costa	Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista	N	Irene Zwierlein, Chairperson	3030 Soda Bay Road Lakeport, CA, 95453	(650) 851-7489	(650) 332-1526	amahmutsuntribal@gmail.com	Costanoan	Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz	
	Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation	N	Corrina Gould, Chairperson	10926 Edes Avenue Oakland, CA, 94603	(510) 575-8408		cvtribe@gmail.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Delta Yokut	Alameda, Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Solano, Stanislaus	3/22/2023
	Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation	N	Deja Gould, Language Program Manager	10926 Edes Ave Oakland, CA, 94603	(510) 575-8408		cvtribe@gmail.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Delta Yokut	Alameda, Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Solano, Stanislaus	3/22/2023
	Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation	N	Cheyenne Gould, Tribal Cultural Resource Manager	10926 Edes Ave Oakland, CA, 94603	(510) 575-8408		cvtribe@gmail.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Delta Yokut	Alameda, Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Solano, Stanislaus	3/22/2023
	Guidiville Rancheria of California	F	Bunny Tarin, Tribal Administrator	PO Box 339 Talmage, CA, 95481	(707) 462-3682		admin@guidiville.net	Pomo	Alameda, Contra Costa, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Sonoma	6/21/2023
	Guidiville Rancheria of California	F	Michael Derry, Historian	PO Box 339 Talmage, CA, 95481	(707) 391-1665		historian@guidiville.net	Pomo	Alameda, Contra Costa, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Sonoma	6/21/2023
	Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan	N	Ann Marie Sayers, Chairperson	P.O. Box 28 Hollister, CA, 95024	(831) 637-4238		ams@indiancanyon.org	Costanoan	Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz	
	Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan	N	Kanyon Sayers-Roods, MLD Contact	1615 Pearson Court San Jose, CA, 95122	(408) 673-0626		kanyon@kanyonconsulting.com	Costanoan	Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz	4/17/2018
	Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area	N	Charlene Nijmeh, Chairperson	20885 Redwood Road, Suite 232 Castro Valley, CA, 94546	(408) 464-2892		cnijmeh@muwekma.org	Costanoan	Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Merced, Napa, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus	
	Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area	N	Monica Arellano, Vice Chairwoman	20885 Redwood Road, Suite 232 Castro Valley, CA, 94546	(408) 205-9714		monicavarellano@gmail.com	Costanoan	Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Merced, Napa, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus	7/12/2019
	The Ohlone Indian Tribe	N	Vincent Medina, Tribal Consultant	17365 Via Del Rey San Lorenzo, CA, 94580	(510) 610-7587		vincent.d.medina@gmail.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Patwin Plains Miwok	Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara	7/24/2023
	The Ohlone Indian Tribe	N	Andrew Galvan, Chairperson	P.O. Box 3388 Fremont, CA, 94539	Phone: (510) 882-0527	(510) 687-9393	chochenyo@AOL.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Patwin Plains Miwok	Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara	7/24/2023
	The Ohlone Indian Tribe	N	Desiree Vigil, THPO	1775 Marco Polo Way, Apt. 21 Burlingame, CA, 94010	(650) 290-0245		dirwin0368@yahoo.com	Bay Miwok Ohlone Patwin Plains Miwok	Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara	7/24/2023

This list is current only as of the date of this document. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

Record: PROJ-2023-004249
Report Type: AB52 GIS
Counties: Contra Costa
NAHC Group: All

This list is only applicable for consultation with Native American tribes under Public Resources Code Sections 21080.3.1 for the proposed Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, Contra Costa County.



August 30th, 2023

The Ohlone Indian Tribe
Andrew Galvan
P.O. Box 3388
Fremont, CA 94539

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Mr. Galvan:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

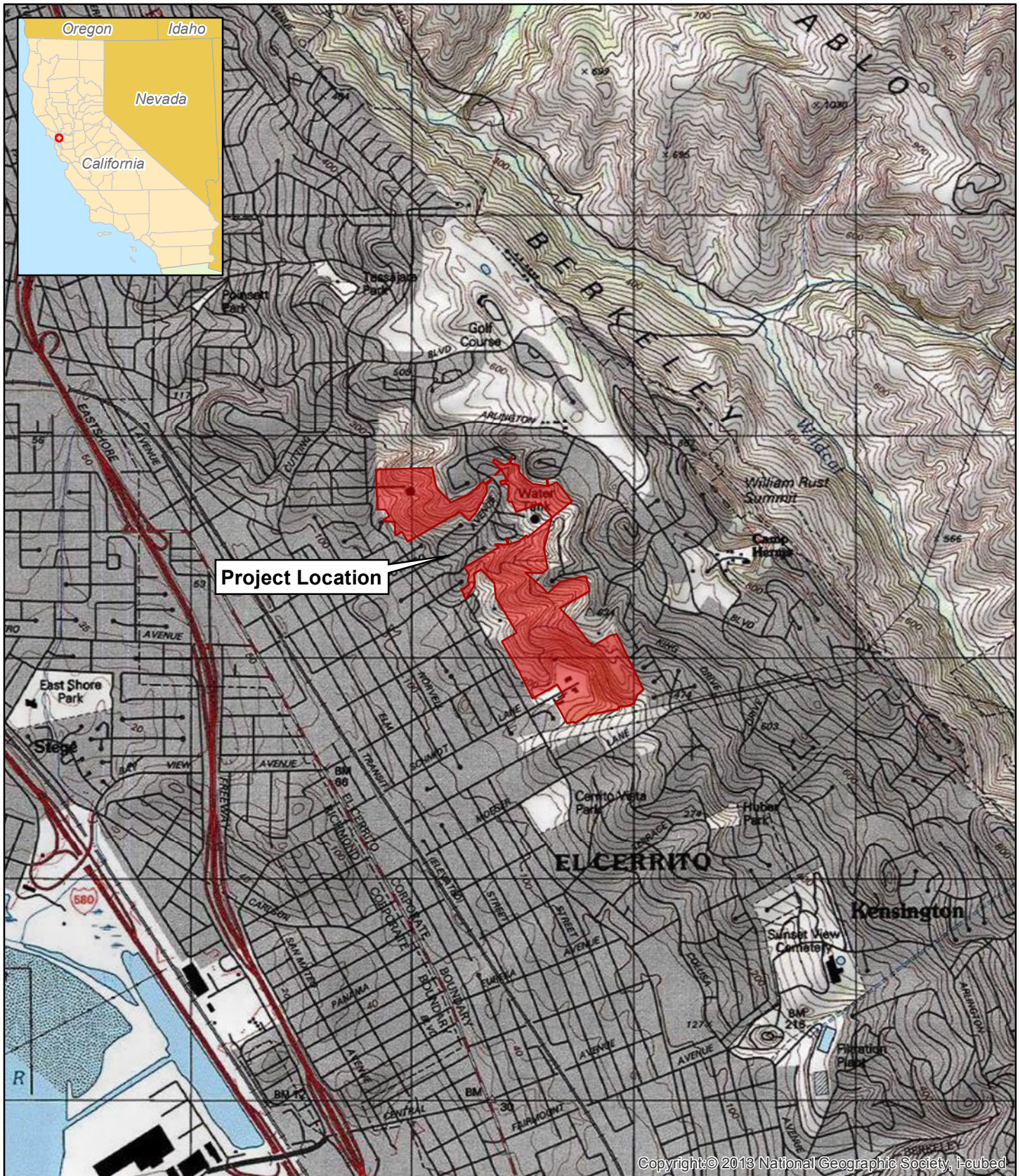
The cultural investigation will include an intensive field survey and we would like to know if you have any knowledge of cultural resources in the vicinity. For your information, the Native American Heritage Commission conducted a search of the Sacred Lands File and identified a previously documented culturally sensitive site or property within or near the project area. If you have any concerns with the proposed Project or know of any potentially significant properties in the area, I would appreciate hearing from you.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by email at brian@solanoarchaeology, or via phone at 530-417-7007.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Brian Ludwig".

Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



Copyright: © 2013 National Geographic Society, Inc.

Project Location Map.

1:24,000

■ Hillside Conservation Management Plan Project Area

0.5

San Pablo Land Grant (Presumed T01N, R04W, Secs 15, 16, 21 and 22).
Richmond 7.5' Series Quadrangle, USGS, 1980.

Miles

1

Kilometers





August 30th, 2023

Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan
Ann Marie Sayers, Chair
P.O. Box 28
Hollister, CA 95024

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Sayers:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Regards,

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Guidiville Rancheria
Bunny Tarin, Tribal Administrator
P.O. Box 339
Talmage, CA 95481

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Tarin:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Regards,

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area
Charlene Nijmeh, Chair
20885 Redwood Rd.
Suite 232
Castro Valley, CA 94546

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Nijmeh:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Regards,

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation
Cheyenne Gould
10926 Edes Ave.
Oakland, CA 94603

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Gould:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Regards,

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation
Corrina Gould, Chair
10926 Edes Ave.
Oakland, CA 94603

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Gould:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation
Deja Gould
10926 Edes Ave.
Oakland, CA 94603

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Gould:

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Regards,

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

The Ohlone Indian Tribe
Desiree Vigil
1775 Marco Polo Way, Apt. 21
Burlingame, CA 94010

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Vigil:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Regards,

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista
Irene Zwierlein, Chair
3030 Soda Bay Rd.
Lakeport, CA 95453

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Zwierlein:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan
Kanyon Sayers-Roods
P.O. Box 28
Hollister, CA 95024

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Sayers-Roods:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Regards,

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Guidiville Rancheria
Michael Derry, Historian
P.O. Box 339
Talmage, CA 95481

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Mr. Derry:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area
Monica Arellano
20885 Redwood Rd.
Suite 232
Castro Valley, CA 94546

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Arellano:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Regards,

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator



August 30th, 2023

The Ohlone Indian Tribe
Vincent Medina
17365 Via Del Rey
San Lorenzo, CA 94580

Re: Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Project, City of El Cerrito, Alameda County, California

Dear Mr. Medina:

LSA Associates has retained Solano Archaeological Services (SAS) to conduct a cultural resources inventory of an approximately 107-acre project area located near Potrero Avenue in the City of El Cerrito (the City) in Alameda County, California. The City was awarded a State Coastal Conservancy grant with which to conduct forest revitalization activities, and as such the Project is subject to California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The project area is situated in the San Pablo Land Grant in projected Township 1 North, Range 4 East, as depicted on the attached *Richmond, California* USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

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Brian Ludwig, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator

ATTACHMENT C

Representative Project Area Photographs



Photo 0718. Project area overview, view to north



Photo 0913. Project area overview, view to west



Photo 2404. Representative photo, steep slope



Photo 0927. Enhanced drainage in project area, view to NE



Photo 5720. HNA nature trail, view to south



Photo 3822. 1332 Navellier St., view to northeast

APPENDIX D

FIRE ROAD AND TRAIL CONDITIONS REPORT

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DRAFT

FIRE ROAD AND TRAIL CONDITIONS

**HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND
FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN**

EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA



LSA

December 2024

DRAFT

FIRE ROAD AND TRAIL CONDITIONS

HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA

City of El Cerrito
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, California 94530

Prepared by:

LSA
157 Park Place
Pt. Richmond, California 94801
(510) 236-6810
Project No. 20231296

Funding provided by:



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FIGURE

Figure 1: Trail Map..... D-5

INTRODUCTION

LSA has prepared this report to describe the current fire road and trail conditions at the Hillside Natural Area in El Cerrito, California. The Hillside Natural Area includes approximately 3.46 miles of combined fire roads and trails, which are divided into three management units: the North Hillside Natural Area (or Motorcycle Hill), the Madera property, and the South Hillside Natural Area (see Figure 1).

Methods

LSA surveyed trails within the Hillside Natural Area to determine their condition for accessibility and mapped spots of erosion, steep trail segments, and other conditions, such as narrow trail segments and fenced off sections of the Hillside Natural Area. Prior to the survey, LSA reviewed trail maps on the AllTrails App¹ and measured each in approximate length and elevation gain.

RESULTS

Based on mapped trail features and information provided by the El Cerrito Trail Trekkers, the AllTrails App, and Friends of 5 Creeks, a brief description including the length and location of each trail is included below. Trail names were collected from El Cerrito Trail Trekkers and the AllTrails App. Figure 1 exhibits all fire roads and trails.

Existing and Potential Fire Roads

North Hillside Natural Area

Motorcycle Hill Trail. The length of the trail is 0.57 mile, one way. The trail starts at Blake Street and ends at Potrero Avenue and includes steep switchbacks.

Lower Snowdon Trail. The length of the trail is 0.14 mile, one way, and approximately 2 feet wide. The trail starts at Snowdon Avenue and connects to the Motorcycle Hill Trail. It is possible to expand the trail for full fire apparatus access.

Madera Property

No current fire road.

South Hillside Natural Area

Ridge Fire Road. The length of the road is 0.75 mile, one way. The road starts at King Court and ends at Regency Court.

Navellier Fire Road. The length of the road is 0.35 mile, one way. The road connects Navellier Street to Regency Court and overlaps with Ridge Fire Road. The trailhead is a paved road between 1432 and 1440 Navellier Street, turning into a fire road. It crosses Ridge Fire Road and Live Oak Trail and ends near the mouth of Regency Court.

¹ AllTrails. 2019. AllTrails: Hike, bike, and run (10.4.2). Mobile app.

Ken Smith Trail. The length of the trail is 0.19 mile, one way. The trail is approximately 10–15 feet wide at the start, near Ridge Fire Road, but dissipates into a dead end towards the south. It could be expanded to provide fire apparatus access, but it needs terminal turnaround.

Forest Brown Fire Road. The length of the road is 0.34 mile, one way. The entrance is on Schmidt Lane and climbs to Ridge Fire Road.

Trails

North Hillside Natural Area

Motorcycle Hill Trail. The length of the trail is 0.57 mile, one way. The trail starts at Blake Street and ends at Potrero Avenue. It includes steep switchbacks.

Peralta Trail. The length of the trail is 0.10 mile, one way, and is relatively unmaintained. The trail starts at the former East Bay Municipal Utility District tank site at the end of a 15-foot-wide paved fire road and connects to the Motorcycle Hill Trail.

Madera Property

Madera-Julian Trail. The length of the trail is 0.21 mile, one way. The trail starts at the concrete steps at 1625 Julian Drive and ends at Ridge Fire Road below Madera Circle. It is also accessible by a 0.1-mile trail starting at 1556 Madera Circle.

South Hillside Natural Area

Wildwood Creek Trail. The length of the trail is 0.05 mile, one way. The trail branches off from Navellier Fire Road alongside the partially channelized Wildwood Creek trailhead from Navellier Fire Road right after the first big turn going uphill.

Ken Smith Trail. The length of the trail is 0.19 mile, one way. The trail is approximately 10–15 feet wide at the start near Ridge Fire Road but dissipates into a dead end towards the south. It could be converted into a fire road. The trail follows the creek uphill, then connects to the Douglas Entry of the Live Oak Trail.

The Lower Trail. The length of the trail is 0.16 mile. This trail connects Forest Brown Fire Road to Live Oak Trail and to Little Hill Trail. The northern section past Little Hill Trail splits the trail into one well-maintained segment and another segment, not maintained as a public trail, which ends at a fenced-off area.

The Little Hill Trail. The length of the trail is 0.05 mile, one way. The trail connects The Lower Trail to Live Oak Trail.

Church Trail. The length of the trail is 0.14 mile, one way. The trail connects Navellier Fire Road to Live Oak Trail. Segments of this trail are as narrow as 1–2 feet wide, with an eroded segment near Live Oak Trail.

Live Oak Trail. The length of the trail is 0.41 mile, one way. The trail connects Douglas Drive to Forest Brown Fire Road. The trailhead is at 1524 Douglas Drive. The trail crosses Navellier Fire Road and runs south, roughly parallel to Ridge Fire Road, to Forest Brown Fire Road. A portion of the trail includes the sign-posted Rotary Interpretive Trail. The trail is incorporated within the Memorial Grove Trail. Erosion of the trail occurs towards Douglas Circle.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the variable conditions of each trail, recommended uses are described below.

Trail Conditions and Use

North Hillside Natural Area

- The top of Motorcycle Hill, also accessible from Potrero Avenue using a relatively flat trail, provides scenic views of the East Bay cities and coast. This space may be appropriate to establish a landing and staging area for vegetation treatments and later as a picnic area. The trail from Potrero Avenue to this space could be maintained for use as a fire road. Ice plant may also be removed from this upper area. A large eucalyptus grove is located south of Motorcycle Hill Trail.
- Motorcycle Hill Trail is very steep and likely challenging for the average hiker. Eucalyptus trees to be removed can also be found along this trail. The upper portion of Motorcycle Hill trail up to the overlook should be developed as a fire road.
- The Lower Snowdon (aka Castro) Trail connects from Snowdon Avenue Fire Road to the Motorcycle Hill Trail switchbacks. If widened and developed, a fire apparatus access road could be developed here. The turnaround at the end of Snowdon Avenue (an old East Bay Municipal Utility District Reservoir site) may provide accessible parking to hikers who want to access Motorcycle Hill, though this area may need to be gated off at night to prevent extended overnight use.
- The Peralta Trail is not well maintained but could provide a desirable shortcut from Snowdon Avenue Fire Road to the lower section of Motorcycle Hill Trail. Once eucalyptus in this area have been removed, the trail should be maintained for foot traffic.

Madera Property

- Madera-Julian Trail has a history of being invaded by French broom and other invasive species. Intermittent treatment of non-native species is necessary.

South Hillside Natural Area

- Wildwood Creek Trail has an improvised stream crossing (planks) that should be evaluated for safety and durability.
- The segment of Lower Trail that connects to Live Oak Trail is steep and might be challenging for average hikers. The north segment of this trail ending in a dead end may best be abandoned/fenced off as a conservation area because the trail segment is not well maintained.

- Eroded segments occur on Live Oak Trail, and maintenance is recommended.
- Forest Brown Fire Road, Navellier Fire Road, and Ridge Fire Road require maintenance to ensure continued vehicular use.
- The segment of Ridge Fire Road below King Court is another flat area where a landing site and log processing area may be located, which later could be converted into a picnic area.
- Ken Smith Trail at the top of Quarry Hill should be developed as a fire road with a turnaround at the southern terminus.

Sensitive Areas to be Avoided

Drainages, Streams, and Wetlands

Drainages and creeks are regulated under Regional Water Quality Control Board jurisdiction and riparian areas are regulated under California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) jurisdiction. Waters and riparian areas within the South Hillside Natural Area include the following features:

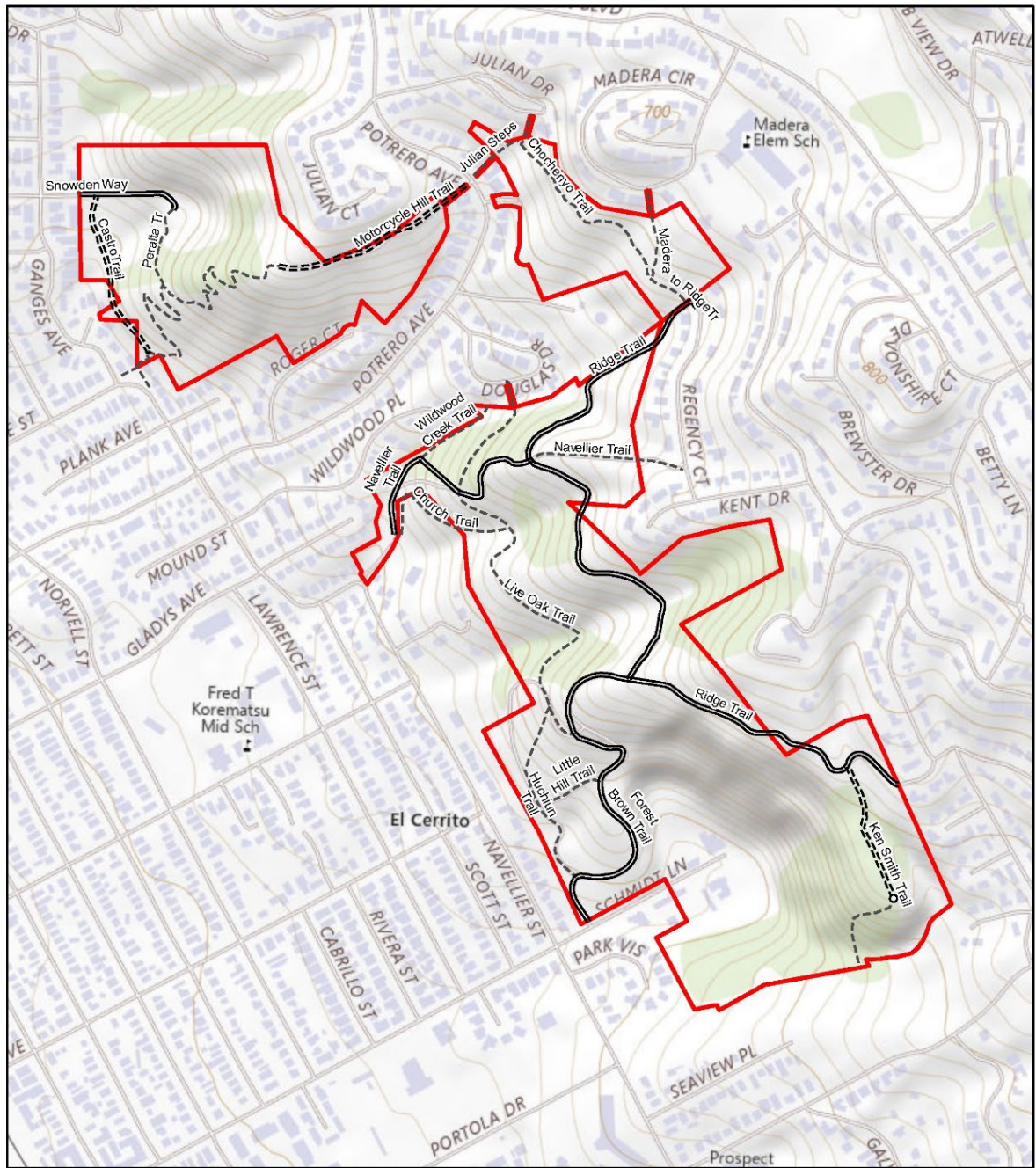
- The Motorcycle Hill Trail has purple needle grass along the trail and will need to be maintained to protect this sensitive species.
- San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat houses were observed to the north of the end of Snowden Avenue and will need to be protected because the species is a California Species of Special Concern.

Madera Property

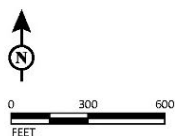
- Purple needle grass along the Madera-Julian Trail will need to be avoided.
- Woodrat houses were observed just north of Regency Court.

South Hillside Natural Area

- Wildwood Creek flows through a 3-foot to 6-foot concrete V-ditch starting near Ridge Fire Road, intersecting Live Oak Trail near Douglas Drive, and flowing southeastward along Wildwood Creek Trail and Navellier Fire Road. The riparian corridor should be avoided.
- An unnamed drainage starts south of Kent Circle and intersects Ridge Fire Road and Live Oak Trail. The riparian corridor should be avoided.
- An unnamed drainage starts between King Drive and Buckingham Drive, intersects with Ridge Fire Road, and flows downhill to the El Cerrito Recycling Center on Schmidt Lane. The riparian corridor should be avoided.
- Purple needle grass along Ridge Fire Road, Live Oak Trail, and Lower Trail should be avoided.



LSA



LEGEND

- Project Site
- Vehicle Accessible Trail
- Foot+Bike or Foot-only Trail
- Recommended to be Modified for Improved Vehicular Access

FIGURE 1

*Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience
and Forest Conservation Management Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California*

Trail Map

SOURCE: LSA (2024); Contra Costa County (05/2024); USGS The National Map (04/2023).

I:\2023\20231296\GIS\MXD\Bio Report\Figure 10_Hillside Natural Area Trails and Fire Roads.mxd (7/6/2024)

APPENDIX E

PLANT LIST

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El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Plants

Scientific name	Common name	Growth form	Native/Not
<i>Acaena pinnatifida</i> var. <i>Californica</i>	California sheep-burr	perennial	native
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	yarrow	perennial	native
<i>Acmispon americanus</i>	Spanish lotus	annual	native
<i>Acmispon glaber</i>	deerweed	shrub	native
<i>Acmispon wrangelianus</i>	birdsfoot treefoil or short-podded lotus	annual	native
<i>Adiantum jordanii</i>	California maidenhair fern	fern	native
<i>Aesculus californica</i>	California buckeye	tree	native
<i>Agoseris hirsuta</i>	Coast Range agoseris	perennial	native
<i>Agrostis pallens</i>	thingrass	grass	native
<i>Allium</i> spp.	wild onion	perennial	native
<i>Amsinckia intermedia</i>	common fiddleneck	annual	native
<i>Arctostaphylos</i> sp.	manzanita	shrub	native
<i>Artemisia californica</i>	California sage	shrub	native
<i>Artemisia douglasiana</i>	mugwort	perennial	native
<i>Aster chilensis</i>	California aster	perennial	native
<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	lady fern	fern	native
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>	coyote bush, coyote brush	shrub	native
<i>Bromus carinatus</i>	California brome	grass	native
<i>Calandrinia ciliata</i>	red maids	perennial	native
<i>Calochortus umbellatus</i>	Oakland star tulip	perennial	native
<i>Calystegia purpurata</i>	Pacific false bindweed	vine	native
<i>Calystegia subacaulis</i>	stemless morning glory	perennial	native
<i>Camissonia</i> sp.	sun cup	perennial	native
<i>Cardamine oligosperma</i>	milkmaids	perennial	native
<i>Carex</i> sp.	sedge	perennial	native
<i>Ceanothus gloriosus</i> v. <i>exaltatus</i>	Pt. Reyes ceanothus	shrub	native
<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i>	California lilac	shrub	native
<i>Chlorogalum pomeridianum</i>	soaproot	perennial	native
<i>Claytonia perfoliata</i>	miners lettuce	annual	native
<i>Clinopodium douglasii</i>	yerba buena	perennial	native
<i>Conyza canadensis</i>	Canadian horseweed	annual	native
<i>Corallorhiza maculata maculata</i>	summer coral root	perennial	native
<i>Corylus cornuta</i>	wild hazelnut	shrub	native
<i>Crassula connata</i>	sand pygmy weed	perennial	native
<i>Cryptantha spiculifera</i>	white forget me not	annual	native
<i>Cyperus eragrostis</i>	tall flatsedge	perennial	native
<i>Danthonia californica</i>	California oatgrass	grass	native

El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Plants

Scientific name	Common name	Growth form	Native/Not
<i>Dichelostemma capitatum</i>	blue dicks	perennial	native
<i>Diplacus aurantiacus</i>	orange bush monkey flower	shrub	native
<i>Dryocallis glandulosa</i>	sticky cinquefoil	perennial	native
<i>Dryopteris arguta</i>	wood fern	fern	native
<i>Elymus multisetus</i>	big squirrel tail	grass	native
<i>Elymus triticoides</i>	creeping wild rye	grass	native
<i>Epilobium brachycarpum</i>	fireweed, willow herb	annual	native
<i>Epilobium canum</i>	Zauschneria, California fuchsia	subshrub	native
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	horsetail	fern	native
<i>Equisetum telmateia ssp braunii</i>	giant horsetail	fern	native
<i>Eriogonum canadensis</i>	Canadian horseweed	annual	native
<i>Eriogonum nudum</i>	naked-stem buckwheat	perennial	native
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>	California poppy	annual	native
<i>Eurybia radulina</i>	roughleaf aster	perennial	native
<i>Frageria vesca</i>	wood strawberry	perennial	native
<i>Frangula californica</i>	California coffeeberry	shrub	native
<i>Fremontodendron californicum</i>	Fremontia	shrub	native
<i>Galium aparine</i>	common bedstraw	annual	native
<i>Galium porringens v. porringens</i>	bedstraw	annual	native
<i>Gamochaeta ustulata</i>	purple cudweed	perennial	native
<i>Gnaphalium sp.</i>	pearly everlasting	perennial	native
<i>Grindelia hirsutula</i>	San Francisco gumplant	perennial	native
<i>Hemizonia congesta luzulifolia</i>	hayfield tarweed	annual	native
<i>Heracleum maximum</i>	cow parsnip	perennial	native
<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	toyon	shrub	native
<i>Holodiscus discolor</i>	ocean spray	shrub	native
<i>Iris douglasiana</i>	wild iris	perennial	native
<i>Juncus xiphioides</i>	iris-leaved rush	rush	native
<i>Koeleria micrantha</i>	junegrass	grass	native
<i>Lathyrus vestitus</i>	peavine	perennial	native
<i>Layia platyglossa</i>	coastal tidytops	perennial	native
<i>Lonicera hispidula</i>	honeysuckle	vine, shrub	native
<i>Lupinus albifrons</i>	silver lupine	shrub	native
<i>Lupinus arboreus</i>	yellow bush lupine	shrub	native
<i>Lupinus succulentus</i>	hollowleaf lupine	annual	native
<i>Madia sativa</i>	coast tarweed	annual	native
<i>Maianthemum stellatum</i>	star-flowered Solomon's seal	perennial	native

El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Plants

Scientific name	Common name	Growth form	Native/Not
<i>Marah fabaceus</i>	manroot	perennial	native
<i>Mimulus aurantiacus</i>	sticky monkeyflower, golden monkeyflower	shrub	native
<i>Navarretia squarrosa</i>	skunkweed, skunkweed	annual	native
<i>Pellaea andromedifolia</i>	coffee fern	fern	native
<i>Pellaea mucronata</i>	birdsfoot fern	fern	native
<i>Perideridia kelloggii</i>	yampah	perennial	native
<i>Phacelia californica</i>	phacelia	perennial	native
<i>Physocarpus capitatus</i>	ninebark	shrub	native
<i>Pinus coulteri</i>	Coulter pine	tree	native
<i>Pinus radiata</i> var. <i>idem</i>	Monterey pine	tree	native
<i>Pityrogramma triangularis</i>	gold-back fern	fern	native
<i>Plagiobothrys</i> sp.	popcorn flower	perennial	native
<i>Plantago erecta</i>	foothill plantain	perennial	native
<i>Platanus racemosa</i>	sycamore	tree	native
<i>Platystemon californicus</i>	California creamcups	perennial	native
<i>Polypodium caliriza</i>	California polypody	fern	native
<i>Polystichum munitum</i>	western sword fem	fern	native
<i>Pseudognaphalium beneolens</i>	pearly everlasting	perennial	native
<i>Pseudognaphalium californicum</i>	ladies tobacco	perennial	native
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> v. <i>pubescens</i>	bracken fern	fern	native
<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	coast live oak	tree	native
<i>Ranunculus californicus</i>	California buttercup	perennial	native
<i>Ribes californicum</i>	hillside or California gooseberry	shrub	native
<i>Ribes menziesii</i>	canyon gooseberry	shrub	native
<i>Rosa californica</i>	California rose	shrub	native
<i>Rosa spithamea</i>	ground rose	shrub	native
<i>Rubus ursinus</i>	native blackberry	sub-shrub	native
<i>Salix lasiolepis</i>	arroyo willow	tree	native
<i>Salix lucida</i> v. <i>lasiandra</i>	willow	tree	native
<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	blue elderberry	tree	native
<i>Sanicula bipinnatifida</i>	purple sanicle	perennial	native
<i>Sanicula crassicaulis</i>	snakeroot, Pacific sanicle	perennial	native
<i>Satureja (clinopodium) douglasii</i>	yerba buena	perennial	native
<i>Scrophularia californica</i>	bee plant	perennial	native
<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>	coast redwood	tree	native
<i>Sidalcea malvaflora</i>	dwarf checkerbloom	perennial	native
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>	blue-eyed grass	perennial	native

El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Plants

Scientific name	Common name	Growth form	Native/Not
<i>Solanum americanum</i>	American nightshade	shrub	native
<i>Solanum umbelliferum</i>	blue witch	shrub	native
<i>Solanum umbelliferum</i>	blue witch	shrub	native
<i>Solidago velutina</i>	California goldenrod	perennial	native
<i>Stachys bullata</i>	California hedge nettle	perennial	native
<i>Stachys rigida</i>	hedge-nettle, wood mint	perennial	native
<i>Stipa lepida</i>	foothill needlegrass	grass	native
<i>Stipa pulchra</i>	purple needlegrass	grass	native
<i>Streptanthus glandulosus</i>	jewelflower	annual	native
<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	snowberry	shrub	native
<i>Symphoricarpos mollis</i>	creeping snowberry	shrub	native
<i>Symphotrichum chilensis</i>	Pacific aster, Chilean aster	perennial	native
<i>Taraxia ovata</i>	sun cup	perennial	native
<i>Toxicodendron diversilobum</i>	poison oak	vine, shrub	native
<i>Toxicoscordion fremontii</i>	death camas	perennial	native
<i>Triphysaria pusilla</i>	butter and eggs	perennial	native
<i>Triteleia laxa</i>	Ithurial's spear	perennial	native
<i>Umbellularia californica</i>	California bay	tree	native
<i>Vicia americana</i> v. <i>americana</i>	vetch	perennial	native
<i>Vicia gigantea</i>	giant vetch	perennial	native
<i>Viola pedunculata</i>	Johnny Jump-Up	perennial	native
<i>Woodwardia fimbriata</i>	chain fern	fern	native
<i>Woodwardia fimbriata</i>	western chain fern	fern	native
<i>Wyethia angustifolia</i>	narrow-leaved sunflower	perennial	native
<i>Avena fatua</i>	wild oats	grass	nonnative
<i>Acacia baileyana</i>	Bailey acacia	tree	non-native
<i>Acacia dealbata</i>	acacia	tree	non-native
<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	blackwood acacia	tree	non-native
<i>Acacia verticillata</i>	prickly moses	shrub	non-native
<i>Bellardia trixago</i>	Mediterranean linseed	perennial	non-native
<i>Briza minor</i>	rattlesnake grass	grass	non-native
<i>Bromus diandrus</i>	ripgut brome	annual grass	non-native
<i>Bromus mollis</i>	soft chess	annual grass	non-native
<i>Buddleia davidii</i>	butterflybush	shrub	non-native
<i>Calendula arvensis</i>	calendula	annual	non-native
<i>Carduus pycnocephalus</i>	Italian thistle	annual	non-native
<i>Conium maculatum</i>	poison hemlock	perennial	non-native

El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Plants

Scientific name	Common name	Growth form	Native/Not
<i>Cortaderia jubata</i>	jubata grass, pampas grass	grass	non-native
<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>	pampas grass	perennial	non-native
<i>Cotoneaster franchetii</i>	cotoneaster	shrub	non-native
<i>Cotoneaster pannosus</i>	cotoneaster	shrub	non-native
<i>Crocasmia</i>	Montbretia	perennial	non-native
<i>Cynara cardunculus</i>	cardoon	perennial	non-native
<i>Delaira odorata</i>	cape ivy	vine	non-native
<i>Dipsacus</i> sp.	fullers teasel	perennial	non-native
<i>Ehrharta erecta</i>	panic veldtgrass	grass	non-native
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	storksbill, red storksbill	annual	non-native
<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	blue gum	tree	non-native
<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i>	red ironbark	tree	non-native
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i>	yellow gum	tree	non-native
<i>Euphorbia characias</i>	Albanian spurge	perennial	non-native
<i>Festuca arundinacea</i>	reed fescue, tall fescue	grass	non-native
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	red fescue	grass	non-native
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	fennel	perennial	non-native
<i>Genista monspessulana</i>	French broom	shrub	non-native
<i>Geranium molle</i>	crane's bill geranium	annual	non-native
<i>Hedera canariensis</i>	English ivy	perennial	non-native
<i>Helminthotheca echioide</i>	bristly ox-tongue	annual	non-native
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	wild mustard	perennial	non-native
<i>Hordeum leporinum</i>	foxtail barley	annual grass	non-native
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	hairy cat's ear	perennial	non-native
<i>Lactuca saligna</i>	willow leaf lettuce	annual	non-native
<i>Lactuca virosa</i>	prickly lettuce	perennial	non-native
<i>Lolium multiflorum</i>	Italian rye	grass	non-native
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	birdsfoot trefoil, deervetch	perennial	non-native
<i>Lythrum hyssopifolium</i>	hyssop loosestrife	annual	non-native
<i>Malva</i> sp.	cheeseweed	perennial	non-native
<i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i>	sourgrass	perennial	non-native
<i>Pennisetum clandestine</i>	kikuyu grass	grass	non-native
<i>Picris echiodes</i>	bristly ox-tongue	perennial	non-native
<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i>	cheesewood	tree	non-native
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	narrow-leaved plantain, Englishman's foot	perennial	non-native
<i>Polypogon monspeliensis</i>	rabbits-foot grass	grass	non-native
<i>Pyracantha coccinea</i>	pyracantha	shrub	non-native

El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area Plants

Scientific name	Common name	Growth form	Native/Not
<i>Ricinus communis</i>	castor bean	shrub	non-native
<i>Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum</i>	nasturtium	perennial	non-native
<i>Rubus armeniacus</i>	Himalayan blackberry	shrub	non-native
<i>Rumex pulcher</i>	fiddle dock	perennial	non-native
<i>Senecio mikanioides</i>	German ivy	perennial	non-native
<i>Stellaria media</i>	common chickweed	annual	non-native
<i>Torilis arvensis</i>	field hedge parsley	perennial	non-native
<i>Trifolium</i> spp.	clover	perennial	non-native
<i>Ulmus astrachilens</i>	elm	tree	non-native
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	stinging nettle	perennial	non-native
<i>Urtica urens</i>	dwarf nettle	annual	non-native
<i>Vicia villosa</i>	hairy vetch	annual	non-native
<i>Vinca major</i>	periwinkle	annual	non-native

Sources:

LSA Associates, Inc. (1987, 2023)

Friends of Five Creeks (2014), Native Plants of the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area, Website: https://www.fivecreeks.org/projects/hillside_natural_area/HNANativesforWebMay2014.pdf

APPENDIX F

VEGETATION TREATMENT STANDARDS

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STANDARDS FOR VEGETATION TREATMENTS FOR DEFENSIBLE SPACE

This set of maintenance standards will be used to certify compliance with defensible space regulations and to direct maintenance activities in the Hillside Natural Area zone within 100 feet of a dwelling structure:

1. Remove all dead plants and dry vegetation. The following actions will provide the same level of fire safety as removing all combustible material, per local and state fire codes.
 - a. Cut grass and weeds to no more than four inches in height.
 - b. Clear leaves, bark, and fallen branches under trees and shrubs (including vines and semi-woody species). At no time should a buildup of leaves exceed 1 inch in depth. However, do not expose bare earth in over 50 percent of the area. Humus is not necessary to be removed.
 - c. Remove dead material that drapes over ground cover (including leaves, bark, and branches).
 - d. Remove all dead branches from within live ground covers, vines, shrubs (including semi-woody species), and immature trees.
2. Cut and chip trees with a high fuel volume that are at risk of falling on buildings, structurally unsound, or are unhealthy. Large, “legacy trees” that are structurally sound, and with branches that are 8-10 feet above ground will be retained.
 - a. Prune trees and large tree-form shrubs (e.g., oaks, manzanitas) that are being retained to provide clearance of three times the height of the understory plant material, or 8 feet, whichever is higher.
 - b. Prune limbs that are smaller than 3 inches in diameter up to 8 feet above the ground; in young trees, prune these branches on the lower one-third of the height of the tree. (Thus, if a tree is 10 feet tall, prune the lower 3–4 feet and keep the understory plant material to less than 1 foot in height. Then as it grows to 24 feet in height, it can be pruned to achieve the 8-foot distance from the ground, and the understory plant material can reach 2.5 feet in height.)

OR

All lower tree branches, under three inches in diameter, will be removed to provide vertical clearance of three times the height of the understory plants, or eight feet above understory plants, whichever is greater. Retention of short understory shrubs provides aesthetic benefits and wildlife habitat without sacrificing fire safety; alternatively, trees may be pruned higher in order to allow for better spacing from the understory shrubs.

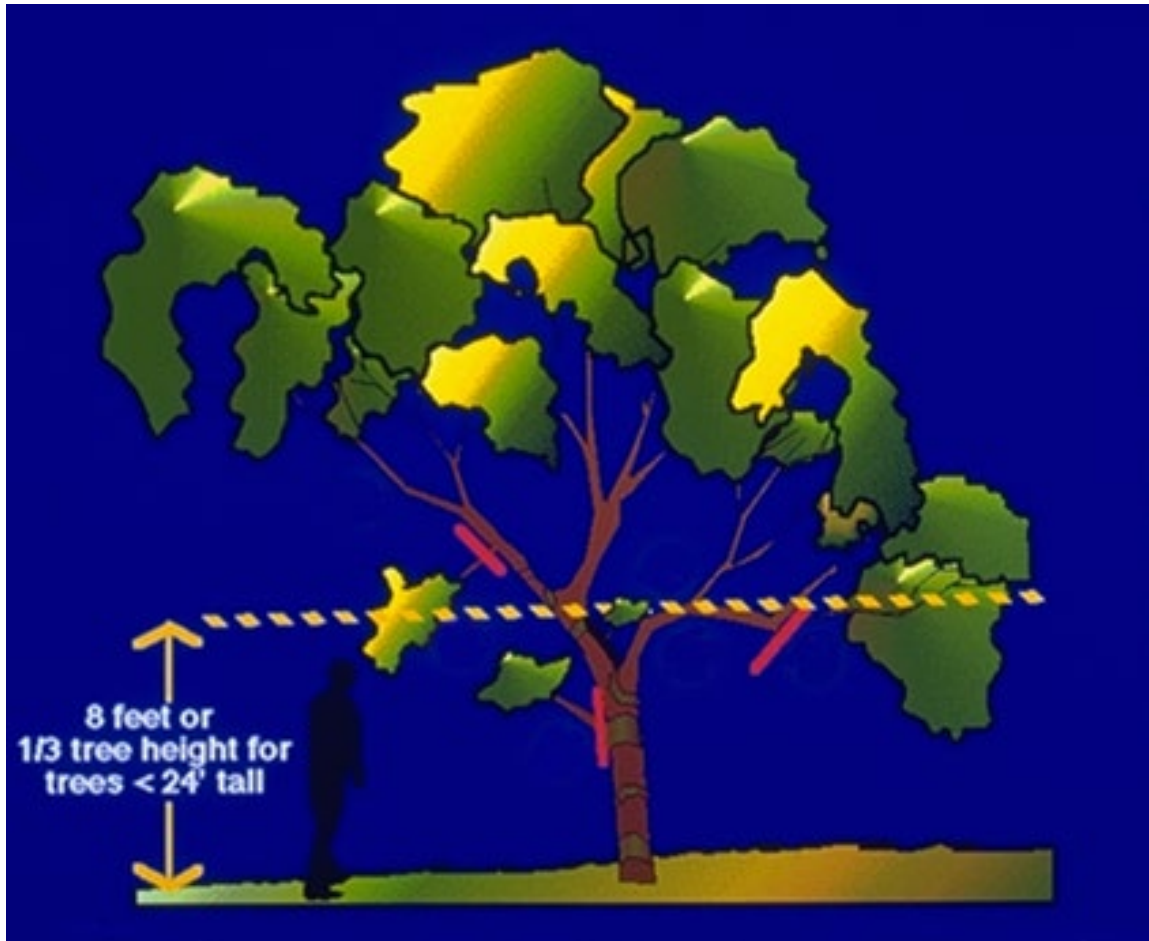


Figure F-1: Prune Branches to a Height of 8 Feet Above the Ground.

3. Manage individual plants or shrub masses to maintain adequate horizontal spacing. Design distinct groupings of shrubs (including landscaping or native vines, semi-woody species, and all types of brush) to dampen the spread of fire.
4. Make sure that the plant groupings are small enough to provide adequate horizontal separation between groupings and to allow proper maintenance; groupings should measure no wider than two times the grouping height, or 120 square feet.
5. The space between islands should be greater than three times the height of the shrubs, or 12 feet at a minimum. On emerging trees, clear a spacing of 12 feet from the edge of the canopy.

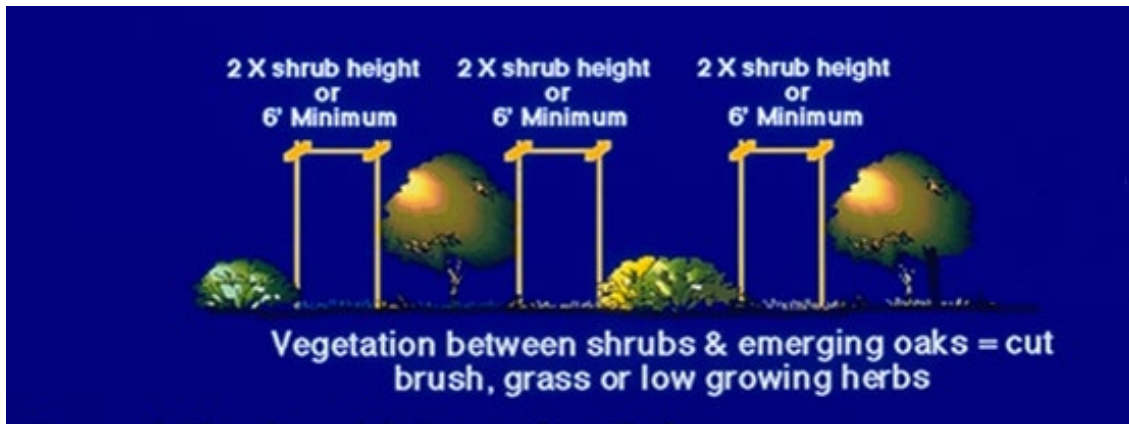


Figure F-2: Shrub Island Spacing.

6. Each shrub or group of plants should measure no wider than two times its height, or less than 120 sq. feet. (or 6 feet x 20 feet). The space between groups should be greater than three times the height of the shrubs, or at least a 12 feet. distance.
 - a. Remove and safely dispose of all cut vegetation and hazardous refuse.
 - b. Allow chipped materials to remain on the site, provided the mulch layer is no greater than 2 inches in depth.

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HNA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
1	Anonymous	Burn Boss, Burn Plans for Motorcycle Hill: Looking forward to seeing upcoming detailed maintenance plans and goat rental schedules that would occur for each region/habitat. For example, Motorcycle Hill trails were stated to have sensitive native purple needle grass, which can benefit from grazing (and possibly burns) but these could harm livestock stomachs if consumed in the wrong season. If Eucalyptus and Broom are to be removed (and require follow-up removals) at the top of Motorcycle Hill, will native grassland be enough to prevent erosion, or will shrubs such as Coyote Brush, Monkey Flower be encouraged and Toyon established – if not already beneath the Eucalyptus canopy? In addition, will pioneer invader/weedy native species like White Yarrow and California Poppy, and/or other soil nitrogen fixers be promoted?	Noted. The pre-activity surveys (mitigation measures under CEQA) will ensure that all sensitive vegetation communities will be identified, mapped and flagged prior to any vegetation treatment. The natural succession after removal of the non-native trees will include various stages/vegetation communities, depending on soil and microclimatic conditions. The Plan does not prescribe a target vegetation community for these sites, but it does provide for extensive weed and invasive species control.
2	Anonymous	Wildlife safety crossings and passages: Any plans for safe crossings and evacuation escape routes for wildlife during wildfire (and to diminish the likelihood of dangerous human-wild animal encounters), and to promote healthy co-existence for the big game (deer) and predators (coyote, bobcat, rare mountain lion) to cross roads – whether during wildfire emergency or as our populations/development increase? Nothing huge like the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing, but a possible Caltrans-funded collaboration (https://www.gov.ca.gov/2024/05/07/worlds-largest-wildlife-crossing-on-track-to-open-by-early-2026/#:~:text=What%20to%20know%3A%20The%20Wallis,clouser%20to%20becoming%20a%20reality).	This is outside the scope for the Plan. There are no plans for wildlife crossings that are part of the HNA Wildfire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan.
3	Anonymous	Vegetation Management, Prescribed “Good” Fire, and Erosion Control: Methods would include routine/seasonal: city staff and volunteer mechanical and hand labor, goats to consume invasives that are toxic to other livestock while also reducing dry grasses that may easily catch fire during the dry season, regular prescribed burnings of dry brush and occasional controlled burnings/pyrolysis for felled tree conversion to biochar used to restore soil health.	Detailed prescriptions will be developed as each vegetation treatment is planned. All methods suggested by the commenter are currently considered as alternatives. The use of volunteers in implementing treatment and restoration actions shall be reviewed by the City consistent with current practices.

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		Likelihood in certain regions of the HNA, to start with alternative practices, such as Eucalyptus girdling, where the fallen will not threaten life and property, and provide clearings where Eucalyptus-tolerant native species such as Toyon could slowly be introduced while the dense forest is gradually thinned? Definitely could be done by volunteers and doesn't require funds, expensive machinery.	
4	Anonymous	Fire Resilient Community-Building: To build a more fire-adapted community, eager to see Fire Dept. in collaboration with a robust and very visible El Cerrito Fire Safe Council implementing Wildfire Detection Systems, starting "Neighborhood Fire Watch" groups to further expand education and outreach in schools and the community, integrating into city events such as Earth Day perhaps, offering workshops for Fire Hardening, Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Evacuation Plans, Temporary Refuge Area, Burn Plans with relevant HNA residents, recognizing a "good fire" or cool fire vs. a severe hazardous fire. Would like to see the city serve as the authority on El Cerrito regional fire-resistant vs. not fire-resistant native species to plant, and basic care. Current list featured on the Vegetation Management page referring to Diablo list on the website leads to a dead link (https://www.el-cerrito.org/721/Vegetation-Management-Standards).	The El Cerrito Fire Department (ECFD) is actively engaged with Home Hardening presentations, and FIREWISE Community Assessments. ECFD promotes and is willing to make site visits and perform presentations upon request. ECFD is committed to community engagement and is willing to increase their visibility during city wide events. The link for fire resistant plants derives from the Diablo Fire Safe Council. When selected on the EC page navigate to the tab Maps, Guides & More. Under the publications page is Professional Guides.
5	Anonymous	Nature-based Solutions: Would like to learn more about plans to align with California Natural Resource Agency: Nature-based solutions (NBS), where the city may benefit from the state's partnerships with NBS leaders around the world to accelerate and scale successful efforts, including China, Australia, Canada, and South Africa (see for more: https://resources.ca.gov/Initiatives/Expanding-Nature-Based-Solutions). Perhaps Australia for solutions and remedies to remove Eucalyptus – including potential private-sector interest in the commercial value of eucalyptus, from wood and other beauty/health products uses, to new trends in luxury (shiitake and oyster) mushroom-growing. Possible state-funded collaboration opportunity. One local resource	This is outside the scope for the Plan. The City may consider this in the future.

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		might be Mino de Angelis from Mycological Society of San Francisco, investigating Mycoremediation for Eucalyptus removal and “aiming toward modeling better ecological practices in forest management, [his group] took up an experiment on East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) forestland west of Grizzly Peak. The goal was to help manage the invasive eucalyptus trees, which have to be culled to reduce fire risk” (https://edibleeastbay.com/2021/11/09/fungi-tackle-the-eucalyptus/).	
6	Anonymous	Mixed-use, self-sustaining Information/Education/Research Center-Resource: Perhaps where the HNA serves as mixed-use open space – from off-leash dog park, to ADA accessible pathways for community respite and recreation; an ethnobotanical educational Edible Fire Buffer in support of tribal research partnerships (indigenous agroforestry, food security and sovereignty, https://www.nal.usda.gov/events/transdisciplinary-approaches-webinar-may2024) to enhance soil health, reduce erosion; while serving as an education center and “living laboratory” where nearby University of California researchers collaborate (includes UCANR, where Integrated Pest Management, Pyrogeography, Landscape Architecture, Environmental Management, Restorative Practices, Urban Food Forests, Wildland-urban interface (WUI) planning intersect), and the city schools engage youth to participate or implement programming. Maybe one day a visitor center, with access to water for firefighting, potable water for visitors, grey/rainwater collected passively and diverted to sustain California Native Plant Nursery collaborative cooperative, to grow plants for the HNA and sell to the community as part of conservation and education efforts.	This is outside the scope for the Plan. The City may consider this in the future.
7	Laura Lent - Board member, El Cerrito Trail Trekkers	The plan represents needed advances for our community to manage its fire risk and improve our outcomes. I'm chiming in with other Trail Trekkers to ask the City to have a clear feedback loop to ensure ongoing channels for citizen back and forth to ensure that the plan can adapt to community	City staff will lead implementation of the Plan as approved by the El Cerrito City Council. To address the comment and effectively monitor and report on progress, Action 8 of the Plan has been amended to include: update the Council and Park & Recreation Commission (or other advisory body designated by City Council) on

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		requests to the degree that it is sensible to do so. We ask the City to add these to the HNA plan to improve its implementation: An advisory body for the implementation of the plan. This can be an existing Commission. A process for the community to submit feedback (via email, website, etc.) to the City during the implementation of the plan. For example, community members may have feedback about annual maintenance, vegetation management, impact on trails, and protecting native wildlife and habitats. A process for the City to report implementation progress to the community on its website. A process for how volunteer groups can or should communicate and coordinate with the City.	implementation challenges, successes, and overall progress at least every 2 years; periodically update the HNA Plan website to keep the community informed about the HNA Plan; review the Plan every 5 years and evaluate the need for an update (changed from 10 years in the Plan). The City invites public comment during the City Council and Park and Recreation Commission updates.
8	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	Introduction (Plan page i/PDF page #5) "We also support the vision of highlighting defensible space and home hardening, an essential element of effective fire resilience by acting 'from the house out.' Therefore, we recommend that the introduction be specific by reinforcing this approach – such as: 'At the same time, it is important to recognize that addressing fire risks must also include actions residents can take in their homes and neighborhoods by doing home hardening and creating defensible space to make infrastructure and buildings more fire resilient.'"	The respective sentence in the Introduction has been changed to better reflect the need for individual homeowner accountability for creating defensible space.
9	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	8: Monitor Key Performance Indicators - Objectives 3.1 – 3.3 (Page v/PDF page #9) "Monitoring at the HNA will include the key indicators of Resiliency, Biodiversity, Recreation, Plan Review, and Public Relations. Recommend including the following in bold: Use monitoring to adapt management practices for each of these key indicators. " "Fire Behavior: Inspect fuel breaks at the HNA annually. Inspections of defensible space are another metric of neighborhood resilience." "Plan Review:..." "Public Relations:..."	Added requested sentence to Summary table and in Part 3, Table E.

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10	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	Prolog – (plan pg. 1/pdf 15) "Please reiterate the points from comment 1. above in the Prolog."	Added "such as home hardening by making structures less prone to ignition, and creating defensible space around structures to prevent a fire from reaching the structure." (Page 1)
11	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	Introduction (page 3/pdf 17) "Other cities (Berkeley) and fire departments (Marin Wildfire Prevention Agency) are providing a perspective on fire that helps the public understand that, besides the tragic fires that have occurred, fire is a part of the natural cycle in the East Bay and thus plans like this, combined with neighborhood home hardening and Firewise landscaping, are effective ways for homes to become much more resilient to fire. We recommend that this perspective be represented in the introduction so that the public knows that what is outlined in this plan, including what homeowners do, makes a difference."	Added two sentences to the Introduction stating that "fire is considered a natural part of the ecosystem of the East Bay" and that "home hardening and Firewise landscaping are the most effective ways to increase the fire resilience of neighborhoods." (Page 5)
12	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	Action 1. Establish Defensible Space – Capturing What’s Been Learned? -"It’s important to note that areas of defensible space have already been established in the HNA. Maps of already treated areas and any pre- and post-treatment observations and photographs from the defensible space treatments, are an invaluable aid to refine the vegetation treatment prescriptions that best realizes the fire risk reduction, biodiversity enhancement, oak retention, and invasive weed control goals valued by members of the public and the City." -"El Cerrito is not starting from scratch. We recommend that maps of already treated areas, photographs, and observations of pre- and post-HNA treatments be assembled and included as an appendix to this plan. City fire, parks, and public works staff and the many volunteers who have worked at the HNA are the best sources for this information." -"Also, since more scientific documentation is needed to	Currently, the Draft Plan states that the City has previously done work in the HNA. Providing maps and photos are not part of this Plan scope but may be incorporated in future documents, e.g. grant documents.

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		guide California cities on the specific prescriptions to fulfill the goals clearly stated in this plan, capturing the experience and observations of the staff and community members in the Planning Team and Stakeholder Advisory Group would be a valuable addition to the plan. See Action 7 also for a recommendation to compile and maintain a digital file of photographs and reports to evaluate performance toward each of the goals in this plan."	
13	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	Action 1. Defensible Space - Prescription (pg. 65/pdf 79) -"Regarding the draft prescription to 'remove dead plants and dry vegetation (combustible material),' directions to 'remove all dry vegetation' can lead to treatments that leave acres of bare mineral soil. That's because all ground-level vegetation looks dry during the long dry periods in California, and excessive complete removal of ground-level vegetation conflicts with the plan's biodiversity, fire risk reduction, and invasive weed prevention and control goals." -"Second, the direction 'to remove all dead plants' has led some municipalities to call for removing lone tree snags that serve as active woodpecker granaries. The wood pile structures that dusky wood rats use as homes can be interpreted as dead plant material that needs to be removed. A biologist cannot be everywhere on a project site. Lastly, all plants, dead, dry, or living, are '(combustible material),' so this is not a helpful descriptor." -"Therefore, we recommend the following modification: remove all dead vegetation (except as noted by the biologist in the pre-work survey) and reduce dry vegetation."	Added a removal threshold of 4 inches and included a footnote in the respective section to warn against excessive removal of ground cover to expose mineral soil. Also included protective measures for snags and woodrat nests. These species are also covered in the mitigation measures of the ISMND. (Page 67)
14	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	Action 2. Shaded Fuel Breaks and Managed Vegetation Areas (pg. 66/pdf 80) "Regarding the statement, 'The desired fire behavior is a surface fire, burning grass, and leaf duff,' please reexamine the notion that the primary surface vegetation cover for fuel breaks and managed vegetation areas is 'grass and leaf duff.'" "This prescription indicates that all low-growing green tree understory plants, such as forbs and other sub-shrubs, would	Modified the sentence to read "The desired fire behavior is a surface fire, burning low vegetation and leaf duff." (Page 70)

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		be eliminated to leave only grass and leaves. Also, projects could eliminate all trimmable native pollinator shrubs in favor of 'grass.' Since sites subject to this level of vegetation clearance often convert to highly-flammable annual weedy grasses and flammable, invasive French broom, we recommend that the desired fuel break plant cover be described as: 'The desired fire behavior is a surface fire, burning low vegetation and leaf duff.'	
15	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	Action 2. Shaded Fuel Breaks - Prescription for tree understories (pg. 67/pdf 81) "Following up on the point above, sentences in the prescription give contradictory directions and could result in undesirable fire behavior, biodiversity impacts, and promote invasive and undesirable weed cover:" "Larger overstory trees (> 6-inches DBH) do count as residual trees and, in order to reduce ladder fuels, will have most vegetation within their drip lines removed." "Larger native overstory trees (> 6-inches DBH) count as residual trees and, in order to reduce ladder fuels, shall have vegetation within their drip lines removed." "Understory fuels over 1 foot in height are to be removed creating vertical separation and low horizontal continuity of fuels." "We recommend that these prescriptions be coordinated, such as: 'Larger overstory trees (> 6-inches DBH) do count as residual trees and, to reduce ladder fuels, low growing native vegetation will be retained and kept to a height stipulated by the state fire code.'"	Reworded the section to reflect this concern: "Larger overstory trees (> 6-inches DBH) count as residual trees. To reduce ladder fuels, low growing native vegetation will be retained and kept to a height of 5 feet or less, provided that there is horizontal separation between plants of 3 to 5 times the height of the residual plants and the residual plants are not within the drip lines of an overstory tree." (Page 70)
16	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	Action 2. Shaded Fuel Breaks - Prescription for grasses (pg. 67/pdf 81) "The draft plan directs that 'All grasses be maintained below four (4) inches in height near the access points, trails, and public recreation spots (picnic sites, benches, etc.). However, sites re-vegetated with native perennials or those containing native perennial grasses (e.g., needle grasses) should not be mowed frequently.'"	Added this sentence: "Mowing heights for grasslands should not be lower than 4 inches to prevent 'scalping' of native perennial bunchgrasses and desirable forbs. Mowing heights may need to be adjusted on a site-specific basis. Generally, they should range from 4 to 6 inches above ground level to favor native plants." (Page 71)

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		"Directing all grasses to be maintained below four (4) inches can lead to mowing, mastication, or goat-grazing to bare dirt level. This is unfortunately a common outcome where this type of direction is used." "The East Bay Regional Park District's Wildfire Hazard Vegetation and Resource Management Plan has, since 2010, stipulated that all grasses, both naturalized annuals and native perennials, be grazed to 4'-6' to maintain habitat, control erosion, and support fire risk reduction objectives. Native perennial grasses are not adapted to mowing or grazing to bare mineral soil. Also, the cut annual grasses have been observed to 'lay down' flat over the soil over summer season, providing an erosion control cover when winter comes and likely helping sustain soil moisture longer into the summer." "It's not easy for most people to recognize native bunchgrass populations during the summer dry dormancy period. To help sustain and expand these deep-rooted native perennial grasses and provide 'natural' erosion control on the hillsides, we recommend reexamining this prescription to a standard similar to the Regional Park District, as follows:" "Mowing heights for grasslands should not be lower than 4 inches to prevent 'scalping' of native perennial bunchgrasses and desirable forbs. Mowing heights may need to be adjusted on a site-specific basis. Generally, they should range from 4 to 6 inches above ground level to favor native plants while removing non-native annual seedheads."	
17	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	6: Remove Invasives (Objective 2.2) – (Page v/PDF page #9) "We recommend including the following recognized standards for invasives in bold: Prevent the spread and strategically remove invasives throughout the HNA. Early detected, new infestations are targeted first, followed by spot treatments and follow-up maintenance projects." "Develop and apply best practices to prevent the spread of invasives, including from vegetation treatment activities. Remove invasive plants mostly by hand. Mechanical treatments (grinding, shredding, chipping, mulching, or	Added these bullet points to Objective 2.2. (Pages 58-59): • Prevent the spread and strategically remove invasive plants throughout the HNA. Early detected, new infestations are targeted first, followed by spot treatments and follow-up maintenance projects. • Develop and apply best practices to prevent the spread of invasive plants, including from vegetation treatment activities. • Remove invasive plants mostly by hand. Mechanical treatments (grinding, shredding, chipping, mulching, or mowing) of understory shrubs or small trees in some places.

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		mowing) of understory shrubs or small trees in some places. Prioritize invasive species removal in healthy native plant communities, fuel breaks, and recently cleared Eucalyptus areas."	• Prioritize invasive plant species removal in healthy native plant communities, fuel breaks, and recently cleared Eucalyptus areas.
18	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	Forest Conservation (pg. 6/pdf 20) "Since severe and excessive vegetation treatment management is documented and observed to cause intensive site disturbance and loss to biodiversity, we request that you add this caution to the following sentence: 'This Plan aims to avoid or reduce long-term, large-magnitude, or broad-scale biodiversity losses through management actions intended to decrease HNA-wide natural disturbance frequency, extent, intensity, or severity, as well as to guide management actions so that they retain and support biodiversity in the HNA.'"	Added the requested sentence on page 8.
19	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	Vegetation Communities (pg. 23/pdf 37) -"The draft plan does not provide adequate information on sensitive natural plant communities in the HNA. In addition, the goal of 'restore sensitive natural communities,' listed on page v of the plan, is not addressed by action items. We recommend that this goal of the plan to 'restore sensitive natural communities' be listed as a performance objective, with a project plan and monitoring component developed by an advisory committee, as one of the key indicators in the key performance indicators section." -"We recommend including a goal and objective for the retention and enhancement of native oak woodlands in the HNA."	The Plan has no goal of restoring sensitive communities. It does have a goal to restore and re-establish native species (Objective 2.3) . The planning team agrees that the Plan does not provide adequate information on sensitive natural communities, as they have been surveyed very incompletely, but a section about sensitive natural communities was added on page 39. The reviewer requested adding a goal of retaining and enhancing native oak woodlands. Goal 2 (increase Forest health) addresses this issue through Actions 5 (manage threats to native oaks), Action 6 (Remove Invasive Species) and Action 7 (restore and re-establish native species) addresses this request. No new objective is therefore needed. The role of an advisory committee in plan implementation is provided in response to a previous comment on comment #7.
20	Jim Hanson, Conservation Chair, California Native Plant Society, East Bay	Action 4. Retain Trees – (Pg. 68/pdf 82) -"With this standard: 'Retain dead or declining trees (snags) that provide habitat for wildlife, except where their condition constitutes a fire risk.'" -"While this goal is mentioned as a standard, it is rarely practiced in the field. From our observations of field practice, this standard is not followed in most management plans because biologists or fire ecologists cannot be present in all	The reviewer requests that snag removal be governed by an advisory committee, because "biologists or fire ecologists cannot be present in all circumstances, and the contractors doing the vegetation work remove most snags". Retention of snags will be considered as part of a project-specific prescription. The mitigation measures outlined in the Biological Resources Report (see pages A19-20) clearly state that a qualified biologist or biological monitor shall be present to observe fuel reduction treatment activities. In addition, worker training is required. Both mitigation measures

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		circumstances, and the contractors doing the vegetation work remove most snags." -"Therefore, we recommend that a project plan and monitoring component be developed by an advisory committee to guide the removal of any dead trees."	ensure that snags are not removed when they do not present a fire risk.
21	Resident of El Cerrito for multiple decades, with deep understanding of HNA and efforts done over that time.	Fire protection 1. The fire danger from the Hillside Natural Area can not be unstated, however it is in this document. Specifically the Executive Summary at the start of this document completely understates these hazards and overstates what the city of El Cerrito has been doing to mitigate these ongoing hazards. This is NOT a recent problem as the summary implies. 2. Chronically under maintained hazardous vegetation, misrepresentations in public reports on progress, and falsely claiming adherence to previous plans, such as the 1994 EL CERRITO HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE HAZARD REDUCTION PLAN, are well documented examples of this failure. These actions warrant GROSS NEGLIGENCE by the city of El Cerrito and the persons charged with responsibility for implementing vegetation management for this area for approximately the past 11 years will be held responsible in the event of any catastrophic event as a result of their inaction. A number of long time residents have historical knowledge and photo documentation that specifically contradicts the claims in this executive summary and the city of El Cerritos attempts to white wash its failure to maintain the city's property and endanger the residents of El Cerrito. 3. The city of El Cerrito must take immediate drastic action to greatly improve its efforts surrounding these vegetation management efforts for the reduction of fire hazards in the HNA. Failure to do so will result in extensive public review of these past and current failures.	Noted
22	Kay Starkweather, El Cerrito, CA	-Overall the plan hit some of my major concerns re vegetation management, shaded fuel breaks within 100 foot clearance from property lines, and defensible space within 100 feet of structures; removal of all eucalyptus and Monterey pine. Include a map showing areas for shaded fuel breaks and annual maintenance areas. Ongoing annual maintenance	Maps are included where possible. All shaded fuel breaks will be located along the perimeter. Areas where shaded fuel breaks cannot be implemented due to existing regulatory constraints (wetlands, riparian habitat) will need to be surveyed and delineated in pre-activity surveys. The current mapping of these areas is not sufficient to create the requested maps. The process for

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		before seed drop and cutting grasses and non-natives is mandatory. What is the process for implementation? How will reporting and feedback be given? Who/what will be the overseer (person or committee). Include reference to El Cerrito vegetation management standard. Increase use of words fire safety, not just fire resilience. Note 2021 City Resolution that wildfire prevention and safety a top priority.	implementing the plan is to be determined by the city, depending on funding. Most shaded fuel break creation and maintenance is anticipated to be implemented by outside contractors upon a public bidding process. The Plan includes safety where appropriate, however this plan addresses the HNA's ability to sustain a fire, and not be completely safe from it. Fire safety is more appropriate for homes and infrastructure that should be protected from fire under all circumstances. The HNA cannot be protected from fire, but it can be managed to ensure that it can sustain a fire without complete destruction or excessive risk to nearby structures.
23	Kay Starkweather, El Cerrito, CA	Recommend assignment to a person or body and regular updates on website.	City staff will lead implementation of the Plan as approved by the El Cerrito City Council. To address the comment and effectively monitor and report on progress, Action 8 of the Plan has been amended to include: update the Council and Park & Recreation Commission (or other advisory body designated by City Council) on implementation challenges, successes, and overall progress at least every 2 years and periodically update the HNA Plan website to keep the community informed about the HNA Plan.
24	Anonymous	Overall, we agree with the focus of the plan on fire resilience and safety. The top priorities should be: -Defensible space within 100 feet of dwelling structures adjacent to the HNA -Shaded fuel break within 100 ft of property boundaries -Removal of all eucalyptus and Monterey pines -Ongoing annual maintenance including cutting grass and invasive weeds, once before setting seeds, and once after they have dried out. We ask the City to add these to the HNA plan to improve its implementation: -An advisory body for the implementation of the plan. This can be an existing Commission. -A process for the community to submit feedback (via email, website, etc.) to the City during the implementation of the plan. For example, community members may have feedback about annual maintenance, vegetation management, impact on trails, and protecting native wildlife and habitats. -A process for the City to report implementation progress to	City staff will lead implementation of the Plan as approved by the El Cerrito City Council. To address the comment and effectively monitor and report on progress, Action 8 of the Plan has been amended to include: update the Council and Park & Recreation Commission (or other advisory body designated by City Council) on implementation challenges, successes, and overall progress at least every 2 years; periodically update the HNA Plan website to keep the community informed about the HNA Plan; and review the Plan and evaluate the need for an update every 5 years (changed from 10 years in the Plan). The City invites public comment during the City Council and Park and Recreation Commission updates. The City will continue to work with the community volunteer groups to develop communication and coordination methods.

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25	Brian Richmond	the community on its website. -A process for how volunteer groups can or should communicate and coordinate with the City. Overall, we agree with the focus of the plan on fire resilience and safety. The top priorities should be: - Defensible space within 100 feet of dwelling structures adjacent to the HNA - Shaded fuel break within 100 ft of property boundaries - Removal of all eucalyptus and Monterey pines - Ongoing annual maintenance including cutting grass and invasive weeds, once before setting seeds, and once after they have dried out. We ask the City to add these to the HNA plan to improve its implementation: - An advisory body for the implementation of the plan. This can be an existing Commission. - A process for the community to submit feedback (via email, website, etc.) to the City during the implementation of the plan. For example, community members may have feedback about annual maintenance, vegetation management, impact on trails, and protecting native wildlife and habitats. - A process for the City to report implementation progress to the community on its website. - A process for how volunteer groups can or should communicate and coordinate with the City.	This comment has been addressed above (see comment #24).
26	Anonymous	Living next to HNA, I look out and see the overgrowth of the eucalyptus trees and they need to be thinned out. Please move on the recommendation of HNA action plan. Create defensible space, establish shaded fuel breaks, and thinning of eucalyptus trees. Thank you for your work on this important city project.	Noted. No changes to the Plan are deemed needed. The City hopes to receive funding to implement the final Plan.
27	Fred Bialy	Page iv: Objective 1.4: Kind Court should be King Court. Where on Motorcycle Hill would service access be added? I see that this would be along the Lower Snowden Trail from Snowden Way to the access stairs at Blake/Navellier (Figure 10). This is a very narrow foot path on the southern end on a	The misspelling has been corrected. See Figure 10 for trail and road improvements.

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28	Fred Bialy	steep slope. Turning this into a fire road with vehicular access would be a major project.	Corrected
29	Fred Bialy	Page 3, second paragraph, last sentence: The history of fire wildfire planning. Should this be The history of fire wildfire planning? Introduction (comment): what strikes me is that El Cerrito has developed numerous assessments related to reducing fire risk and managing natural areas in the Hillside Natural Area and these plans have identified common issues. The problem is the follow-up and not doing what is identified as priorities. Will this plan be different? Does it identify why previous plans have not led to these priorities being addressed?	The major difference is that this Plan provides CEQA clearance and a clear connection to future funding and grant opportunities based on updated technical analyses and on current industry practices. Previous fuel reduction work has been based on past plans and available funding and resources. Many of the actions listed in this Plan will be dependent on outside funding, specifically grants and a major purpose of this Plan is to support the City's applications for grant funding. The City is already actively applying for grants to implement the goals and prioritized actions.
30	Erin Reiche	It seems that some of this plan has not truly considered what will happen to these cleared areas once you remove the flammable trees. All you have to do is look at where these trees were removed in the Berkeley hills to see that non-native invasive plants infill rapidly, e.g. French Broom. Do you plan to cart out the felled flammable trees and/or the chipped remains? Otherwise you are leaving behind super flammable fuel litter, a host for invasive plant species to sprout. You need to make sure you budget for annual removal of stuff you don't want there or your efforts will be wasted.	The prescription for fuel reduction after the removal of eucalyptus will be developed as part of each tree removal project. In general, the goal is to prevent a significant invasion of non-native trees, shrubs and herbaceous species post removal.
31	Erin Reiche	Also, what are your plans for homeowner properties that do not include a 30 foot distance to the Hillside area? I think you should amend this plan to make the 100 foot perimeter completely *inside* the perimeter of the Hillside area, not trying to share the burden and cost with homeowners living adjacent. This unfairly burden those few homeowners for a project benefitting us all. Last, I hope you have consulted with the various experts available to us from the University of California both at Berkeley and Davis, where studying these issues have been going in for decades.	The individual homeowner is responsible for defensible space on their properties, pursuant to PRC 4192, which states: "A person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains a building or structure in, upon, or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered lands, shrub-covered lands, grass-covered lands, or land that is covered with flammable material, shall at all times do all of the following: (1)(A) Maintain defensible space of 100 feet from each side and from the front and rear of the structure, but not beyond the property line," The Plan recommendations are based on current best management practices, published peer reviewed studies and guidance from academia and forest management professionals.

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Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
32	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"I appreciate the efforts to provide an assessment-based framework, strategy, and priorities for creating and maintaining a more fire-resistant vegetation complex that protects human and property values at risk while also protecting native vegetation communities, sensitive species, and wildlife habitats."	Noted
33	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Sections on wildfire risks and threats (p41-48) and actions 1-4 to create defensible space & fuel breaks, reduce eucalyptus, and manage fire roads seem reasonable if attention is paid to sensitive resources on site."	There are numerous avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures that will ensure that no significant impacts occur to sensitive species.
34	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"This document (in various sections) should also estimate how many acres of broom, etc. have been removed per year by F5C and others and integrate that into projections of fire hazard risk changes with and without that level of volunteer effort, either quantitatively or qualitatively."	The acreage estimates are not part of the Plan scope. The City depends on volunteers to provide this information and may make it available in the future as provided.
35	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"INCREASE PRIORITY FOR REMOVING INVASIVES: Action 6, Remove Invasives, currently listed as Medium priority, is at least - if not more - critical to fire hazard and ecosystem health than oak management (listed as Medium-High) at this time."	The City agrees that this is a priority but the actions had to be ranked in order. Medium priority is appropriate, given that there is a) no legal mandate for removal of invasives (in contrast to activities prescribed under PRC 4291) and b) the implementation of other activities provides a bigger "lift" in terms of fire resilience.
36	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Maintenance is critical to the success of initial treatments."	Agreed, maintenance resources and funding will be evaluated per treatment by the City as implementation of the Plan moves forward.
37	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee	"Broom presents a pretty significant fire hazard if allowed to reoccupy site. RECOMMEND HIGHER PRIORITY, AT LEAST A MEDIUM-HIGH."	See above response (comment #35).

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	Chair, submitting comments as individual.		
38	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Actions 5, Actively manage threats to native oak species: p 81-2 ESTIMATE OR DESCRIBE RISKS OF MITIGATING SOD VS SPREADING IT BY REMOVING BAYS OR OAKS."	The SOD actions are accepted standard practices. Estimating the risk of any action is not in the scope of this Plan, as it draws from multiple science-based documents and best practice recommendations.
39	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"SOD occurrences are on the northern edge along the stream corridor. Any guidance or comments about that?" "Recommend a very cautious approach at this stage, coupled with a commitment to continued annual SOD survey. Very doable with a couple of volunteers." "Control of invasives is critical right now and into the future, while oak stands are mostly healthy (despite their density) and SOD is still limited."	SOD surveys are on-going. The Plan recommends a tree inventory that will identify the location and spread of SOD within the HNA. The project team agrees that control of invasives is important.
40	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Measure Progress Goal 3: p 59. 'It is recommended that the City continues to engage in inventory and monitoring programs within the limits imposed by available funds and resources.' No! MEASURING PROGRESS, WHICH DEPENDS ON MONITORING, IS A MUST-HAVE, with or without adaptive management."	The City will seek funding to implement adequate monitoring.
41	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Eucalyptus and invasives' growth and spread should probably be monitored annually, or RECOMMEND A FREQUENCY SUPPORTED BY science/research."	Added to Action 8 that the City will annually monitor eucalyptus re-growth as resources permit. (Page 91)
42	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting	"Community engagement for monitoring and measurement could be added to committee charters." "My comments address biological assessment, management options, and prioritizations, and strategy for integrating the public into implementation/administration."	Collaboration, citizen scientist involvement, and activities of others are welcome, but not a focus of this Plan, which is limited to City staff and programs. Additions to Committee charters is at the discretion of the City Council and may be considered by request of the Committees

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	comments as individual.	"The City should consider including collaboration with volunteers on HNA activities in Urban Forest, EQC, and Parks and Rec committee/commission charters." Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual. "Volunteers may be willing to help with passive restoration efforts."	
43	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"REVIEW PLAN EVERY 5 YEARS. 10 years is too long, given changes in Council and Committee membership, etc."	The City amended the Draft Plan to recommend that the City review the Plan every 5 years and evaluate if an update is necessary.
44	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Part 3: Action Plan p 60: Add 'maintain, maintaining' or 'maintenance' to almost every sentence in this paragraph."	The City agrees maintenance is important and added the following sentence: "The success of these actions will be enhanced with ongoing maintenance activities after each project is completed."
45	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Part 3, Action Plan, Table E, P 61-63 (also in exec summary), and also detailed discussions in the report: INCLUDE ONE TIME AND ONGOING COST COLUMNS - While more quantitative cost estimates would be nice, this table should at the very least provide both a column each for one-time and ongoing costs, with text indicating the period of recurring costs. THIS IS CRITICAL TO EUCALYPTUS SPROUT MANAGEMENT AND CONTROLLING INVASIVES FOR BOTH FIRE HAZARD AND ECOLOGICAL HEALTH."	This Plan is a planning-level document. Cost estimates will be developed as the Plan is implemented on a project basis. We have added a sentence on page 11 to state: "While the City recognizes the importance of on-going maintenance to the successful Plan implementation, this Plan does not contain descriptions of maintenance activities or intervals. It is anticipated that future maintenance will be subject to funding and resource availabilities". In addition, Table E has been updated to show relative one-time and ongoing costs and the following language has been added on Page 61: "The success of these actions will be enhanced with ongoing maintenance activities after each project is completed. In order to adequately plan for maintenance funding, it is recommended that the City develop a maintenance program which includes the relative costs of each action (e.g. per acre cost to maintain a fuel break)."
46	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee	"CLARIFY COST OPTIONS OF RESTORING/ESTABLISHING NATIVE SPECIES: See also p 87. The document recognizes that costs depend on what you do. Passive restoration	The Plan has been amended so the Cost category is \$ -\$\$\$ to reflect the highly variable costs.

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	Chair, submitting comments as individual.	(though not well-defined in the report) doesn't have to be \$\$\$, so this cost should reflect a range, since a high across-the-board restoration price tag may unnecessarily discourage all efforts by the City."	
47	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Forest Conservation, p 6. Add wildlife habitat to this paragraph. Biodiversity is not just about plants."	Biodiversity includes both plants and animals. No change needed.
48	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Please correct mistakes in taxonomic names in Native Grassland and Coast live oak descriptions (P 24): - Stipa lepida not lipid; Cryptantha not Cryptand sp. p; Platystemon caifornicus NOT Platycnemic californica; Chloragalum NOT Chioragalum; M; Polystichum NOT polvistichum."	Corrected. Cryptantha and Platystemon californicus were deleted from this section as they were not verified during the recent survey but they are listed in Appendix E.
49	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Local groups like Friends of 5 Creeks that have worked on HNA and know where those are should be consulted and their input should be used to avoid impacts!!!"	The City welcomes input from volunteer groups. To continue engaging the community including volunteer organizations, the City will periodically update the HNA Plan website to share information about the HNA Plan and invite public comment during the City Council and Park and Recreation Commission updates. Action 8 has been amended to clarify these points.
50	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"What this document doesn't include': p 9. SINCE THIS DOCUMENT PROVIDES A 'STRATEGY,' IT ABSOLUTELY SHOULD INCLUDE IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO INTEGRATE DATA, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE, AND VOLUNTEER WORK FOR CONTINUING CITIZEN SCIENCE EFFORTS."	Although this is out of the scope for the Plan, the City agrees that future projects will need to incorporate local knowledge and data.
51	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting	"The critical contributions of Friends of Five Creeks, local experts, academics, and others in these areas is well known."	The City acknowledges these contributions.

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	comments as individual.		
52	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"The City should dedicate at least a partial staff position to working with interested groups to remove invasives, restore natives, conduct bioblitzes, and contribute to monitoring and assessment."	The City appreciates the on-going efforts of community organizations that conduct volunteer work in the HNA. The Plan provides a framework for funding and strategic allocation of resources, which includes staff. The City, to the extent possible with existing resources, continues important maintenance activities and coordinates activities of community organizations in the HNA. However, many of the actions listed in this Plan will be dependent on outside funding, specifically grants and a major purpose of this Plan is to support the City's applications for grant funding. The City is already actively applying for grants to implement the goals and prioritized actions.
53	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"More aggressive attempts to establish native bunchgrasses all over the annual grass-dominated hillside would be costly and probably unsuccessful, according to most experts."	Agreed
54	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Efforts should be focused on protecting or facilitating regeneration where they are now (often tied to microsite soil conditions such as serpentine) or on select areas where vegetation will be removed (expertise should be sought)."	Agreed
55	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"For all Actions related to vegetation management, PLEASE EMPHASIZE AND REITERATE NEED FOR TRAINING AND OVERSIGHT OF WORKERS SO THEY DO NOT DISTURB SENSITIVE RESOURCES."	See General Avoidance and Minimization Measures section on pages A19-20 of the Biological Resources Assessment (Appendix A of the Plan).
56	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair,	"NESTING BIRD SURVEYS NEED TO BE DONE WHEN BIRDS NEST, IE FROM EARLY SPRING TO EARLY SUMMER, NOT LATE SUMMER OR EARLY FALL."	Agreed. Measures to avoid and minimize impacts to nesting birds will be presented as part of the CEQA process. Nesting bird surveys will be performed prior to project implementation.

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	submitting comments as individual.		
57	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Raptor nesting in eucalyptus , including Great Horned Owl, should be investigated more closely in the eucalyptus and any oaks or other trees targeted for management."	Agreed. See response to comment #56.
58	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Include Bioblitz findings somewhere. LSA study cited for grasslands but no mention of recent bioblitzes in which I participated with experts (PhDs) in various fields."	Up-to-date Bioblitz data needs to be provided to the City to inform pre-construction biological surveys.
59	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Fix citation: (Simler-Williamsson et al. 200). P 61."	Addressed
60	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Action 7, Restore and Establish Native Species, p 87 (and other sections) CONSULT WITH LOCAL UC EXTENSION RANGE SPECIALIST (Sheila Barrie) OR OTHER EXPERT TO DEVELOP PERENNIAL GRASS RESTORATION PLANS."	This is part of the effort to develop a restoration project for native perennial grasses. The City will consider this recommendation when developing restoration plans.
61	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	"Opinions about optimal site prep and management differ."	Agreed

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62	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	" This document suggests early grazing over several years (p 67, Shaded fuel breaks) to reduce annual seed production; however, according to Dr. Lynn Huntsinger (UCB Range and Ecology Mgmt professor), annual seed production is so abundant that reduction benefits would likely be insignificant."	Early, heavy grazing is only recommended where appropriate, to reduce the overall seed drop by annuals and control competition with native perennials . This type of targeted herbivory requires careful planning and acute observation of the plants' developmental stage.
63	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	" Reducing thatch/biomass (i.e. heavy mowing of annual grass), however, may be helpful, and it should be done AFTER perennial grasses produce seed (e.g. after later spring) to benefit following season's growth, maybe in May or June."	This Plan does not advocate for heavy mowing due to the risk of scalping. See also response to comment #16.
64	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	" Biomass growth and seed production calendar dates will vary annually with rain and weather, SO EXPERTISE IS REALLY NEEDED TO ASSESS OPPORTUNITIES, CONDITIONS, AND MGMT FOR PERENNIAL GRASS RESTORATION."	Agreed. Restoration project will include consultants who specialize in this type of work.
65	Cathy Bleier, Urban Forest Committee Chair, submitting comments as individual.	" Perennial bunchgrasses seem to succeed better against annuals on poorer soils, so DON'T FERTILIZE new plantings."	The Plan does not advocate for fertilization.
66	Nick Zamorano	100 ft fire break from existing property markers; ongoing maintenance; removal of all invasive plants; removal of all eucalyptus and Monterey pines	Noted
67	Anonymous	Overall, I agree with the focus of the plan on fire resilience and safety. The top priorities should be: -Defensible space within 100 feet of dwelling structures adjacent to the HNA -Shaded fuel break within 100 ft of property boundaries -Removal of all eucalyptus and Monterey pines -Ongoing annual maintenance including cutting grass and	See response to comment #24.

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		invasive weeds, once before setting seeds, and once after they have dried out. I also ask the City to add these to the HNA plan to improve its implementation: -An advisory body for the implementation of the plan. This can be an existing Commission. -A process for the community to submit feedback (via email, website, etc.) to the City during the implementation of the plan. For example, community members may have feedback about annual maintenance, vegetation management, and native wildlife and habitats. -A process for the City to report implementation progress to the community on its website. -A process for how volunteer groups can or should communicate and coordinate with the City.	
68	Jan and Bob Fabini	As residents whose property is adjacent to Motorcycle Hill, we would value some (a few?) water sources integrated into the trails crossing the hillside above us, like there are along the fire road crossing from above the quarry and recycling center over toward the Madera open space. They could be installed as the improved access is provided for firefighting on Motorcycle Hill. If this has to be coordinated with EBMUD (it would seem so?) then EBMUD should also explore the adequacy of water supply in this area for actual fire-fighting. There has been a lot of work reconfiguring (eliminating some sites and increasing capacities of others) water storage. Making sure water storage is able to handle emergencies should be a very high priority in an area such as this. We certainly experienced severe (complete?) loss of water pressure during and after the fire adjacent to Potrero Avenue in October of 2023, and we are at the lower part of the hill.	ECFD supports the addition of fire hydrants within the HNA if and where feasible. Coordination with EBMUD, and other governmental agencies would be required. ECFD supports and performs hydrant testing to ensure adequate pressure is available for emergency response. ECFD encourages residents to contact local EBMUD authorities to raise concerns regarding the availability and effectiveness of our firefighting water supply.
69	Marlene Keller	This is a sound plan for preventing a fire catastrophe that will destroy El Cerrito. There is great urgency in making this plan happen asap. Because of the urgency, I urge the city to focus on a specific timeline for removal of the dangerous eucalyptus that will create embers destroying homes, schools, businesses and likely loss of life.	Agreed. This Plan will help to qualify the City for grants to implement eucalyptus removal projects.

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70	Anonymous	Overall, we agree with the focus of the plan on fire resilience and safety. The top priorities should be: - Defensible space within 100 feet of dwelling structures adjacent to the HNA - Shaded fuel break within 100 ft of property boundaries - Removal of all eucalyptus and Monterey pines - Ongoing annual maintenance including cutting grass and invasive weeds, once before setting seeds, and once after they have dried out. Overall, the plan has many strengths. We ask the City to add these to the HNA plan to improve its implementation: - An advisory body for the implementation of the plan. This can be an existing Commission. - A process for the community to submit feedback (via email, website, etc.) to the City during the implementation of the plan. For example, community members may have feedback about annual maintenance, vegetation management, impact on trails, and protecting native wildlife and habitats. - A process for the City to report implementation progress to the community on its website. - A process for how volunteer groups can or should communicate and coordinate with the City.	See response to comment #24.
71	Mark Mespelt	Looking forward to reduce the risks of severe fire here in El Cerrito. The recommendation to remove the eucalyptus trees on Motorcycle Hill, and other non-native is welcome. As with the creation of a defensible space 100ft within dwelling adjacent to HNA. Let's move forward to implementation of the plan!	Agreed
72	Gary Prost	This plan is comprehensive and a good thing. The top priorities should be 1) a fire break all the way around the HNA extending 100 ft from the property lines; 2) removing the fire-prone eucalyptus and Monterey Pines; 3) ongoing annual maintenance including cutting grass and invasive weeds, once before setting seeds, and once after they have dried out.	Noted
73	Susan Schwartz	"Action is urgently needed to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfire in the Hillside Natural Area."	Noted

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		Nevertheless, the city, consultants, and Coastal Conservancy should not ground plans or permits, or spend taxpayers money, on work that is claims to be based on science, but lacks foundation or evidence, and is inconsistent, incorrect, or misleading.	
74	Susan Schwartz	1. The current forest and non-forested habitats at the HNA are heavily dominated by invasive species (especially Eucalyptus, covering over 38% of the site).(emphasis mine; p. 6 and repeated or rephrased elsewhere). This is untrue. The details in the plan make clear that grassland covers about 33 acres, oak forest about 29 acres, eucalyptus around 18 acres, and willows something over 6 acres (p. 27). That would leave pines about the same area as eucalyptus (36.2/18). Counting another way, p. 27 says, "Approximately 25% of all trees at the HNA belong to highly flammable species (e.g., pines, eucalyptus)."	Addressed. The total area of eucalyptus and pine cover is 36.2 acres.
75	Susan Schwartz	Eucalyptus is a real danger, but this does not justify exaggerating its prevalence. P. 24 says Eucalyptus and Pine Groves are the most prevalent vegetation community at the project site, totaling over 36.2 acres. This would be about 35% of the site for eucalyptus and pines combined (36.2/102) . (Actual acreage is 107 acres, according to staff, but the draft uses 102 acres consistently.)	This comment is based on a previous version of the Draft Plan and the current version has the 107.18 acres listed on Page 18.
76	Susan Schwartz	Calling eucalyptus and pines a "community" is misleading. Aside from being highly flammable non-native trees, they have almost nothing in common. Most eucalyptus are in groves, as the plan points out. Monterey pines are generally scattered to isolated, often in oak forest. The largest area of pines probably is the swath of widely spaced, varied non-natives planted north of Schmidt; this is never described. If eucalyptus and pines are a "community" so are oaks and willows both native and not highly flammable (and together occupying about the same area). Thus, present phrasing misleads readers regarding the true challenge. A plan based on science also should get its numbers straight and use accurate categories, as is done on p. 46 , which distinguishes "coniferous, eucalyptus stands, and oak forest."	The Plan has been revised to replace "community" with "type" for eucalyptus and non-native pine to address the commenter's concerns.

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77	Susan Schwartz	"Approximately 29 acres of remnant stands of oak woodlands remain (p. 6)." The oak forest is not "remnant" As the plan makes clear (pp. 31-2), oaks have been expanding for at least close to 100 years, since fires were suppressed, and grazing ended. Consultants should be aware of this; their 1987 plan, used as a source in other parts of the plan, called for maintaining a grassy fire break on a ridge that is now overgrown with oak forest.	The Plan has been revised to remove "remnant".
78	Susan Schwartz	See also P. 27 on the overall expansion of tree cover since the 1930s. Going back farther in time, the plans material on history and culture makes clear that oak forest today almost certainly covers far more area than it did in the 19th and 20th Centuries, the period of Spanish-Mexican grazing, or the many centuries that Susan Schwartz comments on draft El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area plan, Aug. 5, 2024 2 Native Americans burned regularly. More generally, current ecological understanding of local foothill areas is that they can switch fairly rapidly between forest, scrub, and grassland, with no natural, dominant, or climax. I know of no evidence of oak forest being a long-term dominant since the end of the last Ice Age. If this evidence exists, it should be cited. If the desire is to favor oak forest, the plan should say that. A science-based plan should say why, with evidence.	Based on community input, the City has a desire to maintain and conserve the oak woodlands where feasible for multiple environmental benefits, including Carbon sequestration.
79	Susan Schwartz	3. "North Franciscan Coastal Scrub has been encroaching into adjacent grassland, changing the species composition and fuel distribution of those areas. This encroachment is due mainly to fire suppression and the termination of historic livestock grazing" (p. 25) By the same logic as in (2), scrub isn't "encroaching" due to lack of grazing and fire, unless the same is true of oak forest. Scrub's 2.6 acres today is less than 3% of the site. On p. 27, all shrubs are estimated at about 6%, vs. about 30% for herbaceous vegetation, mostly grass). Using other figures, scrub's acreage is less than 10% of either the 33 acres of grassland or 29 acres of oak forest (pp. 23-4). The consultants' 1987 plan called for maintaining about 25% of	Noted. The Plan was revised to delete: "This community has been encroaching into adjacent grassland, changing the species composition and fuel distribution of those areas. This encroachment is due mainly to fire suppression and the termination of historic livestock grazing." This statement came from the 1987 LSA report but was not re-stated in recent biological reports.

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		the area as grassland and scrub; it seems safe to say that more was scrub at that time. No evidence for the spread of scrub is offered. By personal observation, shrubland has been shrinking due to fire-control mowing and removal of eucalyptus understory vibrant communities of monkeyflower and sage. The only conspicuous expansion of shrubs of any kind is where city has allowed invasive cotoneaster to take over large areas north of Schmidt. Where oak-forest canopy is closing in, one finds understory coastal-scrub plants such as bracken, California sage, monkeyflower, honeysuckle, and ceanothus, often scattered. LSAs1987 plan (p.27) pointed out that a number of units have isolated patches of oak trees scattered though brushy areas. These are not described in the current document, presumably because they no longer exist. Thus, available evidence indicates that over the past 50 years or so, coastal scrub has lost significant ground to oak-forest expansion. The remaining pockets also are among the relatively few places where one tends to see pollinators such as bees and butterflies. If the object is to eliminate the tiny remainder of this major component of foothill ecosystem and biodiversity, the plan should say that. A science-based plan should provide evidence and reasons.	
80	Susan Schwartz	P. 25 also says, "French broom and localized Crofton Weed (<i>Ageratina adenophora</i>) is also a major constituent throughout the HNA. This is incorrect. Crofton weed is a major constituent of scrub on (foggy) Mt. Tamalpais, but in the Hillside Natural Area it appears to have spread down from gardens into an area of native shrubs with scattered large buckeyes, below Regency Court. From there, it appears to have spread south into oaks and north and west down the shady riparian drainages, which are not coastal scrub. French broom similarly is not a major constituent of the few remaining pockets of Northern coastal scrub. Broom is more common in oak groves and grasslands. Brooms true prevalence is difficult to assess, because after volunteers removed most of the stands of large plants, they have continued to pull out seedlings year-round. A significant long-lasting seed bank remains, however, so that without these	Some of this comment including reference to Page 25, appears to be based on a previous version of the Draft Plan. In reference to word choices, the Plan is updated to replace the word "encroaching" with "frequent". In reference to the volunteer work, on Page 84 of the Plan it states: "The local stakeholder group "Friends of Five Creeks" has used volunteer efforts incorporating hand labor treatment with considerable effectiveness, especially for French broom."

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RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
81	Susan Schwartz	frequent sweeps by volunteer labor, broom sprouts would again rapidly take over large areas. For this reason, the following statement on p. 25 is misleading: "French broom is Susan Schwartz comments on draft El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area plan, Aug. 5, 2024, 3 encroaching into the grassland on the east-west ridges above Navellier Street, along the west border above Navellier Street, and in the grassland around the Madera connector (emphasis mine)." This gives a false picture of dynamics. Broom in the main, 75-acre portion of the Hillside Natural Area is visible mainly on areas volunteers don't reach often enough, or at all: steep slopes, dense poison oak, areas at the far ends of volunteers customary forays, and areas that seem unlikely to get sparks from vehicles or cigarette ash. Brooms occurrence in the northern areas similarly reflects volunteer efforts, but the histories are different. Describing this as "encroachment" conceals the true challenge of containment and maintenance. Authors of this plan have declined to acknowledge this reality. 5. The summary table of objectives, p. v and 63, under Objective 8, Monitor Key Performance Objectives, says: "Biodiversity: Regularly monitor the HNA for the abundance and presence of key special status species, including Monarch butterfly, San Francisco Dusky Woodrat, and other species. "This is misleading and should be removed. Monitoring of special-status species is not an indicator of biodiversity. The lead consultant clearly stated this in the August 3 public meeting on this draft, pointing out that this monitoring is a CEQA requirement unrelated to any measure of biodiversity. The text nowhere acknowledges this. The goals or objectives in regarding biodiversity found in the text are as follows: "P. 6: This Plan aims to avoid or reduce long-term, large-magnitude, or broad-scale biodiversity losses through management actions intended to decrease HNA-wide natural disturbance frequency, extent, intensity, or severity. "That is, avoiding wildfires will boost biodiversity. P. 57, Goal 2, increasing forest health will enhance biodiversity, and P. 58, Objective 2, Removing invasive species will aid biodiversity. "P. 90, Action 8, Monitor Key Performance	This comment suggests that the recommended surveys for special status species cannot be used as indicators of biodiversity. The Planning team concludes that while these species are of special interest from a conservation perspective, their unique habitat requirements also comprise a variety of biodiversity elements, such as pollinator habitat, etc. The Plan acknowledges the value of general biodiversity surveys, such as Christmas bird counts, plant lists, and bio-blitzes. This Plan aims at a low-cost monitoring to ensure that special status species are considered and that vegetation mapping is conducted in 10 year intervals to keep track of changes as management and succession takes place.

HNA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
		Indicators: "Biodiversity conservation, one of the "pillars of landscape resilience," is to be monitored as follows: "Monitoring: It is recommended that the City contracts with a qualified biologist to periodically monitor the abundance and presence of key special status species, including Monarch butterfly, and San Francisco Dusky Woodrat. Every ten years, the vegetation communities of the HNA should be mapped according to the CalVeg standards (1/4 acre minimum mapping unit). In addition, general biodiversity surveys, such as Christmas bird counts, plant lists, and bio-blitzes are encouraged to monitor the biological diversity of the HNA. The plan contemplates no baseline against which to map the vegetation communities 10 years from now. It explicitly does not provide a means for considering general biodiversity surveys (such as those citizens or volunteers might conduct). Thus, besides removing false claims that special-status species are indicators of biodiversity, this plan's statements regarding monitoring regarding biodiversity should be re-examined and justified, or eliminated.	
82	Susan Schwartz	6. Conclusion: The end does not justify the means. Plans need not meet standards of refereed scientific papers, but they should be objective and accurate, with appropriate evidence. Misleading phrasing and sub-standard work cloaked in a cloud of verbiage and outdated assumptions can harm, from wasting citizens' hard-earned money to harming our earth. Local governments, consultants, and the Coastal Conservancy face perverse incentives:. Cities want broad latitude in a costly permit system. Overstating their case may help them compete. Consultants want to do the work cheaply; non-standard ideas may also lead to doubts or even harm reputations. The Conservancy wants to get money out the door and projects done. These comments are a reminder that we also need to seek truth.	Noted
83	Mary D. Ghidella	Need to address the engagement of citizens to include communication between the city and private property owners through neighborhood groups.	The El Cerrito Fire Department (ECFD) is actively engaged with Home Hardening presentations, and FIREWISE Community Assessments. ECFD promotes and is willing to make site visits and perform presentations upon request. ECFD is committed to

HNA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
			community engagement and is willing to increase our visibility during city wide events.
84	Liz Bittner, lizbittner@gmail.com	Hello! I am providing comment on Section 7. When/if planting out nursery grown plant stock, I highly recommend working with a nursery that has adopted BMPs for the prevention of introducing Phytophthora species, nurseries that participate in the AIR program, such as the Watershed Nursery in Richmond. Here is more info about the AIR program: https://www.suddenoakdeath.org/welcome-to-calphytos-org-phytophthoras-in-native-habitats/accreditation/ Also in regards to the plant list of pioneer species, Lupinus albifrons is more appropriate than Lupinus arboreus. L. arboreus is native to coastal habitats, dunes, etc. while L. albifrons is native to our East Bay Hills, oak woodlands, chaparral, etc.	There are no plans for planting nursery stock oak seedlings. The commentor's recommendations have been added as a footnote and included suggestions for silver lupine as a more site-adapted pioneer species.
85	Friends of Five Creeks	"Action is urgently needed to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfire in the Hillside Natural Area. Nevertheless, the city, consultants, and Coastal Conservancy should not ground plans or permits, or spend taxpayers' money, on work that claims to be based on science, but lacks foundation or evidence, and is inconsistent, incorrect, or misleading." (Page 14)	Noted
86	Friends of Five Creeks	"The current forest and non-forested habitats at the HNA are heavily dominated by invasive species (especially Eucalyptus, covering over 38% of the site)... This is untrue. The details in the plan make clear that grassland covers about 33 acres, oak forest about 29 acres, eucalyptus around 18 acres, and willows something over 6 acres." (Page 2)	All acreages and percentages have been checked and where necessary have been corrected. Acreages are only estimates for Eucalyptus and Pine Groves, Ruderal/Non-Native Grassland, Coast Live Oak Woodland and North Franciscan Coastal Scrub, as these communities are large enough to be determined on aerial imagery.
87	Friends of Five Creeks	"Calling eucalyptus and pines a 'community' is misleading. Eucalyptus is mainly in the Oak Forest vegetation type and Monterey pines are generally scattered to isolated, often in oak forest." (Page 2)	The Plan has been revised to replace "community" with "type" for eucalyptus and non-native pine to address the commenter's concerns.
88	Friends of Five Creeks	"French broom and localized Crofton Weed (<i>Ageratina adenophora</i>) is also a major constituent throughout the HNA, with heaviest infestations along the fringes of forested areas. This is incorrect. <i>Ageratina</i> , restricted to California, is entirely absent. Describing this as 'encroachment' conceals the true challenge of containment and maintenance." (Page 3)	Crofton weed (<i>Ageratina adenophora</i>) is present and spreading in several, scattered HNA locations.

HNA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
89	Friends of Five Creeks	"The oak forest is not 'remnant.' In most areas, oaks have been expanding for at least close to 100 years, since fires were suppressed, and grazing ended. Going back farther in time, the plan's material on history and culture makes clear that oak forest today almost certainly covers far more area than it did in the 19th and 20th Centuries." (Page 6)	The Plan has been revised to remove "remnant".
90	Friends of Five Creeks	"North Franciscan Coastal Scrub, the dominant native vegetation community within the HNA, has been encroaching into adjacent grassland, changing the species composition and fuel distribution of those areas. This encroachment is due mainly to fire suppression and the termination of historic livestock grazing. Grassland is a consequence of historic burning and grazing, not a natural vegetation type. Vegetation classification in the draft plan should distinguish Coastal Scrub from Oak Forest with scattered Monterey Pine and small patches of Maritime Chaparral." (Page 3)	Noted. The Plan was revised to delete: "This community has been encroaching into adjacent grassland, changing the species composition and fuel distribution of those areas. This encroachment is due mainly to fire suppression and the termination of historic livestock grazing." This statement came from the 1987 LSA report but was not re-stated in recent biological reports.
91	Friends of Five Creeks	"The text repeatedly inaccurately describes what really grows in the Hillside Natural Area. The description of native grasslands, in particular, contains this sentence: 'Needlegrass grassland within the HNA is dominated by native perennial bunchgrasses such as purple needlegrass (<i>Stipa pulchra</i>), nodding needlegrass (<i>Stipa cernua</i>), and California oatgrass (<i>Danthonia californica</i>), intermixed with forbs including white forget-me-not (<i>Cryptand sp.</i>), tidy tips (<i>Layia platyglossa</i>)...' No doubt there are other grassland areas but these examples are rare." (Page 6) "The authors of the draft have refused requests to acknowledge native <i>Melica</i> species, common along trails and likely to be harmed by mowing along trails. Sword fern, if it really exists, should be acknowledged as rare. Wood fern is very common but sword fern is exceedingly rare in the Hillside Natural Area." (Page 6)	The planning team edited this section to reflect that native grasslands are rare, that sword fern is rare and that <i>Melica</i> species are common along trails.
92	Friends of Five Creeks	"The city, consultants, and Coastal Conservancy should not ground plans or permits, or spend taxpayers' money, on work that claims to be based on science, but lacks foundation or evidence, and is inconsistent, incorrect, or misleading." (Page 14)	Noted
93	Friends of Five Creeks	Going back farther in time, the plan's material on history and culture makes clear that oak forest today almost certainly	See response to comment #77.

HNA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
		covers far more area than it did in the 19th and 20th Centuries, hence, the text's statement that the oak forest is 'remnant' is inaccurate." (Page 6) "If the desire is to favor oak forest, the plan should say that. A science-based plan should say why, with evidence." (Page 6) "Thus, present phrasing misleads readers regarding the true challenge. A plan based on science also should get its numbers straight and use accurate categories." (Page 6)	
94	Friends of Five Creeks	"The summary table of objectives (page 9) under Objective 8, Monitor Key Performance Objectives, says: 'Biodiversity: Regularly monitor the HNA for the abundance and presence of key special status species, including Monarch butterfly, San Francisco Dusky Woodrat, and other species of concern such as the Alameda Whipsnake, as funding and time allows.'" (Page 9)	This Plan does not recommend monitoring of Alameda whipsnake. The likelihood that Alameda whipsnake occurs at the project site is low. Measures to avoid and minimize impacts to Alameda whipsnake and its foraging habitat will be presented as part of the CEQA process.
95	Friends of Five Creeks	Counting another way, p. 27 says, "Approximately 25% of all trees at the HNA belong to highly flammable species (e.g., pines, eucalyptus)." Eucalyptus is a real danger, but this does not justify exaggerating its prevalence. P. 24 says "Eucalyptus and Pine Groves are the most prevalent vegetation community at the project site, totaling over 36.2 acres." This would be about 35% of the site for eucalyptus and pines combined (36.2/102) .	Correct, they are the most prevalent vegetation community at the project site, totaling over 36.2 acres.
96	Friends of Five Creeks	Broom's occurrence in the northern areas similarly reflects volunteer efforts, but the histories are different. Describing this as "encroachment" conceals the true challenge of containment and maintenance. Authors of this plan have declined to acknowledge this reality. If the desire is to favor oak forest, the plan should say that. A science-based plan should say why, with evidence.	Broom is one of the highest priorities for containment and control (listed in the Cal-IPC invasive plant priority database). Please see Page 84 for prioritization of management of invasive species.
97	Friends of Five Creeks	The summary table of objectives, p. v and 63, under Objective 8, Monitor Key Performance Objectives, says: "Biodiversity: Regularly monitor the HNA for the abundance and presence of key special status species, including Monarch butterfly, San Francisco Dusky Woodrat, and other species..."	Removed "and other species", as this is implied by the sentence "Regularly monitor the HNA for the abundance and presence of key special status species, including...."
98	Friends of Five Creeks	"The current forest and non-forested habitats at the HNA are heavily dominated by invasive species (especially Eucalyptus,	This citation is based on a previous version of the Draft Plan. The correct percentage for Eucalyptus is 33.8 percent.

HNA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
99	Friends of Five Creeks	covering over 38% of the site).” (emphasis mine; p. 6 and repeated or rephrased elsewhere). This is untrue. The details in the plan make clear that grassland covers about 33 acres, oak forest about 29 acres, eucalyptus around 18 acres, and willows something over 6 acres (p. 27). That would leave pines about the same area as eucalyptus (36.2 – 18). Actual acreage is 107 acres, according to staff, but the draft uses 102 acres consistently.	The Plan uses 107 acres. The percentage of eucalyptus and pine cover is 33.8 percent.
100	Friends of Five Creeks	Calling eucalyptus and pines a “community” is misleading. Aside from being highly flammable non-native trees, they have almost nothing in common. Most eucalyptus are in groves, as the plan points out. Monterey pines are generally scattered to isolated, often in oak forest. The largest area of pines probably is the swath of widely spaced, varied non-natives planted north of Schmidt; this is never described. If eucalyptus and pines are a “community” so are oaks and willows – both native and not highly flammable (and together occupying about the same area). Thus, present phrasing misleads readers regarding the true challenge. A plan based on science also should get its numbers straight and use accurate categories – as is done on p. 46, which distinguishes “coniferous, eucalyptus stands, and oak forest.”	See response to comments #76 and 87.
101	Friends of Five Creeks	“Approximately 29 acres of remnant stands of oak woodlands remain (p. 6).” The oak forest is not “remnant.” As the plan makes clear (pp. 31-2), oaks have been expanding for at least close to 100 years, since fires were suppressed, and grazing ended. Consultants should be aware of this; their 1987 plan, used as a source in other parts of the plan, called for maintaining a grassy fire break on a ridge that is now overgrown with oak forest. See also P. 27 on the overall expansion of tree cover since the 1930s. Going back farther in time, the plan’s material on history and culture makes clear that oak forest today almost certainly covers far more area than it did in the 19th and 20th Centuries, the period of Spanish-Mexican grazing, or the many centuries that Native Americans burned regularly. More generally, current ecological understanding of local	See response to comment #77.

HNA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
		foothill areas is that they can switch fairly rapidly between forest, scrub, and grassland, with no “natural” dominant” or “climax.” I know of no evidence of oak forest being a long-term dominant since the end of the last Ice Age. If this evidence exists, it should be cited. If the object is to eliminate the tiny remainder of this major component of foothill ecosystem and biodiversity, the plan should say that. A science-based plan should provide evidence and reasons.	
102	Friends of Five Creeks	P. 25 also says, “French broom and localized Crofton Weed (<i>Ageratina adenophora</i>) is also a major constituent throughout the HNA.” This is incorrect. Crofton weed is a major constituent of scrub on (foggy) Mt. Tamalpais, but in the Hillside Natural Area it appears to have spread down from gardens into an area of native shrubs with scattered large buckeyes, below Regency Court. From there, it appears to have spread south into oaks and north and west down the shady riparian drainages, which are not coastal scrub. French broom similarly is not a major constituent of the few remaining pockets of Northern coastal scrub. Broom is more common in oak groves and grasslands. Broom’s true prevalence is difficult to assess, because after volunteers removed most of the stands of large plants, they have continued to pull out seedlings year-round. A significant long-lasting seed bank remains, however, so that without these frequent sweeps by volunteer labor, broom sprouts would again rapidly take over large areas.	See response to comment #80.
103	Friends of Five Creeks	By personal observation, shrubland has been shrinking due to fire-control mowing and removal of eucalyptus understory’s vibrant communities of monkeyflower and sage. The only conspicuous expansion of shrubs of any kind is where city has allowed invasive cotoneaster to take over large areas north of Schmidt. Where oak-forest canopy is closing in, one finds understory coastal-scrub plants such as bracken, California sage, monkeyflower, honeysuckle, and ceanothus, often scattered. LSA’s 1987 plan (p.27) pointed out that “a number of units have isolated patches of oak trees scattered though brushy areas.” These are not described in the current document, presumably because they no longer exist. Thus,	Noted. This Plan is concerned with managing fire behavior in the HNA, and does not intend to provide a thorough analysis on shrub community dynamics in response to landscape change. Please see responses to similar comments above.

HNA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
		available evidence indicates that over the past 50 years or so, coastal scrub has lost significant ground to oak-forest expansion. The remaining pockets also are among the relatively few places where one tends to see pollinators such as bees and butterflies.	
104	Friends of Five Creeks	The text repeatedly inaccurately describes what really grows in the Hillside Natural Area. The description of native grasslands (p. 24) contains this sentence: “Needlegrass grassland within the HNA is dominated by native perennial bunchgrasses such as purple needle grass, foothill needlegrass (<i>Stipa lipid</i>), oatgrass (<i>Danthonia californica</i>), June grass (<i>Koeleria cristata</i>), red fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i>), and bent grass (<i>Agrostis diegoensis</i>), intermixed with forbs including white forget-me-not (<i>Cryptand sp.</i>), tidy tips (<i>Layia platy glossa</i>), popcorn flower (<i>Plagiobothrys spp.</i>), California cream cups (<i>Platycnemic californica</i>), wild onion (<i>Allium spp.</i>), gilia (<i>Gilia sp.</i>), and common jewel flower (<i>Streptanthus glandulosus</i>) (LSA 1987).” <i>Danthonia</i> and June grass are rare in the Hillside Natural Area today, and in my observation not strongly correlated with needlegrass. In 2012, LSA shared with me what I understood to be its plant list from its 1987 vegetation management plan. This did not list any of the wildflowers above. They were not listed in earlier herbarium or Calflora observations, or the observations compiled by UC Berkeley professor Rudi Schmid, who in the 1990s and early 2000s yearly had students in his class in native vegetation survey the area. A few of these wildflowers, including tidy tips, have been planted from commercial wildflower-seed mixes by groups including children in the last year or so. The sentence quoted above, listing wildflowers, is immediately followed by another sentence accurately listing common wildflowers of Hillside Natural Area grasslands. Perhaps material was cut and pasted. The authors of the draft have refused requests to acknowledge native <i>Melica</i> species, common along trails and likely to be harmed by mowing along trails. The same pattern is true for ferns.	Please see response to a similar comment (comment #91). This section has been updated based on the provided information.

HNA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
105	Friends of Five Creeks	The section on Coast Live Oak Woodland (p. 24) says: "Common herbaceous species include wood fern (<i>Dryopteris arguta</i>), sword fern (<i>Polystichum munitum</i>)... (and other non-ferns). As has been pointed out repeatedly, and is evident with any degree of observation, wood fern is very common but sword fern is exceedingly rare in the Hillside Natural Area. The plan's authors have ignored requests to include two ferns that are common in the oak woodlands: California polypody (<i>Polypodium californicum</i>) and goldback fern (<i>Pentagramma triangularis</i>). These are impossible to miss on walks, and likely to be harmed by mowing along trails.	The Plan has been revised to include California polypody (<i>Polypodium californicum</i>) and goldback fern (<i>Pentagramma triangularis</i>) in the text.
106	Concerned El Cerrito resident	Can you hire goats to eat the hillside grass? Seriously even the city of El Sobrante does it.	Prescribed herbivory is one of the potential management actions that could be implemented under this Plan (see Pages 72-73).
107	Anonymous	Overall, looks good. I'm especially hopeful about the removal of eucalyptus trees, but concerned that oaks may be collateral damage. I didn't see how the potential loss of oaks is being mitigated. Also there will be many tall trees removed. It seems there needs to be a plan to get larger oaks into the mix. They take a long time to grow. During pandemic the hillside area was covered with California poppies and lupine for a couple of spring/early summers. As pandemic eased, the city started mowing, but too early. As a result, the poppies and lupines hadn't gone to seed and didn't come back. Now there are catspaw all over and lots of grass and foxtails. Please look to restore the poppies and lupines and other natives in the open hillside areas.	The Plan states that "No removal of oaks or other native trees is anticipated unless they pose a hazard to logging crews or recreationists" on Page 75. When feasible, the City will work to time vegetation management activities to be beneficial to the life cycle of native species.
108	Anonymous	I applaud the efforts the City will be making to remove eucalyptus and other invasive species , and to restore these areas with native plants. I hope the fuel breaks will be cleared of flammable invasives, but that a healthy understory of native plants will be encouraged. Something will grow in the fuel breaks - it would be better to have a healthy understory of low-growing, fire-resistant native plants than a constantly resprouting field of weeds. Here is a list of Fire Resistant Plants for Bayside Areas in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, California https://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/wp-	Please refer to the prescription of Shaded Fuel Breaks which states (Page 70): "A shaded fuel break does not remove all vegetation in the treatment area. Instead, it retains a portion of the canopy of native tree species." The Plan was revised to add the following: "To reduce ladder fuels, low growing native vegetation will be retained and kept to a height of 5 feet or less, provided that there is horizontal separation between plants of tree to five times the height of the residual plants and the residual plants are not within the drip lines of an overstory tree." On Page 71, was further revised to add the following: "Site specific prescriptions may be developed for individual sections of the HNA. In non-forested areas (i.e., Coastal

HNA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

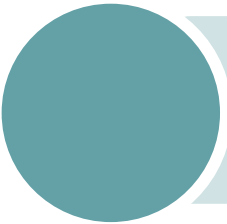
Comment #	Commenter Name	Comment	Response
		content/uploads/2024/07/Fire-Resistant-Plants-for-Bayside-Areas-in-Alameda-and-Contra-Costa-Counties-California-Sheet1.pdf I hope the City continues to remove invasives such as eucalyptus and pampas grass until the Hillside Natural Area really is a natural area, and not a place covered with weeds, as it is now.	Scrub), it is desirable to remove as much brush as possible within the fuel break area (see standards for expanded Defensible Space, Appendix G). However, if individual plants are desired to be left, leave plants with the following characteristics: young Plants less than 5 feet tall and individual or pairs of plants that are no more than 5 feet wide. The distance between residual plants shall be 3 to 5 times the height of the residual plants; three (3) times the height distance for slopes less than 30%, five (5) times for slopes equal to or greater than 30%. The width of the fuel break shall be 100-300 feet, where feasible.” The commenter’s suggested reference was added in a footnote, referring to restoration of native plant communities (Page 88). The City is committed to maintaining native species of the HNA and is currently not considering fire-resistant species from outside this area to be planted.

HNA Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan

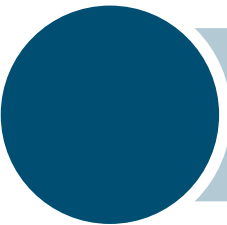
Karineh Samkian, Stephen Prée, & Battalion Chief Beckman
June 3, 2025 - City Council Meeting



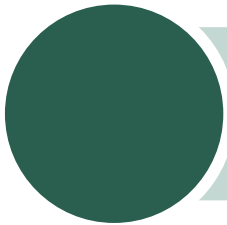
Overview



Plan Development



Prioritized Actions



CEQA Review

Background

- Hillside Natural Area (HNA) is ~107 acres
- City has implemented fire fuel reduction activities
- Volunteers have identified native plants and removed invasive plants



LSA

LEGEND

 Project Area

FIGURE 1

Funding



Coastal
Conservancy

- The State Coastal Conservancy awarded the City a grant to:
 1. Develop HNA Plan for fire fuel reduction and forest conservation
 2. Conduct a CEQA review

Plan Development Process



- City Council authorized contract with LSA Associates, Inc.
- Reviewed City plans and policies
- Coordinated with other City departments
- Conducted Assessments:
 1. Biological
 2. Cultural
 3. Fuel and fire hazard
 4. Trails



Plan Phases

Engagement touchpoints

Phase 1: Studies and Input

Oct 2023-Jan 2024

- SAG meeting #1
- Public workshop #1
- Community survey

Phase 2: Draft Development & Review

Jan-Sep 2024

- Committees & commission update
- SAG meeting #2
- 45-day comment period
- Public workshop #2

Phase 3: CEQA Review and Final Plan

Sep 2024-June 2025

- Committees & commission update
- 30-day CEQA comment period
- City Council

Throughout the process:

- ✓ City webpage
- ✓ City newsletters

Public Process

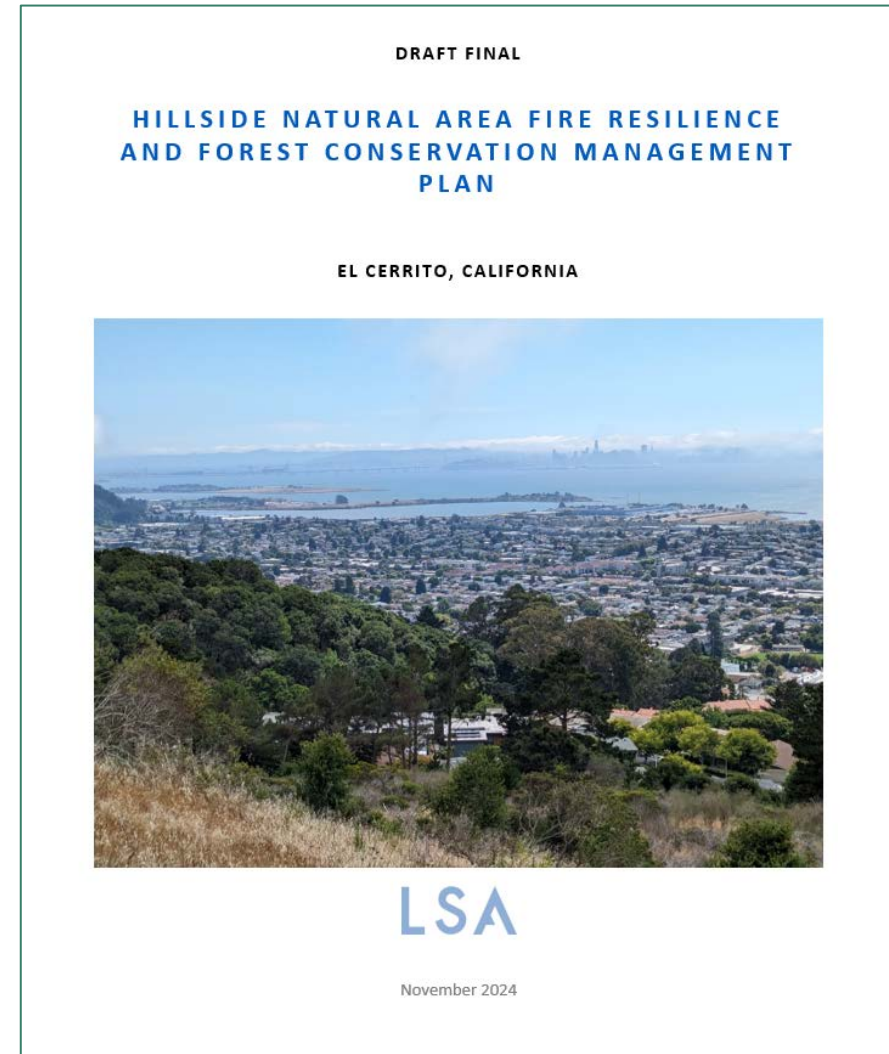


- Established Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) and had 2 meetings
- Met with Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation
- Hosted 2 public workshops
- Released a Community Survey
- Presented recommended actions to City Council

Public Process (continued)



- 45-day public comment period
 - Received 108 comments
 - Reviewed all comments
 - Updated the Plan as applicable
- Consulted with Park & Recreation Commission, Urban Forest Committee, & Environmental Quality Committee
 - Recommend Plan with minor additions



Prioritized Recommendations

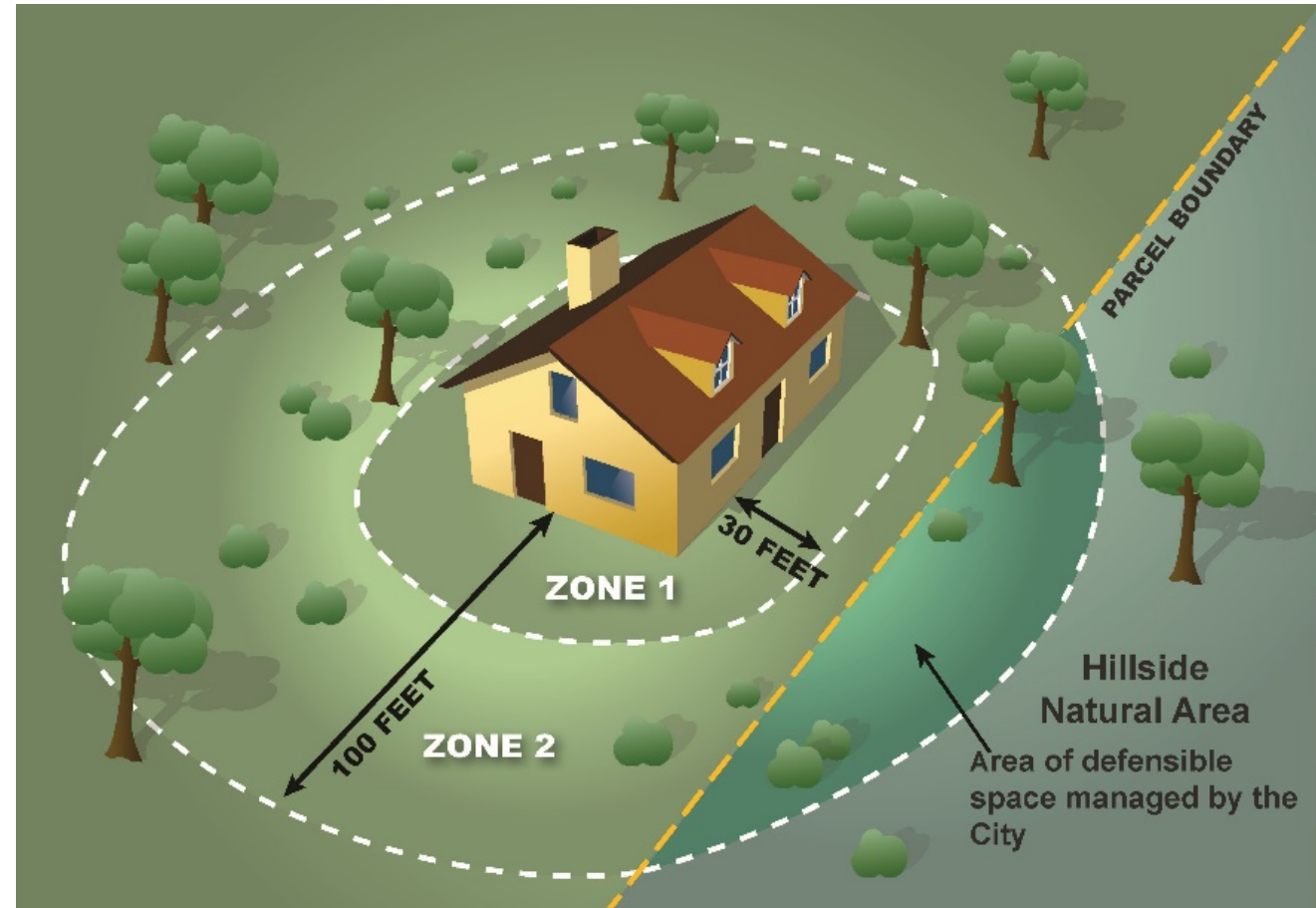


1. HIGHEST Create Defensible Space
2. HIGH Establish Shaded Fuel Break
3. HIGH/MEDIUM Remove Eucalyptus & Non-Native Conifers
4. HIGH/MEDIUM Create System of Fire Roads & Trails
5. HIGH/MEDIUM Manage Threats to Oak
6. MEDIUM Remove Invasive Plants
7. MEDIUM Restore and Re-establish Native Plants
8. MEDIUM Monitor Key Performance Indicators

Highest Priority

1. Create Defensible Space

- Within 100-ft of structures adjacent to HNA



High Priority



2. Establish Shaded Fuel Break

- 100 feet along HNA perimeter from property line

High/Medium Priority

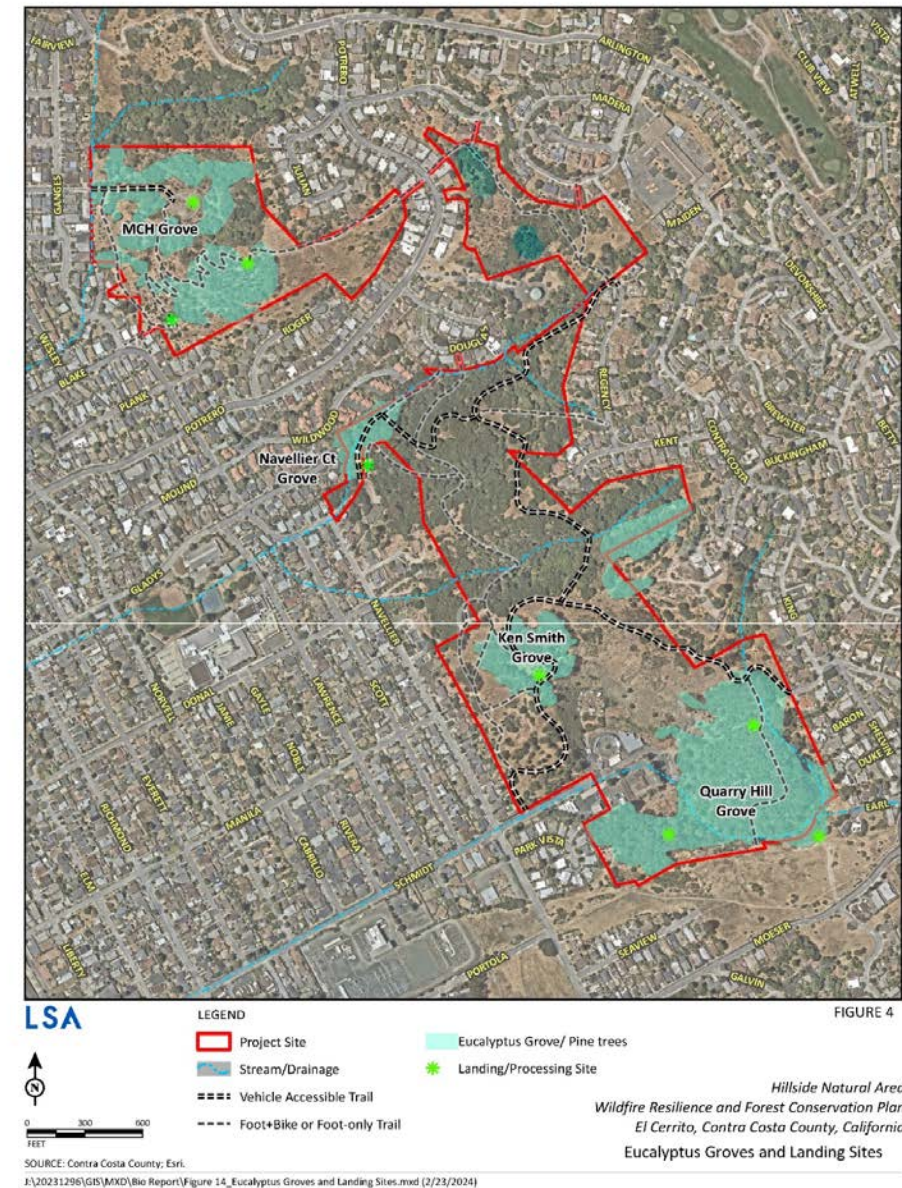
3. Remove Eucalyptus & Non-Native Conifers

a. Motorcycle Hill b. Quarry Hill c. Kent Drive & Buckingham d. Madera property e. Ken Smith grove

4. Create System of Fire Roads & Trails

a. Improvements at Potrero Ave & King Ct. b. add access to Motorcycle Hill c. improve other roads

5. Manage Threats to Oak



Medium Priority



6. Remove Invasive Plants
7. Restore and Re-establish Native Plants
8. Monitor Key Performance Indicators

CEQA



- Initial Study determined Mitigated Negative Declaration appropriate
- 30-day comment period
 - Responded to comments
 - Developed Mitigated Monitoring and Reporting Plan
- Future projects will not require additional CEQA review

Council Consideration



1. Conduct Public Hearing
2. Consider adopting:
 - a. Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
 - b. Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan

Questions?





AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 9.A.

Date: June 3, 2025
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Karen Pinkos, City Manager; Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer, Finance Department
Subject: CITY COUNCIL/PUBLIC FINANCING AUTHORITY ITEM
Fiscal Year 2025-26 Budget - Midcycle Summary and Addendum

ACTION PROPOSED

Receive and file a presentation on the draft Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Midcycle Summary and Addendum

BACKGROUND

On June 18, 2024, the City Council adopted the [Biennial Budget for Fiscal Years 2024-25 and 2025-26](#) by Resolution No. 2024-46. The budget included the operating and capital budgets for the City of El Cerrito, the Public Financing Authority, and the Employee Pension Board. The budget is the City's service and financial plan for the fiscal year: a planning tool that matches the services desired by the community to the resources required in order to provide those services.

The City Council adopted a biennial budget beginning in FY 2024-25 that encompassed two fiscal years. The biennial budget allowed staff to provide a high emphasis on long-term planning and forecasting and provided a greater opportunity to focus on how the City's programs and services are working and complying with the Strategic Plan. The biennial budget also reduced resources associated with annual budgeting, allowing staff the ability to focus on pressing priorities rather than producing a budget book.

The previously approved [budget document](#) provides a plan that outlines how resources will be utilized to achieve the City's goals; however, adoption of the spending authority provides the legal authority to expend City revenues to realize these objectives. While the budget document incorporates two fiscal years, the City Council is required per the El Cerrito Municipal Code to adopt and appropriate an annual budget for each fiscal year.

Staff is presenting an updated budget for FY 2025-26 based on actual financial performance to date, current levels of service, and recommendations for the next fiscal year. The Employee Pension Board has no surviving members and has no budget for Fiscal Year 2025-26. The City's Strategic Plan continues to provide the foundation for developing the updated Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-26.

On May 27, 2025, Staff discussed the FY 2025-26 Budget with the Financial Advisory Board (FAB) at their regular meeting. The City Council is receiving a presentation on the FY 2025-26 Budget on June 3, 2025 and will consider adoption of the FY 2025-26 Budget spending authority and Gann Limit by resolution at their regular meeting on June 17, 2025.

The FAB and City Council may choose to have additional special meetings to review the budget if they feel it is necessary. The City Council must approve the budget by June 30, 2025.

ANALYSIS

General Fund Projected Fiscal Year 2024-25 and Proposed 2025-26 Budget

In May 2025, staff presented the third quarter budget update for FY 2024-25 to the City Council and projected a General Fund reserve balance of \$21.8 million. Table 1 below shows that the adopted FY 2025-26 General Fund budget has a \$15,775 surplus with a year-end reserve ratio of 40.5%. There are no proposed updates to the General Fund budget for expenditures or revenue, only transfers between departments to absorb increased cost projections.

Table 1: Summary of General Fund Revenues, Expenses and Fund Balance				
General Fund Summary	FY 2022-23 Actual	FY 2023-24 Actual	FY 2024-25 Projected	FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget (June 2024)
Beginning Fund Balance	\$16,214,375	\$23,143,081	\$22,893,338	\$21,764,918
Total Revenues	50,968,276	52,123,574	51,696,979	53,779,792
Total Expenses & Other Financing Sources (Uses)	44,039,570	52,373,317	52,825,399	53,764,017
Net Change in Fund Balance	6,928,706	(249,743)	(1,128,420)	15,775
Projected/Actual Total Fund Balance	\$23,143,081	\$22,893,338	\$21,764,918	\$21,780,693
Fund Balance Reserve %	52.6%	43.7%	41.2%	40.5%

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

The CIP currently has 33 identified projects, including about 20 active projects that are either in construction, design, or on-going planning. Estimated FY 2025-26 expenditures total approximately \$7.8 million for all projects. A variety of projects for transportation, recreation facilities, greenway, and storm drain repairs are underway. The largest projects include Swim Center repairs and modifications, Annual Street Improvement Program, Street & Sidewalk Access Modifications, and the Richmond Streets Complete Streets Improvement Project (led by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority).

The CIP Budget table identifies the appropriation of expenditures in various funds. The table also lists the projects to be funded by the City's Measure A Street Improvement Fund (Fund 211), which constitutes the Annual Program of Maintenance and Improvement pursuant to Measure A approved by the votes in 2008, which is updated annually.

The proposed expenditures for the FY 2025-26 CIP Budget are shown in Table 2. The CIP is proposed to increase expenditures by \$5,003,759, with an increase in revenue of \$1,620,000.

Table 2: Capital Improvement Program Budget

Fund		Project #	Category	FY 2025-26
204	Measure J Return to Source (CCTA-Transportation)			
	Ohlone Greenway Improvements - Uptown	C3069/C3084	CR	\$47,000
	Smart & Safe Signals	C3086	ST	50,000
	SUBTOTAL Measure J Return to Source			97,000
205	Measure J Storm Drain			
	Storm Drain Program	C5036	SD	225,000
	SUBTOTAL Measure J Storm Drain			225,000
207	Measure H Parks & Recreation Facilities			
	Swim Center Enhancements	C3050	FA	200,000
	SUBTOTAL Measure H Parks & Rec			200,000
211	Measure A Street Improvements**			
	Annual Street Improvement Program	C3027	ST	3,415,000
	Traffic Safety & Management Program	C3070	ST	160,000
	Richmond Street Improvements	C3080	ST	475,000
	SUBTOTAL Measure A Street Improvements			4,050,000
212	SB 1 - Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account Fund			
	Access Modifications - Streets & Sidewalks	C3024	ST	1,070,000
	Active Transportation Program (ATP)	tbd	ST	75,000
	Richmond Street Improvements	C3080	ST	225,000
	SUBTOTAL SB 1 - Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account Fund			1,370,000
30X	Capital Improvement Fund (Grant Sources - Secure)			
	Ohlone Greenway Improvements - Uptown	C3069/C3084	CR	180,000
	Richmond Street Improvements	C3080	ST	1,400,000
	EC Plaza BART to Bay Trail Connection/TOD ATP	tbd	ST	300,000
	SUBTOTAL Capital Improvement Fund (Grant Sources - Secure)			1,880,000
	TOTAL Capital Improvement Program Budget Appropriations			\$7,822,000

Special Revenue and Debt Service and Enterprise Funds

Table 3 provides a summary of the change in fund balance for all other Special Revenue, Debt Service and Enterprise Funds. The revenue and expenditure estimates for each of these funds are as per the adopted budget, except where minor revisions were needed due to timing of purchases or projects. Total increases in expenditures of \$1,011,612, and a \$40,000 increase in revenue in fund 227 for grant revenue. Increases are due to SEIU labor agreement increases and various updates due to the timing of purchases or projects. The attached Budget Summary outlines all changes on a line-item basis by Department.

Table 3: Summary of Special Revenue and Other Funds

Fund	Fund Description	Beginning Fund Balance FY 2025	Projected Increase (Decrease) FY 2025	Projected Ending Fund Balance FY 2025	Original Change in FB FY 2026	Proposed Increase (Decrease) FY 2026	Ending Projected Fund Balance
201	Gas Tax Fund	\$361,965	\$(33,441)	\$328,524	\$(34,250)	\$(8,648)	\$285,626
202	Nat'l Pollut Dis Elim Sys	368,864	(130,423)	238,441	(142,181)	(103)	96,156
203	Land & Light Assess Distr	213,297	(117,635)	95,662	(20,639)	(5,814)	69,209
204	Measure J-Return to Source Fund	658,426	(302,622)	355,804	6,287	(117,465)	244,626
205	Measure J Storm Drain	1,094,638	(858,436)	236,202	(165,670)	(776)	69,756
206	Measure A Parcel Tax	3,793	(3,793)	-	-	-	-
207	Measure H Park & Rec Facilities	454,063	(291,431)	162,632	56,619	(150,000)	69,251
208	Asset Seizure Fund	322,298	(75,000)	247,298	(75,000)	-	172,298
209	Vehicle Abatement Fund	395,030	(199,890)	195,140	(32,000)	(138,000)	25,140
211	Street Improvement & Maint	3,868,662	-	3,868,662	86,084	(2,638,759)	1,315,987
212	SB1-Road Repair & Accountability	1,379,868	(250,000)	1,129,868	(336,984)	(595,000)	197,884
213	Public Art Fund	142,329	(50,000)	92,329	(50,000)	-	42,329
214	Measure J-Paratransit Fund	610,949	(88,960)	521,989	49,619	(136,945)	434,663
221	Grants	46,039	(24,139)	21,900	-	-	21,900
222	C.O.P.S. Grant Fund	424,003	(208,003)	216,000	(166,000)	(90,000)	(40,000)
230	Municipal Services Corp	48,573	(41,178)	7,395	35,737	1,333	44,465
231	City Housing Trust	2,985,000	-	2,985,000	-	-	2,985,000
232	City LMI Housing Fund	5,281,952	(35,033)	5,246,919	(385,000)	-	4,861,919
3*	Capital Improvement Funds	104,631	-	104,631	40,000	-	144,631
501	Integrated Waste Mgmt	3,387,603	-	3,387,603	163,972	(430,194)	3,121,381
601	Vehicle/Equip Replacement	581,323	45,000	626,323	(108,535)	(45,000)	472,788
835	City Hall Bond D/S	19,531	-	19,531	55,673	-	75,204
836	Street Imp Bond D/S	4,997	-	4,997	-	-	4,997
	Total	\$22,757,835	\$(2,664,984)	\$20,092,851	\$(1,022,270)	\$(4,355,371)	\$14,715,210

Gann Appropriations Limit

Included in the recommended actions for adoption of the FY 2025-26 budget is the approval of the calculation and to establish the City's FY 2025-26 Gann Appropriation Limit as \$195,961,530. Approved in 1979 and amended in 1990, the Gann Initiative sets an annual appropriation limit on City expenditures based on the amount of tax proceeds received. This amount is adjusted each year based on changes in population and inflation. The California Government Code requires that the City adopt the Gann appropriations limit by resolution on an annual basis. In FY 2025-26, the respective State and County offices have provided the City with the following factors to establish the Gann limit computation:

Cost of Living

California Per Capita Personal Income = 6.44%

Population

Population Change, City of El Cerrito = 1.06%

Population Change, County of Contra Costa = 0.00%

Summary

With all funds combined, the Proposed FY 2025-26 Budget recommends total expenditures of \$74,859,180, an increase of \$6,015,388 from the previous fiscal year, and provides funding for all City services, including Police, Fire, Recreation, Community Development, Public Works, and City Management. At this time, total revenues are projected to be \$69,497,298, which is an increase of \$1,660,000 from the previous fiscal year. These funds will continue to be monitored and updated as the impacts of inflation and uncertain economic conditions continue.

For FY 2025-26, staff proposes a General Fund budget with revenues of \$53,779,792 and expenditures of \$53,764,018, resulting in a surplus of \$15,775; no change from the originally adopted budget presented on June 18, 2024.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

This action supports the [City's Strategic Plan Goal\(s\)](#) of:

- *High Performing Organization* by ensuring the City maintains a strong financial position - and will allow the City Manager to develop a plan to ensure the Citywide revenues meet the cost of providing Citywide services, including adequate reserves in the face of significant unanticipated revenue shortfalls. It further ensures procedures that represent best practices in financial management.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Proposed FY 2025-26 Budget recommends total citywide expenditures of \$74,859,180, an increase of \$6,015,388 from the previous fiscal year. Total citywide revenues are projected to be \$69,497,298, which is an increase of \$1,660,000 from the previous fiscal year. For FY 2025-26, staff proposes a General Fund budget with revenues of \$53,779,792 and expenditures of \$53,764,018, resulting in a surplus of \$15,775; no change from the originally adopted budget presented on June 18, 2024. These funds will continue to be monitored and the City Council will be regularly updated as the impacts of inflation and uncertain economic conditions continue.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

Reviewed by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Karen Pinkos', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Karen Pinkos, City Manager

1. Fiscal Year 2025-26 Proposed Budget Addendum
2. Presentation

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
Fund: 101 - General Fund							
REVENUES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							
4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes							
101-00-00 40010		Property Tax-Cur Secured	10,536,113.00	10,949,311.56	10,949,311.56	-	
101-00-00 40020		Property Tax-Supplemental	230,000.00	230,000.00	230,000.00	-	
101-00-00 40030		Property Tax-Unitary	111,944.00	111,944.00	111,944.00	-	
101-00-00 40040		Property Tax-Cur Unsec	344,930.00	358,456.24	358,456.24	-	
101-00-00 40080		Property Tax-Homeowners'	62,000.00	62,000.00	62,000.00	-	
101-00-00 40085		Property Tax-RPTTF Pass Through Pmts	420,000.00	-	-	-	
101-00-00 40090		Property Tax-RPTTF Residual Pmts	1,125,264.00	2,600,000.00	2,600,000.00	-	
101-00-00 40095		Property Tax In-Lieu VLF	3,631,684.00	3,768,598.03	3,768,598.03	-	
101-00-00 40710		Real Property County Transfer Tx	3,000,000.00	3,200,000.00	3,200,000.00	-	
101-00-00 40210		Sales Tax-1% Bradley-Burns Local Share	3,591,458.00	3,690,049.00	3,690,049.00	-	
101-00-00 40220		Sales Tax-1/2% Prop 172	426,332.00	426,332.00	426,332.00	-	
101-00-00 40230		Sales & Use Tax In-Lieu	500,000.00	500,000.00	500,000.00	-	
101-00-00 40240		Sales Tax - District Tax - Measure R	4,459,000.00	4,581,000.00	4,581,000.00	-	
101-00-00 40410		Transient Occupancy Tax	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
101-00-00 40510		Franchise Fees	1,350,000.00	1,350,000.00	1,350,000.00	-	
101-00-00 40515		IN KIND/PEG FEES	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
101-00-00 40610		Business License Taxes	1,182,817.00	1,206,473.14	1,206,473.14	-	
101-00-00 40811		Utility Users' Tax - Energy	2,204,260.00	2,250,000.00	2,250,000.00	-	
101-00-00 40812		Utility Users' Tax - Water	590,000.00	550,000.00	550,000.00	-	
101-00-00 40813		Utility Users' Tax - Telecom	900,000.00	900,000.00	900,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes			34,795,802.00	36,864,163.97	36,864,163.97	-	
4200-Lic & Perm - Licenses & Permits							
101-00-00 42285		Tobacco Retailer License	7,000.00	7,280.00	7,280.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4200-Lic & Perm - Licenses & Permits			7,000.00	7,280.00	7,280.00	-	
4300-Fines/Forf - Fines & Forfeitures							
101-00-00 43925		Penalties-BLT	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4300-Fines/Forf - Fines & Forfeitures			30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property							
101-00-00 44010		Interest Income	560,000.00	420,000.00	420,000.00	-	
101-00-00 44220		Rentals-Facilities	7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property			567,000.00	427,000.00	427,000.00	-	
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues							
101-00-00 45020		VLF In Lieu	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues			30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services							
101-00-00 46510		Successor Agency Admin Allowance	250,000.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services			250,000.00	-	-	-	
4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue							
101-00-00 48997		Cannabis Revenue	440,000.00	550,000.00	550,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue			440,000.00	550,000.00	550,000.00	-	
4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources							
101-00-00 49990.501		Operating Xfer In-IWM	3,671.00	3,671.00	3,671.00	-	
101-00-00 49991.201		Indirect Xfer In-Gas	108,048.00	109,337.00	109,337.00	-	
101-00-00 49991.202		Indirect Xfer In-NPDES	75,000.00	75,000.00	75,000.00	-	
101-00-00 49991.203		Indirect Xfer In-LLAD	163,200.00	163,200.00	163,200.00	-	
101-00-00 49991.204		Indirect Xfer In-MEAS J	68,209.00	69,546.00	69,546.00	-	
101-00-00 49991.205		Indirect Xfer In-Storm Drain	74,000.00	74,000.00	74,000.00	-	
101-00-00 49991.207		Indirect Xfer In-Measure H Park & Facilities	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
101-00-00 49991.501		Indirect Xfer In-IWM	422,034.00	447,356.00	447,356.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources			964,162.00	992,110.00	992,110.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental			37,083,964.00	38,900,553.97	38,900,553.97	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			37,083,964.00	38,900,553.97	38,900,553.97	-	
Department: 10 - Administration							
Division: 10 - City Council							
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services							
101-10-10 46520		Program Fees	-	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services			-	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
Division Total: 10 - City Council			-	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
Division: 40 - City Clerk							
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services							
101-10-40 46520		Program Fees	1,500.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services			1,500.00	-	-	-	
Division Total: 40 - City Clerk			1,500.00	-	-	-	
Division: 50 - Finance Department							
4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue							
101-10-50 48995		Cal Card Rebate Revenue	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue			10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Division Total: 50 - Finance Department			10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Department Total: 10 - Administration			11,500.00	16,000.00	16,000.00	-	
Department: 20 - Police							
Division: 11 - Police Administration							
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues							
101-20-11 45540		POST Reimbursement	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues			15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services							
101-20-11 46210		Fingerprinting Services	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
101-20-11 46520		Program Fees	52,000.00	54,080.00	54,080.00	-	
101-20-11 46910		Reproduction Fees	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services			71,000.00	73,080.00	73,080.00	-	
Division Total: 11 - Police Administration			86,000.00	88,080.00	88,080.00	-	
Division: 12 - Police Operations							
4300-Fines/Forf - Fines & Forfeitures							
101-20-12 43010		Moving Vehicle Citations	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
101-20-12 43020	Parking Citations/Fines	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4300-Fines/Forf - Fines & Forfeitures		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Division Total: 12 - Police Operations		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Department Total: 20 - Police		186,000.00	188,080.00	188,080.00	-	
Department: 25 - Fire						
Division: 10 - Fire Administration						
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues						
101-25-10 45550	OES Reimbursement	700,000.00	700,000.00	700,000.00	-	
101-25-10 45570	Fire Inspection Fees	90,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
101-25-10 45720	Kensington Fire District	4,394,901.00	4,601,543.49	4,601,543.49	-	
101-25-10 45792	Measure H EMS Reimbursements	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues		5,264,901.00	5,481,543.49	5,481,543.49	-	
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-25-10 46010	Plan Check Fees	104,000.00	108,160.00	108,160.00	-	
101-25-10 46250	Weed Abatement	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
101-25-10 46520	Program Fees	5,200.00	5,408.00	5,408.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		119,200.00	123,568.00	123,568.00	-	
Division Total: 10 - Fire Administration		5,384,101.00	5,605,111.49	5,605,111.49	-	
Department Total: 25 - Fire		5,384,101.00	5,605,111.49	5,605,111.49	-	
Department: 30 - Public Works						
Division: 20 - Public Works Engineering						
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-30-20 46520	Program Fees	553,000.00	575,120.00	575,120.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		553,000.00	575,120.00	575,120.00	-	
Division Total: 20 - Public Works Engineering		553,000.00	575,120.00	575,120.00	-	
Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance						
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues						
101-30-30 45590	Other State Reimbursement	24,500.00	24,500.00	24,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues		24,500.00	24,500.00	24,500.00	-	
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-30-30 46520	Program Fees	21,632.00	22,497.28	22,497.28	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		21,632.00	22,497.28	22,497.28	-	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance		46,132.00	46,997.28	46,997.28	-	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works		599,132.00	622,117.28	622,117.28	-	
Department: 40 - Community Development						
Division: 10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmt						
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-40-10 46520	Program Fees	194,464.00	202,222.28	202,222.28	-	
101-40-10 46930	Business License Admin	105,000.00	105,000.00	105,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		299,464.00	307,222.28	307,222.28	-	
Division Total: 10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmt		299,464.00	307,222.28	307,222.28	-	
Division: 30 - Comm Dev-Planning						
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-40-30 46010	Plan Check Fees	207,792.00	216,103.68	216,103.68	-	
101-40-30 46520	Program Fees	300,560.00	312,582.40	312,582.40	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		508,352.00	528,686.08	528,686.08	-	
Division Total: 30 - Comm Dev-Planning		508,352.00	528,686.08	528,686.08	-	
Division: 40 - Comm Dev-Building Svcs						
4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes						
101-40-40 40910	Construction Tax	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes		1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	-	
4200-Lic & Perm - Licenses & Permits						
101-40-40 42210	Building Permits	850,000.00	916,000.00	916,000.00	-	
101-40-40 42220	Building Issuance Fee	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
101-40-40 42230	Electrical Permits	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
101-40-40 42240	Mechanical Permits	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
101-40-40 42260	Plumbing Permits	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4200-Lic & Perm - Licenses & Permits		1,000,000.00	1,066,000.00	1,066,000.00	-	
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-40-40 46010	Plan Check Fees	640,000.00	648,960.00	648,960.00	-	
101-40-40 46040	Rental Inspection Fees	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
101-40-40 46190	Other Planning/Insp Fees	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
101-40-40 46520	Program Fees	2,080.00	2,163.20	2,163.20	-	
101-40-40 46920	Document Imaging Fee	26,000.00	27,040.00	27,040.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		708,080.00	718,163.20	718,163.20	-	
Division Total: 40 - Comm Dev-Building Svcs		1,709,580.00	1,785,663.20	1,785,663.20	-	
Department Total: 40 - Community Development		2,517,396.00	2,621,571.56	2,621,571.56	-	
Department: 50 - Recreation						
Division: 10 - Recreation-Admin						
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-50-10 46520	Program Fees	16,640.00	17,305.60	17,305.60	-	
101-50-10 46542	Restroom Key Fees	8,320.00	8,652.80	8,652.80	-	
101-50-10 46543	Tennis Permit Fees	200.00	200.00	200.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		25,160.00	26,158.40	26,158.40	-	
4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue						
101-50-10 48990	Other Misc Revenue	180,000.00	187,200.00	187,200.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue		180,000.00	187,200.00	187,200.00	-	
Division Total: 10 - Recreation-Admin		205,160.00	213,358.40	213,358.40	-	
Division: 20 - Recreation-Chldcr Admin						
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-50-20 46520	Program Fees	94,261.00	98,032.00	98,032.00	-	
101-50-20 46521.1	Teeter Tots Fees	70,000.00	72,800.00	72,800.00	-	
101-50-20 46521.3	Harding Childcare	528,320.00	549,452.00	549,452.00	-	
101-50-20 46521.5	Madera Childcare	877,300.00	854,880.00	854,880.00	-	
101-50-20 46521.6	Fairmount Childcare	451,500.00	323,752.00	323,752.00	-	
101-50-20 46522.1	Arlington Daycamp	173,800.00	180,752.00	180,752.00	-	
101-50-20 46522.2	Daycamp VIP	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-50-20 46522.3	Harding Daycamp	231,300.00	213,200.00	213,200.00	-	

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
101-50-20 46522.4	Mix & Match Camp	40,000.00	41,600.00	41,600.00	-	
101-50-20 46522.6	Discover Summer Camp	192,000.00	199,680.00	199,680.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		2,661,481.00	2,537,148.00	2,537,148.00	-	
Division Total: 20 - Recreation-Chldcr Admin		2,661,481.00	2,537,148.00	2,537,148.00	-	
Division: 30 - Recreation-Swim Center						
4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property						
101-50-30 44227	Rentals-Swim Ctr	55,000.00	57,200.00	57,200.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property		55,000.00	57,200.00	57,200.00	-	
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-50-30 46520	Program Fees	18,000.00	18,720.00	18,720.00	-	
101-50-30 46525	Recreation Swim	116,480.00	121,139.20	121,139.20	-	
101-50-30 46526	Lap Swim	373,000.00	387,920.00	387,920.00	-	
101-50-30 46526.1	Water Aerobics	21,000.00	21,840.00	21,840.00	-	
101-50-30 46527	Swim Teams	176,800.00	183,872.00	183,872.00	-	
101-50-30 46530	Training/Class Fees	2,600.00	2,704.00	2,704.00	-	
101-50-30 46537	Lesson Fees	290,000.00	301,600.00	301,600.00	-	
101-50-30 46550	Taxable Sales	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		998,880.00	1,038,795.20	1,038,795.20	-	
Division Total: 30 - Recreation-Swim Center		1,053,880.00	1,095,995.20	1,095,995.20	-	
Division: 40 - Recreation-Senior Svcs						
4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property						
101-50-40 44220	Rentals-Facilities	10,000.00	10,400.00	10,400.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property		10,000.00	10,400.00	10,400.00	-	
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-50-40 46520	Program Fees	52,000.00	54,080.00	54,080.00	-	
101-50-40 46532	Excursions/Trips	5,200.00	5,408.00	5,408.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		57,200.00	59,488.00	59,488.00	-	
4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources						
101-50-40 49991.214	Indirect Xfer In-Paratransit	37,877.00	39,392.00	39,392.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources		37,877.00	39,392.00	39,392.00	-	
Division Total: 40 - Recreation-Senior Svcs		105,077.00	109,280.00	109,280.00	-	
Division: 50 - Recreation-Adult /Commnty						
4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property						
101-50-50 44221	Rentals-Comm Center	60,000.00	62,400.00	62,400.00	-	
101-50-50 44222	Rentals-Field Reserv	65,000.00	67,600.00	67,600.00	-	
101-50-50 44223	Rentals-Clubhouse	40,000.00	41,600.00	41,600.00	-	
101-50-50 44224	Rentals-Picnic	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
101-50-50 44226	Rentals-Tennis Crt	110,000.00	114,400.00	114,400.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property		325,000.00	336,000.00	336,000.00	-	
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-50-50 46531	General Activities	248,000.00	257,920.00	257,920.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		248,000.00	257,920.00	257,920.00	-	
Division Total: 50 - Recreation-Adult /Commnty		573,000.00	593,920.00	593,920.00	-	
Division: 60 - Recreation-Youth Services						
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
101-50-60 46520.2	Ravencloff Prgrm	85,000.00	88,400.00	88,400.00	-	
101-50-60 46531	General Activities	275,000.00	286,000.00	286,000.00	-	
101-50-60 46533	Special Programs	739,833.00	720,547.00	720,547.00	-	
101-50-60 46534	Sports Programs	216,455.00	181,709.00	181,709.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		1,316,288.00	1,276,656.00	1,276,656.00	-	
Division Total: 60 - Recreation-Youth Services		1,316,288.00	1,276,656.00	1,276,656.00	-	
Department Total: 50 - Recreation		5,914,886.00	5,826,357.60	5,826,357.60	-	
REVENUES Total		51,696,979.00	53,779,791.90	53,779,791.90	-	
EXPENSES						
Department: 10 - Administration						
Division: 10 - City Council						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
101-10-10 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	39,000.00	39,000.00	39,000.00	-	
101-10-10 51210	PERS Contributions	1,739.00	1,738.80	1,738.80	-	
101-10-10 51211	PERS UAL	7,559.00	7,767.52	7,767.52	-	
101-10-10 51220	FICA/Medicare	2,840.00	2,839.92	2,839.92	-	
101-10-10 51150	Special Pay	250.00	250.00	250.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		51,388.00	51,596.24	51,596.24	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-10-10 52100	Budget Only - One Time Adjustments	-	-	(5,000.00)	(5,000.00)	GF Adj between departments
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		-	-	(5,000.00)	(5,000.00)	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
101-10-10 54210	Telephone Expenses	192.00	182.00	182.00	-	
101-10-10 54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	9,000.00	4,360.00	4,360.00	-	
101-10-10 54410	Printing & Binding	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-10-10 54610	Travel & Training	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	-	
101-10-10 54910	Dues & Subscriptions	47,332.00	48,477.00	48,477.00	-	
101-10-10 54920	Events & Field Trips	7,500.00	14,500.00	14,500.00	-	
101-10-10 54990	Other Administrative Svcs	38,528.00	40,157.00	40,157.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		138,052.00	143,176.00	143,176.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies						
101-10-10 55110	General Office Supplies	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	-	
Division Total: 10 - City Council		190,940.00	196,272.24	191,272.24	(5,000.00)	
Division: 20 - City Manager						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
101-10-20 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	538,527.21	554,683.02	554,683.02	-	
101-10-20 51210	PERS Contributions	59,979.03	61,760.05	61,760.05	-	
101-10-20 51211	PERS UAL	124,197.57	131,419.92	131,419.92	-	
101-10-20 51220	FICA/Medicare	34,105.22	35,509.86	35,509.86	-	
101-10-20 51230	Medical Benefits	74,496.62	76,359.03	76,359.03	-	
101-10-20 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	4,213.99	4,244.19	4,244.19	-	
101-10-20 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	16,978.18	17,827.09	17,827.09	-	

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
101-10-20 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	4,725.00	4,725.00	4,725.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		857,222.81	886,528.16	886,528.16	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-10-20 52100	Budget Only - One Time Adjustments	50,000.00	-	3,450.00	3,450.00	GF Adj between departments
101-10-20 52120	Legal & Financial Svcs	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
101-10-20 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	172,445.00	98,959.00	98,959.00	-	
101-10-20 52230	Other Technical Services	98,927.00	98,927.00	98,927.00	-	
101-10-20 52240	Miscellaneous Services	15,914.00	15,914.00	15,914.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		352,286.00	228,800.00	232,250.00	3,450.00	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
101-10-20 54210	Telephone Expenses	8,057.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	-	
101-10-20 54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	-	
101-10-20 54230	Internet Services	19,500.00	19,500.00	19,500.00	-	
101-10-20 54410	Printing & Binding	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-10-20 54610	Travel & Training	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
101-10-20 54910	Dues & Subscriptions	5,314.00	5,314.00	5,314.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		52,371.00	51,814.00	51,814.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies						
101-10-20 55110	General Office Supplies	946.00	946.00	946.00	-	
101-10-20 55120	Postage & Delivery	568.00	568.00	568.00	-	
101-10-20 55130	Photocopying Charges	473.00	473.00	473.00	-	
101-10-20 55140	Recognition-EE/Volunteer	6,624.00	6,624.00	6,624.00	-	
101-10-20 55210	Fuel	220.00	231.00	231.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		8,831.00	8,842.00	8,842.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital						
101-10-20 56410	Office Equipment <\$10K	4,647.00	4,647.00	4,647.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital		4,647.00	4,647.00	4,647.00	-	
Division Total: 20 - City Manager		1,275,357.81	1,180,631.16	1,184,081.16	3,450.00	
Division: 30 - City Attorney						
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-10-30 52120	Legal & Financial Svcs	350,000.00	350,000.00	350,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		350,000.00	350,000.00	350,000.00	-	
Division Total: 30 - City Attorney		350,000.00	350,000.00	350,000.00	-	
Division: 40 - City Clerk						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
101-10-40 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	261,105.00	268,937.96	268,937.96	-	
101-10-40 51210	PERS Contributions	29,240.00	30,114.41	30,114.41	-	
101-10-40 51211	PERS UAL	63,182.00	66,851.47	66,851.47	-	
101-10-40 51220	FICA/Medicare	19,402.00	20,198.81	20,198.81	-	
101-10-40 51230	Medical Benefits	49,960.00	51,208.38	51,208.38	-	
101-10-40 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	2,541.00	2,564.82	2,564.82	-	
101-10-40 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	13,061.00	13,713.14	13,713.14	-	
101-10-40 51150	Special Pay	1,300.00	1,300.00	1,300.00	-	
101-10-40 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	721.00	720.20	720.20	-	
101-10-40 51990	Salary Savings	1,706.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		442,218.00	455,609.19	455,609.19	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-10-40 52100	Budget Only - One Time Adjustments	-	-	7,286.00	7,286.00	GF Adj between departments
101-10-40 52110	Collect & Admin Services	17,015.00	17,695.00	17,695.00	-	
101-10-40 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	77,230.00	55,000.00	55,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		94,245.00	72,695.00	79,981.00	7,286.00	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
101-10-40 54210	Telephone Expenses	948.00	940.00	940.00	-	
101-10-40 54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	720.00	720.00	720.00	-	
101-10-40 54240	Software Licenses & Maintenance	13,089.00	13,743.00	13,743.00	-	
101-10-40 54310	Legal Notices & Advertise	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-10-40 54610	Travel & Training	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-10-40 54910	Dues & Subscriptions	1,300.00	575.00	575.00	-	
101-10-40 54990	Other Administrative Svcs	8,000.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		32,057.00	23,978.00	23,978.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies						
101-10-40 55110	General Office Supplies	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-10-40 55120	Postage & Delivery	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		1,100.00	1,100.00	1,100.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital						
101-10-40 56410	Office Equipment <\$10K	1,650.00	1,715.00	1,715.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital		1,650.00	1,715.00	1,715.00	-	
Division Total: 40 - City Clerk		571,270.00	555,097.19	562,383.19	7,286.00	
Division: 50 - Finance Department						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
101-10-50 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	730,273.58	763,614.12	763,614.12	-	
101-10-50 51210	PERS Contributions	47,175.01	49,281.86	49,281.86	-	
101-10-50 51211	PERS UAL	164,477.27	176,331.69	176,331.69	-	
101-10-50 51220	FICA/Medicare	54,486.36	57,202.73	57,202.73	-	
101-10-50 51230	Medical Benefits	101,608.78	104,149.00	104,149.00	-	
101-10-50 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	7,151.07	7,413.39	7,413.39	-	
101-10-50 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	39,180.40	41,139.42	41,139.42	-	
101-10-50 51140	Overtime Pay	4,413.55	4,545.96	4,545.96	-	
101-10-50 51150	Special Pay	4,699.76	4,699.76	4,699.76	-	
101-10-50 51155	One-Time Payouts	34,021.51	34,021.51	34,021.51	-	
101-10-50 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	2,880.80	2,880.80	2,880.80	-	
101-10-50 51990	Salary Savings	4,879.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		1,195,247.09	1,245,280.24	1,245,280.24	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-10-50 52100	Budget Only - One Time Adjustments	(50,000.00)	-	(57,932.00)	(57,932.00)	GF Adj between departments
101-10-50 52110	Collect & Admin Services	123,000.00	118,000.00	118,000.00	-	
101-10-50 52120	Legal & Financial Svcs	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
101-10-50 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	60,000.00	60,000.00	60,000.00	-	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			233,000.00	278,000.00	220,068.00	(57,932.00)	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-10-50 54210		Telephone Expenses	4,518.00	4,120.00	4,120.00	-	
101-10-50 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	825.00	825.00	825.00	-	
101-10-50 54230		Internet Services	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-10-50 54240		Software Licenses & Maintenance	145,000.00	145,000.00	145,000.00	-	
101-10-50 54310		Legal Notices & Advertise	309.00	309.00	309.00	-	
101-10-50 54410		Printing & Binding	600.00	600.00	600.00	-	
101-10-50 54610		Travel & Training	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
101-10-50 54910		Dues & Subscriptions	2,575.00	2,575.00	2,575.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			169,327.00	168,929.00	168,929.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
101-10-50 55110		General Office Supplies	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-10-50 55120		Postage & Delivery	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
101-10-50 56410		Office Equipment <\$10K	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs							
101-10-50 58920		Bank & Credit Card Fees	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs			50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Division Total: 50 - Finance Department			1,661,574.09	1,756,209.24	1,698,277.24	(57,932.00)	
Division: 60 - Human Resources							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
101-10-60 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	206,646.00	215,250.90	215,250.90	-	
101-10-60 51210		PERS Contributions	27,103.00	28,216.91	28,216.91	-	
101-10-60 51211		PERS UAL	48,495.00	51,813.27	51,813.27	-	
101-10-60 51220		FICA/Medicare	15,901.00	16,558.49	16,558.49	-	
101-10-60 51230		Medical Benefits	25,175.00	25,803.59	25,803.59	-	
101-10-60 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	2,127.00	2,208.57	2,208.57	-	
101-10-60 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	13,061.00	13,713.14	13,713.14	-	
101-10-60 51150		Special Pay	1,200.00	1,199.90	1,199.90	-	
101-10-60 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	1,441.00	1,440.40	1,440.40	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			341,149.00	356,205.17	356,205.17	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
101-10-60 52100		Budget Only - One Time Adjustments	-	-	261,623.00	261,623.00	GF Adj between departments
101-10-60 52110		Collect & Admin Services	43,000.00	43,000.00	43,000.00	-	
101-10-60 52210		Lab & Investigative Svcs	600.00	600.00	600.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			43,600.00	43,600.00	305,223.00	261,623.00	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-10-60 54110		Insurance Premiums	1,899,900.00	2,089,890.00	2,089,890.00	-	
101-10-60 54120		Settlements & Judgements	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
101-10-60 54130		Insurance-Workers Comp	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
101-10-60 54210		Telephone Expenses	1,800.00	1,800.00	1,800.00	-	
101-10-60 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	990.00	990.00	990.00	-	
101-10-60 54610		Travel & Training	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-10-60 54910		Dues & Subscriptions	530.00	530.00	530.00	-	
101-10-60 54990		Other Administrative Svcs	291,000.00	231,000.00	231,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			2,257,220.00	2,387,210.00	2,387,210.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
101-10-60 55110		General Office Supplies	946.00	946.00	946.00	-	
101-10-60 55120		Postage & Delivery	487.00	487.00	487.00	-	
101-10-60 55130		Photocopying Charges	717.00	717.00	717.00	-	
101-10-60 55140		Recognition-EE/Volunteer	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-10-60 55290		Other Operating Supplies	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			25,150.00	25,150.00	25,150.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
101-10-60 56410		Office Equipment <\$10K	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
Division Total: 60 - Human Resources			2,671,119.00	2,816,165.17	3,077,788.17	261,623.00	
Division: 70 - Information Systems Div							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
101-10-70 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	377,097.69	396,834.20	396,834.20	-	
101-10-70 51200		PARS Contribution	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-10-70 51210		PERS Contributions	39,509.72	41,491.21	41,491.21	-	
101-10-70 51211		PERS UAL	91,531.00	98,575.55	98,575.55	-	
101-10-70 51220		FICA/Medicare	28,939.77	30,449.61	30,449.61	-	
101-10-70 51230		Medical Benefits	76,439.66	78,350.65	78,350.65	-	
101-10-70 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	3,804.86	3,974.77	3,974.77	-	
101-10-70 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	19,590.20	20,569.71	20,569.71	-	
101-10-70 51150		Special Pay	1,199.90	1,199.90	1,199.90	-	
101-10-70 51155		One-Time Payouts	18,364.29	18,364.29	18,364.29	-	
101-10-70 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	720.20	720.20	720.20	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			657,697.27	691,030.09	691,030.09	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
101-10-70 52100		Budget Only - One Time Adjustments	-	-	2,528.00	2,528.00	GF Adj between departments
101-10-70 52230		Other Technical Services	26,360.00	18,000.00	18,000.00	-	
101-10-70 54250		Hardware Maintenance & Support	45,000.00	45,000.00	45,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			71,360.00	63,000.00	65,528.00	2,528.00	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
101-10-70 53250		Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc	515.00	515.00	515.00	-	
101-10-70 53290		Miscellaneous R&M Svcs	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			1,015.00	1,015.00	1,015.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-10-70 54210		Telephone Expenses	3,297.00	3,200.00	3,200.00	-	
101-10-70 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	3,745.00	3,745.00	3,745.00	-	
101-10-70 54230		Internet Services	19,906.00	19,906.00	19,906.00	-	
101-10-70 54240		Software Licenses & Maintenance	303,277.48	312,375.80	312,375.80	-	

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		330,225.48	339,226.80	339,226.80	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies						
101-10-70 55110	General Office Supplies	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-10-70 55210	Fuel	440.00	462.00	462.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		940.00	962.00	962.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital						
101-10-70 56420	Office Equipment >\$10K	71,179.18	72,000.00	72,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital		71,179.18	72,000.00	72,000.00	-	
Division Total: 70 - Information Systems Div		1,132,416.93	1,167,233.89	1,169,761.89	2,528.00	
Department Total: 10 - Administration		7,852,677.84	8,021,608.89	8,233,563.89	211,955.00	
Department: 20 - Police						
Division: 11 - Police Administration						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
101-20-11 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	1,478,859.57	1,530,074.22	1,530,074.22	-	
101-20-11 51120	Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	75,692.64	77,963.42	77,963.42	-	
101-20-11 51200	PARS Contribution	50.00	50.00	50.00	-	
101-20-11 51210	PERS Contributions	240,209.19	247,624.08	247,624.08	-	
101-20-11 51211	PERS UAL	546,472.24	582,167.67	582,167.67	-	
101-20-11 51220	FICA/Medicare	60,266.05	62,592.46	62,592.46	-	
101-20-11 51230	Medical Benefits	227,287.52	232,969.71	232,969.71	-	
101-20-11 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	11,656.28	11,913.08	11,913.08	-	
101-20-11 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	71,830.73	75,422.27	75,422.27	-	
101-20-11 51140	Overtime Pay	36,050.00	37,131.50	37,131.50	-	
101-20-11 51150	Special Pay	80,532.94	82,876.94	82,876.94	-	
101-20-11 51155	One-Time Payouts	31,019.49	31,019.49	31,019.49	-	
101-20-11 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	82,398.28	83,833.75	83,833.75	-	
101-20-11 51990	Salary Savings	304,197.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		3,246,521.93	3,055,638.59	3,055,638.59	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-20-11 52100	Budget Only - One Time Adjustments	-	-	(167,740.00)	(167,740.00)	GF Adj between departments
101-20-11 52110	Collect & Admin Services	1,345,000.00	1,466,050.00	1,466,050.00	-	
101-20-11 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	120,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
101-20-11 52210	Lab & Investigative Svcs	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		1,475,000.00	1,576,050.00	1,408,310.00	(167,740.00)	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services						
101-20-11 53110	Utilities-Energy	12,000.00	13,200.00	13,200.00	-	
101-20-11 53230	Building Maint Services	40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	
101-20-11 53290	Miscellaneous R&M Svcs	16,000.00	16,000.00	16,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services		68,000.00	69,200.00	69,200.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
101-20-11 54210	Telephone Expenses	16,312.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
101-20-11 54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
101-20-11 54230	Internet Services	20,500.00	20,500.00	20,500.00	-	
101-20-11 54240	Software Licenses & Maintenance	156,000.00	162,240.00	162,240.00	-	
101-20-11 54310	Legal Notices & Advertise	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	-	
101-20-11 54410	Printing & Binding	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
101-20-11 54610	Travel & Training	110,000.00	110,000.00	110,000.00	-	
101-20-11 54910	Dues & Subscriptions	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	-	
101-20-11 54990	Other Administrative Svcs	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		348,912.00	353,840.00	353,840.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies						
101-20-11 55110	General Office Supplies	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
101-20-11 55120	Postage & Delivery	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
101-20-11 55130	Photocopying Charges	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-20-11 55290	Other Operating Supplies	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		34,000.00	34,000.00	34,000.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital						
101-20-11 56410	Office Equipment <\$10K	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
101-20-11 56710	Other Equipment <\$10K	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital		30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs						
101-20-11 58920	Bank & Credit Card Fees	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs		1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
Division Total: 11 - Police Administration		5,203,433.93	5,119,728.59	4,951,988.59	(167,740.00)	
Division: 12 - Police Operations						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
101-20-12 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	4,020,354.11	4,200,368.18	4,200,368.18	-	
101-20-12 51210	PERS Contributions	665,955.30	693,676.11	693,676.11	-	
101-20-12 51211	PERS UAL	1,681,616.23	1,810,888.83	1,810,888.83	-	
101-20-12 51220	FICA/Medicare	71,527.47	74,802.94	74,802.94	-	
101-20-12 51230	Medical Benefits	720,379.10	738,388.58	738,388.58	-	
101-20-12 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	32,925.59	34,083.83	34,083.83	-	
101-20-12 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	195,901.99	205,697.09	205,697.09	-	
101-20-12 51140	Overtime Pay	400,000.00	400,000.00	400,000.00	-	
101-20-12 51150	Special Pay	97,193.30	99,893.12	99,893.12	-	
101-20-12 51155	One-Time Payouts	101,241.61	101,241.61	101,241.61	-	
101-20-12 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	183,449.13	188,230.10	188,230.10	-	
101-20-12 51990	Salary Savings	(516,634.09)	(288,474.80)	(288,474.00)	0.80	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		7,653,909.75	8,258,795.59	8,258,796.39	0.80	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-20-12 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-20-12 52230	Other Technical Services	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services						
101-20-12 53250	Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
101-20-12 54990	Other Administrative Svcs	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies						
101-20-12 55210	Fuel	130,000.00	130,000.00	130,000.00	-	
101-20-12 55220	Safety Supplies	55,000.00	55,000.00	55,000.00	-	
101-20-12 55290	Other Operating Supplies	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		194,000.00	194,000.00	194,000.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital						
101-20-12 56520	Vehicles >\$10K	322,624.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
101-20-12 56710	Other Equipment <\$10K	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital		332,624.00	160,000.00	160,000.00	-	
Division Total: 12 - Police Operations		8,291,033.75	8,723,295.59	8,723,296.39	0.80	
Division: 13 - Police Investigations						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
101-20-13 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	726,717.39	756,284.15	756,284.15	-	
101-20-13 51210	PERS Contributions	121,990.12	126,685.81	126,685.81	-	
101-20-13 51211	PERS UAL	301,099.10	323,343.45	323,343.45	-	
101-20-13 51220	FICA/Medicare	10,991.77	11,433.59	11,433.59	-	
101-20-13 51230	Medical Benefits	111,347.97	114,131.67	114,131.67	-	
101-20-13 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	5,845.33	6,002.92	6,002.92	-	
101-20-13 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	32,650.33	34,282.85	34,282.85	-	
101-20-13 51140	Overtime Pay	93,000.00	94,000.00	94,000.00	-	
101-20-13 51150	Special Pay	21,618.04	22,230.59	22,230.59	-	
101-20-13 51155	One-Time Payouts	29,296.70	29,296.70	29,296.70	-	
101-20-13 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	21,217.47	21,509.02	21,509.02	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		1,475,774.23	1,539,200.75	1,539,200.75	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-20-13 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	7,500.00	8,500.00	8,500.00	-	
101-20-13 52210	Lab & Investigative Svcs	70,000.00	70,000.00	70,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		77,500.00	78,500.00	78,500.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
101-20-13 54990	Other Administrative Svcs	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Division Total: 13 - Police Investigations		1,558,274.23	1,622,700.75	1,622,700.75	-	
Department Total: 20 - Police		15,052,741.91	15,465,724.93	15,297,985.73	(167,739.20)	
Department: 25 - Fire						
Division: 10 - Fire Administration						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
101-25-10 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	6,177,492.00	6,381,312.51	6,381,312.51	-	
101-25-10 51120	Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	54,637.00	56,275.44	56,275.44	-	
101-25-10 51148	Back Fill Costs	955,000.00	1,087,000.00	1,087,000.00	-	
101-25-10 51210	PERS Contributions	1,214,261.00	1,253,027.70	1,253,027.70	-	
101-25-10 51211	PERS UAL	2,660,443.00	2,837,285.03	2,837,285.03	-	
101-25-10 51220	FICA/Medicare	106,371.00	109,829.84	109,829.84	-	
101-25-10 51230	Medical Benefits	1,148,592.00	1,177,305.93	1,177,305.93	-	
101-25-10 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	46,187.00	46,946.62	46,946.62	-	
101-25-10 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	246,657.00	258,989.47	258,989.47	-	
101-25-10 51145	FLSA Overtime Pay	111,030.00	114,360.78	114,360.78	-	
101-25-10 51146	Fire Non-Supp OT	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
101-25-10 51147	Fire OES Response	600,000.00	600,000.00	600,000.00	-	
101-25-10 51155	One-Time Payouts	79,871.00	79,870.57	79,870.57	-	
101-25-10 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	299,246.00	300,406.89	300,406.89	-	
101-25-10 51242	Workers Compensation Pay (In Lieu of Salary)	103,000.00	103,000.00	103,000.00	-	
101-25-10 51990	Salary Savings	50,663.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		13,903,450.00	14,455,610.78	14,455,610.78	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-25-10 52100	Budget Only - One Time Adjustments	-	-	201,102.00	201,102.00	GF Adj between departments
101-25-10 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	274,200.00	274,200.00	274,200.00	-	
101-25-10 52220	Medical Services	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	-	
101-25-10 52230	Other Technical Services	26,700.00	26,700.00	26,700.00	-	
101-25-10 52260	OES Equipment & Apparatus	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		435,900.00	435,900.00	637,002.00	201,102.00	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services						
101-25-10 53110	Utilities-Energy	33,866.00	37,252.60	37,252.60	-	
101-25-10 53230	Building Maint Services	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
101-25-10 53240	Landscape/Park Maint Svcs	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-25-10 53250	Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc	322,044.00	175,000.00	175,000.00	-	
101-25-10 53270	Weed Abatement	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-25-10 53290	Miscellaneous R&M Svcs	65,655.00	63,100.00	63,100.00	-	
101-25-10 53330	Vehic Replcmt Rental Chrg	151,000.00	151,000.00	151,000.00	-	
101-25-10 53910	Solid Waste Services	9,600.00	10,584.00	10,584.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services		612,165.00	466,936.60	466,936.60	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
101-25-10 54210	Telephone Expenses	23,415.00	22,000.00	22,000.00	-	
101-25-10 54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	13,000.00	13,000.00	13,000.00	-	
101-25-10 54230	Internet Services	15,750.00	15,750.00	15,750.00	-	
101-25-10 54240	Software Licenses & Maintenance	17,500.00	17,500.00	17,500.00	-	
101-25-10 54310	Legal Notices & Advertise	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	
101-25-10 54410	Printing & Binding	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
101-25-10 54610	Travel & Training	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
101-25-10 54910	Dues & Subscriptions	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	-	
101-25-10 54990	Other Administrative Svcs	8,500.00	8,500.00	8,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		149,665.00	148,250.00	148,250.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies						
101-25-10 55110	General Office Supplies	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-25-10 55120	Postage & Delivery	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-25-10 55130	Photocopying Charges	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	
101-25-10 55210	Fuel	66,066.00	69,369.30	69,369.30	-	
101-25-10 55230	Medical Supplies	30,975.00	32,523.00	32,523.00	-	

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
101-25-10 55240	Clothing & Uniform Supply	75,000.00	75,000.00	75,000.00	-	
101-25-10 55250	Vehicle & Equip Supplies	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
101-25-10 55290	Other Operating Supplies	7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	-	
101-25-10 55520	Building Supplies	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		196,641.00	201,492.30	201,492.30	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital						
101-25-10 56310	Improvements, not Bldgs	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
101-25-10 56410	Office Equipment <\$10K	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
101-25-10 56710	Other Equipment <\$10K	7,100.00	7,100.00	7,100.00	-	
101-25-10 56720	Other Equipment >\$10K	17,825.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital		47,925.00	30,100.00	30,100.00	-	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs						
101-25-10 58220	Licenses & Permits	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs		2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses						
101-25-10 59990.601	TRANSFER OUT-I/S	85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses		85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00	-	
Division Total: 10 - Fire Administration		15,433,246.00	15,825,789.68	16,026,891.68	201,102.00	
Department Total: 25 - Fire		15,433,246.00	15,825,789.68	16,026,891.68	201,102.00	
Department: 30 - Public Works						
Division: 10 - Public Works Admin						
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-30-10 52100	Budget Only - One Time Adjustments	-	-	(71,672.00)	(71,672.00)	GF Adj between departments
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		-	-	(71,672.00)	(71,672.00)	
Division Total: 10 - Public Works Admin		-	-	(71,672.00)	(71,672.00)	
Division: 20 - Public Works Engineering						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
101-30-20 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	185,467.77	195,023.11	195,023.11	-	
101-30-20 51210	PERS Contributions	10,746.65	11,303.80	11,303.80	-	
101-30-20 51211	PERS UAL	42,206.35	45,457.28	45,457.28	-	
101-30-20 51220	FICA/Medicare	14,004.74	14,744.64	14,744.64	-	
101-30-20 51230	Medical Benefits	29,937.85	30,686.30	30,686.30	-	
101-30-20 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	1,860.91	1,944.81	1,944.81	-	
101-30-20 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	10,872.58	11,416.21	11,416.21	-	
101-30-20 51150	Special Pay	364.00	364.00	364.00	-	
101-30-20 51155	One-Time Payouts	2,674.85	2,674.85	2,674.85	-	
101-30-20 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	954.46	954.46	954.46	-	
101-30-20 51990	Salary Savings	526.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		299,616.17	314,569.46	314,569.46	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-30-20 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	97,653.00	95,000.00	95,000.00	-	
101-30-20 52230	Other Technical Services	1,090.00	1,090.00	1,090.00	-	
101-30-20 52240	Miscellaneous Services	13,630.00	16,630.00	16,630.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		112,373.00	112,720.00	112,720.00	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services						
101-30-20 53250	Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
101-30-20 53320	Vehicle & Equipment Lease	4,160.00	4,160.00	4,160.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services		8,160.00	8,160.00	8,160.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
101-30-20 54210	Telephone Expenses	5,399.00	5,200.00	5,200.00	-	
101-30-20 54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	9,680.00	9,680.00	9,680.00	-	
101-30-20 54240	Software Licenses & Maintenance	1,680.00	1,680.00	1,680.00	-	
101-30-20 54610	Travel & Training	4,160.00	4,160.00	4,160.00	-	
101-30-20 54910	Dues & Subscriptions	1,300.00	1,300.00	1,300.00	-	
101-30-20 54920	Events & Field Trips	440.00	440.00	440.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		22,659.00	22,460.00	22,460.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies						
101-30-20 55110	General Office Supplies	840.00	840.00	840.00	-	
101-30-20 55120	Postage & Delivery	940.00	940.00	940.00	-	
101-30-20 55130	Photocopying Charges	630.00	630.00	630.00	-	
101-30-20 55220	Safety Supplies	520.00	520.00	520.00	-	
101-30-20 55290	Other Operating Supplies	110.00	110.00	110.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		3,040.00	3,040.00	3,040.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital						
101-30-20 56410	Office Equipment <\$10K	11,900.00	13,900.00	13,900.00	-	
101-30-20 56710	Other Equipment <\$10K	320.00	320.00	320.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital		12,220.00	14,220.00	14,220.00	-	
Division Total: 20 - Public Works Engineering		458,068.17	475,169.46	475,169.46	-	
Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
101-30-30 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	322,449.00	336,696.02	336,696.02	-	
101-30-30 51120	Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	57,751.00	59,482.54	59,482.54	-	
101-30-30 51200	PARS Contribution	150.00	150.00	150.00	-	
101-30-30 51210	PERS Contributions	29,099.00	30,314.68	30,314.68	-	
101-30-30 51211	PERS UAL	79,053.00	84,545.15	84,545.15	-	
101-30-30 51220	FICA/Medicare	24,361.00	25,472.74	25,472.74	-	
101-30-30 51230	Medical Benefits	73,200.00	75,029.01	75,029.01	-	
101-30-30 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	3,279.00	3,412.77	3,412.77	-	
101-30-30 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	24,815.00	26,054.93	26,054.93	-	
101-30-30 51140	Overtime Pay	4,414.00	4,545.96	4,545.96	-	
101-30-30 51142	Straight OT	6,620.00	6,818.40	6,818.40	-	
101-30-30 51150	Special Pay	2,898.00	2,897.18	2,897.18	-	
101-30-30 51155	One-Time Payouts	4,377.00	4,376.04	4,376.04	-	
101-30-30 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	487.00	486.20	486.20	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		632,953.00	660,281.62	660,281.62	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-30-30 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	4,160.00	4,160.00	4,160.00	-	
101-30-30 52230	Other Technical Services	4,610.00	4,610.00	4,610.00	-	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
101-30-30 52240		Miscellaneous Services	8,510.00	8,510.00	8,510.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			17,280.00	17,280.00	17,280.00	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
101-30-30 53110		Utilities-Energy	134,330.00	147,763.00	147,763.00	-	
101-30-30 53111		Utilities-Water & Sewer	125,600.00	125,600.00	125,600.00	-	
101-30-30 53210		Infrastructure Maint Svc	148,050.00	148,050.00	148,050.00	-	
101-30-30 53230		Building Maint Services	122,225.00	128,830.00	128,830.00	-	
101-30-30 53240		Landscape/Park Maint Svcs	518,672.00	644,780.00	644,780.00	-	
101-30-30 53250		Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc	59,106.00	58,630.00	58,630.00	-	
101-30-30 53260		Janitorial Services	26,610.00	29,610.00	29,610.00	-	
101-30-30 53290		Miscellaneous R&M Svcs	12,810.00	12,810.00	12,810.00	-	
101-30-30 53320		Vehicle & Equipment Lease	4,090.00	4,090.00	4,090.00	-	
101-30-30 53910		Solid Waste Services	41,110.00	41,110.00	41,110.00	-	
101-30-30 53990		Other Property Services	6,060.00	6,060.00	6,060.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			1,198,663.00	1,347,333.00	1,347,333.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-30-30 54210		Telephone Expenses	13,976.00	13,010.00	13,010.00	-	
101-30-30 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	10,690.00	10,690.00	10,690.00	-	
101-30-30 54230		Internet Services	7,690.00	7,690.00	7,690.00	-	
101-30-30 54240		Software Licenses & Maintenance	2,400.00	2,400.00	2,400.00	-	
101-30-30 54610		Travel & Training	6,970.00	6,970.00	6,970.00	-	
101-30-30 54910		Dues & Subscriptions	8,960.00	8,960.00	8,960.00	-	
101-30-30 54920		Events & Field Trips	3,960.00	3,960.00	3,960.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			54,646.00	53,680.00	53,680.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
101-30-30 55110		General Office Supplies	2,670.00	2,670.00	2,670.00	-	
101-30-30 55120		Postage & Delivery	810.00	810.00	810.00	-	
101-30-30 55130		Photocopying Charges	550.00	550.00	550.00	-	
101-30-30 55210		Fuel	20,977.00	22,025.85	22,025.85	-	
101-30-30 55220		Safety Supplies	7,090.00	7,090.00	7,090.00	-	
101-30-30 55250		Vehicle & Equip Supplies	7,790.00	7,790.00	7,790.00	-	
101-30-30 55290		Other Operating Supplies	9,710.00	9,710.00	9,710.00	-	
101-30-30 55520		Building Supplies	16,920.00	16,920.00	16,920.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			66,517.00	67,565.85	67,565.85	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
101-30-30 56410		Office Equipment <\$10K	14,490.00	14,490.00	14,490.00	-	
101-30-30 56620		Heavy Equipment >\$10K	23,000.00	23,000.00	23,000.00	-	
101-30-30 56710		Other Equipment <\$10K	7,770.00	8,770.00	8,770.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			45,260.00	46,260.00	46,260.00	-	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs							
101-30-30 58220		Licenses & Permits	7,700.00	7,700.00	7,700.00	-	
101-30-30 58920		Bank & Credit Card Fees	760.00	760.00	760.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs			8,460.00	8,460.00	8,460.00	-	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance			2,023,779.00	2,200,860.47	2,200,860.47	-	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works			2,481,847.17	2,676,029.93	2,604,357.93	(71,672.00)	
Department: 40 - Community Development							
Division: 10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmnt							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
101-40-10 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	438,836.07	452,001.15	452,001.15	-	
101-40-10 51120		Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	1,750.00	1,750.00	1,750.00	-	
101-40-10 51200		PARS Contribution	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	
101-40-10 51210		PERS Contributions	41,246.28	42,480.33	42,480.33	-	
101-40-10 51211		PERS UAL	100,292.54	106,109.81	106,109.81	-	
101-40-10 51220		FICA/Medicare	32,558.58	33,643.73	33,643.73	-	
101-40-10 51230		Medical Benefits	59,602.18	61,092.24	61,092.24	-	
101-40-10 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	4,282.33	4,371.10	4,371.10	-	
101-40-10 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	24,161.25	25,369.32	25,369.32	-	
101-40-10 51150		Special Pay	260.00	260.00	260.00	-	
101-40-10 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	1,440.40	1,440.40	1,440.40	-	
101-40-10 51990		Salary Savings	10,824.11	16,988.78	16,989.00	0.22	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			715,353.75	745,606.86	745,607.08	0.22	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
101-40-10 52100		Budget Only - One Time Adjustments	35,000.00	-	(15,364.00)	(15,364.00)	GF Adj between departments
101-40-10 52120		Legal & Financial Svcs	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-40-10 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	51,047.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	-	
101-40-10 52230		Other Technical Services	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			117,047.00	56,000.00	40,636.00	(15,364.00)	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-40-10 54210		Telephone Expenses	1,048.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-40-10 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	1,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-40-10 54410		Printing & Binding	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-40-10 54610		Travel & Training	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
101-40-10 54910		Dues & Subscriptions	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	-	
101-40-10 54920		Events & Field Trips	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			21,548.00	22,500.00	22,500.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
101-40-10 55110		General Office Supplies	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-40-10 55120		Postage & Delivery	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	
101-40-10 55130		Photocopying Charges	900.00	900.00	900.00	-	
101-40-10 55240		Clothing & Uniform Supply	600.00	600.00	600.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
101-40-10 56410		Office Equipment <\$10K	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs							
101-40-10 58925		Credit Card Processing Fees	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs			35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	-	
Division Total: 10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmnt			897,948.75	868,106.86	852,743.08	(15,363.78)	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
Division: 30 - Comm Dev-Planning							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
101-40-30 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	455,486.81	478,602.02	478,602.02	-	
101-40-30 51210		PERS Contributions	41,055.10	43,212.09	43,212.09	-	
101-40-30 51211		PERS UAL	112,066.08	120,509.42	120,509.42	-	
101-40-30 51220		FICA/Medicare	34,467.83	36,275.16	36,275.16	-	
101-40-30 51230		Medical Benefits	108,024.30	110,724.91	110,724.91	-	
101-40-30 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	4,530.51	4,718.02	4,718.02	-	
101-40-30 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	23,834.75	25,026.49	25,026.49	-	
101-40-30 51150		Special Pay	1,820.00	1,820.00	1,820.00	-	
101-40-30 51155		One-Time Payouts	5,643.76	5,643.76	5,643.76	-	
101-40-30 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	720.20	720.20	720.20	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			787,649.34	827,252.07	827,252.07	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
101-40-30 52130		Architect/Engineering Svc	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
101-40-30 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	180,599.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
101-40-30 52230		Other Technical Services	20,000.00	22,000.00	22,000.00	-	
101-40-30 52240		Miscellaneous Services	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			210,599.00	52,000.00	52,000.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-40-30 54210		Telephone Expenses	1,148.00	1,051.00	1,051.00	-	
101-40-30 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	250.00	250.00	250.00	-	
101-40-30 54240		Software Licenses & Maintenance	298.00	298.00	298.00	-	
101-40-30 54310		Legal Notices & Advertise	6,500.00	6,500.00	6,500.00	-	
101-40-30 54410		Printing & Binding	2,060.00	2,060.00	2,060.00	-	
101-40-30 54610		Travel & Training	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
101-40-30 54910		Dues & Subscriptions	1,766.00	1,766.00	1,766.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			18,022.00	17,925.00	17,925.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
101-40-30 55110		General Office Supplies	473.00	473.00	473.00	-	
101-40-30 55120		Postage & Delivery	1,893.00	1,893.00	1,893.00	-	
101-40-30 55130		Photocopying Charges	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			4,866.00	4,866.00	4,866.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
101-40-30 56410		Office Equipment <\$10K	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
Division Total: 30 - Comm Dev-Planning			1,023,136.34	904,043.07	904,043.07	-	
Division: 40 - Comm Dev-Building Svcs							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
101-40-40 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	803,433.00	840,096.65	840,096.65	-	
101-40-40 51210		PERS Contributions	63,572.00	66,342.93	66,342.93	-	
101-40-40 51211		PERS UAL	200,815.00	214,947.56	214,947.56	-	
101-40-40 51220		FICA/Medicare	61,063.00	63,906.58	63,906.58	-	
101-40-40 51230		Medical Benefits	219,958.00	225,456.55	225,456.55	-	
101-40-40 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	8,229.00	8,558.70	8,558.70	-	
101-40-40 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	49,955.00	52,452.74	52,452.74	-	
101-40-40 51140		Overtime Pay	2,207.00	2,272.45	2,272.45	-	
101-40-40 51150		Special Pay	1,520.00	1,519.96	1,519.96	-	
101-40-40 51155		One-Time Payouts	10,662.00	10,661.34	10,661.34	-	
101-40-40 51990		Salary Savings	(157,133.00)	(151,885.08)	(151,885.00)	0.08	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			1,264,281.00	1,334,330.38	1,334,330.46	0.08	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
101-40-40 52130		Architect/Engineering Svc	300,000.00	300,000.00	300,000.00	-	
101-40-40 52130.4		Solar Plan Review	9,506.00	-	-	-	
101-40-40 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	495,000.00	495,000.00	495,000.00	-	
101-40-40 52190.1		Temp Staff in City Hall	61,692.00	-	-	-	
101-40-40 52230		Other Technical Services	25,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			891,198.00	820,000.00	820,000.00	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
101-40-40 53250		Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-40-40 54210		Telephone Expenses	4,168.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
101-40-40 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-40-40 54230		Internet Services	1,448.00	1,448.00	1,448.00	-	
101-40-40 54240		Software Licenses & Maintenance	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-40-40 54410		Printing & Binding	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-40-40 54610		Travel & Training	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
101-40-40 54910		Dues & Subscriptions	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
101-40-40 54990		Other Administrative Svcs	1,843.00	1,843.00	1,843.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			20,959.00	20,791.00	20,791.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
101-40-40 55110		General Office Supplies	1,419.00	1,419.00	1,419.00	-	
101-40-40 55120		Postage & Delivery	946.00	946.00	946.00	-	
101-40-40 55130		Photocopying Charges	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-40-40 55210		Fuel	3,300.00	3,465.00	3,465.00	-	
101-40-40 55220		Safety Supplies	331.00	331.00	331.00	-	
101-40-40 55240		Clothing & Uniform Supply	709.00	709.00	709.00	-	
101-40-40 55290		Other Operating Supplies	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			12,705.00	12,870.00	12,870.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
101-40-40 56410		Office Equipment <\$10K	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs							
101-40-40 58920		Bank & Credit Card Fees	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs			50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Division Total: 40 - Comm Dev-Building Svcs			2,247,643.00	2,246,491.38	2,246,491.46	0.08	
Department Total: 40 - Community Development			4,168,728.09	4,018,641.31	4,003,277.61	(15,363.70)	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
Department: 50 - Recreation							
Division: 10 - Recreation-Admin							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
101-50-10 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	361,758.00	374,852.56	374,852.56	-	
101-50-10 51120		Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	15,914.00	16,390.90	16,390.90	-	
101-50-10 51200		PARS Contribution	50.00	50.00	50.00	-	
101-50-10 51210		PERS Contributions	45,768.00	47,362.81	47,362.81	-	
101-50-10 51211		PERS UAL	87,157.00	92,685.40	92,685.40	-	
101-50-10 51220		FICA/Medicare	25,831.00	26,990.83	26,990.83	-	
101-50-10 51230		Medical Benefits	62,802.00	64,371.67	64,371.67	-	
101-50-10 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	3,373.00	3,440.09	3,440.09	-	
101-50-10 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	20,570.00	21,598.20	21,598.20	-	
101-50-10 51140		Overtime Pay	531.00	546.36	546.36	-	
101-50-10 51150		Special Pay	1,950.00	1,950.00	1,950.00	-	
101-50-10 51155		One-Time Payouts	9,572.00	9,571.89	9,571.89	-	
101-50-10 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	1,009.00	1,008.28	1,008.28	-	
101-50-10 51990		Salary Savings	4,415.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			640,700.00	660,818.99	660,818.99	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
101-50-10 52100		Budget Only - One Time Adjustments	-	-	(169,281.00)	(169,281.00)	GF Adj between departments
101-50-10 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	18,000.00	18,000.00	18,000.00	-	
101-50-10 52230		Other Technical Services	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
101-50-10 52240		Miscellaneous Services	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			43,000.00	43,000.00	(126,281.00)	(169,281.00)	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
101-50-10 53110		Utilities-Energy	16,419.00	18,060.90	18,060.90	-	
101-50-10 53111		Utilities-Water & Sewer	2,310.00	2,310.00	2,310.00	-	
101-50-10 53230		Building Maint Services	21,000.00	21,000.00	21,000.00	-	
101-50-10 53240		Landscape/Park Maint Svcs	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-50-10 53250		Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
101-50-10 53990		Other Property Services	60,000.00	62,400.00	62,400.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			108,729.00	112,770.90	112,770.90	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-50-10 54210		Telephone Expenses	15,353.00	14,049.00	14,049.00	-	
101-50-10 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	2,080.00	2,080.00	2,080.00	-	
101-50-10 54230		Internet Services	25,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	-	
101-50-10 54240		Software Licenses & Maintenance	18,000.00	18,000.00	18,000.00	-	
101-50-10 54310		Legal Notices & Advertise	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-50-10 54410		Printing & Binding	32,136.00	33,421.00	33,421.00	-	
101-50-10 54610		Travel & Training	5,150.00	5,150.00	5,150.00	-	
101-50-10 54910		Dues & Subscriptions	2,575.00	2,575.00	2,575.00	-	
101-50-10 54990		Other Administrative Svcs	14,000.00	14,000.00	14,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			115,294.00	115,275.00	115,275.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
101-50-10 55110		General Office Supplies	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-50-10 55120		Postage & Delivery	25,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	-	
101-50-10 55130		Photocopying Charges	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	-	
101-50-10 55140		Recognition-EE/Volunteer	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	
101-50-10 55210		Fuel	2,750.00	2,887.50	2,887.50	-	
101-50-10 55290		Other Operating Supplies	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
101-50-10 55520		Building Supplies	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			49,750.00	49,887.50	49,887.50	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
101-50-10 56410		Office Equipment <\$10K	18,000.00	18,000.00	18,000.00	-	
101-50-10 56710		Other Equipment <\$10K	18,000.00	18,000.00	18,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			36,000.00	36,000.00	36,000.00	-	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs							
101-50-10 58220		Licenses & Permits	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-50-10 58920		Bank & Credit Card Fees	195,000.00	200,850.00	200,850.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs			198,000.00	203,850.00	203,850.00	-	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses							
101-50-10 59990.225		Operating Xfer Out-Donations	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses			50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Division Total: 10 - Recreation-Admin			1,241,473.00	1,271,602.39	1,102,321.39	(169,281.00)	
Division: 20 - Recreation-Chldcr Admin							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
101-50-20 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	445,995.89	459,375.76	459,375.76	-	
101-50-20 51120		Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	780,600.00	764,400.00	764,400.00	-	
101-50-20 51200		PARS Contribution	6,200.00	6,200.00	6,200.00	-	
101-50-20 51210		PERS Contributions	67,696.23	69,679.08	69,679.08	-	
101-50-20 51211		PERS UAL	122,166.04	129,119.21	129,119.21	-	
101-50-20 51220		FICA/Medicare	34,700.07	35,723.63	35,723.63	-	
101-50-20 51230		Medical Benefits	140,769.81	144,289.05	144,289.05	-	
101-50-20 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	4,692.47	4,826.29	4,826.29	-	
101-50-20 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	39,180.40	41,139.42	41,139.42	-	
101-50-20 51140		Overtime Pay	3,182.70	3,278.18	3,278.18	-	
101-50-20 51150		Special Pay	14,999.80	7,599.80	7,599.80	-	
101-50-20 51155		One-Time Payouts	10,560.75	10,560.75	10,560.75	-	
101-50-20 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	2,880.80	2,880.80	2,880.80	-	
101-50-20 51990		Salary Savings	9,923.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			1,683,547.95	1,679,071.97	1,679,071.97	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
101-50-20 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	75,000.00	28,000.00	28,000.00	-	
101-50-20 52220		Medical Services	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-50-20 52250		Instructor Services	10,032.00	10,032.00	10,032.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			87,032.00	40,032.00	40,032.00	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
101-50-20 53110		Utilities-Energy	13,658.00	15,023.80	15,023.80	-	

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
101-50-20 53230	Building Maint Services	15,000.00	-	-	-	
101-50-20 53310	Land & Building Lease	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
101-50-20 53990	Other Property Services	2,472.00	2,472.00	2,472.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services		41,130.00	27,495.80	27,495.80	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
101-50-20 54210	Telephone Expenses	1,152.00	1,054.00	1,054.00	-	
101-50-20 54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	-	
101-50-20 54230	Internet Services	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
101-50-20 54310	Legal Notices & Advertise	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	
101-50-20 54610	Travel & Training	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-50-20 54910	Dues & Subscriptions	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-50-20 54920	Events & Field Trips	48,464.00	50,403.00	50,403.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		65,616.00	67,457.00	67,457.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies						
101-50-20 55110	General Office Supplies	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-50-20 55120	Postage & Delivery	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-50-20 55130	Photocopying Charges	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	-	
101-50-20 55140	Recognition-EE/Volunteer	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-50-20 55210	Fuel	2,750.00	2,887.50	2,887.50	-	
101-50-20 55230	Medical Supplies	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-50-20 55240	Clothing & Uniform Supply	13,500.00	13,500.00	13,500.00	-	
101-50-20 55290	Other Operating Supplies	80,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00	-	
101-50-20 55520	Building Supplies	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		112,250.00	112,387.50	112,387.50	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital						
101-50-20 56410	Office Equipment <\$10K	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-50-20 56710	Other Equipment <\$10K	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital		10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs						
101-50-20 58220	Licenses & Permits	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs		2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
Division Total: 20 - Recreation-Chldcr Admin		2,001,575.95	1,938,444.27	1,938,444.27	-	
Division: 30 - Recreation-Swim Center						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
101-50-30 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	121,526.35	129,948.97	129,948.97	-	
101-50-30 51120	Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	670,000.00	644,800.00	644,800.00	-	
101-50-30 51200	PARS Contribution	6,500.00	6,500.00	6,500.00	-	
101-50-30 51210	PERS Contributions	12,389.20	13,207.57	13,207.57	-	
101-50-30 51211	PERS UAL	30,679.12	33,446.97	33,446.97	-	
101-50-30 51220	FICA/Medicare	9,296.77	9,941.10	9,941.10	-	
101-50-30 51230	Medical Benefits	31,957.64	32,756.58	32,756.58	-	
101-50-30 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	1,274.96	1,355.09	1,355.09	-	
101-50-30 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	8,815.59	9,256.37	9,256.37	-	
101-50-30 51140	Overtime Pay	1,060.90	1,092.73	1,092.73	-	
101-50-30 51155	One-Time Payouts	3,490.42	3,490.42	3,490.42	-	
101-50-30 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	432.12	432.12	432.12	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		897,423.06	886,227.92	886,227.92	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
101-50-30 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	2,080.00	2,080.00	2,080.00	-	
101-50-30 52220	Medical Services	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	-	
101-50-30 52250	Instructor Services	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		7,080.00	7,080.00	7,080.00	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services						
101-50-30 53110	Utilities-Energy	65,021.00	71,523.10	71,523.10	-	
101-50-30 53111	Utilities-Water & Sewer	39,699.00	41,287.00	41,287.00	-	
101-50-30 53990	Other Property Services	9,984.00	9,984.00	9,984.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services		114,704.00	122,794.10	122,794.10	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
101-50-30 54210	Telephone Expenses	2,584.00	2,364.00	2,364.00	-	
101-50-30 54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-50-30 54230	Internet Services	3,538.00	3,538.00	3,538.00	-	
101-50-30 54310	Legal Notices & Advertise	1,753.00	1,753.00	1,753.00	-	
101-50-30 54610	Travel & Training	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-50-30 54910	Dues & Subscriptions	3,120.00	3,245.00	3,245.00	-	
101-50-30 54920	Events & Field Trips	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		19,495.00	19,400.00	19,400.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies						
101-50-30 55110	General Office Supplies	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-50-30 55120	Postage & Delivery	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-50-30 55130	Photocopying Charges	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-50-30 55140	Recognition-EE/Volunteer	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-50-30 55210	Fuel	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	
101-50-30 55230	Medical Supplies	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-50-30 55240	Clothing & Uniform Supply	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
101-50-30 55290	Other Operating Supplies	24,000.00	24,000.00	24,000.00	-	
101-50-30 55520	Building Supplies	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-50-30 55590	Other Maintenance Supply	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		52,000.00	52,000.00	52,000.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital						
101-50-30 56410	Office Equipment <\$10K	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-50-30 56710	Other Equipment <\$10K	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital		7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	-	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs						
101-50-30 58220	Licenses & Permits	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs		3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	-	
Division Total: 30 - Recreation-Swim Center		1,101,202.06	1,098,002.02	1,098,002.02	-	
Division: 40 - Recreation-Senior Svcs						
5100-Persn - Personnel						

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
101-50-40	51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	41,506.51	42,751.70	42,751.70	-	
101-50-40	51120	Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	24,000.00	24,960.00	24,960.00	-	
101-50-40	51200	PARS Contribution	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	
101-50-40	51210	PERS Contributions	4,289.91	4,418.05	4,418.05	-	
101-50-40	51211	PERS UAL	10,472.91	11,074.08	11,074.08	-	
101-50-40	51220	FICA/Medicare	3,175.25	3,270.51	3,270.51	-	
101-50-40	51230	Medical Benefits	10,652.59	10,918.90	10,918.90	-	
101-50-40	51235	Life & LTD Insurance	432.05	443.62	443.62	-	
101-50-40	51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	2,938.54	3,085.46	3,085.46	-	
101-50-40	51140	Overtime Pay	530.45	546.36	546.36	-	
101-50-40	51155	One-Time Payouts	3,014.42	3,014.42	3,014.42	-	
101-50-40	51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	324.22	324.22	324.22	-	
101-50-40	51990	Salary Savings	847.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			102,283.84	104,907.32	104,907.32	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
101-50-40	52220	Medical Services	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-50-40	52250	Instructor Services	22,000.00	22,880.00	22,880.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			22,500.00	23,380.00	23,380.00	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
101-50-40	53110	Utilities-Energy	2,979.00	3,276.90	3,276.90	-	
101-50-40	53230	Building Maint Services	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-50-40	53990	Other Property Services	832.00	832.00	832.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			4,811.00	5,108.90	5,108.90	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-50-40	54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	1,269.00	1,269.00	1,269.00	-	
101-50-40	54410	Printing & Binding	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-50-40	54610	Travel & Training	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-50-40	54910	Dues & Subscriptions	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-50-40	54920	Events & Field Trips	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			11,269.00	11,269.00	11,269.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
101-50-40	55110	General Office Supplies	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-50-40	55120	Postage & Delivery	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-50-40	55210	Fuel	880.00	924.00	924.00	-	
101-50-40	55290	Other Operating Supplies	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			11,880.00	11,924.00	11,924.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
101-50-40	56710	Other Equipment <\$10K	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
Division Total: 40 - Recreation-Senior Svcs			155,743.84	159,589.22	159,589.22	-	
Division: 50 - Recreation-Adult/Commnty							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
101-50-50	51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	143,941.56	149,064.32	149,064.32	-	
101-50-50	51120	Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	40,000.00	41,600.00	41,600.00	-	
101-50-50	51200	PARS Contribution	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	
101-50-50	51210	PERS Contributions	12,154.23	12,552.70	12,552.70	-	
101-50-50	51211	PERS UAL	35,915.74	38,137.53	38,137.53	-	
101-50-50	51220	FICA/Medicare	11,036.37	11,428.26	11,428.26	-	
101-50-50	51230	Medical Benefits	37,098.33	38,025.79	38,025.79	-	
101-50-50	51235	Life & LTD Insurance	1,504.87	1,552.15	1,552.15	-	
101-50-50	51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	10,774.63	11,313.37	11,313.37	-	
101-50-50	51150	Special Pay	325.00	325.00	325.00	-	
101-50-50	51155	One-Time Payouts	162.59	162.59	162.59	-	
101-50-50	51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	1,008.28	1,008.28	1,008.28	-	
101-50-50	51990	Salary Savings	1,561.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			295,582.60	305,269.99	305,269.99	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
101-50-50	52250	Instructor Services	130,000.00	135,200.00	135,200.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			130,000.00	135,200.00	135,200.00	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
101-50-50	53230	Building Maint Services	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-50-50	54210	Telephone Expenses	4,727.00	4,325.00	4,325.00	-	
101-50-50	54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	800.00	800.00	800.00	-	
101-50-50	54230	Internet Services	4,058.00	4,058.00	4,058.00	-	
101-50-50	54610	Travel & Training	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-50-50	54910	Dues & Subscriptions	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-50-50	54920	Events & Field Trips	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			17,085.00	16,683.00	16,683.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
101-50-50	55110	General Office Supplies	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	-	
101-50-50	55120	Postage & Delivery	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-50-50	55130	Photocopying Charges	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-50-50	55290	Other Operating Supplies	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			13,500.00	13,500.00	13,500.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
101-50-50	56410	Office Equipment <\$10K	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-50-50	56710	Other Equipment <\$10K	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			13,000.00	13,000.00	13,000.00	-	
Division Total: 50 - Recreation-Adult/Commnty			474,167.60	488,652.99	488,652.99	-	
Division: 60 - Recreation-Youth Services							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
101-50-60	51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	153,696.80	160,721.21	160,721.21	-	
101-50-60	51120	Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	65,000.00	67,600.00	67,600.00	-	
101-50-60	51200	PARS Contribution	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-50-60	51210	PERS Contributions	8,639.93	9,006.05	9,006.05	-	
101-50-60	51211	PERS UAL	34,705.84	37,193.84	37,193.84	-	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
101-50-60 51220		FICA/Medicare	11,757.82	12,295.18	12,295.18	-	
101-50-60 51230		Medical Benefits	23,123.22	23,701.30	23,701.30	-	
101-50-60 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	1,614.41	1,677.59	1,677.59	-	
101-50-60 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	11,427.60	11,998.98	11,998.98	-	
101-50-60 51140		Overtime Pay	2,206.26	2,272.45	2,272.45	-	
101-50-60 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	1,260.22	1,260.22	1,260.22	-	
101-50-60 51990		Salary Savings	1,613.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			316,045.10	328,726.82	328,726.82	-	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
101-50-60 52250		Instructor Services	650,000.00	613,600.00	613,600.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			650,000.00	613,600.00	613,600.00	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
101-50-60 53310		Land & Building Lease	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-50-60 54110		Insurance Premiums	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
101-50-60 54210		Telephone Expenses	2,584.00	2,364.00	2,364.00	-	
101-50-60 54230		Internet Services	3,680.00	3,680.00	3,680.00	-	
101-50-60 54310		Legal Notices & Advertise	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-50-60 54410		Printing & Binding	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-50-60 54610		Travel & Training	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
101-50-60 54910		Dues & Subscriptions	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-50-60 54920		Events & Field Trips	40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			59,764.00	59,544.00	59,544.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
101-50-60 55110		General Office Supplies	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	-	
101-50-60 55120		Postage & Delivery	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
101-50-60 55130		Photocopying Charges	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
101-50-60 55140		Recognition-EE/Volunteer	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-50-60 55210		Fuel	3,500.00	3,640.00	3,640.00	-	
101-50-60 55220		Safety Supplies	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-50-60 55240		Clothing & Uniform Supply	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-50-60 55290		Other Operating Supplies	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			26,500.00	26,640.00	26,640.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
101-50-60 56710		Other Equipment <\$10K	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
Division Total: 60 - Recreation-Youth Services			1,063,309.10	1,039,510.82	1,039,510.82	-	
Division: 70 - Recreation-Custodial Services							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
101-50-70 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	278,412.64	291,748.52	291,748.52	-	
101-50-70 51120		Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	56,160.00	58,406.00	58,406.00	-	
101-50-70 51200		PARS Contribution	150.00	150.00	150.00	-	
101-50-70 51210		PERS Contributions	34,202.44	35,548.73	35,548.73	-	
101-50-70 51211		PERS UAL	83,246.11	88,978.52	88,978.52	-	
101-50-70 51220		FICA/Medicare	21,749.91	22,770.11	22,770.11	-	
101-50-70 51230		Medical Benefits	135,740.77	139,134.29	139,134.29	-	
101-50-70 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	2,932.59	3,070.55	3,070.55	-	
101-50-70 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	28,732.29	30,168.91	30,168.91	-	
101-50-70 51140		Overtime Pay	1,060.90	1,092.73	1,092.73	-	
101-50-70 51150		Special Pay	5,899.92	5,899.92	5,899.92	-	
101-50-70 51155		One-Time Payouts	6,602.12	6,602.12	6,602.12	-	
101-50-70 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	1,008.28	1,008.28	1,008.28	-	
101-50-70 51990		Salary Savings	6,504.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			662,401.98	684,578.68	684,578.68	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
101-50-70 53230		Building Maint Services	60,000.00	60,000.00	60,000.00	-	
101-50-70 53250		Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00	-	
101-50-70 53260		Janitorial Services	25,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			97,000.00	97,000.00	97,000.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
101-50-70 54210		Telephone Expenses	4,905.00	4,788.00	4,788.00	-	
101-50-70 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	4,680.00	4,680.00	4,680.00	-	
101-50-70 54610		Travel & Training	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			12,585.00	12,468.00	12,468.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
101-50-70 55140		Recognition-EE/Volunteer	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
101-50-70 55220		Safety Supplies	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
101-50-70 55240		Clothing & Uniform Supply	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
101-50-70 55290		Other Operating Supplies	3,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-	
101-50-70 55520		Building Supplies	42,000.00	42,000.00	42,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			52,000.00	53,000.00	53,000.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
101-50-70 56520		Vehicles >\$10K	79,881.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	-	
101-50-70 56710		Other Equipment <\$10K	12,127.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			92,008.00	42,000.00	42,000.00	-	
Division Total: 70 - Recreation-Custodial Services			915,994.98	889,046.68	889,046.68	-	
Department Total: 50 - Recreation			6,953,466.53	6,884,848.39	6,715,567.39	(169,281.00)	
Department: 90 - Non-Departmental							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
101-90-00 52150		Library Services	70,000.00	70,000.00	81,000.00	11,000.00	GF Adj between departments
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			70,000.00	70,000.00	81,000.00	11,000.00	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs							
101-90-00 58110		Principal Payments	172,987.00	165,545.48	165,545.48	-	
101-90-00 58120		Interest Payments	16,375.00	9,093.71	9,093.71	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs			189,362.00	174,639.19	174,639.19	-	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses							

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
101-90-00 59990.835	Operating Xfer Out-CHALL	623,329.00	626,735.00	626,735.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses		623,329.00	626,735.00	626,735.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental		882,691.00	871,374.19	882,374.19	11,000.00	
Department Total: 90 - Non-Departmental		882,691.00	871,374.19	882,374.19	11,000.00	
EXPENSES Total		52,825,398.53	53,764,017.32	53,764,018.42	1.10	
Fund REVENUE Total: 101 - General Fund		51,696,979.00	53,779,791.90	53,779,791.90	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 101 - General Fund		52,825,398.53	53,764,017.32	53,764,018.42	1.10	
Fund Total: 101 - General Fund		(1,128,419.53)	15,774.58	15,773.48	(1.10)	

Fund: 201 - Gas Tax Fund

REVENUES

Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue

Division: 00 - Non-Departmental

4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues

201-00-00 45310	Gas Tax (Section 2105)	160,535.15	165,000.00	165,000.00	-	
201-00-00 45320	Gas Tax (Section 2106)	102,195.14	105,000.00	105,000.00	-	
201-00-00 45330	Gas Tax (Section 2107)	218,782.74	220,000.00	220,000.00	-	
201-00-00 45340	Gas Tax (Section 2107.5)	6,522.86	6,600.00	6,600.00	-	
201-00-00 45370	Gas Tax (Section 2103)	229,846.12	230,000.00	230,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues		717,882.01	726,600.00	726,600.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental		717,882.01	726,600.00	726,600.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue		717,882.01	726,600.00	726,600.00	-	
REVENUES Total		717,882.01	726,600.00	726,600.00	-	

EXPENSES

Department: 30 - Public Works

Division: 20 - Public Works Engineering

5100-Persn - Personnel

201-30-20 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	91,045.55	97,397.90	97,397.90	-	
201-30-20 51210	PERS Contributions	5,425.36	5,815.25	5,815.25	-	
201-30-20 51211	PERS UAL	20,529.45	22,454.75	22,454.75	-	
201-30-20 51220	FICA/Medicare	7,004.74	7,490.69	7,490.69	-	
201-30-20 51230	Medical Benefits	12,912.90	13,235.72	13,235.72	-	
201-30-20 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	948.05	1,010.63	1,010.63	-	
201-30-20 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	6,530.10	6,856.60	6,856.60	-	
201-30-20 51150	Special Pay	520.00	520.00	520.00	-	
201-30-20 51155	One-Time Payouts	2,283.46	2,283.46	2,283.46	-	
201-30-20 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	504.40	504.40	504.40	-	
201-30-20 51990	Salary Savings	3,570.00	-	8,648.00	8,648.00	Labor contract increases
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		151,274.01	157,569.40	166,217.40	8,648.00	

5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services

201-30-20 52110	Collect & Admin Services	3,200.00	3,200.00	3,200.00	-	
201-30-20 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	41,200.00	31,236.00	31,236.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		44,400.00	34,436.00	34,436.00	-	
Division Total: 20 - Public Works Engineering		195,674.01	192,005.40	200,653.40	8,648.00	

Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance

5100-Persn - Personnel

201-30-30 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	105,535.00	109,601.96	109,601.96	-	
201-30-30 51210	PERS Contributions	11,867.00	12,295.77	12,295.77	-	
201-30-30 51211	PERS UAL	26,719.00	28,444.91	28,444.91	-	
201-30-30 51220	FICA/Medicare	7,536.00	7,872.55	7,872.55	-	
201-30-30 51230	Medical Benefits	27,112.00	27,789.69	27,789.69	-	
201-30-30 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	979.00	1,006.30	1,006.30	-	
201-30-30 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	5,780.00	6,068.05	6,068.05	-	
201-30-30 51140	Overtime Pay	4,255.00	4,382.58	4,382.58	-	
201-30-30 51142	Straight OT	2,128.00	2,191.82	2,191.82	-	
201-30-30 51150	Special Pay	869.00	868.92	868.92	-	
201-30-30 51155	One-Time Payouts	1,462.00	1,461.38	1,461.38	-	
201-30-30 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	145.00	144.04	144.04	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		194,387.00	202,127.97	202,127.97	-	

5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services

201-30-30 53120	Utilities-Street Light	166,300.00	183,120.00	183,120.00	-	
201-30-30 53130	Utilities-Sign/Signal	18,900.00	22,360.00	22,360.00	-	
201-30-30 53220	Sign & Signal Maint Svc	54,904.00	45,000.00	45,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services		240,104.00	250,480.00	250,480.00	-	

5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services

201-30-30 54240	Software Licenses & Maintenance	6,210.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		6,210.00	-	-	-	

5500-Supplies - Supplies

201-30-30 55530	Landscape & Park Supplies	6,900.00	6,900.00	6,900.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		6,900.00	6,900.00	6,900.00	-	

5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses

201-30-30 59991.101	Indirect Xfer-GEN	108,048.00	109,337.00	109,337.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses		108,048.00	109,337.00	109,337.00	-	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance		555,649.00	568,844.97	568,844.97	-	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works		751,323.01	760,850.37	769,498.37	8,648.00	
EXPENSES Total		751,323.01	760,850.37	769,498.37	8,648.00	
Fund REVENUE Total: 201 - Gas Tax Fund		717,882.01	726,600.00	726,600.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 201 - Gas Tax Fund		751,323.01	760,850.37	769,498.37	8,648.00	
Fund Total: 201 - Gas Tax Fund		(33,441.00)	(34,250.37)	(42,898.37)	(8,648.00)	

Fund: 202 - Nat'l Pollut Dis Elim Sys

REVENUES

Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue

Division: 00 - Non-Departmental

4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues

202-00-00 45710	Nat'l Pol Disch Elim Sys	298,686.00	296,960.00	296,960.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues		298,686.00	296,960.00	296,960.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental		298,686.00	296,960.00	296,960.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue		298,686.00	296,960.00	296,960.00	-	

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
REVENUES Total		298,686.00	296,960.00	296,960.00	-	
EXPENSES						
Department: 30 - Public Works						
Division: 20 - Public Works Engineering						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
202-30-20 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	19,330.77	20,063.87	20,063.87	-	
202-30-20 51210	PERS Contributions	934.73	973.34	973.34	-	
202-30-20 51211	PERS UAL	4,485.87	4,775.65	4,775.65	-	
202-30-20 51220	FICA/Medicare	1,480.78	1,536.86	1,536.86	-	
202-30-20 51230	Medical Benefits	3,790.25	3,885.01	3,885.01	-	
202-30-20 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	195.91	202.54	202.54	-	
202-30-20 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	1,077.46	1,131.33	1,131.33	-	
202-30-20 51150	Special Pay	26.00	26.00	26.00	-	
202-30-20 51155	One-Time Payouts	675.86	675.86	675.86	-	
202-30-20 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	104.26	104.26	104.26	-	
202-30-20 51990	Salary Savings	31.00	-	103.00	103.00	Labor contract increases
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		32,132.90	33,374.72	33,477.72	103.00	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
202-30-20 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	21,914.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		21,914.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
202-30-20 54990	Other Administrative Svcs	3,300.00	3,300.00	3,300.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		3,300.00	3,300.00	3,300.00	-	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs						
202-30-20 58220	Licenses & Permits	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs		15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
Division Total: 20 - Public Works Engineering		72,346.90	71,674.72	71,777.72	103.00	
Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
202-30-30 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	114,526.08	120,436.18	120,436.18	-	
202-30-30 51210	PERS Contributions	13,405.07	14,070.76	14,070.76	-	
202-30-30 51211	PERS UAL	30,522.31	32,794.03	32,794.03	-	
202-30-30 51220	FICA/Medicare	8,716.61	9,173.83	9,173.83	-	
202-30-30 51230	Medical Benefits	36,803.15	37,723.23	37,723.23	-	
202-30-30 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	1,173.52	1,225.84	1,225.84	-	
202-30-30 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	7,738.13	8,125.04	8,125.04	-	
202-30-30 51140	Overtime Pay	3,578.49	3,862.24	3,862.24	-	
202-30-30 51142	Straight OT	2,801.56	3,007.11	3,007.11	-	
202-30-30 51150	Special Pay	995.28	995.28	995.28	-	
202-30-30 51155	One-Time Payouts	2,430.54	2,430.54	2,430.54	-	
202-30-30 51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	353.08	353.08	353.08	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		223,043.82	234,197.16	234,197.16	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services						
202-30-30 53210	Infrastructure Maint Svc	58,389.00	57,930.00	57,930.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services		58,389.00	57,930.00	57,930.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
202-30-30 54920	Events & Field Trips	329.60	339.49	339.49	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		329.60	339.49	339.49	-	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses						
202-30-30 59991.101	Indirect Xfer-GEN	75,000.00	75,000.00	75,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses		75,000.00	75,000.00	75,000.00	-	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance		356,762.42	367,466.65	367,466.65	-	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works		429,109.31	439,141.37	439,244.37	103.00	
EXPENSES Total		429,109.31	439,141.37	439,244.37	103.00	
Fund REVENUE Total: 202 - Nat'l Pollut Dis Elim Sys		298,686.00	296,960.00	296,960.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 202 - Nat'l Pollut Dis Elim Sys		429,109.31	439,141.37	439,244.37	103.00	
Fund Total: 202 - Nat'l Pollut Dis Elim Sys		(130,423.31)	(142,181.37)	(142,284.37)	(103.00)	
Fund: 203 - Land & Light Assess Distr						
REVENUES						
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue						
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental						
4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes						
203-00-00 40110	Special Assessments	789,300.00	789,300.00	789,300.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes		789,300.00	789,300.00	789,300.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental		789,300.00	789,300.00	789,300.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue		789,300.00	789,300.00	789,300.00	-	
Department: 30 - Public Works						
Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance						
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues						
203-30-30 45790	Other Local Reimbursement	10,500.00	10,500.00	10,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues		10,500.00	10,500.00	10,500.00	-	
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
203-30-30 46520	Program Fees	1,040.00	1,081.60	1,081.60	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		1,040.00	1,081.60	1,081.60	-	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance		11,540.00	11,581.60	11,581.60	-	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works		11,540.00	11,581.60	11,581.60	-	
REVENUES Total		800,840.00	800,881.60	800,881.60	-	
EXPENSES						
Department: 30 - Public Works						
Division: 20 - Public Works Engineering						
5100-Persn - Personnel						
203-30-20 51990	Salary Savings	2,640.00	-	5,814.00	5,814.00	Labor contract increases
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		2,640.00	-	5,814.00	5,814.00	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
203-30-20 52110	Collect & Admin Services	4,100.00	4,100.00	4,100.00	-	
203-30-20 52120	Legal & Financial Svcs	11,742.00	12,094.26	12,094.26	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		15,842.00	16,194.26	16,194.26	-	
Division Total: 20 - Public Works Engineering		18,482.00	16,194.26	22,008.26	5,814.00	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance							
<i>5100-Persn - Personnel</i>							
203-30-30 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	92,010.00	97,028.37	97,028.37	-	
203-30-30 51200		PARS Contribution	450.00	450.00	450.00	-	
203-30-30 51210		PERS Contributions	12,227.00	12,863.81	12,863.81	-	
203-30-30 51211		PERS UAL	25,503.00	27,443.10	27,443.10	-	
203-30-30 51220		FICA/Medicare	7,088.00	7,471.56	7,471.56	-	
203-30-30 51230		Medical Benefits	33,705.00	34,547.05	34,547.05	-	
203-30-30 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	969.00	1,013.30	1,013.30	-	
203-30-30 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	6,531.00	6,856.54	6,856.54	-	
203-30-30 51140		Overtime Pay	4,255.00	4,382.58	4,382.58	-	
203-30-30 51142		Straight OT	2,128.00	2,191.82	2,191.82	-	
203-30-30 51150		Special Pay	639.00	638.82	638.82	-	
203-30-30 51155		One-Time Payouts	2,540.00	2,539.18	2,539.18	-	
203-30-30 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	396.00	395.98	395.98	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			188,441.00	197,822.11	197,822.11	-	
<i>5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services</i>							
203-30-30 52230		Other Technical Services	2,190.00	500.00	500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			2,190.00	500.00	500.00	-	
<i>5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services</i>							
203-30-30 53110		Utilities-Energy	25,200.00	27,720.00	27,720.00	-	
203-30-30 53111		Utilities-Water & Sewer	155,500.00	160,165.00	160,165.00	-	
203-30-30 53210		Infrastructure Maint Svc	12,360.00	12,730.80	12,730.80	-	
203-30-30 53240		Landscape/Park Maint Svcs	235,181.00	122,003.50	122,003.50	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			428,241.00	322,619.30	322,619.30	-	
<i>5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services</i>							
203-30-30 54610		Travel & Training	1,100.00	1,100.00	1,100.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			1,100.00	1,100.00	1,100.00	-	
<i>5500-Supplies - Supplies</i>							
203-30-30 55530		Landscape & Park Supplies	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
<i>5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses</i>							
203-30-30 59991.101		Indirect Xfer-GEN	163,200.00	163,200.00	163,200.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses			163,200.00	163,200.00	163,200.00	-	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance			803,172.00	705,241.41	705,241.41	-	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works			821,654.00	721,435.67	727,249.67	5,814.00	
Department: 50 - Recreation							
Division: 70 - Recreation-Custodial Services							
<i>5100-Persn - Personnel</i>							
203-50-70 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	53,698.18	55,309.13	55,309.13	-	
203-50-70 51210		PERS Contributions	3,811.37	3,923.01	3,923.01	-	
203-50-70 51211		PERS UAL	13,228.33	13,979.80	13,979.80	-	
203-50-70 51220		FICA/Medicare	4,207.36	4,330.60	4,330.60	-	
203-50-70 51230		Medical Benefits	11,960.91	12,259.93	12,259.93	-	
203-50-70 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	568.45	585.50	585.50	-	
203-50-70 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	6,530.07	6,856.57	6,856.57	-	
203-50-70 51140		Overtime Pay	796.19	820.08	820.08	-	
203-50-70 51150		Special Pay	1,300.00	1,300.00	1,300.00	-	
203-50-70 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	720.20	720.20	720.20	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			96,821.06	100,084.82	100,084.82	-	
Division Total: 70 - Recreation-Custodial Services			96,821.06	100,084.82	100,084.82	-	
Department Total: 50 - Recreation			96,821.06	100,084.82	100,084.82	-	
EXPENSES Total			918,475.06	821,520.49	827,334.49	5,814.00	
Fund REVENUE Total: 203 - Land & Light Assess Distr			800,840.00	800,881.60	800,881.60	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 203 - Land & Light Assess Distr			918,475.06	821,520.49	827,334.49	5,814.00	
Fund Total: 203 - Land & Light Assess Distr			(117,635.06)	(20,638.89)	(26,452.89)	(5,814.00)	
Fund: 204 - Measure J-Return to Source Fund							
REVENUES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							
<i>4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes</i>							
204-00-00 40310		Measure J-1/2% Transport	600,000.00	612,000.00	612,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes			600,000.00	612,000.00	612,000.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental			600,000.00	612,000.00	612,000.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			600,000.00	612,000.00	612,000.00	-	
REVENUES Total			600,000.00	612,000.00	612,000.00	-	
EXPENSES							
Department: 30 - Public Works							
Division: 20 - Public Works Engineering							
<i>5100-Persn - Personnel</i>							
204-30-20 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	57,410.00	61,030.04	61,030.04	-	
204-30-20 51210		PERS Contributions	4,286.00	4,530.70	4,530.70	-	
204-30-20 51211		PERS UAL	13,019.00	14,159.46	14,159.46	-	
204-30-20 51220		FICA/Medicare	4,251.00	4,534.57	4,534.57	-	
204-30-20 51230		Medical Benefits	7,894.00	8,090.60	8,090.60	-	
204-30-20 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	567.00	597.95	597.95	-	
204-30-20 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	3,559.00	3,736.86	3,736.86	-	
204-30-20 51150		Special Pay	325.00	325.00	325.00	-	
204-30-20 51155		One-Time Payouts	1,209.00	1,208.81	1,208.81	-	
204-30-20 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	328.00	327.86	327.86	-	
204-30-20 51990		Salary Savings	139.00	-	465.00	465.00	Labor contract increases
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			92,987.00	98,541.85	99,006.85	465.00	
<i>5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services</i>							
204-30-20 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	10,800.00	10,800.00	10,800.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			10,800.00	10,800.00	10,800.00	-	
<i>5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services</i>							
204-30-20 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
204-30-20 54910		Dues & Subscriptions	57,225.00	60,086.25	60,086.25	-	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			58,225.00	61,086.25	61,086.25	-	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses							
204-30-20 59991.101		Indirect Xfer-GEN	68,209.00	69,546.00	69,546.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses			68,209.00	69,546.00	69,546.00	-	
Division Total: 20 - Public Works Engineering			230,221.00	239,974.10	240,439.10	465.00	
Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
204-30-30 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	32,153.75	33,896.16	33,896.16	-	
204-30-30 51120		Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	11,600.00	12,296.00	12,296.00	-	
204-30-30 51210		PERS Contributions	3,912.16	4,093.84	4,093.84	-	
204-30-30 51211		PERS UAL	8,785.29	9,447.72	9,447.72	-	
204-30-30 51220		FICA/Medicare	2,511.81	2,645.11	2,645.11	-	
204-30-30 51230		Medical Benefits	11,052.14	11,328.45	11,328.45	-	
204-30-30 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	340.38	358.83	358.83	-	
204-30-30 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	2,742.61	2,879.74	2,879.74	-	
204-30-30 51140		Overtime Pay	3,783.19	3,896.69	3,896.69	-	
204-30-30 51142		Straight OT	1,893.14	1,949.93	1,949.93	-	
204-30-30 51150		Special Pay	680.16	680.16	680.16	-	
204-30-30 51155		One-Time Payouts	746.14	746.14	746.14	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			80,200.77	84,218.77	84,218.77	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
204-30-30 53120		Utilities-Street Light	143,200.00	157,520.00	157,520.00	-	
204-30-30 53210		Infrastructure Maint Svc	94,000.00	84,000.00	84,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			237,200.00	241,520.00	241,520.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
204-30-30 55510		Infrastructure Supplies	18,000.00	-	20,000.00	20,000.00	To continue address backlog of street name & other street sign replacement, available fund balance
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			18,000.00	-	20,000.00	20,000.00	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses							
204-30-30 59990.301		Operating Xfer Out-CIP	40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses			40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance			375,400.77	365,738.77	385,738.77	20,000.00	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works			605,621.77	605,712.87	626,177.87	20,465.00	
Department: 90 - Non-Departmental							
Division: 50 - Capital Outlay							
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
204-90-50 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	100,000.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			100,000.00	-	-	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
204-90-50 53810		Construction Services	197,000.00	-	97,000.00	97,000.00	Projects carried forward from FY25 to FY26 due to current number of active projects
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			197,000.00	-	97,000.00	97,000.00	
Division Total: 50 - Capital Outlay			297,000.00	-	97,000.00	97,000.00	
Department Total: 90 - Non-Departmental			297,000.00	-	97,000.00	97,000.00	
EXPENSES Total			902,621.77	605,712.87	723,177.87	117,465.00	
Fund REVENUE Total: 204 - Measure J-Return to Source Fund			600,000.00	612,000.00	612,000.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 204 - Measure J-Return to Source Fund			902,621.77	605,712.87	723,177.87	117,465.00	
Fund Total: 204 - Measure J-Return to Source Fund			(302,621.77)	6,287.13	(111,177.87)	(117,465.00)	
Fund: 205 - Measure J Storm Drain							
REVENUES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							
4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes							
205-00-00 40150		Parcel Tax-Local Approved	709,400.00	709,400.00	709,400.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes			709,400.00	709,400.00	709,400.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental			709,400.00	709,400.00	709,400.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			709,400.00	709,400.00	709,400.00	-	
REVENUES Total			709,400.00	709,400.00	709,400.00	-	
EXPENSES							
Department: 30 - Public Works							
Division: 20 - Public Works Engineering							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
205-30-20 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	27,699.86	29,265.16	29,265.16	-	
205-30-20 51210		PERS Contributions	1,598.78	1,697.49	1,697.49	-	
205-30-20 51211		PERS UAL	6,426.68	6,948.34	6,948.34	-	
205-30-20 51220		FICA/Medicare	2,124.03	2,243.77	2,243.77	-	
205-30-20 51230		Medical Benefits	5,170.13	5,299.38	5,299.38	-	
205-30-20 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	286.25	301.92	301.92	-	
205-30-20 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	1,958.99	2,056.94	2,056.94	-	
205-30-20 51150		Special Pay	65.00	65.00	65.00	-	
205-30-20 51155		One-Time Payouts	777.96	777.96	777.96	-	
205-30-20 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	107.90	107.90	107.90	-	
205-30-20 51990		Salary Savings	232.00	-	776.00	776.00	Labor contract increases
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			46,447.59	48,763.86	49,539.86	776.00	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
205-30-20 52110		Collect & Admin Services	6,695.00	6,695.00	6,695.00	-	
205-30-20 52120		Legal & Financial Svcs	7,004.00	7,004.00	7,004.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			13,699.00	13,699.00	13,699.00	-	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses							
205-30-20 59991.101		Indirect Xfer-GEN	74,000.00	74,000.00	74,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses			74,000.00	74,000.00	74,000.00	-	
Division Total: 20 - Public Works Engineering			134,146.59	136,462.86	137,238.86	776.00	
Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
205-30-30 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	175,491.78	183,086.42	183,086.42	-	
205-30-30 51120		Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	11,600.00	12,296.00	12,296.00	-	
205-30-30 51210		PERS Contributions	20,821.10	21,644.97	21,644.97	-	
205-30-30 51211		PERS UAL	47,063.94	50,241.70	50,241.70	-	
205-30-30 51220		FICA/Medicare	13,282.30	13,877.30	13,877.30	-	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
205-30-30	51230	Medical Benefits	57,421.04	58,856.56	58,856.56	-	
205-30-30	51235	Life & LTD Insurance	1,771.41	1,842.33	1,842.33	-	
205-30-30	51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	12,635.67	13,267.46	13,267.46	-	
205-30-30	51140	Overtime Pay	4,040.00	4,161.20	4,161.20	-	
205-30-30	51142	Straight OT	3,220.00	3,316.60	3,316.60	-	
205-30-30	51150	Special Pay	2,475.20	2,475.20	2,475.20	-	
205-30-30	51155	One-Time Payouts	3,712.19	3,712.19	3,712.19	-	
205-30-30	51237	Allowances & Other Benefits	79.30	79.30	79.30	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			353,613.93	368,857.23	368,857.23	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
205-30-30	53210	Infrastructure Maint Svc	82,101.00	79,150.00	79,150.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			82,101.00	79,150.00	79,150.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
205-30-30	55510	Infrastructure Supplies	15,600.00	15,600.00	15,600.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			15,600.00	15,600.00	15,600.00	-	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance			451,314.93	463,607.23	463,607.23	-	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works			585,461.52	600,070.09	600,846.09	776.00	
Department: 90 - Non-Departmental							
Division: 50 - Capital Outlay							
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
205-90-50	52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	192,374.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			192,374.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
205-90-50	53810	Construction Services	790,000.00	225,000.00	225,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			790,000.00	225,000.00	225,000.00	-	
Division Total: 50 - Capital Outlay			982,374.00	275,000.00	275,000.00	-	
Department Total: 90 - Non-Departmental			982,374.00	275,000.00	275,000.00	-	
EXPENSES Total			1,567,835.52	875,070.09	875,846.09	776.00	
Fund REVENUE Total: 205 - Measure J Storm Drain			709,400.00	709,400.00	709,400.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 205 - Measure J Storm Drain			1,567,835.52	875,070.09	875,846.09	776.00	
Fund Total: 205 - Measure J Storm Drain			(858,435.52)	(165,670.09)	(166,446.09)	(776.00)	
Fund: 207 - Measure H Park & Rec Facilities							
REVENUES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							
4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes							
207-00-00	40150	Parcel Tax-Local Approved	647,000.00	647,000.00	647,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes			647,000.00	647,000.00	647,000.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental			647,000.00	647,000.00	647,000.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			647,000.00	647,000.00	647,000.00	-	
REVENUES Total			647,000.00	647,000.00	647,000.00	-	
EXPENSES							
Department: 30 - Public Works							
Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance							
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
207-30-30	53210	Infrastructure Maint Svc	11,358.00	9,850.00	9,850.00	-	
207-30-30	53240	Landscape/Park Maint Svcs	162,914.20	154,403.39	154,403.39	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			174,272.20	164,253.39	164,253.39	-	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance			174,272.20	164,253.39	164,253.39	-	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works			174,272.20	164,253.39	164,253.39	-	
Department: 50 - Recreation							
Division: 30 - Recreation-Swim Center							
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
207-50-30	53110	Utilities-Energy	85,799.00	94,378.90	94,378.90	-	
207-50-30	53210	Infrastructure Maint Svc	65,479.00	65,479.00	65,479.00	-	
207-50-30	53290	Miscellaneous R&M Svcs	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			201,278.00	209,857.90	209,857.90	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
207-50-30	55295	Chemicals	56,270.00	56,270.00	56,270.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			56,270.00	56,270.00	56,270.00	-	
Division Total: 30 - Recreation-Swim Center			257,548.00	266,127.90	266,127.90	-	
Division: 70 - Recreation-Custodial Services							
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
207-50-70	53290	Miscellaneous R&M Svcs	56,454.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			56,454.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
207-50-70	55530	Landscape & Park Supplies	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
207-50-70	56710	Other Equipment <\$10K	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Division Total: 70 - Recreation-Custodial Services			66,454.00	60,000.00	60,000.00	-	
Department Total: 50 - Recreation			324,002.00	326,127.90	326,127.90	-	
Department: 90 - Non-Departmental							
Division: 50 - Capital Outlay							
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
207-90-50	52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	1,635.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			1,635.00	-	-	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
207-90-50	53810	Construction Services	388,522.00	50,000.00	200,000.00	150,000.00	\$200,000 budgeted for parking lot improvements will not be spent this year, holding back \$100,000 in FY25 for slide project and Lap Pool conceptual design and cost estimating. Allocating additional \$50,000 from anticipated fund balance
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			388,522.00	50,000.00	200,000.00	150,000.00	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses							
207-90-50	59991.101	Indirect Xfer-GEN	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses			50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Division Total: 50 - Capital Outlay			440,157.00	100,000.00	250,000.00	150,000.00	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
Department Total: 90 - Non-Departmental			440,157.00	100,000.00	250,000.00	150,000.00	
EXPENSES Total			938,431.20	590,381.29	740,381.29	150,000.00	
Fund REVENUE	Total: 207 - Measure H Park & Rec Facilities		647,000.00	647,000.00	647,000.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE	Total: 207 - Measure H Park & Rec Facilities		938,431.20	590,381.29	740,381.29	150,000.00	
Fund Total: 207 - Measure H Park & Rec Facilities			(291,431.20)	56,618.71	(93,381.29)	(150,000.00)	
Fund: 208 - Asset Seizure Fund							
EXPENSES							
Department: 20 - Police							
Division: 11 - Police Administration							
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
208-20-11 55290	Other Operating Supplies		75,000.00	75,000.00	75,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			75,000.00	75,000.00	75,000.00	-	
Division Total: 11 - Police Administration			75,000.00	75,000.00	75,000.00	-	
Department Total: 20 - Police			75,000.00	75,000.00	75,000.00	-	
EXPENSES Total			75,000.00	75,000.00	75,000.00	-	
Fund REVENUE	Total: 208 - Asset Seizure Fund						
Fund EXPENSE	Total: 208 - Asset Seizure Fund		75,000.00	75,000.00	75,000.00	-	
Fund Total: 208 - Asset Seizure Fund			(75,000.00)	(75,000.00)	(75,000.00)	-	
Fund: 209 - Vehicle Abatement Fund							
REVENUES							
Department: 20 - Police							
Division: 11 - Police Administration							
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues							
209-20-11 45510	Abandoned Vehicle Abatem		8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues			8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
Division Total: 11 - Police Administration			8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
Department Total: 20 - Police			8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
REVENUES Total			8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
EXPENSES							
Department: 20 - Police							
Division: 11 - Police Administration							
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
209-20-11 52240	Miscellaneous Services		-	-	8,000.00	8,000.00	EBRCS Account Due Payoff - billing inconsistency in 2017 & 2018 \$4k and On-going EBRCS Radio Payments \$4k
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			-	-	8,000.00	8,000.00	
Division Total: 11 - Police Administration			-	-	8,000.00	8,000.00	
Division: 12 - Police Operations							
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
209-20-12 53250	Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc		10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
209-20-12 54240	Software Licenses & Maintenance		30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
209-20-12 56510	Vehicles <\$10K		7,890.00	-	-	-	
209-20-12 56520	Vehicles >\$10K		160,000.00	-	130,000.00	130,000.00	Project delays, may be reduced to \$95k if project is executed within current FY (in process)
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			167,890.00	-	130,000.00	130,000.00	
Division Total: 12 - Police Operations			207,890.00	40,000.00	170,000.00	130,000.00	
Department Total: 20 - Police			207,890.00	40,000.00	178,000.00	138,000.00	
EXPENSES Total			207,890.00	40,000.00	178,000.00	138,000.00	
Fund REVENUE	Total: 209 - Vehicle Abatement Fund		8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE	Total: 209 - Vehicle Abatement Fund		207,890.00	40,000.00	178,000.00	138,000.00	
Fund Total: 209 - Vehicle Abatement Fund			(199,890.00)	(32,000.00)	(170,000.00)	(138,000.00)	
Fund: 211 - Street Improvemt & Maint							
REVENUES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							
4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes							
211-00-00 40240	Sales Tax - District Tax - Measure R		2,229,000.00	2,291,000.00	2,291,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes			2,229,000.00	2,291,000.00	2,291,000.00	-	
4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property							
211-00-00 44010	Interest Income		45,831.00	45,831.00	45,831.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property			45,831.00	45,831.00	45,831.00	-	
4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue							
211-00-00 48990	Other Misc Revenue		5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue			5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental			2,279,831.00	2,341,831.00	2,341,831.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			2,279,831.00	2,341,831.00	2,341,831.00	-	
REVENUES Total			2,279,831.00	2,341,831.00	2,341,831.00	-	
EXPENSES							
Department: 10 - Administration							
Division: 50 - Finance Department							
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
211-10-50 52120	Legal & Financial Svcs		6,570.00	6,570.00	6,570.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			6,570.00	6,570.00	6,570.00	-	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses							
211-10-50 59990.836	Operating Xfer Out-ST IMP		702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses			702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
Division Total: 50 - Finance Department			709,070.00	709,570.00	709,570.00	-	
Department Total: 10 - Administration			709,070.00	709,570.00	709,570.00	-	
Department: 30 - Public Works							
Division: 20 - Public Works Engineering							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
211-30-20 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages		47,719.45	49,872.07	49,873.00	0.93	
211-30-20 51210	PERS Contributions		2,201.84	2,304.23	2,305.00	0.77	
211-30-20 51211	PERS UAL		10,796.64	11,565.43	11,566.00	0.57	
211-30-20 51220	FICA/Medicare		3,650.57	3,815.24	3,816.00	0.76	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
211-30-20 51230		Medical Benefits	7,938.57	8,137.03	8,138.00	0.97	
211-30-20 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	483.84	502.29	503.00	0.71	
211-30-20 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	2,611.99	2,742.59	2,743.00	0.41	
211-30-20 51155		One-Time Payouts	310.58	310.58	311.00	0.42	
211-30-20 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	251.68	251.68	252.00	0.32	
211-30-20 51990		Salary Savings	77.00	-	259.00	259.00	Labor contract increases
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			76,042.14	79,501.14	79,766.00	264.86	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
211-30-20 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	329.60	339.49	340.00	0.51	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			329.60	339.49	340.00	0.51	
Division Total: 20 - Public Works Engineering			76,371.74	79,840.63	80,106.00	265.37	
Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
211-30-30 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	24,905.74	26,037.83	26,038.00	0.17	
211-30-30 51210		PERS Contributions	3,412.96	3,550.43	3,551.00	0.57	
211-30-30 51211		PERS UAL	7,064.45	7,547.26	7,548.00	0.74	
211-30-30 51220		FICA/Medicare	1,940.54	2,027.15	2,028.00	0.85	
211-30-30 51230		Medical Benefits	9,745.17	9,988.80	9,989.00	0.20	
211-30-30 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	263.65	275.63	276.00	0.37	
211-30-30 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	2,122.40	2,228.52	2,229.00	0.48	
211-30-30 51140		Overtime Pay	1,507.92	1,553.16	1,554.00	0.84	
211-30-30 51142		Straight OT	458.35	472.10	473.00	0.90	
211-30-30 51150		Special Pay	462.28	462.28	463.00	0.72	
211-30-30 51155		One-Time Payouts	693.68	693.68	694.00	0.32	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			52,577.13	54,836.84	54,843.00	6.16	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance			52,577.13	54,836.84	54,843.00	6.16	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works			128,948.87	134,677.47	134,949.00	271.53	
Department: 90 - Non-Departmental							
Division: 50 - Capital Outlay							
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
211-90-50 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	20,800.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			20,800.00	-	-	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
211-90-50 53810		Construction Services	3,125,000.00	1,411,500.00	4,050,000.00	2,638,500.00	Richmond Complete Streets Construction moved from FY25 to FY26; and 2025 Street Resurfacing Project needing to be rebid so award moved from FY25 to FY26, include adjusted cost estimates and planning for FY27 project
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			3,125,000.00	1,411,500.00	4,050,000.00	2,638,500.00	
Division Total: 50 - Capital Outlay			3,145,800.00	1,411,500.00	4,050,000.00	2,638,500.00	
Department Total: 90 - Non-Departmental			3,145,800.00	1,411,500.00	4,050,000.00	2,638,500.00	
EXPENSES Total			3,983,818.87	2,255,747.47	4,894,519.00	2,638,771.53	
Fund REVENUE		Total: 211 - Street Improvemt & Maint	2,279,831.00	2,341,831.00	2,341,831.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE		Total: 211 - Street Improvemt & Maint	3,983,818.87	2,255,747.47	4,894,519.00	2,638,771.53	
Fund Total: 211 - Street Improvemt & Maint			(1,703,987.87)	86,083.53	(2,552,688.00)	(2,638,771.53)	
Fund: 212 - SB1-Road Repair & Accountability							
REVENUES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues							
212-00-00 45810		SB-1 Road Repair - Revenue	663,891.00	700,000.00	700,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues			663,891.00	700,000.00	700,000.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental			663,891.00	700,000.00	700,000.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			663,891.00	700,000.00	700,000.00	-	
REVENUES Total			663,891.00	700,000.00	700,000.00	-	
EXPENSES							
Department: 30 - Public Works							
Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance							
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
212-30-30 53210		Infrastructure Maint Svc	87,000.00	87,000.00	87,000.00	-	
212-30-30 53220		Sign & Signal Maint Svc	138,712.00	135,754.00	135,754.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			225,712.00	222,754.00	222,754.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
212-30-30 55510		Infrastructure Supplies	38,730.00	38,730.00	38,730.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			38,730.00	38,730.00	38,730.00	-	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance			264,442.00	261,484.00	261,484.00	-	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works			264,442.00	261,484.00	261,484.00	-	
Department: 90 - Non-Departmental							
Division: 50 - Capital Outlay							
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
212-90-50 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	36,611.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			36,611.00	-	-	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
212-90-50 53810		Construction Services	1,084,302.00	775,000.00	1,370,000.00	595,000.00	Richmond Complete Streets Construction moved from FY25 to FY26
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			1,084,302.00	775,000.00	1,370,000.00	595,000.00	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
212-90-50 54410		Printing & Binding	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
Division Total: 50 - Capital Outlay			1,121,413.00	775,500.00	1,370,500.00	595,000.00	
Department Total: 90 - Non-Departmental			1,121,413.00	775,500.00	1,370,500.00	595,000.00	
EXPENSES Total			1,385,855.00	1,036,984.00	1,631,984.00	595,000.00	
Fund REVENUE		Total: 212 - SB1-Road Repair & Accountability	663,891.00	700,000.00	700,000.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE		Total: 212 - SB1-Road Repair & Accountability	1,385,855.00	1,036,984.00	1,631,984.00	595,000.00	
Fund Total: 212 - SB1-Road Repair & Accountability			(721,964.00)	(336,984.00)	(931,984.00)	(595,000.00)	
Fund: 213 - Public Art Fund							
EXPENSES							
Department: 10 - Administration							
Division: 20 - City Manager							
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
213-10-20 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Division Total: 20 - City Manager		50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Department Total: 10 - Administration		50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
EXPENSES Total		50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Fund REVENUE Total: 213 - Public Art Fund						
Fund EXPENSE Total: 213 - Public Art Fund		50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Fund Total: 213 - Public Art Fund		(50,000.00)	(50,000.00)	(50,000.00)	-	

Fund: 214 - Measure J-Paratransit Fund

REVENUES

Department: 50 - Recreation
Division: 40 - Recreation-Senior Svcs
4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes

214-50-40 40320	Measure J-Paratransit	261,720.00	269,572.00	269,572.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4000-Taxes - Property and Other Taxes		261,720.00	269,572.00	269,572.00	-	
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services						
214-50-40 46532	Excursions/Trips	2,500.00	2,575.00	2,575.00	-	
214-50-40 46532.1	Fare Box Revenue	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
214-50-40 46532.2	Nutrition Rides	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services		10,000.00	10,075.00	10,075.00	-	
Division Total: 40 - Recreation-Senior Svcs		271,720.00	279,647.00	279,647.00	-	
Department Total: 50 - Recreation		271,720.00	279,647.00	279,647.00	-	
REVENUES Total		271,720.00	279,647.00	279,647.00	-	

EXPENSES

Department: 50 - Recreation
Division: 40 - Recreation-Senior Svcs
5100-Persn - Personnel

214-50-40 51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	15,775.00	16,248.00	16,248.00	-	
214-50-40 51120	Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	61,800.00	63,654.00	63,654.00	-	
214-50-40 51200	PARS Contribution	500.00	500.00	500.00	-	
214-50-40 51210	PERS Contributions	1,116.00	1,148.52	1,149.00	0.48	
214-50-40 51211	PERS UAL	4,823.00	5,093.96	5,094.00	0.04	
214-50-40 51220	FICA/Medicare	1,232.00	1,267.85	1,268.00	0.15	
214-50-40 51230	Medical Benefits	9,187.00	9,416.21	9,417.00	0.79	
214-50-40 51235	Life & LTD Insurance	167.00	172.00	172.00	-	
214-50-40 51240	Workers Compensation Premiums	1,633.00	1,714.13	1,715.00	0.87	
214-50-40 51140	Overtime Pay	531.00	546.36	547.00	0.64	
214-50-40 51150	Special Pay	325.00	325.00	325.00	-	
214-50-40 51990	Salary Savings	714.00	-	1,945.00	1,945.00	Labor contract increases
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel		97,803.00	100,086.03	102,034.00	1,947.97	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services						
214-50-40 52220	Medical Services	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services						
214-50-40 53250	Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services		10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
214-50-40 54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
214-50-40 54410	Printing & Binding	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-	
214-50-40 54920	Events & Field Trips	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	-	
5500-Supplies - Supplies						
214-50-40 55110	General Office Supplies	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
214-50-40 55120	Postage & Delivery	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
214-50-40 55210	Fuel	11,000.00	11,550.00	11,550.00	-	
214-50-40 55250	Vehicle & Equip Supplies	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
214-50-40 55290	Other Operating Supplies	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		21,000.00	21,550.00	21,550.00	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital						
214-50-40 56510	Vehicles <\$10K	-	-	135,000.00	135,000.00	Purchase of electric paratransit van
214-50-40 56520	Vehicles >\$10K	135,000.00	-	-	-	
214-50-40 56710	Other Equipment <\$10K	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital		137,000.00	2,000.00	137,000.00	135,000.00	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses						
214-50-40 59991.101	Indirect Xfer-GEN	37,877.00	39,392.00	39,392.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses		37,877.00	39,392.00	39,392.00	-	
Division Total: 40 - Recreation-Senior Svcs		360,680.00	230,028.03	366,976.00	136,947.97	
Department Total: 50 - Recreation		360,680.00	230,028.03	366,976.00	136,947.97	
EXPENSES Total		360,680.00	230,028.03	366,976.00	136,947.97	
Fund REVENUE Total: 214 - Measure J-Paratransit Fund		271,720.00	279,647.00	279,647.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 214 - Measure J-Paratransit Fund		360,680.00	230,028.03	366,976.00	136,947.97	
Fund Total: 214 - Measure J-Paratransit Fund		(88,960.00)	49,618.97	(87,329.00)	(136,947.97)	

Fund: 221 - Grants

REVENUES

Department: 40 - Community Development
Division: 10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmt
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues

221-40-10 45440	State Grant-Operating	1,085,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
221-40-10 45790	Other Local Reimbursement	117,000.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues		1,202,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
Division Total: 10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmt		1,202,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
Department Total: 40 - Community Development		1,202,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
REVENUES Total		1,202,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	

EXPENSES

Department: 40 - Community Development
Division: 10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmt
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
221-40-10 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	331,139.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services		331,139.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services						
221-40-10 54990	Other Administrative Svcs	895,000.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		895,000.00	-	-	-	
Division Total: 10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmnt		1,226,139.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
Department Total: 40 - Community Development		1,226,139.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
EXPENSES Total		1,226,139.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
Fund REVENUE Total: 221 - Grants		1,202,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 221 - Grants		1,226,139.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
Fund Total: 221 - Grants		(24,139.00)	-	-	-	

Fund: 222 - C.O.P.S. Grant Fund

REVENUES

Department: 20 - Police
Division: 12 - Police Operations
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues

222-20-12 45440	State Grant-Operating	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Division Total: 12 - Police Operations		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Department Total: 20 - Police		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
REVENUES Total		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	

EXPENSES

Department: 20 - Police
Division: 11 - Police Administration
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services

222-20-11 54240	Software Licenses & Maintenance	136,000.00	136,000.00	186,000.00	50,000.00	Radio Systems/Payoff for billing inconsistency in 2017 & 2018 EBRCS
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services		136,000.00	136,000.00	186,000.00	50,000.00	
Division Total: 11 - Police Administration		136,000.00	136,000.00	186,000.00	50,000.00	

Division: 12 - Police Operations
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services

222-20-12 53250	Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc	140,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services		140,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	

5500-Supplies - Supplies

222-20-12 55220	Safety Supplies	32,003.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies		32,003.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	-	

5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital

222-20-12 56520	Vehicles >\$10K	-	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	Patrol Vehicle Purchase
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital		-	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	
Division Total: 12 - Police Operations		172,003.00	130,000.00	170,000.00	40,000.00	
Department Total: 20 - Police		308,003.00	266,000.00	356,000.00	90,000.00	
EXPENSES Total		308,003.00	266,000.00	356,000.00	90,000.00	

Fund REVENUE Total: 222 - C.O.P.S. Grant Fund		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 222 - C.O.P.S. Grant Fund		308,003.00	266,000.00	356,000.00	90,000.00	
Fund Total: 222 - C.O.P.S. Grant Fund		(208,003.00)	(166,000.00)	(256,000.00)	(90,000.00)	

Fund: 225 - Donations

REVENUES

Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental
4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue

225-00-00 48120.4	Donations - July 4th	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue		50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	

4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources

225-00-00 49990.101	Operating Xfer In-GEN	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources		50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	

Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
REVENUES Total		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	

EXPENSES

Department: 50 - Recreation
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental
5450 - Programs

225-50-00 52185.4	July 4th Expenses	145,184.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5450 - Programs		145,184.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	

Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental		145,184.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Department Total: 50 - Recreation		145,184.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
EXPENSES Total		145,184.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	

Fund REVENUE Total: 225 - Donations		100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 225 - Donations		145,184.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	-	
Fund Total: 225 - Donations		(45,184.00)	-	-	-	

Fund: 227 - Grants - Environmental Services

REVENUES

Department: 10 - Administration
Division: 80 - Environmental Services
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues

227-10-80 45440	State Grant-Operating	75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	Grant revenue
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues		75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	
Division Total: 80 - Environmental Services		75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	
Department Total: 10 - Administration		75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	
REVENUES Total		75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	

EXPENSES

Department: 10 - Administration
Division: 80 - Environmental Services
5450 - Programs

227-10-80 52185	Program Expense	75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	SB1383 Grant Program Expenditures not expensed in FY25
Account Classification Total: 5450 - Programs		75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	
Division Total: 80 - Environmental Services		75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
Department Total: 10 - Administration			75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	
EXPENSES Total			75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	
Fund REVENUE	Total: 227 - Grants - Environmental Services		75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	
Fund EXPENSE	Total: 227 - Grants - Environmental Services		75,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	
Fund Total: 227 - Grants - Environmental Services			-	-	-	-	
Fund: 230 - Municipal Services Corp							
REVENUES							
Department:	40 - Community Development						
Division:	10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmt						
4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue							
230-40-10 48997	Cannabis Revenue		150,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue			150,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
Division Total: 10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmt			150,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
Department Total: 40 - Community Development			150,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
REVENUES Total			150,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
EXPENSES							
Department:	40 - Community Development						
Division:	10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmt						
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
230-40-10 52240	Miscellaneous Services		108,822.00	114,263.00	112,930.00	(1,333.00)	Approved adjustment for FY25-26 MSC Budget
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			108,822.00	114,263.00	112,930.00	(1,333.00)	
Division Total: 10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmt			108,822.00	114,263.00	112,930.00	(1,333.00)	
Department Total: 40 - Community Development			108,822.00	114,263.00	112,930.00	(1,333.00)	
EXPENSES Total			108,822.00	114,263.00	112,930.00	(1,333.00)	
Fund REVENUE	Total: 230 - Municipal Services Corp		150,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE	Total: 230 - Municipal Services Corp		108,822.00	114,263.00	112,930.00	(1,333.00)	
Fund Total: 230 - Municipal Services Corp			41,178.00	35,737.00	37,070.00	1,333.00	
Fund: 232 - City LMI Housing Fund							
EXPENSES							
Department:	40 - Community Development						
Division:	10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmt						
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
232-40-10 52120	Legal & Financial Svcs		20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
232-40-10 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs		15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	-	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses							
232-40-10 59110	Loans & Grants		-	350,000.00	350,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses			-	350,000.00	350,000.00	-	
Division Total: 10 - Comm Dev-Econ Developmt			35,000.00	385,000.00	385,000.00	-	
Department Total: 40 - Community Development			35,000.00	385,000.00	385,000.00	-	
Department:	60 - Economic Development						
Division:	20 - Economic Development						
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
232-60-20 54210	Telephone Expenses		33.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services			33.00	-	-	-	
Division Total: 20 - Economic Development			33.00	-	-	-	
Department Total: 60 - Economic Development			33.00	-	-	-	
EXPENSES Total			35,033.00	385,000.00	385,000.00	-	
Fund REVENUE	Total: 232 - City LMI Housing Fund						
Fund EXPENSE	Total: 232 - City LMI Housing Fund		35,033.00	385,000.00	385,000.00	-	
Fund Total: 232 - City LMI Housing Fund			(35,033.00)	(385,000.00)	(385,000.00)	-	
Fund: 301 - Capital Improvement Fund							
REVENUES							
Department:	00 - Non-Departmental Revenue						
Division:	00 - Non-Departmental						
4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources							
301-00-00 49990.204	Operating Xfer In-Meas J Return to Source		40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources			40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental			40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	
REVENUES Total			40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	
EXPENSES							
Department:	90 - Non-Departmental						
Division:	50 - Capital Outlay						
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
301-90-50 52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs		164,845.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			164,845.00	-	-	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
301-90-50 53810	Construction Services		10,270.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			10,270.00	-	-	-	
Division Total: 50 - Capital Outlay			175,115.00	-	-	-	
Department Total: 90 - Non-Departmental			175,115.00	-	-	-	
EXPENSES Total			175,115.00	-	-	-	
Fund REVENUE	Total: 301 - Capital Improvement Fund		40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE	Total: 301 - Capital Improvement Fund		175,115.00	-	-	-	
Fund Total: 301 - Capital Improvement Fund			(135,115.00)	40,000.00	40,000.00	-	
Fund: 303 - CIP Del Norte Complete Streets							
REVENUES							
Department:	00 - Non-Departmental Revenue						
Division:	00 - Non-Departmental Revenue						
4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue							
303-00-00 48610	Transportation Impact Fees		200,000.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue			200,000.00	-	-	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			200,000.00	-	-	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			200,000.00	-	-	-	
REVENUES Total			200,000.00	-	-	-	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
EXPENSES							
Department: 90 - Non-Departmental							
Division: 50 - Capital Outlay							
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
303-90-50 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	1,397,367.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			1,397,367.00	-	-	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
303-90-50 53810		Construction Services	9,512,445.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			9,512,445.00	-	-	-	
Division Total: 50 - Capital Outlay			10,909,812.00	-	-	-	
Department Total: 90 - Non-Departmental			10,909,812.00	-	-	-	
EXPENSES Total			10,909,812.00	-	-	-	
Fund REVENUE Total: 303 - CIP Del Norte Complete Streets			200,000.00	-	-	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 303 - CIP Del Norte Complete Streets			10,909,812.00	-	-	-	
Fund Total: 303 - CIP Del Norte Complete Streets			(10,709,812.00)	-	-	-	
Fund: 304 - Capital Improvement Fund Master							
REVENUES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues							
304-00-00 45450		State Grant-Capital	1,750,000.00	-	-	-	
304-00-00 45460		Local Agency Grants	180,000.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	Project delivery changes from FY25 to FY26
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues			1,930,000.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			1,930,000.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			1,930,000.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	
REVENUES Total			1,930,000.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	
EXPENSES							
Department: 90 - Non-Departmental							
Division: 50 - Capital Outlay							
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
304-90-50 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	182,834.00	-	-	-	
Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services			182,834.00	-	-	-	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
304-90-50 53810		Construction Services	1,883,179.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	Project delivery changes from FY25 to FY26
Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services			1,883,179.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	
Division Total: 50 - Capital Outlay			2,066,013.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	
Department Total: 90 - Non-Departmental			2,066,013.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	
EXPENSES Total			2,066,013.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	
Fund REVENUE Total: 304 - Capital Improvement Fund Master			1,930,000.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 304 - Capital Improvement Fund Master			2,066,013.00	260,000.00	1,880,000.00	1,620,000.00	
Fund Total: 304 - Capital Improvement Fund Master			(136,013.00)	-	-	-	
Fund: 501 - Integrated Waste Mgmt							
REVENUES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							
4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property							
501-00-00 44010		Interest Income	28,969.00	28,969.00	28,969.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property			28,969.00	28,969.00	28,969.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental			28,969.00	28,969.00	28,969.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			28,969.00	28,969.00	28,969.00	-	
Department: 10 - Administration							
Division: 80 - Environmental Services							
4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues							
501-10-80 45440		State Grant-Operating	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
501-10-80 45460		Local Agency Grants	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4500-Intergov'l - Intergovernmental Revenues			22,000.00	22,000.00	22,000.00	-	
4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services							
501-10-80 46310		IWM Fees	4,180,265.89	4,431,081.84	4,431,081.84	-	
501-10-80 46320		Recycling Revenues	92,664.00	96,370.56	96,370.56	-	
501-10-80 46321.1		Recycling Sales-CFL/Flourescent Tubes	1,880.00	1,880.00	1,880.00	-	
501-10-80 46321.5		Recycling Sales-Sharps	160.00	160.00	160.00	-	
501-10-80 46321.9		Recycling Sales-Event Stands	400.00	400.00	400.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4600-Chg for Svc - Charges for Services			4,275,369.89	4,529,892.40	4,529,892.40	-	
4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue							
501-10-80 48990		Other Misc Revenue	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4800-Oth Revenu - Other Revenue			3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	
Division Total: 80 - Environmental Services			4,300,369.89	4,554,892.40	4,554,892.40	-	
Department Total: 10 - Administration			4,300,369.89	4,554,892.40	4,554,892.40	-	
REVENUES Total			4,329,338.89	4,583,861.40	4,583,861.40	-	
EXPENSES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
501-00-00 56910		Depreciation Expense	179,491.39	179,491.39	179,491.39	-	
Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital			179,491.39	179,491.39	179,491.39	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental			179,491.39	179,491.39	179,491.39	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			179,491.39	179,491.39	179,491.39	-	
Department: 10 - Administration							
Division: 20 - City Manager							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
501-10-20 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	59,541.14	61,327.38	61,327.38	-	
501-10-20 51210		PERS Contributions	7,798.00	8,029.32	8,029.32	-	
501-10-20 51211		PERS UAL	13,569.08	14,360.74	14,360.74	-	
501-10-20 51220		FICA/Medicare	3,541.75	3,702.50	3,702.50	-	
501-10-20 51230		Medical Benefits	6,244.92	6,401.05	6,401.05	-	
501-10-20 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	430.05	430.05	430.05	-	
501-10-20 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	1,632.51	1,714.14	1,714.14	-	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
501-10-20 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	675.00	675.00	675.00	-	
		Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel	93,432.46	96,640.18	96,640.18	-	
		Division Total: 20 - City Manager	93,432.46	96,640.18	96,640.18	-	
Division: 80 - Environmental Services							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
501-10-80 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	984,313.00	1,016,361.87	1,016,361.87	-	
501-10-80 51120		Part-Time Permanent Salaries & Wages	54,364.00	55,994.30	55,994.30	-	
501-10-80 51200		PARS Contribution	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	
501-10-80 51210		PERS Contributions	95,470.00	98,479.52	98,479.52	-	
501-10-80 51211		PERS UAL	266,114.00	281,828.31	281,828.31	-	
501-10-80 51220		FICA/Medicare	74,695.00	77,190.69	77,190.69	-	
501-10-80 51230		Medical Benefits	359,574.00	368,562.70	368,562.70	-	
501-10-80 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	10,088.00	10,383.17	10,383.17	-	
501-10-80 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	75,749.00	79,536.20	79,536.20	-	
501-10-80 51140		Overtime Pay	37,132.00	38,245.44	38,245.44	-	
501-10-80 51150		Special Pay	5,900.00	5,899.92	5,899.92	-	
501-10-80 51155		One-Time Payouts	11,470.00	11,469.82	11,469.82	-	
501-10-80 51237		Allowances & Other Benefits	4,214.00	4,213.04	4,213.04	-	
501-10-80 51990		Salary Savings	96,726.00	-	214,194.00	214,194.00	labor contract increases 95,194 Admin position approved FY25 119k
		Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel	2,076,809.00	2,049,164.98	2,263,358.98	214,194.00	
5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services							
501-10-80 52190		Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	247,100.00	60,000.00	150,000.00	90,000.00	For consultant services related to franchise fee study and post-collection services;
501-10-80 52210		Lab & Investigative Svcs	8,200.00	8,200.00	8,200.00	-	
501-10-80 52230		Other Technical Services	2,400.00	2,400.00	2,400.00	-	
501-10-80 52240		Miscellaneous Services	55,900.00	5,900.00	45,900.00	40,000.00	For services related to solid waste/environmental-related work; unused budget FY25 so in IWM 10-year plan
		Account Classification Total: 5200-Prof Svcs - Purchased Professional & Technical Services	313,600.00	76,500.00	206,500.00	130,000.00	
5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services							
501-10-80 53110		Utilities-Energy	4,800.00	5,280.00	5,280.00	-	
501-10-80 53111		Utilities-Water & Sewer	6,970.00	7,179.10	7,179.10	-	
501-10-80 53210		Infrastructure Maint Svc	60,400.00	60,400.00	60,400.00	-	
501-10-80 53230		Building Maint Services	19,380.00	19,380.00	19,380.00	-	
501-10-80 53250		Vehicle & Equip Maint Svc	274,724.00	239,120.00	239,120.00	-	
501-10-80 53320		Vehicle & Equipment Lease	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	-	
501-10-80 53910		Solid Waste Services	269,627.00	240,000.00	240,000.00	-	
501-10-80 53990		Other Property Services	2,297.00	2,365.81	2,365.81	-	
		Account Classification Total: 5300-Prop Svcs - Purchased Property Services	644,198.00	579,724.91	579,724.91	-	
5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services							
501-10-80 54110		Insurance Premiums	-	25,000.00	25,000.00	-	
501-10-80 54210		Telephone Expenses	3,322.00	3,080.00	3,080.00	-	
501-10-80 54220		Mobile/Wireless Expenses	4,870.00	4,870.00	4,870.00	-	
501-10-80 54230		Internet Services	2,260.00	2,260.00	2,260.00	-	
501-10-80 54310		Legal Notices & Advertise	520.00	520.00	520.00	-	
501-10-80 54410		Printing & Binding	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	-	
501-10-80 54610		Travel & Training	19,000.00	19,000.00	25,000.00	6,000.00	Significant changes in staff requires investment in training/certifications
501-10-80 54910		Dues & Subscriptions	16,060.00	16,060.00	16,060.00	-	
501-10-80 54920		Events & Field Trips	5,410.00	5,410.00	5,410.00	-	
		Account Classification Total: 5400-Other Svcs - Other Purchased Services	71,442.00	96,200.00	102,200.00	6,000.00	
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
501-10-80 55110		General Office Supplies	2,080.00	2,080.00	2,080.00	-	
501-10-80 55120		Postage & Delivery	410.00	410.00	410.00	-	
501-10-80 55130		Photocopying Charges	1,740.00	1,740.00	1,740.00	-	
501-10-80 55210		Fuel	83,677.00	87,860.85	87,860.85	-	
501-10-80 55220		Safety Supplies	16,410.00	5,410.00	5,410.00	-	
501-10-80 55240		Clothing & Uniform Supply	6,830.00	6,830.00	6,830.00	-	
501-10-80 55250		Vehicle & Equip Supplies	61,278.00	61,040.00	61,040.00	-	
501-10-80 55290		Other Operating Supplies	10,920.00	10,920.00	10,920.00	-	
501-10-80 55520		Building Supplies	200.00	200.00	200.00	-	
		Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies	183,545.00	176,490.85	176,490.85	-	
5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital							
501-10-80 56410		Office Equipment <\$10K	18,769.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-	
501-10-80 56620		Heavy Equipment >\$10K	749,000.00	250,000.00	250,000.00	-	
501-10-80 56710		Other Equipment <\$10K	123,000.00	45,750.00	125,750.00	80,000.00	Roll PO from FY25
501-10-80 56910		Depreciation Expense	7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	-	
		Account Classification Total: 5600-Prop & Cap - Property & Capital	897,769.00	317,750.00	397,750.00	80,000.00	
5800-Financing - Financing Costs							
501-10-80 58110.1		Principal Payments-Facilities	298,300.00	151,900.00	151,900.00	-	
501-10-80 58110.4		Principal Pymt - Sideloader Recycling Truck	77,895.00	-	-	-	
501-10-80 58110.6		Principal Pymt - Rearloader Recycling Truck	81,788.00	84,685.00	84,685.00	-	
501-10-80 58120.1		Interest Payments-Facilities	8,235.00	1,385.00	1,385.00	-	
501-10-80 58120.4		Interest Payment - Sideloader Recycling Truck	1,632.00	-	-	-	
501-10-80 58120.6		Interest Payment - Rearloader Recycling Truck	12,218.00	9,321.00	9,321.00	-	
501-10-80 58220		Licenses & Permits	8,790.00	8,790.00	8,790.00	-	
501-10-80 58920		Bank & Credit Card Fees	410.00	410.00	410.00	-	
		Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs	489,268.00	256,491.00	256,491.00	-	
5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses							
501-10-80 59991.101		Indirect Xfer-GEN	422,034.00	447,356.00	447,356.00	-	
501-10-80 59990.101		Operating Xfer Out-GEN	3,671.00	3,671.00	3,671.00	-	
		Account Classification Total: 5900-Oth Financ - Other Financing Uses	425,705.00	451,027.00	451,027.00	-	
		Division Total: 80 - Environmental Services	5,102,336.00	4,003,348.74	4,433,542.74	430,194.00	
		Department Total: 10 - Administration	5,195,768.46	4,099,988.92	4,530,182.92	430,194.00	
Department: 30 - Public Works							
Division: 20 - Public Works Engineering							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
501-30-20 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	3,513.65	3,794.74	3,794.74	-	
501-30-20 51210		PERS Contributions	243.51	262.99	262.99	-	
501-30-20 51211		PERS UAL	819.38	902.95	902.95	-	

G/L Account Number		Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
501-30-20 51220		FICA/Medicare	268.81	290.32	290.32	-	
501-30-20 51230		Medical Benefits	660.76	677.28	677.28	-	
501-30-20 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	37.20	40.17	40.17	-	
501-30-20 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	326.48	342.81	342.81	-	
501-30-20 51155		One-Time Payouts	38.92	38.92	38.92	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			5,908.72	6,350.18	6,350.18	-	
Division Total: 20 - Public Works Engineering			5,908.72	6,350.18	6,350.18	-	
Division: 30 - Public Works Maintenance							
5100-Persn - Personnel							
501-30-30 51110		Regular Salaries & Wages	65,627.68	69,885.19	69,885.19	-	
501-30-30 51210		PERS Contributions	6,574.25	6,937.39	6,937.39	-	
501-30-30 51211		PERS UAL	16,925.04	18,362.74	18,362.74	-	
501-30-30 51220		FICA/Medicare	5,149.20	5,474.89	5,474.89	-	
501-30-30 51230		Medical Benefits	17,851.50	18,297.78	18,297.78	-	
501-30-30 51235		Life & LTD Insurance	694.73	739.80	739.80	-	
501-30-30 51240		Workers Compensation Premiums	5,713.80	5,999.49	5,999.49	-	
501-30-30 51140		Overtime Pay	2,994.31	3,537.44	3,537.44	-	
501-30-30 51142		Straight OT	2,200.42	2,299.73	2,299.73	-	
501-30-30 51150		Special Pay	1,681.94	1,681.94	1,681.94	-	
501-30-30 51155		One-Time Payouts	842.00	842.00	842.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5100-Persn - Personnel			126,254.86	134,058.39	134,058.39	-	
Division Total: 30 - Public Works Maintenance			126,254.86	134,058.39	134,058.39	-	
Department Total: 30 - Public Works			132,163.58	140,408.57	140,408.57	-	
EXPENSES Total			5,507,423.43	4,419,888.88	4,850,082.88	430,194.00	
Fund REVENUE Total: 501 - Integrated Waste Mgmt			4,329,338.89	4,583,861.40	4,583,861.40	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 501 - Integrated Waste Mgmt			5,507,423.43	4,419,888.88	4,850,082.88	430,194.00	
Fund Total: 501 - Integrated Waste Mgmt			(1,178,084.54)	163,972.52	(266,221.48)	(430,194.00)	
Fund: 601 - Vehicle/Equip Replacement							
REVENUES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							
4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property							
601-00-00 44240		Departmental Rental Chgs	136,591.00	136,590.23	136,590.23	-	
Account Classification Total: 4400-Use of Prp - Use of Money and Property			136,591.00	136,590.23	136,590.23	-	
4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources							
601-00-00 49990.101		Operating Xfer In-GEN	85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources			85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental			221,591.00	221,590.23	221,590.23	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			221,591.00	221,590.23	221,590.23	-	
REVENUES Total			221,591.00	221,590.23	221,590.23	-	
EXPENSES							
Department: 10 - Administration							
Division: 70 - Information Systems Div							
5500-Supplies - Supplies							
601-10-70 55250		Vehicle & Equip Supplies	-	-	45,000.00	45,000.00	IT equipment purchases, transferred into ISF FY25.
Account Classification Total: 5500-Supplies - Supplies			-	-	45,000.00	45,000.00	
Division Total: 70 - Information Systems Div			-	-	45,000.00	45,000.00	
Department Total: 10 - Administration			-	-	45,000.00	45,000.00	
Department: 25 - Fire							
Division: 10 - Fire Administration							
5800-Financing - Financing Costs							
601-25-10 58110		Principal Payments	190,028.10	193,534.99	193,534.99	-	
601-25-10 58120		Interest Payments	31,562.10	136,590.20	136,590.20	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs			221,590.20	330,125.19	330,125.19	-	
Division Total: 10 - Fire Administration			221,590.20	330,125.19	330,125.19	-	
Department Total: 25 - Fire			221,590.20	330,125.19	330,125.19	-	
EXPENSES Total			221,590.20	330,125.19	375,125.19	45,000.00	
Fund REVENUE Total: 601 - Vehicle/Equip Replacement			221,591.00	221,590.23	221,590.23	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 601 - Vehicle/Equip Replacement			221,590.20	330,125.19	375,125.19	45,000.00	
Fund Total: 601 - Vehicle/Equip Replacement			0.80	(108,534.96)	(153,534.96)	(45,000.00)	
Fund: 835 - City Hall Bond D/S							
REVENUES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							
4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources							
835-00-00 49990.101		Operating Xfer In-GEN	623,329.00	626,735.00	626,735.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources			623,329.00	626,735.00	626,735.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental			623,329.00	626,735.00	626,735.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue			623,329.00	626,735.00	626,735.00	-	
REVENUES Total			623,329.00	626,735.00	626,735.00	-	
EXPENSES							
Department: 10 - Administration							
Division: 50 - Finance Department							
5800-Financing - Financing Costs							
835-10-50 58110		Principal Payments	330,000.00	345,000.00	345,000.00	-	
835-10-50 58120		Interest Payments	242,562.50	226,062.50	226,062.50	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs			572,562.50	571,062.50	571,062.50	-	
Division Total: 50 - Finance Department			572,562.50	571,062.50	571,062.50	-	
Department Total: 10 - Administration			572,562.50	571,062.50	571,062.50	-	
EXPENSES Total			572,562.50	571,062.50	571,062.50	-	
Fund REVENUE Total: 835 - City Hall Bond D/S			623,329.00	626,735.00	626,735.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 835 - City Hall Bond D/S			572,562.50	571,062.50	571,062.50	-	
Fund Total: 835 - City Hall Bond D/S			50,766.50	55,672.50	55,672.50	-	
Fund: 836 - Street Imp Bond D/S							
REVENUES							
Department: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue							
Division: 00 - Non-Departmental							

G/L Account Number	Account Description	2025 Amended Budget	2026 Original	2026 Proposed	2026 Adjustments	Department Proposed Comments
4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources						
836-00-00 49990.211	Operating XferIN-STREETS	702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 4900-Oth Source - Other Financing Sources		702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
Division Total: 00 - Non-Departmental		702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
Department Total: 00 - Non-Departmental Revenue		702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
REVENUES Total		702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
EXPENSES						
Department: 10 - Administration						
Division: 50 - Finance Department						
5800-Financing - Financing Costs						
836-10-50 58110	Principal Payments	390,000.00	410,000.00	410,000.00	-	
836-10-50 58120	Interest Payments	312,500.00	293,000.00	293,000.00	-	
Account Classification Total: 5800-Financing - Financing Costs		702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
Division Total: 50 - Finance Department		702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
Department Total: 10 - Administration		702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
EXPENSES Total		702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
Fund REVENUE Total: 836 - Street Imp Bond D/S		702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
Fund EXPENSE Total: 836 - Street Imp Bond D/S		702,500.00	703,000.00	703,000.00	-	
Fund Total: 836 - Street Imp Bond D/S		-	-	-	-	
REVENUE GRAND Totals:		68,367,987.90	67,837,298.13	69,497,298.13	1,660,000.00	
EXPENSE GRAND Totals:		86,449,635.40	68,843,792.87	74,859,180.47	6,015,387.60	
Grand Totals:		(18,081,647.50)	(1,006,494.74)	(5,361,882.34)	(4,355,387.60)	

16.60 Rounding

DRAFT



Fiscal Year 2025-26 Proposed Budget

*City of El Cerrito
El Cerrito Public Financing Authority*

June 3, 2025



Agenda

- Budget Overview
- Proposed Budget – All Funds
- Proposed Budget – General Fund
- General Fund Balance and Forecast
- Summary
- Next Steps

Budget Overview

- Adopted annually per El Cerrito Municipal Code
 - July 1 – June 30 fiscal calendar
- 3 Types of Funds
 - General Fund – supports general governmental functions, unrestricted dollars
 - Special Revenue Fund – funds restricted for a specific program or use
 - E.g., Gas Tax Fund must be used for streets and road-related programs
 - Enterprise Fund – self-supporting activities funded by fees on a user-charge basis
 - Integrated Waste Management Fund is supported by user charges for the City's solid waste program

Budget Guiding Principles

Fiscal Sustainability

- Annual budgets should balance and avoid deficit spending.

One City, One General Fund

- General Fund revenue is a shared resource across all departments.

Transparency

- Provide City Council, Finance, the City Manager and the public with the information they need to make informed decisions and support the City's objectives.

One-Time Uses for One-Time Revenue

- Fund balance and one-time revenue should be used for one-time costs, not ongoing programmatic or staffing needs.

Budget to the Bottom Line (Division Level)

- Departments have the discretion to allocate spending among line items within a division for non-personnel expenses.
- The use of salary savings for other expenses must be approved by City Manager and Finance Director.

Plan and Prepare for Long-Term Needs

- Staff will develop asset replacement plans and internal service funds to prepare for long-term needs.

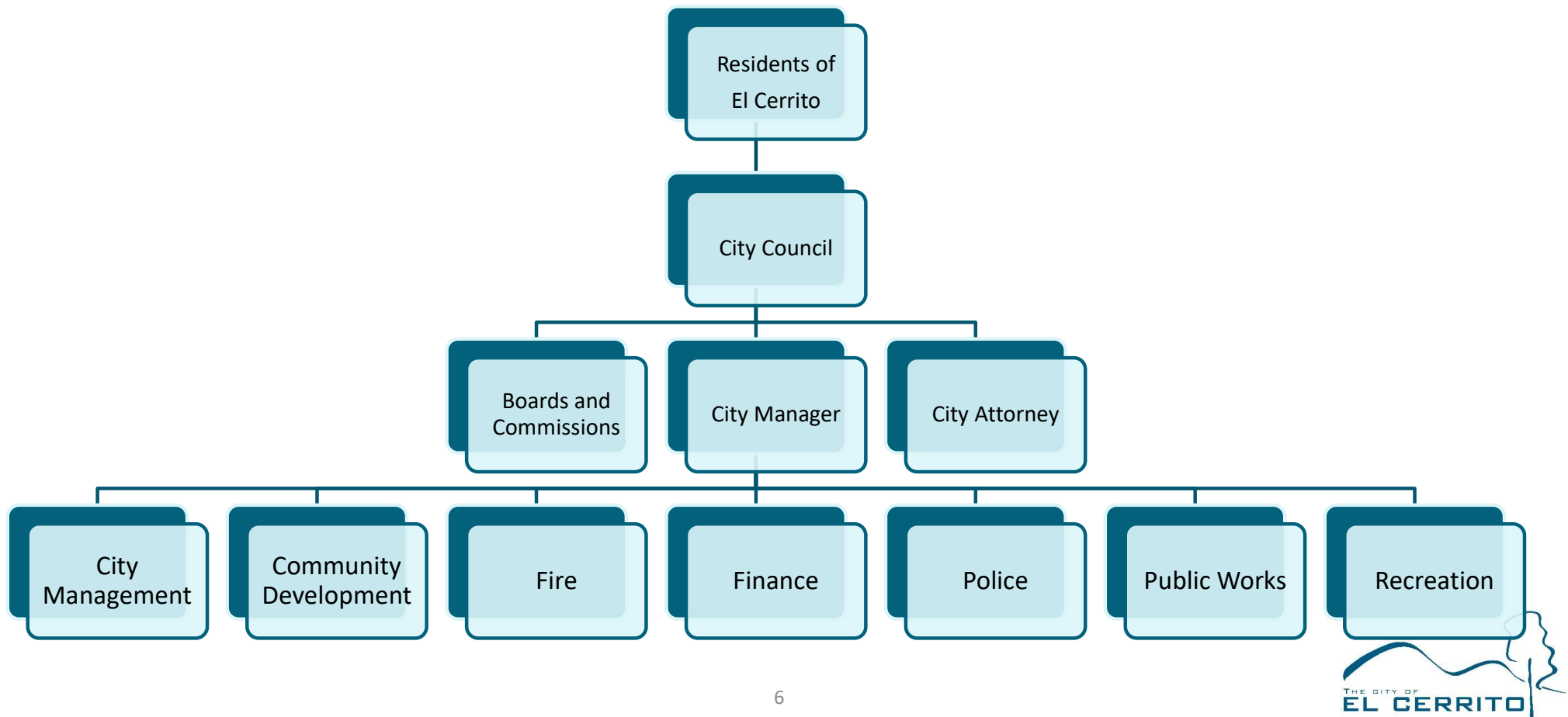


El Cerrito Strategic Plan 2024-2029

- Budget process and recommendations guided by Strategic Plan
- Department workplans aligned to Strategic Plan goals
 - Detailed strategic alignment information for each department included in biennial budget document



City Organization



Overall Position Listing

Department	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
City Council	5	5	5	5	5
City Management	9	10	10.5	10	10
Community Development	14	15	15	15	15
Finance	6	6	6.5	6	6
Fire	37	37	37.5	37.5	38
Police	48	48	48	48	48
Public Works	24.2	27.3	27.3	27.3	28.3
Recreation	18	18	20	20	20
TOTAL	161.2	166.3	169.8	168.8	170.3

Biennial Budget Public Engagement Process in 2024

- December 5: Strategic Plan Adopted by City Council
- January 13: Budget Priority Setting Workshop
 - Online Survey Launched (175 responses received)
- March 5: Mid-Year Budget Update
- March 19: FY 2022-23 ACFR Presented to Council
- April 6: Community Budget Workshop
- April 23: Financial Advisory Board Budget Workshop
- May 7: City Council Budget Study Session
- May 21: Department head presentations, Assessment hearings, Master Fee Schedule adoption
- May 28: Financial Advisory Board Meeting and Budget Discussion
- June 4: First Budget Hearing
- June 6: FAB Special Meeting
- June 18: Second Budget Hearing & Adoption

Midcycle Budget Process – FY 2025-26

- Feb 4: FY 2023-24 Audit presented to City Council
- March 4: Mid-year update to City Council on Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25
- April 15: City Council study session on General Fund for FY 2025-26
- May 20: City Council discussion and direction on one-time appropriations
- May 27: FAB Discussion of Proposed Midcycle Budget and One-time Appropriations
- **June 3: Review of Proposed Midcycle Budget**
- Prior to June 30: Formal adoption of FY 2025-26 Budget

Updates to FY 2024-25 After Adoption

Updates with FY 2024-25 Budget Impact

- Roll-forward of purchase orders from FY 2023-24
- New labor contracts signed (SEIU, PEA, PSMA, City Manager)

Updates with no FY 2024-25 Budget Impact

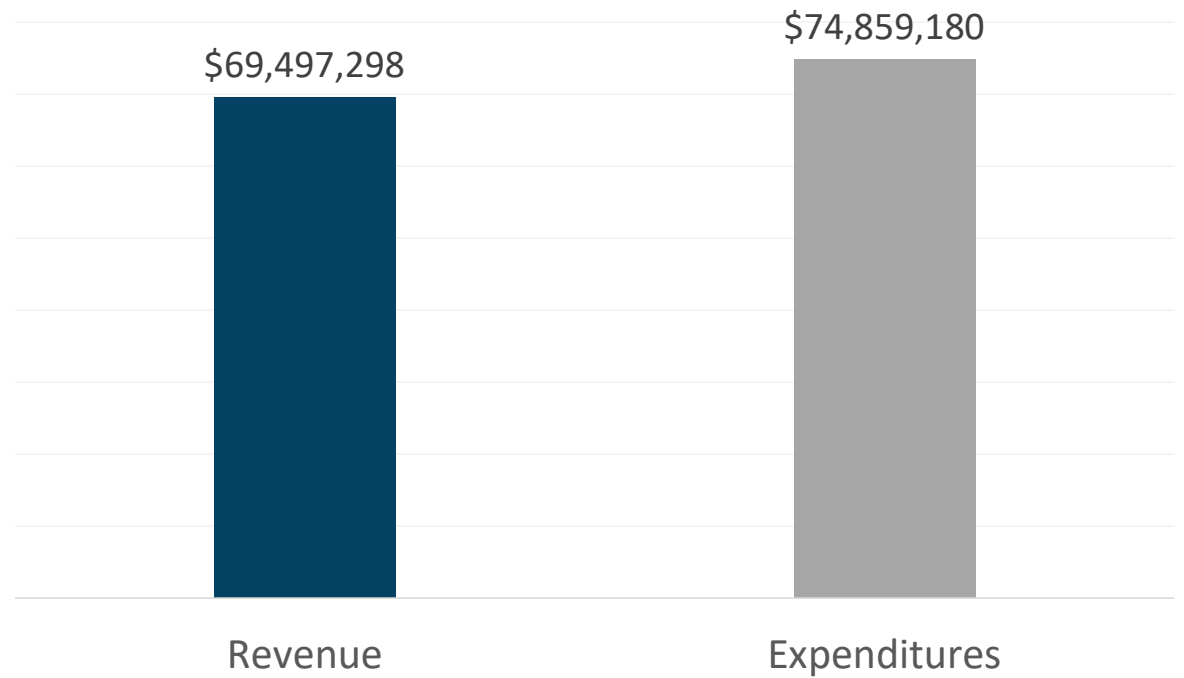
- Measure G passes with 81% approval
 - No change to current Biennial Budget but supports long-term sustainability
- FY 2023-24 year-end finalized, ACFR presented – update to fund balance from budget estimates
- General Fund Reserve policy level increased from 10% to 17%
- El Cerrito recognized by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)
 - Distinguished Budget Presentation Award
 - Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

Adjustments required for FY 2025-26

- Updated personnel estimates
 - SEIU, PSMA, PEA and City Manager contracts
 - Position reclassifications
 - Conversion of Fire Inspector to full-time
- Updated General Liability and Worker's Compensation insurance estimates
- Updated utilities cost estimates
- Increased costs for Library additional hours
- Unbilled expenses from County for East Bay Regional Communications System Authority (EBRCS) for 2017-2018
- **All adjustments incorporated into proposed FY 2025-26 budget - no change to General Fund Expenditure totals**

All Funds

Proposed Budget All Funds, FY 2025-26



All Funds - Revenues

	Citywide Revenues - All Funds				
	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Amended	Proposed
Property and Other Taxes	\$ 35,905,450	\$ 37,614,912	\$ 38,993,064	\$ 40,033,722	\$ 42,183,936
Licenses & Permits	1,440,973	1,173,898	1,272,849	1,007,000	1,073,280
Fines & Forfeitures	155,301	115,407	231,231	130,000	130,000
Non-Departmental Revenue	5,686,068	2,687,791	5,469,262	2,502,868	2,536,237
Use of Money & Property	534,949	413,475	1,538,381	1,168,391	1,041,990
Intergovernmental Revenue	13,117,282	10,382,641	11,411,062	10,362,360	9,485,103
Charges for Services	10,310,368	10,673,223	11,612,779	12,125,647	12,091,551
Other Revenue	661,280	760,489	1,172,215	1,038,000	955,200
Total	\$ 67,811,671	\$ 63,821,836	\$ 71,700,843	\$ 68,367,988	\$ 69,497,298

All Funds - Expenditures

	Citywide Expenditures - All Funds				
	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Amended	Proposed
Administration	\$ 8,314,816	\$ 8,799,551	\$ 13,134,711	\$ 15,157,579	\$ 14,882,379
Community Development	5,705,556	5,409,171	4,697,306	5,538,722	4,651,208
Fire	12,894,914	13,115,138	14,785,934	15,603,481	16,357,017
Police	11,632,344	11,841,853	13,478,342	15,635,745	15,906,986
Public Works	7,868,026	8,553,038	5,810,643	6,374,843	6,468,469
Recreation	4,760,970	5,596,337	6,620,274	7,880,152	7,608,756
Non-Departmental	4,347,394	2,746,453	9,136,162	20,199,866	8,984,365
Total	\$ 55,524,020	\$ 56,061,541	\$ 67,663,372	\$ 86,390,388	\$ 74,859,180

All Funds Overview

- Increase in total expenditures of \$6,015,388 from the previous fiscal year, with total revenues projected to increase \$1,660,000
- Driven largely by Capital Improvement Program's proposed increase in expenditures of \$5,003,759, with an increase in revenue of \$1,620,000
- Otherwise, revenue and expenditure estimates for all "Special Funds" are per the Adopted Biennial Budget, except where minor revisions were needed due to timing of purchases or projects

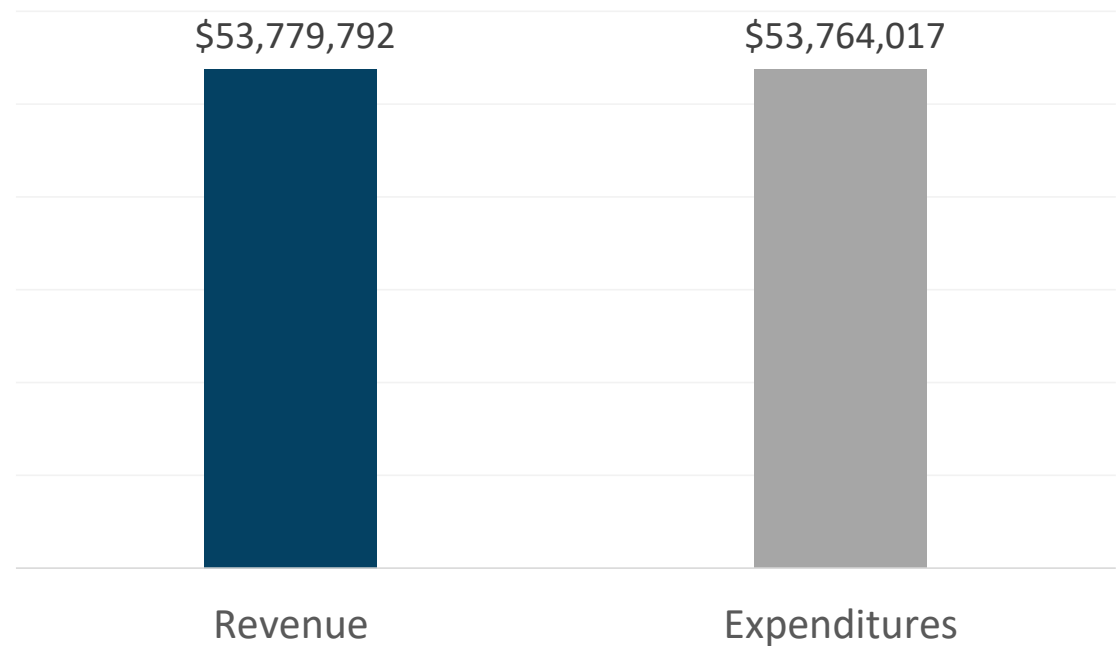
Capital Improvement Program



- Five-Year CIP includes 33 Identified Projects
- FY 2025-26 includes 20 *Active* Projects
- FY 2025-26 Proposed Budget - **\$7.8 Million**
 - Includes:
 - Transportation Improvements
 - Greenway Improvements
 - Swim Center Repairs and Modifications
 - Storm Drain Repairs
 - Annual Street Improvement Program
 - Street and Sidewalk Access Improvements
 - Richmond Street Complete Streets

General Fund Budget

Proposed General Fund Budget, FY 2025-26



General Fund Revenue

	General Fund Revenues				
	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Amended	Proposed
Property and Other Taxes	\$ 29,117,345	\$ 32,290,132	\$ 31,509,937	\$ 34,797,302	\$ 36,865,664
Licenses & Permits	1,440,973	1,173,898	1,272,849	1,007,000	1,073,280
Fines & Forfeitures	152,343	115,407	231,231	130,000	130,000
Non-Departmental Revenue	4,256,961	1,357,928	977,182	1,002,039	1,031,502
Use of Money & Property	378,949	413,475	1,018,874	957,000	830,600
Intergovernmental Revenue	8,007,683	8,261,850	8,898,568	5,334,401	5,551,043
Charges for Services	6,427,398	6,748,164	7,423,701	7,839,237	7,550,502
Other Revenue	497,710	681,068	777,245	630,000	747,200
Total	\$ 50,279,362	\$ 51,041,922	\$ 52,109,587	\$ 51,696,979	\$ 53,779,791

Highlighted Revenue Trends



Real Property Transfer Tax

	FY 2021-22 Actual	FY 2022-23 Actual	FY 2023-24 Actual	FY 2024-25 Adopted	FY 2025-26 Adopted
Real Property Transfer Tax	\$4,863,035	\$4,157,840	\$3,129,523*	\$3,000,000	\$3,200,000

FY 2023-24 Month	Properties Sold	Amount Received
July	12	\$ 173,868
August	17	\$ 235,014
September	19	\$ 266,855
October	21	\$ 278,220
November	27	\$ 360,954
December	16	\$ 224,868
January	10	\$ 120,038
February	18	\$ 254,166
March	13	\$ 172,536
April	30	\$ 531,408
May	27	\$ 366,174
June	17	\$ 228,642
Total FY23-24	227	\$ 3,212,743

*Actual total includes RPTT rebates of \$83,220



Measure R/G

	FY 2021-22 Actual	FY 2022-23 Actual	FY 2023-24 Actual	FY 2024-25 Adopted	FY 2025-26 Adopted
Measure R Revenue	\$3,632,337	\$4,651,914	\$4,322,227	\$4,459,000	\$4,581,000



General Fund Cannabis Revenue

	FY 2021-22 Actual	FY 2022-23 Actual	FY 2023-24 Actual	FY 2024-25 Adopted	FY 2025-26 Adopted
Cannabis Revenue	\$330,425	\$448,514	\$519,098	\$440,000	\$550,000



General Fund Expenditures

	General Fund Expenditures				
	FY 2021-22 Actual	FY 2022-23 Actual	FY 2023-24 Actual	FY 2024-25 Amended	FY 2025-26 Proposed
Administration	\$ 5,915,479	\$ 6,702,303	\$ 7,543,320	\$ 7,852,678	\$ 8,233,564
Community Development	3,064,082	3,057,584	4,267,261	4,168,728	4,003,278
Fire	12,894,300	13,076,900	14,649,344	15,381,891	16,026,892
Police	11,632,344	11,689,437	13,146,401	15,052,742	15,297,986
Public Works	1,903,618	2,269,406	2,616,116	2,481,847	2,604,358
Recreation	4,342,199	5,157,900	6,117,293	6,953,467	6,715,567
Non-Departmental	1,047,306	797,614	4,045,826	882,691	882,374
Total	\$ 40,799,328	\$ 42,751,144	\$ 52,385,561	\$ 52,774,044	\$ 53,764,019

Key Highlights for General Fund

- Second year of Biennial Budget
- No changes recommended to total General Fund revenues and expenditures
 - Proposed shifts among departments to ensure expenses do not exceed authority
- Little to no capacity for unbudgeted projects and initiatives
- Impacts to departments may change, with possible readjustments at midyear depending on economic conditions and revenue and expenditure trends in each department

Proposed One-Time Appropriations + Transfer to Section 115 Trust

\$1 million in One-time Appropriations & \$1.5 million EDRF Transfer

General Fund Appropriations

Swim Center Pool Replaster	\$500,000
Fire Engine and Equipment Replacement	380,000
Service Delivery Study	120,000
Total General Fund Appropriation	\$1,000,000

Transfer from the EDRF

Section 115 Trust (Reduction in EDRF)	1,500,000
Total General Fund Appropriation & EDRF Transfer	\$2,500,000

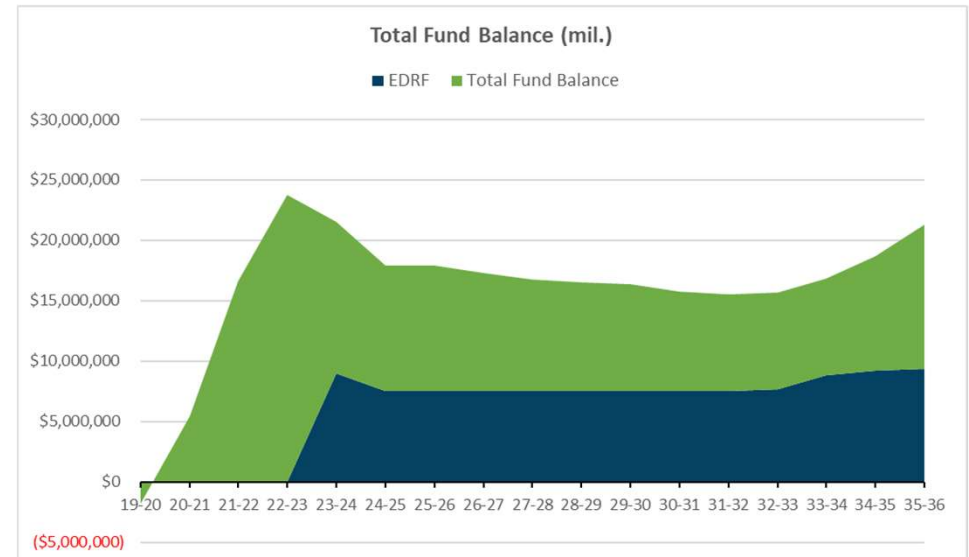
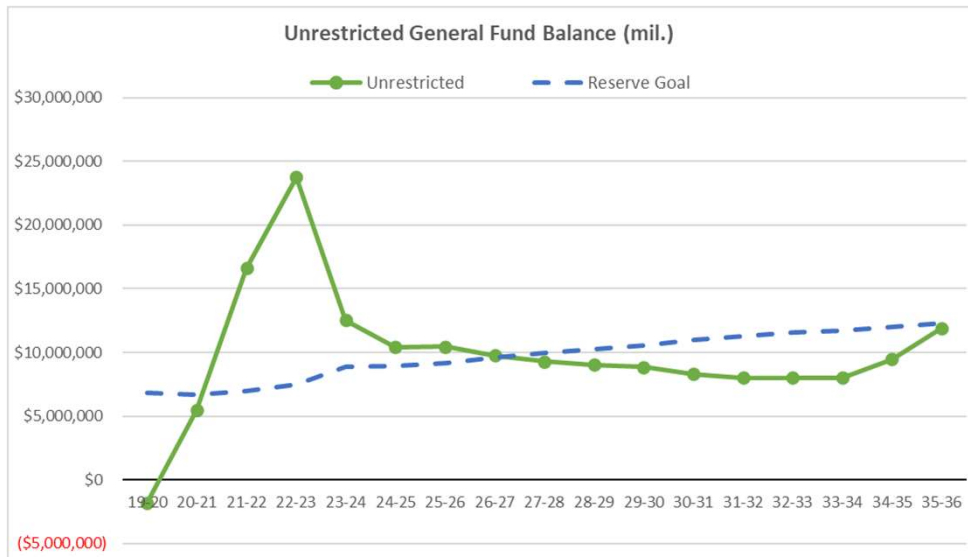
General Fund Balance

Fund Balance Projection		
FY24 General Fund - Total Fund Balance (actual)	\$	22,893,338
EDRF	(9,000,000)	
Section 115	(1,372,890)	
Non-Spendable	(126,751)	
FY25 Original Projected Surplus	33,952	
FY25 Approved adjustments:		
Expenditures	(1,437,907)	
One-time use of fund balance	(1,000,000)	
Revenues	310,535	
Use of fund balance		(2,093,420)
Projected Total Ending FY25 Fund Balance		20,799,918
EDRF (Internally Restricted)	(7,500,000)	
Section 115 (Restricted)	(2,900,161)	
Non-Spendable	(126,751)	(10,526,912)
Projected FY25 Unrestricted Fund Balance		10,273,007
FY26 Expenditure Proposed Budget	53,764,017	
FY26 17% Reserve Goal		9,139,883
Projected discretionary for FY26		1,133,124
FY 25 Projected Ending Total Fund Balance	\$	20,799,918
FY 25 Projected Total Reserve %		39%

If City Council takes action to appropriate one-time funding/EDRF transfer:

- Projected Ending Fund Balance of \$20.8M (39% reserve ratio), includes:
 - EDRF - \$7.5M
 - Section 115 Trust - \$2.9M
 - Unrestricted – \$10.3M
- **Projected discretionary funds remaining for FY 2025-26 of \$1.1M**
 - Doesn't include any potential surplus from FY25

General Fund Forecast – Updated May 2025



- Forecast includes:
 - Conservative revenue and expenditure growth assumptions
 - Labor increases from existing contracts and historic averages
 - Approval of \$1 million in one-time fund balance use/\$1.5 million EDRF transfer to Section 115 Trust

- Forecast does not include:
 - Assumption of a recession
 - Section 115 Trust smoothing payments
 - Issuance of new debt or uses of fund balance
 - Equipment or vehicle purchases beyond those budgeted
 - Additional contributions to Internal Service Funds

Strategies for General Fund Long-Term Sustainability

- Ongoing structural changes for ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability
- Completing studies using independent experts to improve operations:
 - Classification and Compensation Study ✓
 - Citywide Cost Allocation Plan and Fee Study ✓
 - **Service Delivery Study (proposed for FY 2025-26)**
- Provide information, strategies, and options to City Council for future fiscal years
- Next Biennial Budget Process to begin in late fall/winter

Proposed Budget Summary

The FY 2025-26 Proposed Budget:

- Reflects City Council priorities, including feedback from Biennial Budget process and input received during this current fiscal year
- Aligns with the City's Strategic Plan
- Balanced Has revenues exceeding expenditures; doesn't use any reserves for ongoing costs
- Maintains reserves above 17%, not including \$7.5M in EDRF
- Enables the City to continue providing key services without service delivery impacts, while making thoughtful decisions about long-term adjustments

Gann Limit

Gann Limit

\$195,961,530

Included in the recommended actions for adopting the FY 2025-26 Budget is the approval of the calculation and establishing the City's FY 2025-26 Gann Appropriation Limit

The California Government Code requires that the City adopt the Gann appropriations limit by resolution on an annual basis

Next Steps

- Questions, Comments, Direction
- Potential FAB Meeting
- Regular City Council Meeting June 17, 2025
- Additional Special Meetings as needed
- Adoption of Budget by June 30, 2025

FY 2025-26 Proposed Budget: Thanks to.....

- Residents, businesses, and community members for all their input during the biennial budget process
- City Council for their leadership and diligence
- Financial Advisory Board for their review and feedback
- City Staff for their hard work and commitment
- Executive Team for their leadership and dedication
- Special thanks to Finance Director Crystal Reams, Assistant to the City Manager Will Provost, Budget Manager Claire Coleman for their work to improve the City's long-term financial sustainability



Thank you!





AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 9.B.

Date: June 3, 2025
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Crystal Reams, Finance Director/City Treasurer, Finance Department
Subject: Approval of Fiscal Year 2024-25 One-Time Uses of General Fund Balance

ACTION PROPOSED

Adopt a resolution approving one-time expenditures and transfers from General Fund balance in Fiscal Year 2024-25.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The City ended Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24 with a General Fund balance of \$22.89 million. This total includes:

- \$9,000,000 in the Emergency Disaster Relief Fund (EDRF) (*internally restricted*)
- \$1,372,890 in the Section 115 Trust (*restricted*)
- \$126,751 in prepaid/inventory (*non-spendable*)

During the course of FY 2024-25, the City Council has approved a total use of fund balance of \$1.09 million. The projected ending General Fund balance total is \$21.8 million, representing a 40% fund balance ratio. Per the Comprehensive Financial Policy adopted in 2024, the City's General Fund reserve ratio requirement totals 30%, including a minimum 17% of unassigned fund balance and a minimum EDRF reserve of 13%.

For FY 2025-26, the General Fund expenditure budget is proposed to total \$53.76 million. Per the Policy, similar to the previous fiscal year numbers, this would mean the following minimum requirements for the General Fund reserve balance:

- General Fund (17%): \$9.14 million
- EDRF (13%) \$6.99 million
- Total reserve minimum requirement: \$16.13 million

With a projected General Fund balance that exceeds the minimum requirements, staff identified a discretionary total of \$2.1 million as well as \$2 million in additional funding available in the EDRF in excess of the City's Financial Policy Requirements. The current projected fund balance is shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Projected General Fund Balance

Fund Balance Projection		
FY24 General Fund - Total Fund Balance (actual)		\$ 22,893,338
EDRF	(9,000,000)	
Section 115	(1,372,890)	
Non-Spendable	(126,751)	
FY25 Original Projected Surplus	33,952	
FY25 Approved adjustments:		
Expenditures	(1,437,907)	
Revenues	310,535	
Use of fund balance		(1,093,420)
Projected Total Ending FY25 Fund Balance		21,799,918
EDRF (Internally Restricted)	(9,000,000)	
Section 115 (Restricted)	(1,400,161)	
Non-Spendable	(126,751)	(10,526,912)
Projected FY25 Unrestricted Fund Balance		11,273,007
FY26 Expenditure Proposed Budget	53,764,017	
FY26 17% Reserve Goal		9,139,883
Projected discretionary for FY26		2,133,124
FY 25 Projected Ending Total Fund Balance		21,799,918

On April 15, 2025, the City Council held a study session to discuss the potential use of the discretionary fund balance to address one-time expenditure needs including vehicles, equipment and time-sensitive projects. The City Council reviewed the various proposed expenditures and discussed priorities, and directed staff to return with options using \$1,000,000 of the discretionary total.

On [May 20, 2025, City staff presented options](#) for the City Council's consideration, prioritizing the most urgent needs across the organization, including the Swim Center Pool Replaster project, replacing a Fire Engine and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) equipment, completing a Service Delivery Study, and increasing funding of the City's Section 115 Trust.

Following the presentation, the City Council directed staff by motion to return with a resolution for Council action that would make \$1 million in General Fund Appropriations, specifically for the aforementioned projects, while also transferring \$1.5 million from the EDRF into the City's Section 115 Trust, as outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2:
\$1 million in One-time Appropriations and \$1.5 million transfer from EDRF

\$1 million in One-time Appropriations & \$1.5 million EDRF	
General Fund Appropriations	
Swim Center Pool Replaster	\$500,000
Fire Engine and Equipment Replacement	380,000
Service Delivery Study	120,000
Total General Fund Appropriation	\$1,000,000
Transfer from the EDRF	
Section 115 Trust (Reduction in EDRF)	1,500,000
Total General Fund Appropriation & EDRF Transfer	\$2,500,000

Based on the City Council's direction on May 20, City staff have prepared the attached resolution for the City Council's consideration, Notably, after this action is taken, the City will continue to maintain, and exceed, the minimum reserve requirements totaling 30% of General Fund expenditures (17% for unassigned fund balance and 13% for EDRF). The table below displays an updated General Fund projected fund balance, should the City Council approve this action.

Table 3: Projected General Fund Balance Following \$1 million in One-time Appropriations and \$1.5 million transfer from EDRF

Fund Balance Projection		
FY24 General Fund - Total Fund Balance (actual)	\$	22,893,338
EDRF	(9,000,000)	
Section 115	(1,372,890)	
Non-Spendable	(126,751)	
FY25 Original Projected Surplus	33,952	
FY25 Approved adjustments:		
Expenditures	(1,437,907)	
One-time use of fund balance	(1,000,000)	
Revenues	310,535	
Use of fund balance		(2,093,420)
Projected Total Ending FY25 Fund Balance		20,799,918
EDRF (Internally Restricted)	(7,500,000)	
Section 115 (Restricted)	(2,900,161)	
Non-Spendable	(126,751)	(10,526,912)
Projected FY25 Unrestricted Fund Balance		10,273,007
FY26 Expenditure Proposed Budget	53,764,017	
FY26 17% Reserve Goal		9,139,883
Projected discretionary for FY26		1,133,124
FY 25 Projected Ending Total Fund Balance	\$	20,799,918
FY 25 Projected Total Reserve %		39%

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

This action supports the City's Strategic Plan Goal(s) of:

- **High Performing Organization** Ensure the City maintains a strong financial position and a high-performing organization where employees feel a sense of inclusion and belonging.
- **Community Safety** Maintain public safety responsiveness and ensure community emergency preparedness.
- **Livability and Belonging** Promote a high quality of life and sense of community for current and future generations.
- **Infrastructure and Amenities** Advance climate focused, sustainable infrastructure efforts that have community benefit.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

After taking this action, the General Fund discretionary balance will be reduced from \$2.13 million to \$1.13 million, while the balance in the EDRF will be reduced from \$9 million to \$7.5 million. The City's estimated total reserve balance will be 39%, with a total Section 115 Trust balance of \$2.9 million.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

Reviewed by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Karen Pinkos', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Karen Pinkos, City Manager

Attachments:

1. Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-XX

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL CERRITO APPROVING ONE-TIME GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS AND A TRANSFER FROM THE EMERGENCY DISASTER RELIEF FUND IN FISCAL YEAR 2024-25

WHEREAS, the City Council has established a Comprehensive Financial Policy that requires a minimum General Fund reserve ratio of 30%, consisting of a 17% unassigned fund balance and a 13% EDRF balance; and

WHEREAS, the City of El Cerrito ended Fiscal Year 2023-24 with a General Fund balance of \$22.89 million, including \$9,000,000 in the Emergency Disaster Relief Fund (EDRF), \$1,372,890 in the Section 115 Trust; and prior to making any one-time appropriations the projected ending General Fund balance for Fiscal Year 2024-25 is \$21.8 million, representing a 40% General Fund reserve ratio, which exceeds the City's minimum reserve requirements; and

WHEREAS, staff identified a discretionary General Fund balance of \$2.1 million and an additional \$2 million in the EDRF in excess of the City's Financial Policy minimum reserve requirements; and

WHEREAS, on April 15, 2025, the City Council held a budget study session and discussed potential one-time expenditures from fund balance for vehicles, equipment, and time-sensitive projects; and

WHEREAS, at the May 20, 2025, City Council meeting, staff presented options for the City Council's consideration, prioritizing urgent needs including the Swim Center Pool Replaster project, Fire Engine and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) replacement, a Service Delivery Study, and increased funding for the City's Section 115 Trust; and

WHEREAS, at the May 20, 2025, meeting, the City Council directed staff to return with a resolution for City Council consideration to appropriate \$1 million from the discretionary General Fund balance to fund the aforementioned urgent needs as well as to transfer \$1.5 million from the EDRF to the City's Section 115 Trust; and

WHEREAS, the proposed one-time appropriations will address the most urgent and critical needs in the organization, while the transfer to the Section 115 Trust will bolster the City's funding for future pension costs, helping smooth and mitigate sharp increases in the annual payments requested by CalPERS in the coming years; and

WHEREAS, even after these actions, the City will continue to maintain and exceed the minimum reserve requirements for the General Fund and the EDRF.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of El Cerrito, that it hereby approves the following one-time appropriations from General Fund Balance in the amount of \$1,000,000:

1. \$500,000 for the Swim Center Pool Replaster project to be placed in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) fund.

2. \$380,000 for the Fire Engine and Equipment Replacement to be placed in the Vehicle and Equipment Replacement fund.
3. \$120,000 for the Service Delivery Study.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of El Cerrito hereby approves the transfer of \$1,500,000 from the Emergency Disaster Relief Fund to the City's Section 115 Trust.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage and adoption.

I CERTIFY that at a regular meeting on June 3, 2025, the City Council of the City of El Cerrito passed this Resolution by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

IN WITNESS of this action, I sign this document and affix the corporate seal of the City of El Cerrito on _____.

Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk

APPROVED:

Carolyn Wysinger, Mayor



AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 9.C.

Date: June 3, 2025
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Shannon Bassi, Human Resources Manager, City Management
Subject: Adopt resolution modifying the Salary, Benefits, and Terms of Employment for Management and Confidential Employees

ACTION PROPOSED

Adopt a resolution modifying salaries, benefits, and conditions of employment for Management and Confidential Employees.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The salaries, benefits, and conditions of employment for the City's Management and Confidential employees (Management/Confidential) are governed by resolution of the City Council. The most recent update to the Management/Confidential Employees Resolution was [Resolution 2023-48](#), approved by the City Council on June 20, 2023.

For many years, the City has utilized a salary structure for Management/Confidential employees based on a control point and pay-for-performance system. Under this structure, each classification had a designated salary grade, consisting of a minimum (bottom), a control point, and a maximum (top) monthly salary amount. The minimum represented the base salary for the classification, while the control point - established by surveying the median top step of comparable agencies - functioned as the de facto "top step" for tenured employees. The maximum, set at 25% above the established control point, was intended to recognize employees' exceptional performance for those who had already reached the control point.

Upon review, City staff determined that the current control point system no longer serves the City effectively for several reasons. Primarily, the current system creates confusion for many individuals, particularly job candidates who are in the recruitment/job offer stage as well as current employees. The last column in the salary schedule, labeled "top step," advertises an inflated salary range that is rarely attainable in practice. As such, this creates a disconnect between the control point (the City's intended top step) and the inflated "top step" that is listed in the salary schedule showing 25% above the control point. As a result, this confusion directly impacts the City's recruitment and retention efforts. Additionally, the current system makes it challenging to accurately budget and forecast personnel costs without a clear-cut salary system to operate from. It also creates confusion for outside agencies, such as CalPERS, when analyzing the City's salary structure and compensation data reported through payroll.

City staff proposes to eliminate the control point system in the attached resolution, and adopt a simplified structure that establishes a range with a minimum and maximum salary for each grade. This proposed salary structure is common in various local government agencies, particularly for management positions, and allows greater flexibility to place employees within an open salary range based on experience and qualifications.

In conjunction with proposing this structural change, the City also took the opportunity to review and propose the market adjustment recommendations from Koff and Associates, based on findings from the [City's Classification and Compensation Study](#), which was completed and presented at the [March 5, 2024 City Council Meeting](#). The study found that several Management/Confidential classifications were significantly below the market and required a market adjustment to remain competitive. This gap is largely due to the Management/Confidential Employee group not receiving a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for multiple years during the pandemic and the City's previous financial challenges.

The study's recommended market adjustments have been incorporated into the proposed salary grade ranges within the salary schedule included in the proposed resolution. Additionally, staff reviewed internal alignment between classifications and recommended one-time salary grade changes to better reflect the roles and responsibilities of certain positions in relation to similar classifications. Staff is confident that these changes will improve recruitment and retention issues, support future succession planning efforts, and enhance the City's ability to budget and forecast personnel costs with more precision and detail. Overall, the proposed salary system is competitive and will help the City attract and retain talented staff, ensuring continued delivery of excellent services to the community.

Summary of Proposed Changes

Below is a summary of the following proposed changes within the Management and Confidential Employees resolution:

- The proposed changes will be effective the first full pay period of July 2025 and remain in place through June 30, 2028.
- Restructure the salary schedule to remove the control point, incorporate necessary market adjustments, and internally align the salary grades.
- Provide a 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for all employees in Management/Confidential in each of the following fiscal years (FY): FY 2025-26, FY 2026-27 and 2027-28.
- Formally incorporate new classifications in the Management/Confidential group, as already approved and adopted by the City Council.
 - [Facilities & Maintenance Manager](#)
 - [Maintenance Operations Supervisor](#)
 - [Senior Management Analyst](#)
 - [Environmental Services Manager](#)

- Revise language regarding Floating Holidays to prorate accruals for new hires and separated employees to more accurately distribute accrued/earned hours.
- Increase bilingual pay from \$100 per month to \$100 per payroll to align with other MOUs.
- Establish language to address the 40-hour work schedule for employees in the Public Safety Executive Assistant classification.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

This action supports the [City's Strategic Plan Goal\(s\)](#) of:

- *High Performing Organization; and*
- *Community Safety; and*
- *Livability and Belonging*

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this item.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs) have a financial impact of approximately \$107,093, which is included in the FY 2024-26 Budget that was adopted on June 18, 2024.

The proposed action of restructuring the salary schedule has no financial impact on current incumbents at this time; market adjustments will be considered for employees on a case-by-case basis over the fiscal year(s). Increasing bilingual pay for those incumbents who currently receive the pay will have an annual financial impact of approximately \$9,800, which can be absorbed in the current FY 2025-26 proposed budget. Fiscal Year 2026-27 and 2027-28 COLAs have been factored into the long-term forecast and will be included in the next biennial budget.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

Reviewed by:



Karen Pinkos, City Manager

Attachments:

1. Resolution
2. Resolution (redline)

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-XX

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL CERRITO ESTABLISHING SALARIES, BENEFITS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR MANAGEMENT AND CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEES EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2025; AND RESCINDING RESOLUTION 2023-46

WHEREAS, it is in the City's best interest to recruit and retain high quality, talented employees for the City to fulfill the Strategic Goal of a High Performing Organization; and

WHEREAS, an effective means for achieving this objective is to provide competitive salaries, benefits, and conditions of employment for management and confidential employees.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the El Cerrito City Council hereby establishes the salaries, benefits, and conditions of employment for the City's management and confidential employees, as follows:

CHAPTER 1 EMPLOYEES

1.1 Management employees are, for purposes of this section, those actively involved in the following classifications:

- Assistant City Manager
- Assistant to the City Manager
- Associate Engineer
- Building Official
- Budget/Financial Services Manager
- City Clerk
- Community Development Director
- Environmental Services Manager
- Facilities and Maintenance Manager Finance Director/City Treasurer
- Human Resources Manager
- Information Technology Manager
- Maintenance Operations Supervisor
- Management Analyst I,II,III
- Network Security Engineer
- Operations and Environmental Services Manager
- Planning Manager
- Program Manager
- Public Works Director/City Engineer
- Recreation Director
- Recreation Supervisor
- Recycling Operations Supervisor
- Senior Accountant
- Senior Engineer
- Senior Human Resources Analyst
- Senior Management Analyst
- Senior Planner
- Senior Program Manager

- 1.2 Confidential employees are, for the purposes of this section, those actively involved in the following classifications:
- Accountant II
 - Human Resources Specialist
 - Information Technology Specialist
 - Public Safety Executive Assistant

CHAPTER 2 SALARIES AND BENEFITS

- 2.1 Effective the first full pay period in July 2025, a revised salary system and salary schedule are established, as shown in Exhibit A. This system creates a salary grade range with a bottom and a top monthly salary, and employees may be placed within this range based on experience, performance, and other factors as determined by the City Manager. The system includes market adjustments based on the Koff & Associates Compensation study completed in 2024, one-time internal alignment adjustments, and a 3% cost of living adjustment.
- A. Effective the first full pay period in July 2025, the salary grade ranges as listed in Exhibit A shall apply to all management classifications.
 - B. Effective the first full pay period in July 2025, the salary grade ranges as listed in Exhibit A shall apply to all confidential classifications.
- 2.2 The following cost of living adjustments (COLA) shall be implemented for the salaries of management and confidential employees for Fiscal Years 2026-27 and 2027-28:
- A. Effective the first full pay period in July 2026, a 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) shall be implemented. See Exhibit B.
 - B. Effective the first full pay period in July 2027, a 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) shall be implemented. See Exhibit C.
 - C. Effective July 1, 2021, no salary adjustments or merit increases shall be implemented unless approved by the City Manager.
- 2.3 Bilingual Pay
The City shall pay one hundred dollars \$100.00 per pay period to management/confidential employees who are bilingual and who have passed a proficiency test provided and approved by the City.
- 2.4 Pension Plan Benefits
- A. Employees are members of the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS) plan, with a 2.7% at 55 retirement formula integrated with Social Security, which has an eight percent (8%) employee contribution, the PERS single highest year option and service credit for unused sick leave option.

- B. Effective January 1, 2013, newly hired employees that are considered “new members” in accordance with the Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act (PEPRA), will be enrolled under the CalPERS Miscellaneous Employee 2% at 62 retirement formula integrated with Social Security, average of highest three (3) years compensation earnable, in accordance with applicable law and PEPRA.
- C. In accordance with City Council Resolution 2020-32, effective the first full pay period in July 2020, all Management and Confidential employees will pay an additional one percent (1%) into the required employer CalPERS contribution; effective the first full pay period in July 2021, all Management and Confidential employees will pay an additional two percent (2%) into the required employer CalPERS contribution, for a total of 3%.

2.5 Flexible Benefits Plan

The City has a Flexible Benefits Plan that provides for the following:

- A. The City will contribute the equivalent of the cost of the lowest cost medical plan rate, according to dependent status, regardless of which medical plan is chosen. *“According to dependent status”* means that if an employee is single, they shall receive the lowest cost single premium in their flexible spending account. If an employee and a dependent are enrolled in a City medical plan, the employee shall receive the lowest cost two party premium in their flexible spending account. If an employee and more than one dependent are enrolled in a City medical plan, the employee shall receive the lowest cost family premium in his or her flexible spending account.
- B. In the event that an employee has alternate comprehensive group medical coverage through a spouse's medical plan or some other group medical plan, the employee may elect to receive “cash in-lieu” of medical coverage after they provide proof of such medical coverage to Human Resources. In this event, the City shall contribute \$793.18 to the employee's Flexible Benefits Plan and the employee may receive this amount in cash, in which case the amount is treated as taxable income; or the employee may reallocate it toward the purchase of other benefits in the Plan; or a combination of both. The “cash in-lieu” benefit amount shall be \$350 per month for: a) Employees hired after December 31, 2020 or b) existing employees who discontinue the City’s medical coverage and opt for “cash in lieu” of medical coverage at a later date as long as they meet the requirements as described above.
- C. Employees may contribute salary of up to the maximum by law on a pre-tax basis in order to purchase the following benefits:
- Medical premiums, co-payments, and deductibles
 - Dental premiums, co-payments, and deductibles
 - Unreimbursed medical and dental expenses
 - Dependent care Mental health counseling services

Rules governing the allocation and distribution of such funds shall conform to applicable sections of State and Federal tax codes and the City of El Cerrito's Flexible Benefits Plan.

- D. Health plans will become effective the first of the month following the date of hire.
- E. Health benefit programs recognize the participation of domestic partners of eligible employees. Please refer to the City's Citiflex document for details.

2.6 Dental Plan

The City will pay the full cost of family coverage under the Delta Dental Plan.

2.7 Life Insurance

The City will provide a term life insurance policy for management and confidential employees. The principal sum shall be equal to the annual salary rounded to the nearest \$1,000 (up to a maximum of \$100,000), effective the first day of the month following City Council adoption of any changes in the salary schedule.

2.8 Auto Allowance

The City will supply an automobile to management employees who, in the opinion of the City Manager, require a City vehicle as an integral part of their work. Management and Confidential employees required to use their own automobiles for City business shall be reimbursed at the Internal Revenue Service allowable rate.

2.9 Short-term/Long term Disability Insurance

The City shall provide employees with short-term/long term disability insurance with coverage of two-thirds salary up to the maximum monthly salary limit of \$10,000 and a thirty-day elimination period. Like regular wages, this benefit is taxable.

2.10 Benefit Status

- A. The salary and benefits contained within this Resolution are granted only to employees who are in a current pay status. The City shall incur no cost, nor shall benefits accrue, for retirees, survivors, or employees in a non-pay status. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), California Family Rights Act (CFRA), and Military Leave, however, shall be granted in accordance with the applicable provisions of state and federal law.
- B. In the event an employee is in a non-pay status because of a disputed workers' compensation claim, benefits under this article shall be continued upon written agreement of the affected employee to repay to the City the amount of any premiums paid by the City during the non-pay status period if the employee's claim is denied by the Workers Compensation Appeals Board or withdrawn by the employee prior to a decision by the Board.

CHAPTER 3 HOLIDAYS

3.1 Holidays

The following holidays are recognized as municipal holidays for pay purposes:

New Year's Day	Veteran's Day
Dr. M.L. King Jr. Birthday	Thanksgiving Day
President's Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve Day
Juneteenth	Christmas Day
Independence Day (July 4)	½ Day New Year's Eve
Labor Day	

In the event that any of the aforementioned days falls on a Sunday, the following Monday shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes. In the event that any of the aforementioned days fall on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes. (Department Directors may make changes in the above schedule in accordance with the needs of their departments.) The afternoon of New Year's Eve, shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes, equaling 3.75 holiday pay hours for 37.5-hour employees and 4 holiday pay hours for 40-hour employees. In the event New Year's Eve falls on a Sunday or a Monday, the preceding Friday afternoon shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes. Some adjustments may be made if necessitated by an alternative work schedule.

3.2 Birthday and Floating Holidays

In addition to the recognized municipal holidays, full-time employees (37.5 hours per week or greater) shall receive annually three (3) floating holidays, subject to the same requirements for scheduling vacation under Section 5.2 of this agreement. Employees hired during the fiscal year shall receive floating holiday credit in accordance with the following table:

Hire Date:	Prorated Hours:
July 1 to September 30	22.5 hours
October 1 to December 31	15 hours
January 1 to March 31	7.5 hours
April 1 to June 30	0 hours

Floating holidays shall be prorated (bi-weekly) for employees who separate before June 30th each fiscal year, based on time worked within that fiscal year. Floating holidays must be taken within the fiscal year they are received and may not be carried over and accumulated.

Full-time employees (37.5 hours per week or greater) are allowed an additional holiday in recognition of their birthday. This birthday holiday shall be posted upon appointment to City service and at the beginning of each fiscal year thereafter.

Regular Part-Time employees will earn prorated birthday and floating holidays based on the number of hours worked and applying the full-time equivalent percentage to the accrual rate listed above based on three Floating Holidays and one Birthday Holiday for full-time employees.

3.3 Compensation for Municipal Holidays

- A. An employee on leave of absence without pay shall not receive any compensation for holidays occurring during such leave.
- B. Regular employees must be in a pay status on the workday preceding a holiday to be eligible to be compensated for the holiday.

**CHAPTER 4
SICK LEAVE, WORKERS' COMPENSATION, FAMILY SICK LEAVE,
AND OTHER LEAVES**

4.1 Accrual of Sick Leave Rate

- A. Sick leave shall accrue at the rate of eight hours and 45 minutes per calendar month worked, providing the employee has worked or been authorized leave with pay for at least ten working days in the month.
- B. Employees with 20 or more years of service shall accrue sick leave at the rate of 11 hours and 25 minutes per calendar month worked, provided the employee has worked or been authorized leave with pay for at least ten working days in the month.
- C. Regular Part-Time employees shall be eligible to accrue sick leave in the same proportion as their scheduled work hours per week related to the standard work week.

4.2 Sick Leave Maximum Accrual

Accumulation of sick leave is unlimited.

4.3 Activity During Sick Leave

No employee who is absent from work on sick leave shall engage in any work or other activity that would interfere with the employee's ability to return to work to perform regular duties.

4.4 Retirement Benefit

Upon retirement from City service, an employee shall be entitled to compensation for one fourth of the accumulated sick leave on the books at the time of such retirement, with a maximum payment equivalent to twenty-five (25) days pay, at the employee's option. Actual sick leave remaining on the books will be reported to CalPERS in accordance with CalPERS regulations governing the sick leave credit contract option. In no case will unearned sick leave be reported for the purpose of increasing the member's retirement as prohibited by CalPERS.

4.5 On the Job Injury

When an employee is off work as a result of an on-the-job injury, the City shall continue to pay full salary for up to 90 calendar days.

4.6 Workers' Compensation Disability Payments

An employee receiving disability payments under the Workers' Compensation laws may use accumulated sick leave and vacation leave in order to maintain regular income. Under these circumstances, the employee shall be paid the difference between full salary and the disability payments received. Such sick leave and vacation leave shall be drawn in proportion to the salary payments required to provide the employee with their regular income.

4.7 Family Sick Leave

Under Labor Code Section 233, employees may utilize accrued sick leave to care for an ill or injured child, spouse, or parent. The City has extended this provision to include domestic partners and their dependent children. There is no requirement that the illness or injury reach the level of seriousness provided for under the Family and Medical Leave Acts. However, if the illness or injury qualifies under the Family and Medical Leave Act, it also satisfies the "family sick leave" criteria. The maximum "family sick leave" allowed each calendar year that is subject to this provision is one-half (1/2) of the employee's annual accrual of sick leave. Additional family sick leave may be taken subject to departmental regulations and the approval of the Department Director and City Manager.

4.8 Bereavement Leave

Employees are entitled to time off with pay when there is a death or anticipated death in the immediate family. Bereavement leave shall not exceed five (5) consecutive days when death is anticipated. Bereavement leave after death shall not exceed that period of time between death and the day of the funeral, providing the funeral is held within five days following death. Additional time may be granted and charged as sick leave when, in the opinion of the Department Director, unusual circumstances identify the need for additional time off.

Immediate family is defined as spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, parent-in-law, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, grandparent, spouse's grandparent, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or any other relative of the employee or employee's spouse residing in the same household, or who has resided with the employee in the same household for three or more years. In cases where death has occurred involving someone other than the immediate family, the Department Director shall make the decision as to qualification for bereavement leave.

4.9 Administrative Leave

Management employees shall receive administrative leave in recognition of extraordinary working hours and conditions. The City Manager will annually approve the number of leave days by individual employee, based on the amount of overtime performed and the quality of work produced. The annual amount of time assigned shall not exceed ten days or 75 hours per fiscal year. For new hires, Administrative Leave will be pro-rated (biweekly) based on the start date. Unused administrative leave cannot be carried over from year to year or cashed out at year end or upon separation.

4.10 Family and Medical Leave

Pursuant to State and Federal law, the City will provide family and medical care leave for eligible employees. The City Family Care and Medical Leave policy sets forth employees' rights and obligations with respect to such leave. Rights and obligations which are not specifically set forth in the City's policy are set forth in the Department of Labor regulations implementing the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 ("FMLA") and the regulations of the California State Pregnancy Disability Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Commission implementing the California Family Rights Act ("CFRA") (Government Code Section 12945.2). Unless otherwise provided by the City's policy or this resolution, "Leave" under this article shall mean leave pursuant to the FMLA.

CHAPTER 5 VACATION

5.1 Eligibility

Regular and probationary employees shall be eligible to take a paid vacation upon accrual of vacation hours, unless otherwise provided by the City Manager.

5.2 Scheduling

The scheduling of annual vacation leave and the amount to be taken at any one time shall be determined by the Department Head in accordance with departmental regulations and with regard for the needs of the City and the preference of the employee.

5.3 Vacation at Termination

Employees leaving the municipal service with accrued vacation leave shall be paid the amount of accrued vacation to the date of termination. Payment for accrued vacation shall be at the employee's current rate of pay.

5.4 Effect of Extended Military Leave

A management employee who interrupts their City service because of extended military leave shall be compensated for accrued vacation at the time the leave becomes effective.

5.5 Sick Leave During Vacation

Vacation leave may be converted to sick leave subject to the review and approval of the Department Head and the City Manager if an employee is injured or sick during the vacation for a period in excess of 24 hours.

5.6 Vacation Cap

The vacation cap shall be two (2) times the employee's annual vacation accrual rate. Any time an employee reaches the maximum accrual, the employee will cease accruing vacation hours until such time the balance falls below the cap. No employee will be allowed to accrue vacation hours above the cap.

5.7 Vacation Cash-Out

Employees may annually cash-out up to 16 days (120 hours) of vacation provided that they have taken a minimum of 8 vacation days (or administrative leave for management employees) in the previous fiscal year and maintain a vacation

balance of 37.5 hours at the time of vacation cash out. Employees may elect to cash-out a maximum of two (2) times annually and each cash-out request must be a minimum of 8 days (60 hours).

All irrevocable vacation cash-out requests must be in writing and submitted to Human Resources no later than December 15 of the calendar year before the calendar year in which the employee wishes to cash-out vacation leave. The notice shall indicate how many vacation leave hours the employee wishes to cash-out the following year. The amount requested cannot exceed the amount stated above. An employee can cash-out during the months of May and December. The Human Resources Manager has final approval.

5.8 Accrual

Unless otherwise provided by the City Manager, vacation leave will be accrued from the first day of employment when a management employee is in a pay status and will be credited on a monthly basis. Municipal holidays shall not be counted during vacation. The vacation schedule is based on the years of service with the City.

VACATION ACCRUAL – MANAGEMENT AND CONFIDENTIAL

Years of Service	Days	Hrs Earned/Yr (37.5 hrs/wk)	Hrs Earned/Yr (40 hrs/wk)
During 1st Year	11	82.50	87.99
2-3	12	90.00	95.99
4	13	97.50	103.99
5	15	112.50	119.99
6-7	16	120.00	127.99
8-9	17	127.50	135.99
10-11	18	135.00	143.99
12-13	19	142.50	151.99
Years of Service	Days	Hrs Earned/Yr (37.5 hrs/wk)	Hrs Earned/Yr (40 hrs/wk)
14-15	20	150.00	159.99
16-17	21	157.50	167.99
18-19	22	165.00	175.99
20-21	23	172.50	183.99
22-23	24	180.00	191.99
24-25	25	187.50	199.99
26-27	26	195.00	207.99
28-29	27	202.50	215.99
30-31	28	210.00	223.99
32-33	29	217.50	231.99
34-35	30	225.00	239.99
36-37	31	232.50	247.98
38-39	32	240.00	255.98
40	33	247.50	263.98

CHAPTER 6 WORK SCHEDULE

6.1 Workweek

The number of hours worked in the workweek for management and confidential employees is as required by the City. The normal workday schedule varies by department and classification depending upon the standard or designated alternative work schedule. The workweek for those assigned to the nine-day schedule in a two-week period begins the mid-point on Friday and concludes immediately before the mid-point the following Friday.

6.2 Hours per Week

All classifications included in this resolution are designated as 37.5 hours per week, except the Public Safety Executive Assistant which is designated as 40 hours per week.

CHAPTER 7 EDUCATION BENEFITS

7.1 Tuition Refund Plan

Management and confidential employees are eligible for educational cost reimbursement up to a maximum of \$1,000 per fiscal year for work related studies at a recognized college, university or professional school. The City will reimburse management and confidential employees up to a limit of \$3,500 per fiscal year while pursuing a master's degree. These reimbursement limits are not compounding. Course content should relate to one of the following:

- Knowledge or skills needed by an employee in their present job.
- Preparation for promotional opportunities or advancement in the same or different field within the City organization.
- The requirements of a program leading to a degree, at an approved institution, which enhances the employee's job knowledge or on the job skills.

Procedures for obtaining reimbursement and limitations regarding reimbursement may be found in the City of El Cerrito administrative procedure on educational expense reimbursement.

CHAPTER 8 MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES FOR MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES

8.1 Continuing Education

It is the policy of the City that management employees take part in some educational or training course each year, and the City Council will attempt to provide funds in each budget for such purpose.

8.2 Membership

It is the policy of the City to provide paid membership in approved professional associations for management employees. This policy shall include publications associated with membership and other educational materials as may be approved.

8.3 Conferences

It is the policy of the City that each management employee attend (as a member) a professional conference of their peers each year at City expense dependent upon budget availability; however, travel outside the state of California is discouraged due to budgetary restraints.

CHAPTER 9 MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES FOR CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEES

9.1 Overtime

A. Policy – Definition

Management employees are exempt and not eligible for overtime. For confidential employees, it is the policy of the City that overtime work is to be kept at a minimum consistent with the protection of the lives and property of El Cerrito community members and the efficient operation of the departments and activities of the City. Overtime must be authorized by both the supervisor and Department Director and is subject to such other rules and procedures as the City Manager may prescribe.

Overtime shall be defined as time worked beyond the hours worked in the normal workweek, defined in Section 6.1 herein as 37.5 hours for full-time confidential employees and 40 hours for full-time Public Safety Executive Assistants. Hours worked are defined as all time during which an employee is necessarily required to be on the employer's premises, on duty or at a prescribed workplace. Sick leave, vacation, holidays, and other paid leave are considered to be part of the normal workweek and unpaid leave shall not be included as time worked. Overtime shall commence at the time an employee is released or the work is completed, whichever is earlier.

B. Overtime Compensation

1. For hours worked in excess of the normal workweek, but not in excess of forty hours in a workweek, one of the following shall occur at the discretion of the department manager and in consultation with the employee:
 - a. Employee shall accrue compensatory time off on a time-and-one-half basis (this will not count toward the FLSA compensatory time ceiling of 240 hours, but will count toward the City's 40-hour compensatory time cap)
 - b. Overtime shall be paid at time-and-one-half the regular hourly rate of pay.
2. For hours worked in excess of forty (40) in any workweek, one of the following shall occur at the discretion of the employee:
 - a. Employee shall accrue compensatory time off on a time-and-one-half basis (this will count toward the FLSA compensatory time ceiling of 240 hours as well as the City's 40-hour compensatory cap); or

b. Overtime shall be paid at time-and-one-half the regular hourly rate of pay.

C. Maximum Accumulation of Compensatory Time

Confidential employees may not accrue more than 40 hours of compensatory time-off without permission of the Department Head. Time off for compensatory time must be approved by the Department Head or City Manager.

9.2 Uniform Allowance

The City shall provide uniforms in accordance with department procedures and subject to approval by the Department Director and City Manager for management and confidential employees required to wear one.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Resolution 2023-46 is hereby rescinded and this resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage and adoption.

I CERTIFY that at a regular meeting on June 3, 2025 the City Council of the City of El Cerrito passed this Resolution by the following vote:

AYES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
NOES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSTAIN:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSENT:	COUNCILMEMBERS:

IN WITNESS of this action, I sign this document and affix the corporate seal of the City of El Cerrito on _____.

Holly M. Charl  ty, City Clerk

APPROVED:

Carolyn Wysinger, Mayor

Exhibit A
Management Salary Schedule (2025-2026)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Top
935	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER	16,849	22,113
545	ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER	11,575	15,193
912	ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	9,320	12,233
690	BUDGET/FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,575	15,193
926	BUILDING OFFICIAL	11,932	15,660
551	CITY CLERK	12,944	16,989
950	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	15,273	20,045
913	FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE MANAGER	9,282	13,110
924	FINANCE DIRECTOR/CITY TREASURER	16,046	21,060
921	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER	12,534	16,451
910	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER	12,534	16,451
550	MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,426	9,746
546	MANAGEMENT ANALYST I	7,103	9,323
547	MANAGEMENT ANALYST II	7,841	10,291
548	MANAGEMENT ANALYST III	8,115	10,651
544	SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST	8,625	11,029
903	NETWORK SECURITY ENGINEER	8,439	11,076
916	OPERATIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,575	15,193
915	PLANNING MANAGER	11,932	15,660
549	PROGRAM MANAGER	9,094	11,935
948	PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER	16,046	21,060
949	RECREATION DIRECTOR	14,537	19,079
650	RECREATION SUPERVISOR	8,115	10,651
682	RECYCLING OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,464	9,796
688	SENIOR ACCOUNTANT	8,238	10,813
914	SENIOR ENGINEER	11,356	14,905
902	SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST	9,014	11,830
905	SENIOR PLANNER	8,655	11,359
900	SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER	10,038	13,174
982	EXTRA HELP RETIRED ANNUITANT (HOURLY RATE)***	18.89	139.05

Confidential Salary Schedule (2025-2026)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Top
543	ACCOUNTANT II	6,799	8,925
529	HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST	6,930	9,096
539	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST	6,930	9,096
716	PUBLIC SAFETY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT (40 hrs wk)	7,388	8,941

Exhibit B
Management Salary Schedule (2026-2027)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Top
935	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER	17,354	22,776
545	ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER	11,922	15,649
912	ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	9,600	12,600
690	BUDGET/FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,922	15,649
926	BUILDING OFFICIAL	12,290	16,130
551	CITY CLERK	13,332	17,499
950	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	15,731	20,647
913	FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE MANAGER	9,561	13,503
924	FINANCE DIRECTOR/CITY TREASURER	16,527	21,692
921	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER	12,910	16,945
910	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER	12,910	16,945
550	MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,648	10,039
546	MANAGEMENT ANALYST I	7,316	9,603
547	MANAGEMENT ANALYST II	8,076	10,600
548	MANAGEMENT ANALYST III	8,359	10,970
544	SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST	8,884	11,360
903	NETWORK SECURITY ENGINEER	8,692	11,408
916	OPERATIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,922	15,649
915	PLANNING MANAGER	12,290	16,130
549	PROGRAM MANAGER	9,366	12,293
948	PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER	16,527	21,692
949	RECREATION DIRECTOR	14,973	19,652
650	RECREATION SUPERVISOR	8,359	10,970
682	RECYCLING OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,688	10,090
688	SENIOR ACCOUNTANT	8,485	11,137
914	SENIOR ENGINEER	11,697	15,352
902	SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST	9,284	12,185
905	SENIOR PLANNER	8,914	11,700
900	SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER	10,339	13,569
982	EXTRA HELP RETIRED ANNUITANT (HOURLY RATE)***	19.46	143.22

Confidential Salary Schedule (2026-2027)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Top
543	ACCOUNTANT II	7,003	9,193
529	HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST	7,138	9,369
539	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST	7,138	9,369
716	PUBLIC SAFETY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT (40 hrs wk)	7,610	9,210

Exhibit C
Management Salary Schedule (2027-2028)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Top
935	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER	17,875	23,459
545	ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER	12,280	16,118
912	ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	9,888	12,978
690	BUDGET/FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER	12,280	16,118
926	BUILDING OFFICIAL	12,658	16,614
551	CITY CLERK	13,732	18,024
950	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	16,203	21,266
913	FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE MANAGER	9,847	13,908
924	FINANCE DIRECTOR/CITY TREASURER	17,023	22,343
921	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER	13,298	17,453
910	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER	13,298	17,453
550	MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,878	10,340
546	MANAGEMENT ANALYST I	7,536	9,891
547	MANAGEMENT ANALYST II	8,318	10,918
548	MANAGEMENT ANALYST III	8,610	11,299
544	SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST	9,150	11,701
903	NETWORK SECURITY ENGINEER	8,953	11,750
916	OPERATIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER	12,280	16,118
915	PLANNING MANAGER	12,658	16,614
549	PROGRAM MANAGER	9,647	12,662
948	PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER	17,023	22,343
949	RECREATION DIRECTOR	15,422	20,241
650	RECREATION SUPERVISOR	8,610	11,299
682	RECYCLING OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,918	10,393
688	SENIOR ACCOUNTANT	8,740	11,471
914	SENIOR ENGINEER	12,047	15,812
902	SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST	9,562	12,551
905	SENIOR PLANNER	9,182	12,051
900	SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER	10,649	13,977
982	EXTRA HELP RETIRED ANNUITANT (HOURLY RATE)***	20.04	147.52

Confidential Salary Schedule (2027-2028)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Top
543	ACCOUNTANT II	7,213	9,468
529	HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST	7,352	9,650
539	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST	7,352	9,650
716	PUBLIC SAFETY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT (40 hrs wk)	7,838	9,486

RESOLUTION NO. 20235-XX

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL CERRITO ESTABLISHING SALARIES, BENEFITS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR MANAGEMENT AND CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEES EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 20235; AND RESCINDING RESOLUTION 20223-468

WHEREAS, it is in the City's best interest to recruit and retain high quality, talented employees for the City to fulfill the Strategic Goal of a High Performing Organization; and

WHEREAS, an effective means for achieving this objective is to provide competitive salaries, benefits, and conditions of employment for management and confidential ~~said~~ employees.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the El Cerrito City Council hereby establishes the salaries, benefits, and conditions of employment for the City's management and confidential employees, as follows:

**CHAPTER 1
EMPLOYEES**

1.1 Management employees are, for purposes of this section, those actively involved in the following classifications:

- Assistant City Manager
- Assistant to the City Manager
- Associate Engineer
- Building Official
- Budget/Financial Services Manager
- City Clerk
- Community Development Director
- Environmental Services Manager
- Facilities and Maintenance Manager
- Finance Director/City Treasurer
- Human Resources Manager
- Information Technology Manager
- Maintenance ~~Services Superintendent~~ Operations Supervisor
- Management Analyst I,II,III
- Network Security Engineer
- Operations and Environmental Services Manager
- Planning Manager
- Program Manager
- Public Works Director/City Engineer
- Recreation Director
- Recreation Supervisor
- Recycling Operations Supervisor
- Senior Accountant
- Senior Engineer

- Senior Human Resources Analyst
- Senior Management Analyst
- Senior Planner
- Senior Program Manager

1.2 Confidential employees are, for the purposes of this section, those actively involved in the following classifications:

- Accountant II
- Human Resources Specialist
- Information Technology Specialist
- Public Safety Executive Assistant

CHAPTER 2 SALARIES AND BENEFITS

2.1 Effective the first full pay period in July 2023~~5~~, a revised salary system and salary schedule are established, as shown in Exhibit A. This system creates a salary grade range with a bottom and a top monthly salary, and employees may be placed within this range based on experience, performance, and other factors as determined by the City Manager. The system includes market adjustments based on the Koff & Associates Compensation study completed in 2024, one-time internal alignment adjustments, and a 3% cost of living adjustment.

A. Effective the first full pay period in July 2025, the following control pointssalary grade ranges as listed in Exhibit A shall apply to all -shall apply for management classificationemployees.

B. Effective the first full pay period in July 2025, the salary grade ranges as listed in Exhibit A shall apply to all confidential classifications.

2.2 The following cost of living adjustments (COLA) shall be implemented for the salaries of management and confidential employees for Fiscal Years 2026-27 and 2027-28:

A. ~~For~~Effective the first full pay period in July 2026, a 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) shall be implemented. See Exhibit B.

B. Effective the first full pay period in July 2027, -a 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) shall be implemented. See Exhibit C.

A.C. Effective July 1, 2021, no salary adjustments or merit increases shall be implemented unless approved by the City Manager.

~~Only those employees whose performance, over time, far exceeds expectations will achieve and maintain a salary that is above control point.~~

2.3 Bilingual Pay

The City shall pay one hundred dollars \$100.00 per ~~month-pay period (\$46.15 per payroll)~~ to management/confidential employees who are bilingual and who have passed a proficiency test provided and approved by the City.

2.4 Pension Plan Benefits

A. Employees are members of the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS) plan, with a 2.7% at 55 retirement formula integrated with Social Security, which has an eight percent (8%) employee contribution, the PERS single highest year option and service credit for unused sick leave option.

B. Effective January 1, 2013, newly hired employees that are considered “new members” in accordance with the Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act (PEPRA), will be enrolled under the CalPERS Miscellaneous Employee 2% at 62 retirement formula integrated with Social Security, average of highest three (3) years compensation earnable, in accordance with applicable law and PEPRA.

~~C.~~ In accordance with City Council Resolution 2020-32, effective the first full pay period in July 2020, all Management and Confidential employees will pay an additional one percent (1%) into the required employer CalPERS contribution;

~~D.~~

~~E.C.~~ ~~E~~effective the first full pay period in July 2021, all Management and Confidential employees will pay an additional two percent (2%) into the required employer CalPERS contribution, for a total of 3%.

2.5 Flexible Benefits Plan

The City has a Flexible Benefits Plan that provides for the following:

A. The City will contribute the equivalent of the cost of the lowest cost medical plan rate, according to dependent status, regardless of which medical plan is chosen. *“According to dependent status”* means that if an employee is single, they shall receive the lowest cost single premium in their flexible spending account. ~~If an employee and a dependent are enrolled in a City medical plan, the employee shall receive the lowest cost two party premium in their flexible spending account. If an employee and more than one dependent are enrolled in a City medical plan, the employee shall receive the lowest cost family premium in his or her flexible spending account.~~

~~Effective January 2022, the lowest cost medical plan rate is Kaiser HMO.~~

B. In the event that an employee has alternate comprehensive group medical coverage through a spouse's medical plan or some other group medical plan, the employee may elect to receive “cash in-lieu” of medical coverage

after they provide proof of such medical coverage to Human Resources. In this event, the City shall contribute \$793.18 to the employee's Flexible Benefits Plan and the employee may receive this amount in cash, in which case the amount is treated as taxable income; or the employee may reallocate it toward the purchase of other benefits in the Plan; or a combination of both. The "cash in-lieu" benefit amount shall be \$350 per month for: a) Employees hired after December 31, 2020 or b) existing employees who discontinue the City's medical coverage and opt for "cash in lieu" of medical coverage at a later date as long as they meet the requirements as described above.

C. Employees may contribute salary of up to the maximum by law on a pre-tax basis in order to purchase the following benefits:

- Medical premiums, co-payments, and deductibles
- Dental premiums, co-payments, and deductibles
- Unreimbursed medical and dental expenses
- Dependent care Mental health counseling services

Rules governing the allocation and distribution of such funds shall conform to applicable sections of State and Federal tax codes and the City of El Cerrito's Flexible Benefits Plan.

D. Health plans will become effective the first of the month following the date of hire.

E. Health benefit programs recognize the participation of domestic partners of eligible employees. Please refer to the City's Citiflex document for details.

~~F. The City may establish a Citywide task force for the purpose of exploring alternate health plans, including PERS Health, for both active and retired employees. The City will include members of the unrepresented management group.~~

2.6 Dental Plan

The City will pay the full cost of family coverage under the Delta Dental Plan.

2.7 Life Insurance

The City will provide a term life insurance policy for management and confidential employees. The principal sum shall be equal to the annual salary rounded to the nearest \$1,000 (up to a maximum of \$100,000), effective the first day of the month following City Council adoption of any changes in the Pay Plans salary schedule.

2.8 Auto Allowance

The City will supply an automobile to management employees who, in the opinion of the City Manager, require a City vehicle as an integral part of their work. Management and Confidential employees required to use their own automobiles

for City business shall be reimbursed at the Internal Revenue Service allowable rate.

2.9 Short-term/Long term Disability Insurance

The City shall provide employees with short-term/long term disability insurance with coverage of two-thirds salary up to the maximum monthly salary limit of \$10,000 and a thirty-day elimination period. Like regular wages, this benefit is taxable.

2.10 Benefit Status

- A. The salary and benefits contained within this Resolution are granted only to employees who are in a current pay status. The City shall incur no cost, nor shall benefits accrue, for retirees, survivors, or employees in a non-pay status. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), California Family Rights Act (CFRA), and Military Leave, however, shall be granted in accordance with the applicable provisions of state and federal law.
- B. In the event an employee is in a non-pay status because of a disputed workers' compensation claim, benefits under this article shall be continued upon written agreement of the affected employee to repay to the City the amount of any premiums paid by the City during the non-pay status period if the employee's claim is denied by the Workers Compensation Appeals Board or withdrawn by the employee prior to a decision by the Board.

CHAPTER 3 HOLIDAYS

3.1 Holidays

The following holidays are recognized as municipal holidays for pay purposes:

New Year's Day
Dr. M.L. King Jr. Birthday
President's Day
Memorial Day
Juneteenth
Independence Day (July 4)
Labor Day

Veteran's Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve Day
Christmas Day
½ Day New Year's Eve

In the event that any of the aforementioned days falls on a Sunday, the following Monday shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes. In the event that any of the aforementioned days fall on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes. (Department ~~Director~~Heads may make changes in the above schedule in accordance with the needs of their departments.) The afternoon of New Year's Eve, ~~commencing at 12 noon~~, shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes, equaling 3.75 holiday pay hours for 37.5-hour employees and 4 holiday pay hours for 40-hour employees. In the event New Year's Eve falls

on a Sunday or a Monday, the preceding Friday afternoon shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes. Some adjustments may be made if necessitated by an alternative work schedule.

3.2 Birthday and Floating Holidays

In addition to the recognized municipal holidays, full-time employees (37.5 hours per week or greater) -shall receive annually three (3) floating holidays, subject to the same requirements for scheduling vacation under Section 5.2 of this agreement.

Employees hired during the fiscal year shall receive floating holiday credit in accordance with the following table:

<u>Hire Date:</u>	<u>Prorated Hours:</u>
<u>July 1 to September 30</u>	<u>22.5 hours</u>
<u>October 1 to December 31</u>	<u>15 hours</u>
<u>January 1 to March 31</u>	<u>7.5 hours</u>
<u>April 1 to June 30</u>	<u>0 hours</u>

~~For new employees, the floating holidays are pro-rated monthly based on date of hire. For employees separating from service, the floating holidays are pro-rated monthly based on the separation date. Floating holidays shall be prorated (bi-weekly) for employees who separate before June 30th each fiscal year, based on time worked within that fiscal year.~~ Floating holidays must be taken within the fiscal year they are received and may not be carried over and accumulated.

Full-time employees (37.5 hours per week or greater) ~~Employees~~ are allowed an additional holiday in recognition of their birthday. This birthday holiday shall be posted upon appointment to City service and at the beginning of each fiscal year thereafter.

~~Permanent-Regular~~ Part-Time employees will earn prorated birthday and floating holidays based on the number of hours worked and applying the full-time equivalent percentage to the accrual rate listed above based on (three3 Floating Holidays and one4 Birthday Holiday for full-time employees).

3.3 Compensation for Municipal Holidays

- A. An employee on leave of absence without pay shall not receive any compensation for holidays occurring during such leave.
- B. Regular employees must be in a pay status on the workday preceding a holiday to be eligible to be compensated for the holiday.

CHAPTER 4
SICK LEAVE, WORKERS' COMPENSATION, FAMILY SICK LEAVE,
AND OTHER LEAVES

4.1 Accrual of Sick Leave Rate

- A. Sick leave shall accrue at the rate of eight hours and 45 minutes per calendar month worked, providing the employee has worked or been authorized leave with pay for at least ten working days in the month.
- B. Employees with 20 or more years of service shall accrue sick leave at the rate of 11 hours and 25 minutes per calendar month worked, provided the employee has worked or been authorized leave with pay for at least ten working days in the month.
- C. ~~Permanent-Regular~~ Part-Time employees shall be eligible to accrue sick leave in the same proportion as their scheduled work hours per week related to the standard work week.

4.2 Sick Leave Maximum Accrual

Accumulation of sick leave is unlimited.

4.3 Activity During Sick Leave

No employee who is absent from work on sick leave shall engage in any work or other activity that would interfere with the employee's ability to return to work to perform regular duties.

4.4 Retirement Benefit

Upon retirement from City service, an employee shall be entitled to compensation for one fourth of the accumulated sick leave on the books at the time of such retirement, with a maximum payment equivalent to twenty-five (25) days pay, at the employee's option. Actual sick leave remaining on the books will be reported to CalPERS in accordance with CalPERS regulations governing the sick leave credit contract option. In no case will unearned sick leave be reported for the purpose of increasing the member's retirement as prohibited by CalPERS.

4.5 On the Job Injury

When an employee is off work as a result of an on-the-job injury, the City shall continue to pay full salary for up to 90 calendar days.

4.6 Workers' Compensation Disability Payments

An employee receiving disability payments under the Workers' Compensation laws may use accumulated sick leave and vacation leave in order to maintain regular income. Under these circumstances, the employee shall be paid the difference between full salary and the disability payments received. Such sick leave and

vacation leave shall be drawn in proportion to the salary payments required to provide the employee with their regular income.

4.7 Family Sick Leave

Under Labor Code Section 233, employees may utilize accrued sick leave to care for an ill or injured child, spouse, or parent. The City has extended this provision to include domestic partners and their dependent children.— There is no requirement that the illness or injury reach the level of seriousness provided for under the Family and Medical Leave Acts. However, if the illness or injury qualifies under the Family and Medical Leave Act, it also satisfies the “family sick leave” criteria. The maximum “family sick leave” allowed each calendar year that is subject to this provision is one-half (1/2) of the employee’s annual accrual of sick leave. Additional family sick leave may be taken subject to departmental regulations and the approval of the Department DirectorHead and City Manager.

4.8 Bereavement Leave

Employees are entitled to time off with pay when there is a death or anticipated death in the immediate family. —Bereavement leave shall not exceed five (5) consecutive days when death is anticipated. —Bereavement leave after death shall not exceed that period of time between death and the day of the funeral, providing the funeral is held within five days following death. Additional time may be granted and charged as sick leave when, in the opinion of the Department DirectorHead, unusual circumstances identify the need for additional time off.

Immediate family is defined as spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, parent-in-law, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, grandparent, spouse's grandparent, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or any other relative of the employee or employee's spouse residing in the same household, or who has resided with the employee in the same household for three or more years. In cases where death has occurred involving someone other than the immediate family, the Department DirectorHead shall make the decision as to qualification for bereavement leave.

4.9 Administrative Leave

Management employees shall receive administrative leave in recognition of extraordinary working hours and conditions. —The City Manager will annually approve the number of leave days by individual employee, based on the amount of overtime performed and the quality of work produced. —The annual amount of time assigned shall not exceed ten days or 75 hours per fiscal year. For new hires, Administrative Leave will be pro-rated (monthlybiweekly) based on the start date. Unused administrative leave cannot be carried over from year to year or cashed out at year end or upon separation.

4.10 Family and Medical Leave

Pursuant to State and Federal law, the City will provide family and medical care leave for eligible employees. —The City Family Care and Medical Leave policy sets

forth employees' rights and obligations with respect to such leave. –Rights and obligations which are not specifically set forth in the City's policy are set forth in the Department of Labor regulations implementing the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 ("FMLA") and the regulations of the California State Pregnancy Disability Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Commission implementing the California Family Rights Act ("CFRA") (Government Code Section 12945.2). Unless otherwise provided by the City's policy or this resolution, "Leave" under this article shall mean leave pursuant to the FMLA.

CHAPTER 5 VACATION

- 5.1 Eligibility
Regular and probationary employees shall be eligible to take a paid vacation upon accrual of vacation hours, unless otherwise provided by the City Manager.
- 5.2 Scheduling
The scheduling of annual vacation leave and the amount to be taken at any one time shall be determined by the Department Head in accordance with departmental regulations and with regard for the needs of the City and the preference of the employee.
- 5.3 Vacation at Termination
Employees leaving the municipal service with accrued vacation leave shall be paid the amount of accrued vacation to the date of termination. Payment for accrued vacation shall be at the employee's current rate of pay.
- 5.4 Effect of Extended Military Leave
A management employee who interrupts their City service because of extended military leave shall be compensated for accrued vacation at the time the leave becomes effective.
- 5.5 Sick Leave During Vacation
Vacation leave may be converted to sick leave subject to the review and approval of the Department Head and the City Manager if an employee is injured or sick during the vacation for a period in excess of 24 hours.
- 5.6 Vacation Cap
The vacation cap shall be two (2) times the employee's annual vacation accrual rate. Any time an employee reaches the maximum accrual, the employee will cease accruing vacation hours until such time the balance falls below the cap. No employee will be allowed to accrue vacation hours above the cap.
- 5.7 Vacation Cash-Out
Employees may annually cash-out up to 16 days (120 hours) of vacation provided that they have taken a minimum of 8 vacation days (or administrative leave for

management employees) in the previous fiscal year and maintain a vacation balance of 37.5 hours at the time of vacation cash out. Employees may elect to cash-out a maximum of two (2) times annually and each cash-out request must be a minimum of 8 days (60 hours).

All irrevocable vacation cash-out requests must be in writing and submitted to Human Resources no later than December 15 of the calendar year before the calendar year in which the employee wishes to cash-out vacation leave. The notice shall indicate how many vacation leave hours the employee wishes to cash-out the following year. The amount requested cannot exceed the amount stated above. An employee can cash-out during the months of May and December. The Human Resources Manager has final approval.

5.8 Accrual

Unless otherwise provided by the City Manager, vacation leave will be accrued from the first day of employment when a management employee is in a pay status and will be credited on a monthly basis. Municipal holidays shall not be counted during vacation. The vacation schedule is based on the years of service with the City.

VACATION ACCRUAL – MANAGEMENT AND CONFIDENTIAL

Years of Service	Days	Hrs Earned/Yr (37.5 hrs/wk)	<u>Hrs Earned/Yr (40 hrs/wk)</u>
During 1st Year	11	82.50	<u>87.99</u>
2-3	12	90.00	<u>95.99</u>
4	13	97.50	<u>103.99</u>
5	15	112.50	<u>119.99</u>
6-7	16	120.00	<u>127.99</u>
8-9	17	127.50	<u>135.99</u>
10-11	18	135.00	<u>143.99</u>
12-13	19	142.50	<u>151.99</u>
14-15	20	150.00	<u>159.99</u>
16-17	21	157.50	<u>167.99</u>
18-19	22	165.00	<u>175.99</u>
20-21	23	172.50	<u>183.99</u>
22-23	24	180.00	<u>191.99</u>
24-25	25	187.50	<u>199.99</u>
26-27	26	195.00	<u>207.99</u>
28-29	27	202.50	<u>215.99</u>
30-31	28	210.00	<u>223.99</u>
32-33	29	217.50	<u>231.99</u>
34-35	30	225.00	<u>239.99</u>
36-37	31	232.50	<u>247.98</u>

38-39	32	240.00	255.98
40	33	247.50	263.98

CHAPTER 6 WORK SCHEDULE

6.1 Workweek

The number of hours worked in the workweek for management and confidential employees is as required by the City. The normal workday schedule varies by department and classification depending upon the standard or designated alternative work schedule. The workweek for those assigned to the nine-day schedule in a two-week period begins at the mid-point noon on Friday and concludes immediately before noon the mid-point the following Friday.

6.2 Hours per Week

All classifications included in this resolution are designated as 37.5 hours per week, except the Public Safety Executive Assistant which is designated as 40 hours per week.

CHAPTER 7 EDUCATION BENEFITS

7.1 Tuition Refund Plan

Management and confidential employees are eligible for educational cost reimbursement up to a maximum of \$1,000 per fiscal year for work related studies at a recognized college, university or professional school. The City will reimburse management and confidential employees up to a limit of \$3,500 per fiscal year while pursuing a master's degree. These reimbursement limits are not compounding. Course content should relate to one of the following:

- Knowledge or skills needed by an employee in their present job.
- Preparation for promotional opportunities or advancement in the same or different field within the City organization.
- The requirements of a program leading to a degree, at an approved institution, which enhances the employee's job knowledge or on the job skills.

Procedures for obtaining reimbursement and limitations regarding reimbursement may be found in the City of El Cerrito administrative procedure on educational expense reimbursement.

CHAPTER 8 MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES FOR MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES

8.1 Continuing Education

It is the policy of the City that management employees take part in some educational or training course each year, and the City Council will attempt to provide funds in each budget for such purpose.

8.2 Membership

It is the policy of the City to provide paid membership in approved professional associations for management employees. -This policy shall include publications associated with membership and other educational materials as may be approved.

8.3 Conferences

It is the policy of the City that each management employee attend (as a member) a professional conference of their peers each year at City expense dependent upon budget availability; however, travel outside the state of California is discouraged due to budgetary restraints.

CHAPTER 9 MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES FOR CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEES

9.1 Overtime

A. Policy – Definition

Management employees are exempt and not eligible for overtime. For confidential employees, it is the policy of the City that overtime work is to be kept at a minimum consistent with the protection of the lives and property of El Cerrito community members ~~citizens~~ and the efficient operation of the departments and activities of the City. Overtime must be authorized by both the supervisor and Ddepartment ~~manager~~ Director and is subject to such other rules and procedures as the City Manager may prescribe.

Overtime shall be defined as time worked beyond the hours worked in the normal workweek, defined in Section 6.1 herein as 37.5 hours for full-time confidential employees and 40 hours for full-time Public Safety Executive Assistants. Hours worked are defined as all time during which an employee is necessarily required to be on the employer's premises, on duty or at a prescribed workplace. Sick leave, vacation, holidays, and other paid leave are considered to be part of the normal workweek and unpaid leave shall not be included as time worked. Overtime shall commence at the time an employee is released or the work is completed, whichever is earlier.

B. Overtime Compensation

1. For hours worked in excess of the normal workweek, but not in excess of forty hours in a workweek, one of the following shall occur at the discretion of the department manager and in consultation with the employee:

- a. Employee shall accrue compensatory time off on a time-and-one-half basis (this will not count toward the FLSA compensatory time ceiling of 240 hours, but will count toward the City's 40-hour compensatory time cap)
 - b. Overtime shall be paid at time-and-one-half the regular hourly rate of pay.
 - 2. For hours worked in excess of forty (40) in any workweek, one of the following shall occur at the discretion of the employee:
 - a. Employee shall accrue compensatory time off on a time-and-one-half basis (this will count toward the FLSA compensatory time ceiling of 240 hours as well as the City's 40-hour compensatory cap); or
 - b. Overtime shall be paid at time-and-one-half the regular hourly rate of pay.
- C. **Maximum Accumulation of Compensatory Time**
 Confidential employees may not accrue more than 40 hours of compensatory time-off without permission of the Department Head~~department manager~~. Time off for compensatory time must be approved by the ~~d~~Department manager-Head or delegate~~City~~ Manager.

9.2 Uniform Allowance

The City shall provide uniforms in accordance with department procedures and subject to approval by the Department Director~~Head~~ and City Manager for management and confidential employees required to wear one.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Resolution 202~~32-486~~ is hereby rescinded and this resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage and adoption.

I CERTIFY that at a special~~regular~~ meeting on June ~~320~~, 202~~35~~ the City Council of the City of El Cerrito passed this Resolution by the following vote:

AYES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
NOES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSTAIN:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSENT:	COUNCILMEMBERS:

IN WITNESS of this action, I sign this document and affix the corporate seal of the City of El Cerrito on June 3, 202~~35~~.

Holly M. Charl  ty, City Clerk

APPROVED:

~~Lisa Motoyama~~Carolyn Wysinger, Mayor

Exhibit A

Management Salary Schedule (2025-2026)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3% COLA)
935	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER	16,358	16,849	21,469	22,113
545	ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER	11,238	11,575	14,750	15,193
912	ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	9,049	9,320	11,876	12,233
690	BUDGET/FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,238	11,575	14,750	15,193
926	BUILDING OFFICIAL	11,584	11,932	15,204	15,660
551	CITY CLERK	12,567	12,944	16,494	16,989
950	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	14,828	15,273	19,462	20,045
913	FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE MANAGER	9,012	9,282	12,728	13,110
924	FINANCE DIRECTOR/CITY TREASURER	15,579	16,046	20,447	21,060
921	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER	12,169	12,534	15,972	16,451
910	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER	12,169	12,534	15,972	16,451
550	MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,209	7,426	9,462	9,746
546	MANAGEMENT ANALYST I	6,896	7,103	9,051	9,323
547	MANAGEMENT ANALYST II	7,613	7,841	9,991	10,291
548	MANAGEMENT ANALYST III	7,879	8,115	10,341	10,651
544	SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST	8,374	8,625	10,708	11,029
903	NETWORK SECURITY ENGINEER	8,193	8,439	10,753	11,076
916	OPERATIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,238	11,575	14,750	15,193
915	PLANNING MANAGER	11,584	11,932	15,204	15,660
549	PROGRAM MANAGER	8,829	9,094	11,588	11,935
948	PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER	15,579	16,046	20,447	21,060
949	RECREATION DIRECTOR	14,113	14,537	18,524	19,079
650	RECREATION SUPERVISOR	7,879	8,115	10,341	10,651
682	RECYCLING OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,246	7,464	9,511	9,796
688	SENIOR ACCOUNTANT	7,998	8,238	10,498	10,813
914	SENIOR ENGINEER	11,025	11,356	14,470	14,905
902	SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST	8,751	9,014	11,486	11,830
905	SENIOR PLANNER	8,403	8,655	11,028	11,359
900	SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER	9,745	10,038	12,791	13,174
982	EXTRA HELP RETIRED ANNUITANT (HOURLY RATE)***	18.34	18.89	135.00	139.05

Exhibit A Continued-

Confidential Salary Schedule (2025-2026)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3%COLA)
543	ACCOUNTANT II	6,601	6,799	8,665	8,925
529	HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST	6,728	6,930	8,831	9,096
539	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST	6,728	6,930	8,831	9,096
716	PUBLIC SAFETY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT (40 hrs wk)	7,173	7,388	8,681	8,941

Exhibit B

Management Salary Schedule (2026-2027)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3% COLA)
935	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER	16,849	17,354	22,113	22,776
545	ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER	11,575	11,922	15,193	15,649
912	ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	9,320	9,600	12,233	12,600
690	BUDGET/FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,575	11,922	15,193	15,649
926	BUILDING OFFICIAL	11,932	12,290	15,660	16,130
551	CITY CLERK	12,944	13,332	16,989	17,499
950	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	15,273	15,731	20,045	20,647
913	FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE MANAGER	9,282	9,561	13,110	13,503
924	FINANCE DIRECTOR/CITY TREASURER	16,046	16,527	21,060	21,692
921	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER	12,534	12,910	16,451	16,945
910	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER	12,534	12,910	16,451	16,945
550	MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,426	7,648	9,746	10,039
546	MANAGEMENT ANALYST I	7,103	7,316	9,323	9,603
547	MANAGEMENT ANALYST II	7,841	8,076	10,291	10,600
548	MANAGEMENT ANALYST III	8,115	8,359	10,651	10,970
544	SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST	8,625	8,884	11,029	11,360
903	NETWORK SECURITY ENGINEER	8,439	8,692	11,076	11,408
916	OPERATIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,575	11,922	15,193	15,649
915	PLANNING MANAGER	11,932	12,290	15,660	16,130
549	PROGRAM MANAGER	9,094	9,366	11,935	12,293
948	PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER	16,046	16,527	21,060	21,692
949	RECREATION DIRECTOR	14,537	14,973	19,079	19,652
650	RECREATION SUPERVISOR	8,115	8,359	10,651	10,970
682	RECYCLING OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,464	7,688	9,796	10,090
688	SENIOR ACCOUNTANT	8,238	8,485	10,813	11,137
914	SENIOR ENGINEER	11,356	11,697	14,905	15,352
902	SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST	9,014	9,284	11,830	12,185
905	SENIOR PLANNER	8,655	8,914	11,359	11,700
900	SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER	10,038	10,339	13,174	13,569
982	EXTRA HELP RETIRED ANNUITANT (HOURLY RATE)***	18.89	19.46	139.05	143.22

Exhibit B Continued-

Confidential Salary Schedule (2026-2027)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3%COLA)
543	ACCOUNTANT II	6,799	7,003	8,925	9,193
529	HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST	6,930	7,138	9,096	9,369
539	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST	6,930	7,138	9,096	9,369
716	PUBLIC SAFETY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT (40 hrs wk)	7,388	7,610	8,941	9,210

Exhibit C

Management Salary Schedule (2027-2028)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3% COLA)
935	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER	17,354	17,875	22,776	23,459
545	ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER	11,922	12,280	15,649	16,118
912	ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	9,600	9,888	12,600	12,978
690	BUDGET/FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,922	12,280	15,649	16,118
926	BUILDING OFFICIAL	12,290	12,658	16,130	16,614
551	CITY CLERK	13,332	13,732	17,499	18,024
950	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	15,731	16,203	20,647	21,266
913	FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE MANAGER	9,561	9,847	13,503	13,908
924	FINANCE DIRECTOR/CITY TREASURER	16,527	17,023	21,692	22,343
921	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER	12,910	13,298	16,945	17,453
910	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER	12,910	13,298	16,945	17,453
550	MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,648	7,878	10,039	10,340
546	MANAGEMENT ANALYST I	7,316	7,536	9,603	9,891
547	MANAGEMENT ANALYST II	8,076	8,318	10,600	10,918
548	MANAGEMENT ANALYST III	8,359	8,610	10,970	11,299
544	SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST	8,884	9,150	11,360	11,701
903	NETWORK SECURITY ENGINEER	8,692	8,953	11,408	11,750
916	OPERATIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,922	12,280	15,649	16,118
915	PLANNING MANAGER	12,290	12,658	16,130	16,614
549	PROGRAM MANAGER	9,366	9,647	12,293	12,662
948	PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER	16,527	17,023	21,692	22,343
949	RECREATION DIRECTOR	14,973	15,422	19,652	20,241
650	RECREATION SUPERVISOR	8,359	8,610	10,970	11,299
682	RECYCLING OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,688	7,918	10,090	10,393
688	SENIOR ACCOUNTANT	8,485	8,740	11,137	11,471
914	SENIOR ENGINEER	11,697	12,047	15,352	15,812
902	SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST	9,284	9,562	12,185	12,551
905	SENIOR PLANNER	8,914	9,182	11,700	12,051
900	SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER	10,339	10,649	13,569	13,977
982	EXTRA HELP RETIRED ANNUITANT (HOURLY RATE)***	19.46	20.04	143.22	147.52

Exhibit C Continued-

Confidential Salary Schedule (2027-2028)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3%COLA)
543	ACCOUNTANT II	7,003	7,213	9,193	9,468
529	HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST	7,138	7,352	9,369	9,650
539	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST	7,138	7,352	9,369	9,650
716	PUBLIC SAFETY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT (40 hrs wk)	7,610	7,838	9,210	9,486

RESOLUTION NO. 202~~35~~-XX

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL CERRITO ESTABLISHING SALARIES, BENEFITS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR MANAGEMENT AND CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEES EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 202~~35~~; AND RESCINDING RESOLUTION 202~~23~~-4~~68~~

WHEREAS, it is in the City's best interest to recruit and retain high quality, talented employees for the City to fulfill the Strategic Goal of a High Performing Organization; and

WHEREAS, an effective means for achieving this objective is to provide competitive salaries, benefits, and conditions of employment for management and confidential ~~said~~ employees.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the El Cerrito City Council hereby establishes the salaries, benefits, and conditions of employment for the City's management and confidential employees, as follows:

CHAPTER 1 EMPLOYEES

1.1 Management employees are, for purposes of this section, those actively involved in the following classifications:

- Assistant City Manager
- Assistant to the City Manager
- Associate Engineer
- Building Official
- Budget/Financial Services Manager
- City Clerk
- ~~Community Development Director~~
- Environmental Services Manager
- Facilities and Maintenance Manager
- Finance Director/City Treasurer
- Human Resources Manager
- Information Technology Manager
- Maintenance ~~Services Superintendent~~ Operations Supervisor
- Management Analyst I,II,III
- Network Security Engineer
- Operations and Environmental Services Manager
- Planning Manager
- Program Manager
- Public Works Director/City Engineer
- Recreation Director
- Recreation Supervisor
- Recycling Operations Supervisor
- Senior Accountant
- Senior Engineer

- Senior Human Resources Analyst
- Senior Management Analyst
- Senior Planner
- Senior Program Manager

1.2 Confidential employees are, for the purposes of this section, those actively involved in the following classifications:

- Accountant II
- Human Resources Specialist
- Information Technology Specialist
- Public Safety Executive Assistant

CHAPTER 2 SALARIES AND BENEFITS

2.1 Effective the first full pay period in July 2023~~5~~, a revised salary system and salary schedule are established, as shown in Exhibit A. This system creates a salary grade range with a bottom and a top monthly salary, and employees may be placed within this range based on experience, performance, and other factors as determined by the City Manager. The system includes market adjustments based on the Koff & Associates Compensation study completed in 2024, one-time internal alignment adjustments, and a 3% cost of living adjustment.

A. Effective the first full pay period in July 2025, the following ~~control point~~ salary grade ranges as listed in Exhibit A shall apply to all ~~shall apply for management classification~~ employees.

B. Effective the first full pay period in July 2025, the salary grade ranges as listed in Exhibit A shall apply to all confidential classifications.

2.2 The following cost of living adjustments (COLA) shall be implemented for the salaries of management and confidential employees for Fiscal Years 2026-27 and 2027-28:

A. ~~For~~ Effective the first full pay period in July 2026, a 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) shall be implemented. See Exhibit B.

B. Effective the first full pay period in July 2027, a 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) shall be implemented. See Exhibit C.

A.C. Effective July 1, 2021, no salary adjustments or merit increases shall be implemented unless approved by the City Manager.

~~Only those employees whose performance, over time, far exceeds expectations will achieve and maintain a salary that is above control point.~~

2.3 Bilingual Pay

The City shall pay one hundred dollars \$100.00 per ~~month-pay period (\$46.15 per payroll)~~ to management/confidential employees who are bilingual and who have passed a proficiency test provided and approved by the City.

2.4 Pension Plan Benefits

- A. Employees are members of the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS) plan, with a 2.7% at 55 retirement formula integrated with Social Security, which has an eight percent (8%) employee contribution, the PERS single highest year option and service credit for unused sick leave option.
- B. Effective January 1, 2013, newly hired employees that are considered “new members” in accordance with the Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act (PEPRA), will be enrolled under the CalPERS Miscellaneous Employee 2% at 62 retirement formula integrated with Social Security, average of highest three (3) years compensation earnable, in accordance with applicable law and PEPRA.
- ~~C.~~ In accordance with City Council Resolution 2020-32, effective the first full pay period in July 2020, all Management and Confidential employees will pay an additional one percent (1%) into the required employer CalPERS contribution;
- ~~D.~~
- ~~E.C.~~ ~~E~~ effective the first full pay period in July 2021, all Management and Confidential employees will pay an additional two percent (2%) into the required employer CalPERS contribution, for a total of 3%.

2.5 Flexible Benefits Plan

The City has a Flexible Benefits Plan that provides for the following:

- A. The City will contribute the equivalent of the cost of the lowest cost medical plan rate, according to dependent status, regardless of which medical plan is chosen. *“According to dependent status”* means that if an employee is single, they shall receive the lowest cost single premium in their flexible spending account. If an employee and a dependent are enrolled in a City medical plan, the employee shall receive the lowest cost two party premium in their flexible spending account. If an employee and more than one dependent are enrolled in a City medical plan, the employee shall receive the lowest cost family premium in his or her flexible spending account.

~~Effective January 2022, the lowest cost medical plan rate is Kaiser HMO.~~

- B. In the event that an employee has alternate comprehensive group medical coverage through a spouse's medical plan or some other group medical plan, the employee may elect to receive “cash in-lieu” of medical coverage

after they provide proof of such medical coverage to Human Resources. In this event, the City shall contribute \$793.18 to the employee's Flexible Benefits Plan and the employee may receive this amount in cash, in which case the amount is treated as taxable income; or the employee may reallocate it toward the purchase of other benefits in the Plan; or a combination of both. The "cash in-lieu" benefit amount shall be \$350 per month for: a) Employees hired after December 31, 2020 or b) existing employees who discontinue the City's medical coverage and opt for "cash in lieu" of medical coverage at a later date as long as they meet the requirements as described above.

C. Employees may contribute salary of up to the maximum by law on a pre-tax basis in order to purchase the following benefits:

- Medical premiums, co-payments, and deductibles
- Dental premiums, co-payments, and deductibles
- Unreimbursed medical and dental expenses
- Dependent care Mental health counseling services

Rules governing the allocation and distribution of such funds shall conform to applicable sections of State and Federal tax codes and the City of El Cerrito's Flexible Benefits Plan.

D. Health plans will become effective the first of the month following the date of hire.

E. Health benefit programs recognize the participation of domestic partners of eligible employees. Please refer to the City's Citiflex document for details.

~~F. The City may establish a Citywide task force for the purpose of exploring alternate health plans, including PERS Health, for both active and retired employees. The City will include members of the unrepresented management group.~~

2.6 Dental Plan

The City will pay the full cost of family coverage under the Delta Dental Plan.

2.7 Life Insurance

The City will provide a term life insurance policy for management and confidential employees. The principal sum shall be equal to the annual salary rounded to the nearest \$1,000 (up to a maximum of \$100,000), effective the first day of the month following City Council adoption of any changes in the Pay Plans salary schedule.

2.8 Auto Allowance

The City will supply an automobile to management employees who, in the opinion of the City Manager, require a City vehicle as an integral part of their work. Management and Confidential employees required to use their own automobiles

for City business shall be reimbursed at the Internal Revenue Service allowable rate.

2.9 Short-term/Long term Disability Insurance

The City shall provide employees with short-term/long term disability insurance with coverage of two-thirds salary up to the maximum monthly salary limit of \$10,000 and a thirty-day elimination period. Like regular wages, this benefit is taxable.

2.10 Benefit Status

- A. The salary and benefits contained within this Resolution are granted only to employees who are in a current pay status. The City shall incur no cost, nor shall benefits accrue, for retirees, survivors, or employees in a non-pay status. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), California Family Rights Act (CFRA), and Military Leave, however, shall be granted in accordance with the applicable provisions of state and federal law.
- B. In the event an employee is in a non-pay status because of a disputed workers' compensation claim, benefits under this article shall be continued upon written agreement of the affected employee to repay to the City the amount of any premiums paid by the City during the non-pay status period if the employee's claim is denied by the Workers Compensation Appeals Board or withdrawn by the employee prior to a decision by the Board.

CHAPTER 3 HOLIDAYS

3.1 Holidays

The following holidays are recognized as municipal holidays for pay purposes:

New Year's Day
Dr. M.L. King Jr. Birthday
President's Day
Memorial Day
Juneteenth
Independence Day (July 4)
Labor Day

Veteran's Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve Day
Christmas Day
½ Day New Year's Eve

In the event that any of the aforementioned days falls on a Sunday, the following Monday shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes. In the event that any of the aforementioned days fall on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes. (Department Director Heads may make changes in the above schedule in accordance with the needs of their departments.) The afternoon of New Year's Eve, ~~commencing at 12 noon~~, shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes, equaling 3.75 holiday pay hours for 37.5-hour employees and 4 holiday pay hours for 40-hour employees. In the event New Year's Eve falls

on a Sunday or a Monday, the preceding Friday afternoon shall be considered a holiday for pay purposes. Some adjustments may be made if necessitated by an alternative work schedule.

3.2 Birthday and Floating Holidays

In addition to the recognized municipal holidays, full-time employees (37.5 hours per week or greater) shall receive annually three (3) floating holidays, subject to the same requirements for scheduling vacation under Section 5.2 of this agreement.

Employees hired during the fiscal year shall receive floating holiday credit in accordance with the following table:

<u>Hire Date:</u>	<u>Prorated Hours:</u>
<u>July 1 to September 30</u>	<u>22.5 hours</u>
<u>October 1 to December 31</u>	<u>15 hours</u>
<u>January 1 to March 31</u>	<u>7.5 hours</u>
<u>April 1 to June 30</u>	<u>0 hours</u>

~~For new employees, the floating holidays are pro-rated monthly based on date of hire. For employees separating from service, the floating holidays are pro-rated monthly based on the separation date. Floating holidays shall be prorated (bi-weekly) for employees who separate before June 30th each fiscal year, based on time worked within that fiscal year.~~ Floating holidays must be taken within the fiscal year they are received and may not be carried over and accumulated.

Full-time employees (37.5 hours per week or greater) ~~Employees~~ are allowed an additional holiday in recognition of their birthday. This birthday holiday shall be posted upon appointment to City service and at the beginning of each fiscal year thereafter.

~~Permanent-Regular~~ Part-Time employees will earn prorated birthday and floating holidays based on the number of hours worked and applying the full-time equivalent percentage to the accrual rate listed above based on ~~(three3~~ Floating Holidays and ~~one4~~ Birthday Holiday for full-time employees)..

3.3 Compensation for Municipal Holidays

- A. An employee on leave of absence without pay shall not receive any compensation for holidays occurring during such leave.
- B. Regular employees must be in a pay status on the workday preceding a holiday to be eligible to be compensated for the holiday.

CHAPTER 4
SICK LEAVE, WORKERS' COMPENSATION, FAMILY SICK LEAVE,
AND OTHER LEAVES

4.1 Accrual of Sick Leave Rate

- A. Sick leave shall accrue at the rate of eight hours and 45 minutes per calendar month worked, providing the employee has worked or been authorized leave with pay for at least ten working days in the month.
- B. Employees with 20 or more years of service shall accrue sick leave at the rate of 11 hours and 25 minutes per calendar month worked, provided the employee has worked or been authorized leave with pay for at least ten working days in the month.
- C. ~~Permanent-Regular~~ Part-Time employees shall be eligible to accrue sick leave in the same proportion as their scheduled work hours per week related to the standard work week.

4.2 Sick Leave Maximum Accrual

Accumulation of sick leave is unlimited.

4.3 Activity During Sick Leave

No employee who is absent from work on sick leave shall engage in any work or other activity that would interfere with the employee's ability to return to work to perform regular duties.

4.4 Retirement Benefit

Upon retirement from City service, an employee shall be entitled to compensation for one fourth of the accumulated sick leave on the books at the time of such retirement, with a maximum payment equivalent to twenty-five (25) days pay, at the employee's option. Actual sick leave remaining on the books will be reported to CalPERS in accordance with CalPERS regulations governing the sick leave credit contract option. In no case will unearned sick leave be reported for the purpose of increasing the member's retirement as prohibited by CalPERS.

4.5 On the Job Injury

When an employee is off work as a result of an on-the-job injury, the City shall continue to pay full salary for up to 90 calendar days.

4.6 Workers' Compensation Disability Payments

An employee receiving disability payments under the Workers' Compensation laws may use accumulated sick leave and vacation leave in order to maintain regular income. Under these circumstances, the employee shall be paid the difference between full salary and the disability payments received. Such sick leave and

vacation leave shall be drawn in proportion to the salary payments required to provide the employee with their regular income.

4.7 Family Sick Leave

Under Labor Code Section 233, employees may utilize accrued sick leave to care for an ill or injured child, spouse, or parent. The City has extended this provision to include domestic partners and their dependent children.— There is no requirement that the illness or injury reach the level of seriousness provided for under the Family and Medical Leave Acts. However, if the illness or injury qualifies under the Family and Medical Leave Act, it also satisfies the “family sick leave” criteria. The maximum “family sick leave” allowed each calendar year that is subject to this provision is one-half (1/2) of the employee’s annual accrual of sick leave. Additional family sick leave may be taken subject to departmental regulations and the approval of the Department [DirectorHead](#) and City Manager.

4.8 Bereavement Leave

Employees are entitled to time off with pay when there is a death or anticipated death in the immediate family. —Bereavement leave shall not exceed five (5) consecutive days when death is anticipated. —Bereavement leave after death shall not exceed that period of time between death and the day of the funeral, providing the funeral is held within five days following death. Additional time may be granted and charged as sick leave when, in the opinion of the Department [DirectorHead](#), unusual circumstances identify the need for additional time off.

Immediate family is defined as spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, parent-in-law, sister, brother, [aunt, uncle,](#) sister-in-law, brother-in-law, grandparent, spouse's grandparent, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or any other relative of the employee or employee's spouse residing in the same household, or who has resided with the employee in the same household for three or more years. In cases where death has occurred involving someone other than the immediate family, the Department [DirectorHead](#) shall make the decision as to qualification for bereavement leave.

4.9 Administrative Leave

Management employees shall receive administrative leave in recognition of extraordinary working hours and conditions. —The City Manager will annually approve the number of leave days by individual employee, based on the amount of overtime performed and the quality of work produced. —The annual amount of time assigned shall not exceed ten days or 75 hours per fiscal year. For new hires, Administrative Leave will be pro-rated ([monthlybiweekly](#)) based on the start date. Unused administrative leave cannot be carried over from year to year or cashed out at year end or upon separation.

4.10 Family and Medical Leave

Pursuant to State and Federal law, the City will provide family and medical care leave for eligible employees. —The City Family Care and Medical Leave policy sets

forth employees' rights and obligations with respect to such leave. –Rights and obligations which are not specifically set forth in the City's policy are set forth in the Department of Labor regulations implementing the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 ("FMLA") and the regulations of the California State Pregnancy Disability Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Commission implementing the California Family Rights Act ("CFRA") (Government Code Section 12945.2). Unless otherwise provided by the City's policy or this resolution, "Leave" under this article shall mean leave pursuant to the FMLA.

CHAPTER 5 VACATION

5.1 Eligibility

Regular and probationary employees shall be eligible to take a paid vacation upon accrual of vacation hours, unless otherwise provided by the City Manager.

5.2 Scheduling

The scheduling of annual vacation leave and the amount to be taken at any one time shall be determined by the Department Head in accordance with departmental regulations and with regard for the needs of the City and the preference of the employee.

5.3 Vacation at Termination

Employees leaving the municipal service with accrued vacation leave shall be paid the amount of accrued vacation to the date of termination. Payment for accrued vacation shall be at the employee's current rate of pay.

5.4 Effect of Extended Military Leave

A management employee who interrupts their City service because of extended military leave shall be compensated for accrued vacation at the time the leave becomes effective.

5.5 Sick Leave During Vacation

Vacation leave may be converted to sick leave subject to the review and approval of the Department Head and the City Manager if an employee is injured or sick during the vacation for a period in excess of 24 hours.

5.6 Vacation Cap

The vacation cap shall be two (2) times the employee's annual vacation accrual rate. Any time an employee reaches the maximum accrual, the employee will cease accruing vacation hours until such time the balance falls below the cap. No employee will be allowed to accrue vacation hours above the cap.

5.7 Vacation Cash-Out

Employees may annually cash-out up to 16 days (120 hours) of vacation provided that they have taken a minimum of 8 vacation days (or administrative leave for

management employees) in the previous fiscal year and maintain a vacation balance of 37.5 hours at the time of vacation cash out. Employees may elect to cash-out a maximum of two (2) times annually and each cash-out request must be a minimum of 8 days (60 hours).

All irrevocable vacation cash-out requests must be in writing and submitted to Human Resources no later than December 15 of the calendar year before the calendar year in which the employee wishes to cash-out vacation leave. The notice shall indicate how many vacation leave hours the employee wishes to cash-out the following year. The amount requested cannot exceed the amount stated above. An employee can cash-out during the months of May and December. The Human Resources Manager has final approval.

5.8 Accrual

Unless otherwise provided by the City Manager, vacation leave will be accrued from the first day of employment when a management employee is in a pay status and will be credited on a monthly basis. Municipal holidays shall not be counted during vacation. The vacation schedule is based on the years of service with the City.

VACATION ACCRUAL – MANAGEMENT AND CONFIDENTIAL

Years of Service	Days	Hrs Earned/Yr (37.5 hrs/wk)	<u>Hrs Earned/Yr (40 hrs/wk)</u>
During 1st Year	11	82.50	<u>87.99</u>
2-3	12	90.00	<u>95.99</u>
4	13	97.50	<u>103.99</u>
5	15	112.50	<u>119.99</u>
6-7	16	120.00	<u>127.99</u>
8-9	17	127.50	<u>135.99</u>
10-11	18	135.00	<u>143.99</u>
12-13	19	142.50	<u>151.99</u>
14-15	20	150.00	<u>159.99</u>
16-17	21	157.50	<u>167.99</u>
18-19	22	165.00	<u>175.99</u>
20-21	23	172.50	<u>183.99</u>
22-23	24	180.00	<u>191.99</u>
24-25	25	187.50	<u>199.99</u>
26-27	26	195.00	<u>207.99</u>
28-29	27	202.50	<u>215.99</u>
30-31	28	210.00	<u>223.99</u>
32-33	29	217.50	<u>231.99</u>
34-35	30	225.00	<u>239.99</u>
36-37	31	232.50	<u>247.98</u>

38-39	32	240.00	<u>255.98</u>
40	33	247.50	<u>263.98</u>

CHAPTER 6 WORK SCHEDULE

6.1 Workweek

The number of hours worked in the workweek for management and confidential employees is as required by the City. The normal workday schedule varies by department and classification depending upon the standard or designated alternative work schedule. The workweek for those assigned to the nine-day schedule in a two-week period begins at the mid-point noon on Friday and concludes immediately before noon the mid-point the following Friday.

6.2 Hours per Week

All classifications included in this resolution are designated as 37.5 hours per week, except the Public Safety Executive Assistant which is designated as 40 hours per week.

CHAPTER 7 EDUCATION BENEFITS

7.1 Tuition Refund Plan

Management and confidential employees are eligible for educational cost reimbursement up to a maximum of \$1,000 per fiscal year for work related studies at a recognized college, university or professional school. The City will reimburse management and confidential employees up to a limit of \$3,500 per fiscal year while pursuing a master's degree. These reimbursement limits are not compounding. Course content should relate to one of the following:

- Knowledge or skills needed by an employee in their present job.
- Preparation for promotional opportunities or advancement in the same or different field within the City organization.
- The requirements of a program leading to a degree, at an approved institution, which enhances the employee's job knowledge or on the job skills.

Procedures for obtaining reimbursement and limitations regarding reimbursement may be found in the City of El Cerrito administrative procedure on educational expense reimbursement.

CHAPTER 8 MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES FOR MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES

8.1 Continuing Education

It is the policy of the City that management employees take part in some educational or training course each year, and the City Council will attempt to provide funds in each budget for such purpose.

8.2 Membership

It is the policy of the City to provide paid membership in approved professional associations for management employees. –This policy shall include publications associated with membership and other educational materials as may be approved.

8.3 Conferences

It is the policy of the City that each management employee attend (as a member) a professional conference of their peers each year at City expense dependent upon budget availability; however, travel outside the state of California is discouraged due to budgetary restraints.

CHAPTER 9 MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES FOR CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEES

9.1 Overtime

A. Policy – Definition

Management employees are exempt and not eligible for overtime. For confidential employees, it is the policy of the City that overtime work is to be kept at a minimum consistent with the protection of the lives and property of El Cerrito community members ~~citizens~~ and the efficient operation of the departments and activities of the City. Overtime must be authorized by both the supervisor and Ddepartment ~~manager~~ Director and is subject to such other rules and procedures as the City Manager may prescribe.

Overtime shall be defined as time worked beyond the hours worked in the normal workweek, defined in Section 6.1 herein as 37.5 hours for full-time confidential employees and 40 hours for full-time Public Safety Executive Assistants. Hours worked are defined as all time during which an employee is necessarily required to be on the employer's premises, on duty or at a prescribed workplace. Sick leave, vacation, holidays, and other paid leave are considered to be part of the normal workweek and unpaid leave shall not be included as time worked. Overtime shall commence at the time an employee is released or the work is completed, whichever is earlier.

B. Overtime Compensation

1. For hours worked in excess of the normal workweek, but not in excess of forty hours in a workweek, one of the following shall occur at the discretion of the department manager and in consultation with the employee:

- a. Employee shall accrue compensatory time off on a time-and-one-half basis (this will not count toward the FLSA compensatory time ceiling of 240 hours, but will count toward the City's 40-hour compensatory time cap)
 - b. Overtime shall be paid at time-and-one-half the regular hourly rate of pay.
 - 2. For hours worked in excess of forty (40) in any workweek, one of the following shall occur at the discretion of the employee:
 - a. Employee shall accrue compensatory time off on a time-and-one-half basis (this will count toward the FLSA compensatory time ceiling of 240 hours as well as the City's 40-hour compensatory cap); or
 - b. Overtime shall be paid at time-and-one-half the regular hourly rate of pay.
- C. **Maximum Accumulation of Compensatory Time**
 Confidential employees may not accrue more than 40 hours of compensatory time-off without permission of the ~~Department Head~~~~department manager~~. Time off for compensatory time must be approved by the ~~d~~Department ~~manager~~~~Head~~ or ~~delegate~~City Manager.

9.2 Uniform Allowance

The City shall provide uniforms in accordance with department procedures and subject to approval by the Department ~~Director~~Head and City Manager for management and confidential employees required to wear one.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Resolution 202~~32~~-4~~86~~ is hereby rescinded and this resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage and adoption.

I CERTIFY that at a ~~special~~regular meeting on June ~~320~~, 202~~35~~ the City Council of the City of El Cerrito passed this Resolution by the following vote:

AYES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
NOES:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSTAIN:	COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSENT:	COUNCILMEMBERS:

IN WITNESS of this action, I sign this document and affix the corporate seal of the City of El Cerrito on June ~~3~~, 202~~35~~.

Holly M. Charl  ty, City Clerk

APPROVED:

~~Lisa Motoyama~~Carolyn Wysinger, Mayor

Exhibit A

Management Salary Schedule (2025-2026)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3% COLA)
935	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER	16,358	16,849	21,469	22,113
545	ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER	11,238	11,575	14,750	15,193
912	ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	9,049	9,320	11,876	12,233
690	BUDGET/FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,238	11,575	14,750	15,193
926	BUILDING OFFICIAL	11,584	11,932	15,204	15,660
551	CITY CLERK	12,567	12,944	16,494	16,989
950	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	14,828	15,273	19,462	20,045
913	FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE MANAGER	9,012	9,282	12,728	13,110
924	FINANCE DIRECTOR/CITY TREASURER	15,579	16,046	20,447	21,060
921	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER	12,169	12,534	15,972	16,451
910	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER	12,169	12,534	15,972	16,451
550	MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,209	7,426	9,462	9,746
546	MANAGEMENT ANALYST I	6,896	7,103	9,051	9,323
547	MANAGEMENT ANALYST II	7,613	7,841	9,991	10,291
548	MANAGEMENT ANALYST III	7,879	8,115	10,341	10,651
544	SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST	8,374	8,625	10,708	11,029
903	NETWORK SECURITY ENGINEER	8,193	8,439	10,753	11,076
916	OPERATIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,238	11,575	14,750	15,193
915	PLANNING MANAGER	11,584	11,932	15,204	15,660
549	PROGRAM MANAGER	8,829	9,094	11,588	11,935
948	PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER	15,579	16,046	20,447	21,060
949	RECREATION DIRECTOR	14,113	14,537	18,524	19,079
650	RECREATION SUPERVISOR	7,879	8,115	10,341	10,651
682	RECYCLING OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,246	7,464	9,511	9,796
688	SENIOR ACCOUNTANT	7,998	8,238	10,498	10,813
914	SENIOR ENGINEER	11,025	11,356	14,470	14,905
902	SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST	8,751	9,014	11,486	11,830
905	SENIOR PLANNER	8,403	8,655	11,028	11,359
900	SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER	9,745	10,038	12,791	13,174
982	EXTRA HELP RETIRED ANNUITANT (HOURLY RATE)***	18.34	18.89	135.00	139.05

Exhibit A Continued-

Confidential Salary Schedule (2025-2026)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3%COLA)
543	ACCOUNTANT II	6,601	6,799	8,665	8,925
529	HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST	6,728	6,930	8,831	9,096
539	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST	6,728	6,930	8,831	9,096
716	PUBLIC SAFETY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT (40 hrs wk)	7,173	7,388	8,681	8,941

Exhibit B

Management Salary Schedule (2026-2027)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3% COLA)
935	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER	16,849	17,354	22,113	22,776
545	ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER	11,575	11,922	15,193	15,649
912	ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	9,320	9,600	12,233	12,600
690	BUDGET/FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,575	11,922	15,193	15,649
926	BUILDING OFFICIAL	11,932	12,290	15,660	16,130
551	CITY CLERK	12,944	13,332	16,989	17,499
950	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	15,273	15,731	20,045	20,647
913	FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE MANAGER	9,282	9,561	13,110	13,503
924	FINANCE DIRECTOR/CITY TREASURER	16,046	16,527	21,060	21,692
921	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER	12,534	12,910	16,451	16,945
910	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER	12,534	12,910	16,451	16,945
550	MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,426	7,648	9,746	10,039
546	MANAGEMENT ANALYST I	7,103	7,316	9,323	9,603
547	MANAGEMENT ANALYST II	7,841	8,076	10,291	10,600
548	MANAGEMENT ANALYST III	8,115	8,359	10,651	10,970
544	SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST	8,625	8,884	11,029	11,360
903	NETWORK SECURITY ENGINEER	8,439	8,692	11,076	11,408
916	OPERATIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,575	11,922	15,193	15,649
915	PLANNING MANAGER	11,932	12,290	15,660	16,130
549	PROGRAM MANAGER	9,094	9,366	11,935	12,293
948	PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER	16,046	16,527	21,060	21,692
949	RECREATION DIRECTOR	14,537	14,973	19,079	19,652
650	RECREATION SUPERVISOR	8,115	8,359	10,651	10,970
682	RECYCLING OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,464	7,688	9,796	10,090
688	SENIOR ACCOUNTANT	8,238	8,485	10,813	11,137
914	SENIOR ENGINEER	11,356	11,697	14,905	15,352
902	SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST	9,014	9,284	11,830	12,185
905	SENIOR PLANNER	8,655	8,914	11,359	11,700
900	SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER	10,038	10,339	13,174	13,569
982	EXTRA HELP RETIRED ANNUITANT (HOURLY RATE)***	18.89	19.46	139.05	143.22

Exhibit B Continued-

Confidential Salary Schedule (2026-2027)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3%COLA)
543	ACCOUNTANT II	6,799	7,003	8,925	9,193
529	HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST	6,930	7,138	9,096	9,369
539	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST	6,930	7,138	9,096	9,369
716	PUBLIC SAFETY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT (40 hrs wk)	7,388	7,610	8,941	9,210

Exhibit C

Management Salary Schedule (2027-2028)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3% COLA)
935	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER	17,354	17,875	22,776	23,459
545	ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER	11,922	12,280	15,649	16,118
912	ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	9,600	9,888	12,600	12,978
690	BUDGET/FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,922	12,280	15,649	16,118
926	BUILDING OFFICIAL	12,290	12,658	16,130	16,614
551	CITY CLERK	13,332	13,732	17,499	18,024
950	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	15,731	16,203	20,647	21,266
913	FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE MANAGER	9,561	9,847	13,503	13,908
924	FINANCE DIRECTOR/CITY TREASURER	16,527	17,023	21,692	22,343
921	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER	12,910	13,298	16,945	17,453
910	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER	12,910	13,298	16,945	17,453
550	MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,648	7,878	10,039	10,340
546	MANAGEMENT ANALYST I	7,316	7,536	9,603	9,891
547	MANAGEMENT ANALYST II	8,076	8,318	10,600	10,918
548	MANAGEMENT ANALYST III	8,359	8,610	10,970	11,299
544	SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST	8,884	9,150	11,360	11,701
903	NETWORK SECURITY ENGINEER	8,692	8,953	11,408	11,750
916	OPERATIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER	11,922	12,280	15,649	16,118
915	PLANNING MANAGER	12,290	12,658	16,130	16,614
549	PROGRAM MANAGER	9,366	9,647	12,293	12,662
948	PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER	16,527	17,023	21,692	22,343
949	RECREATION DIRECTOR	14,973	15,422	19,652	20,241
650	RECREATION SUPERVISOR	8,359	8,610	10,970	11,299
682	RECYCLING OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR	7,688	7,918	10,090	10,393
688	SENIOR ACCOUNTANT	8,485	8,740	11,137	11,471
914	SENIOR ENGINEER	11,697	12,047	15,352	15,812
902	SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST	9,284	9,562	12,185	12,551
905	SENIOR PLANNER	8,914	9,182	11,700	12,051
900	SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER	10,339	10,649	13,569	13,977
982	EXTRA HELP RETIRED ANNUITANT (HOURLY RATE)***	19.46	20.04	143.22	147.52

Exhibit C Continued-

Confidential Salary Schedule (2027-2028)

JOB CODE	JOB CLASS	Bottom	Bottom (3%COLA)	Top	Top (3%COLA)
543	ACCOUNTANT II	7,003	7,213	9,193	9,468
529	HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST	7,138	7,352	9,369	9,650
539	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST	7,138	7,352	9,369	9,650
716	PUBLIC SAFETY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT (40 hrs wk)	7,610	7,838	9,210	9,486



**SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA MATERIALS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

June 3, 2025

(revised 6/4/2025)

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING (6:00 PM)

Public Comments (Not on the Agenda and Consent Calendar)

Agenda Item No. 7.A. – Environmental Quality Committee Recommendation
Public comments

Agenda Item No. 8.A. – Approval of the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan
a. **Revised Presentation**
b. Public Comments

Agenda Item No. 9.A. – CITY COUNCIL/PUBLIC FINANCING AUTHORITY ITEM
Fiscal Year 2025-26 Budget - Midcycle Summary and Addendum
Public Comments

From: [Cordell Hindler](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments
Date: Friday, May 30, 2025 2:19:02 PM

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Hello Mayor Wysinger, Council Members and Staff,

I am submitting the Following Comments into the Record:

1. for a future Agenda, the Council Should Consider Revisiting the idea of having the Public to Participate Remotely
2. Also to Invite Sophia Skoda to Present on Investing the Future for EBMUD

Sincerely
Cordell

From: [Ira Sharenow](#)
To: [Holly Charléty](#); [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Lisa Motoyama](#); [William Ktsanes](#); [Rebecca Saltzman](#)
Subject: June 3, 2025 council meeting: Items Not on the Agenda
Date: Monday, June 2, 2025 7:54:50 PM

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El Cerrito recently completed a library survey that the taxpayers paid for. Now the government needs to release the raw survey data and all associated reports.

Ira Sharenow
El Cerrito, CA

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: June 3, 2025 council meeting: Items Not on the Agenda
Date: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 5:50:26 PM

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Sorry for the late entry, never done this before.

I did a survey about the library and would like to see the results of that survey. The most I can find is a reference in the city managers report. It would be nice to be able to see the actual data from the entire survey.

Tom Kelly
Born and raised in El Cerrito.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item 7A
Date: Saturday, May 31, 2025 3:26:51 PM

EQC, I appreciate the recommendation.

I urge the City Council to approve the recommendation with amendments.

We must take a more aggressive approach and be specific for the future generations. What is shocking to me, after reading multiple Bay Area cities' Climate Action Plan or Policy, is that almost none of them mention animal agriculture (factory farming) as a major threat to the climate and environment. Food systems and diet are among the top three sectors that contribute to (human caused) climate change.

Sure we can reduce our environmental impact by recycling, driving less, riding bicycles, but the single most powerful way is to cut out meat and dairy consumption. [A study by University of Oxford published in 2016](#) estimated that a global switch to diets that rely less on meat and more on fruit and vegetables could save up to 8 million lives by 2050, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by two thirds, and lead to healthcare-related savings. It could also avoid climate-related damages of \$1.5 trillion (US).

City of Berkeley is the only city in the Bay Area adopted a [resolution in 2021](#) to cut its consumption of animal-based foods such as meat and dairy in half by 2024 and banned factory farming in 2024.

The school district and the city need to launch educational campaigns promoting the health and climate benefits plant-based eating, and encourage reduction of meat and dairy. As a part of the educational campaign, it must clarify "climate friendly foods" to be foods derived from plants. Simply stating "healthy food" is just too vague.

The City should offer incentives for restaurants or small businesses to expand plant-based offerings and make plant-based the default in city institutions. The schools should make plant-based the default in school meals. Consult with organizations like [Greener By Default](#) which has conducted numerous [behavior studies](#); NYC public hospitals have implemented this with great success. This strategy allows people the choice to opt in to traditional foods.

I urge you to endorse the [Plant-Based Treaty](#) as a city, joining 41 other cities and towns across the world.

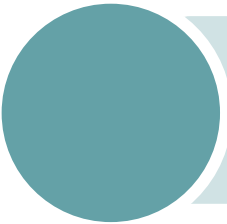
We shall all follow global leaders like [Amsterdam](#), which promotes citizens moving toward 60% plant-based diets, and offers plant-based food in public institutions and events--really putting food front and center in climate discussion where it belongs.

Thank you,
Jennifer P.
El Cerritos Resident

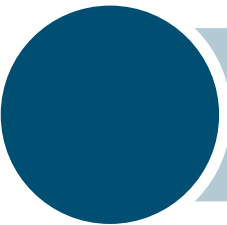
HNA Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan

Karineh Samkian, Stephen Prée, & Battalion Chief Beckman
June 3, 2025 - City Council Meeting

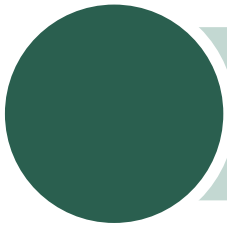
Overview



Plan Development



Prioritized Actions



CEQA Review

Background

- Hillside Natural Area (HNA) is ~107 acres
- City has implemented fire fuel reduction activities
- Volunteers have identified native plants and removed invasive plants



LSA

LEGEND

 Project Area

FIGURE 1



Funding



Coastal
Conservancy

- The State Coastal Conservancy awarded the City a grant to:
 1. Develop HNA Plan for fire fuel reduction and forest conservation
 2. Conduct a CEQA review

Plan Development Process



- City Council authorized contract with LSA Associates, Inc.
- Reviewed City plans and policies
- Coordinated with other City departments
- Conducted Assessments:
 1. Biological
 2. Cultural
 3. Fuel and fire hazard
 4. Trails



Plan Phases



Engagement touchpoints

Phase 1: Studies and Input

Oct 2023-Jan 2024

- SAG meeting #1
- Public workshop #1
- Community survey

Phase 2: Draft Development & Review

Jan-Sep 2024

- Committees & commission update
- SAG meeting #2
- 45-day comment period
- Public workshop #2

Phase 3: CEQA Review and Final Plan

Sep 2024-June 2025

- Committees & commission update
- 30-day CEQA comment period
- City Council

Throughout the process:

- ✓ City webpage
- ✓ City newsletters

Public Process

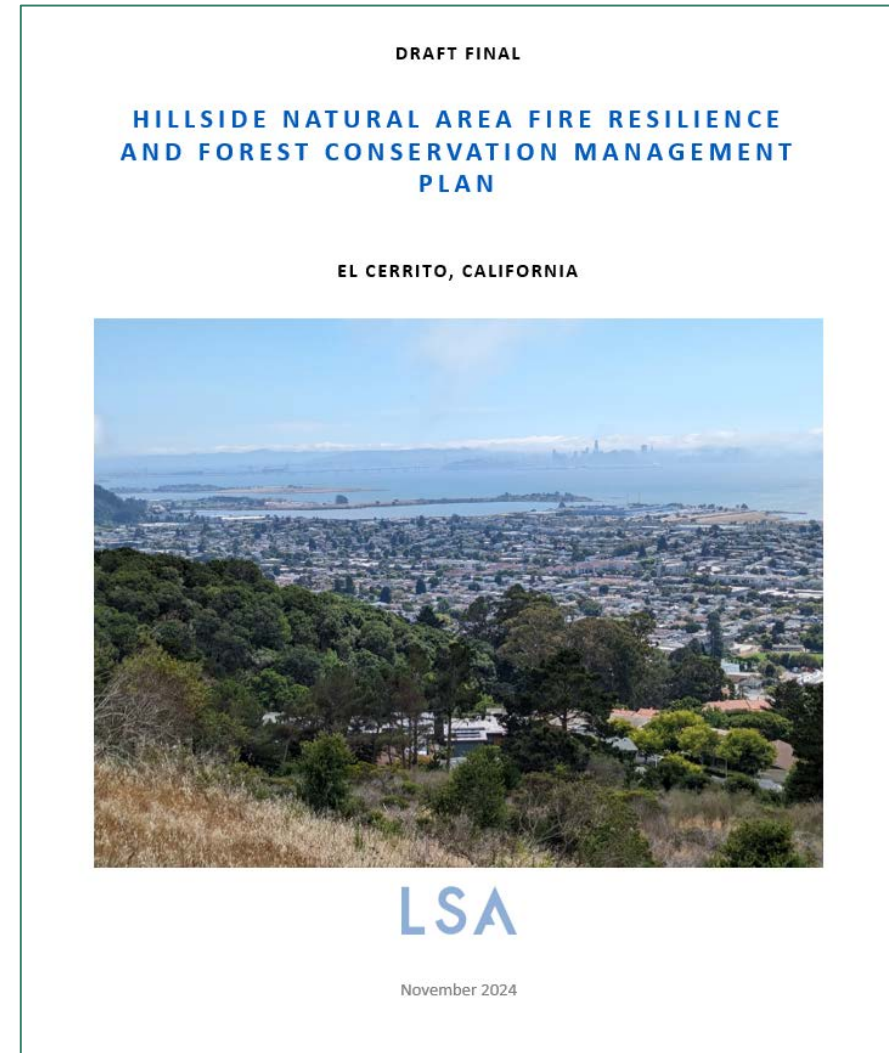


- Established Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) and had 2 meetings
- Met with Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation
- Hosted 2 public workshops
- Released a Community Survey
- Presented recommended actions to City Council

Public Process (continued)



- 45-day public comment period
 - Received 108 comments
 - Reviewed all comments
 - Updated the Plan as applicable
- Consulted with Park and Recreation Commission, Urban Forest Committee, & Environmental Quality Committee
 - Recommend Plan with minor additions



Prioritized Recommendations

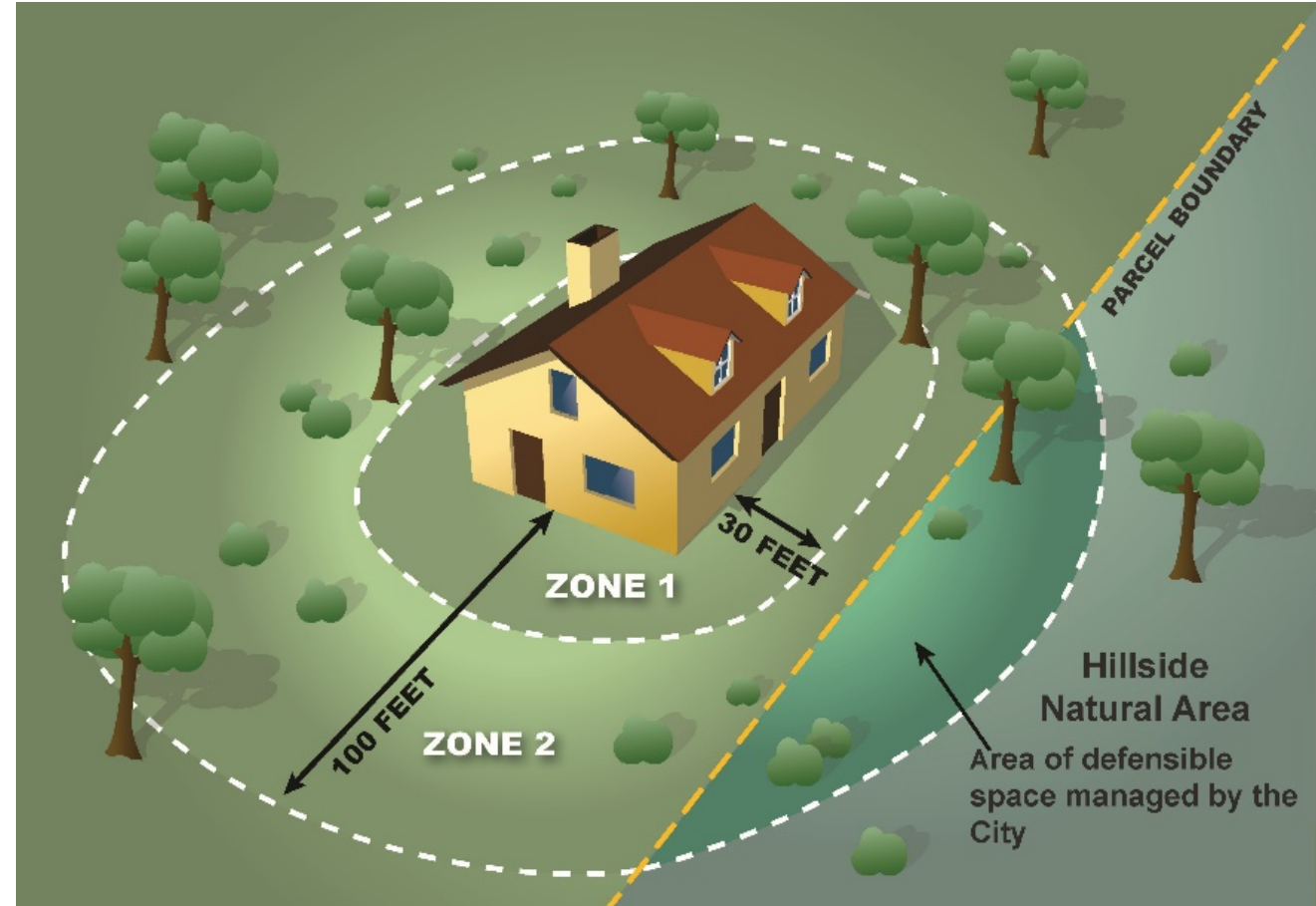


- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1. HIGHEST | Create Defensible Space |
| 2. HIGH | Establish Shaded Fuel Break |
| 3. HIGH/MEDIUM | Remove Eucalyptus & Non-Native Conifers |
| 4. HIGH/MEDIUM | Create System of Fire Roads & Trails |
| 5. HIGH/MEDIUM | Manage Threats to Oak |
| 6. MEDIUM | Remove Invasive Plants |
| 7. MEDIUM | Restore and Re-establish Native Plants |
| 8. MEDIUM | Monitor Key Performance Indicators |

Highest Priority

1. Create Defensible Space

- Within 100-ft of structures adjacent to HNA



High Priority



2. Establish Shaded Fuel Break

- 100 feet along HNA perimeter from property line

High/Medium Priority

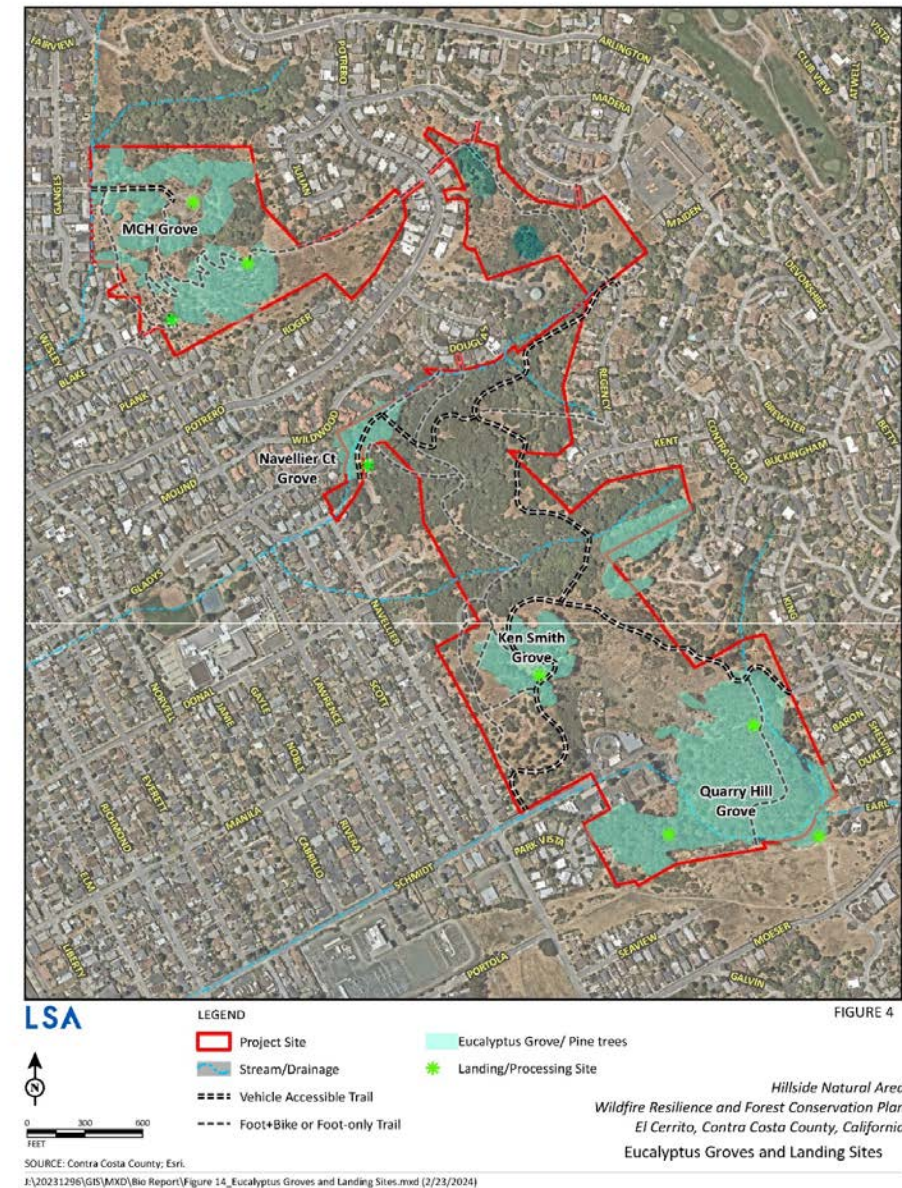
3. Remove Eucalyptus & Non-Native Conifers

a. Motorcycle Hill b. Quarry Hill c. Kent Drive & Buckingham d. Madera property e. Ken Smith grove

4. Create System of Fire Roads & Trails

a. Improvements at Potrero Ave & King Ct. b. add access to Motorcycle Hill c. improve other roads

5. Manage Threats to the Oak Woodland



Medium Priority



6. Remove Invasive Plants
7. Restore and Re-establish Native Plants
8. Monitor Key Performance Indicators

CEQA



- Initial Study determined Mitigated Negative Declaration appropriate
- 30-day comment period
 - Responded to comments
 - Developed Mitigated Monitoring and Reporting Plan
- Future projects will not require additional CEQA review

Council Consideration



1. Conduct Public Hearing
2. Consider adopting:
 - a. Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
 - b. Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan

Questions?



Mayor Carolyn Wysinger
Mayor Pro Tem Gabe Quinto
Councilmember William Ktsanes
Councilmember Lisa Motoyama
Councilmember Rebecca Saltzman

June 2, 2025

Re: Approval of the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan

.Dear Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem and Councilmembers,

We strongly recommend your approval of the HNA Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan, along with adoption of a resolution approving the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

The Plan involved significant community engagement. The Plan's proposed actions and priorities are sound and long overdue--and importantly the Plan includes critically needed improvements for fire and emergency access. The Plan supports the City's Strategic Plan goals of community safety, livability, belonging, and environmental sustainability. Above all, the HNA Plan is the best balancing of prudent action to address the city's vulnerability to catastrophic fire danger while making progress on preserving the HNA as a resilient habitat that El Cerrito can enjoy as a beautiful, restful location for walks, hikes, environmental education, and vistas.

Your Vision for the City

Each of you has eloquently described a heartwarming vision for El Cerrito as a destination city that is safe, welcoming, and that values and respects all of us. However, El Cerrito cannot become a destination city if the city is destroyed by fire.

Work by El Cerrito volunteers in the HNA

Volunteers with Trail Trekkers, Five Creeks and the Friends of the Hillside (lead by Audrey Liese) have worked countless hours yearly to remove invasive species, highly flammable plants, and dead wood from the HNA. However, this work counts on the city to increase its stewardship of the HNA.

We ask you to approve this urgently needed Plan that will help return the HNA to a thriving habitat for native species and will begin to make our HNA a destination nature area for the city and the region.

Sincerely,

Christian G. Fritz and Marlene Keller, [REDACTED], El Cerrito

From: [Brian Richmond](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments - Agenda Item 8
Date: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 9:43:38 AM

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Dear Members of the El Cerrito City Council,

I am writing regarding the "Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan" (HNA Plan) to express my support and urge the city council to vote to adopt it and the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP).

I am a citizen of El Cerrito, the HNA Plan stakeholder representative for the Make El Cerrito Fire Safe group, Co-President of the El Cerrito Trail Trekkers, and Co-Founder of the Friends of the Hillside Natural Area. I care deeply about the safety of our community and being a responsible steward of the HNA to improve it as a public resource and conserve the native habitats and its wildlife.

I have read the final draft of the HNA Plan, participated in the stakeholder and public meetings for earlier drafts of the HNA Plan, and spoken with many El Cerrito residents about their concerns.

I strongly support the HNA Plan and encourage you to approve this plan, work on a budget needed to carry it out, and complete the actions detailed in the plan.

Sincerely,
Brian

--

Brian Richmond, PhD



[El Cerrito Trail Trekkers](#), Co-President
El Cerrito Fire Safe Council, Board Member
Friends of the Hillside Natural Area, Co-Founder

From: [Gary Prost](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item 8A, City Council Meeting June 3, 2025
Date: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 12:43:42 PM

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Honorable Mayor Wysinger and City Council:

I have read the LSA report "Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan" and the accompanying memo by City Planning Manager Sean Moss. It has been a long time since the 1987 HNA Vegetation Management Plan by LSA. Community groups like Make El Cerrito Fire Safe urged Council to adopt that plan, in conjunction with the 2017 El Cerrito-Kensington Wildfire Action Plan and Community Wildfire Protection Plan, since 2018 and before. It has been four years since Council approved a resolution (in May 2021) making Wildfire Prevention and Safety a top city priority.

I participated in the community outreach and feedback meetings for early drafts of this plan. As a resident living adjacent to the HNA, I encourage you to 1) approve this plan, 2) approve the budget needed to carry it out, and 3) assign measurable actions, detailed in the plan, and corresponding timing to Public Works and other departments needed to carry out the plan.

This is just the beginning. Now you need to make a start on vegetation management as the current fire season gets underway.

Sincerely,

Gary Prost

[REDACTED], El Cerrito

Gary L. Prost PhD

[REDACTED]

From: [Scott Tipping](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Scott Tipping](#)
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda item 8, A; hillside natural area fire resilience and forest conservation management plan
Date: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 1:25:22 PM

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Mayor and city Council Members;

At a minimum the City of El Cerrito must immediately increase its FUNDING and WORK in the HNA to create and maintain a 100' fuel break from property lines into the HNA for the safety of our citizens. This largely means string trimming of dry grass and brush within those areas at least twice a year. Take a walk out from King Ct. Entrance to HNA and look for yourself south and north of the entrance at the dry grass near fence lines of homes. A few folks have cleared the first few feet near homes, and north there is a crude road made by EBMUD doing recent sewer improvements.

If the new hillside natural area fire resilience and forest conservation management plan is to be approved, it should be with the caveat that CEQA and environmental regulations will be implemented as may be required at time of implementation of work. Or similar language.

These projects may be currently exempt from CEQA (see emergency order from Gov.) and were previously exempt for a period starting in 2019.

Myself and another citizens of El Cerrito were able to secure county funded work crews to perform over \$400,000 + in work to start a shaded fuel break for the eastern slope of the HNA, over the past few years, via measure X. The hard work has been started simply mowing and string trimming the grass and brush a few times a year, in areas adjacent to homes is the minimum the city should be doing. For example the area immediately behind our home has only been cut once by the City of El Cerrito in the last 5 years.

In my opinion and based on my observations, the City of El Cerrito has been negligent in maintaining vegetation for fire safety in these areas for years.

Time is of the essence. The time is now to dedicate staff and funds to diligently pursue grant funding for hazardous fuel reduction in El Cerritos HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA.

Ask your staff to show you exactly what they have applied for over the past 5 years? What was the response for funding agencies? Compare what El Cerrito submitted vs. municipalities that were awarded funds.

In March 2025 Governor Newsom exempted fire safety vegetation management/ hazardous fuel reduction projects related to fire safety, from CEQA and other environmental requirements.

El Cerrito can immediately apply for the plan under the existing 1994 Hillside Natural Area Fire Reduction plan (page below of fuel breaks). Implement fuel breaks outlined in that plan that were never done and maintain shaded fuel breaks started by El Cerrito citizens applying for measure X-funds. Also the city's 2017 El Cerrito- Kensington Wild Fire Action

plan, part of the CWPP, can be used.



Additionally, the city could apply for exemption for newly developed “hillside natural area fire resilience and forest conservation management plan” and not be constrained by the overly complicated regulations required under CEQA, but instead use any funds and these criteria, in addition to common sense and best practices as a guideline while doing the important work of decreasing vegetation and the danger that exists in the HNA.

And as time passes the danger is only growing.

(see excerpt from Californias wildfire task force and link below).

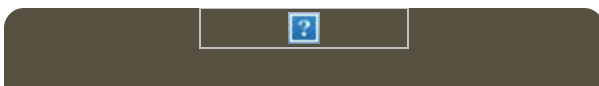
A project is eligible to operate under the suspension of state laws if it meets all four of the following requirements:

1. The primary objective of the project is at least one of these activities:

- Removal of hazardous, dead, and/or dying trees
- Removal of vegetation for the creation of strategic fuel breaks as identified by approved fire prevention plans, including without limitation, CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plans or Community Wildfire Preparedness Plans
- Removal of vegetation for community defensible space
- Removal of vegetation along roadways, high-ways, and freeways for the creation of safer ingress and egress routes for the public and responders and/or to reduce roadside ignitions
- Removal of vegetation using cultural traditional ecological knowledge for cultural burning and/or prescribed fire treatments for fuels reduction
- Maintenance of previously established fuel breaks or fuels modification projects

2. The request for suspension is submitted in the 2025 calendar year.

3. Work will be performed or supervised by qualified responsible parties, such as Registered Professional Foresters, Certified Rangeland Managers, qualified vegetation management contractors, qualified incident commanders, certified arborists, certified burn bosses and authorized cultural burners.



Requests to Suspend State Statutes and
Regulations - California Wildfire & Forest
Resilience
wildfiretaskforce.org

Respectfully,

Scott Tipping
El Cerrito resident for over 20 years

Sent from my iPad

From: [Sue Duncan](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Agenda item 8
Date: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 1:26:11 PM

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Honorable Mayor and City Council Members,

We strongly encourage you to approve the Hillside Natural Area Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan. After approving, the city must find funding to not only perform the management jobs within the plan, but to also maintain the work already done by Measure X crews and the dedicated volunteers and all future work. I understand that this will be difficult especially now with the current chaotic and uncertain financial picture due to certain people working in the nations's capital. The city must be aggressive in applying for grants.

Thank you,

Sue and Paul Duncan

El Cerrito

From: [Audrey Liese](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Christian Fritz](#); [Eric Saylor](#); [Chase Beckman](#); [EC firesafe](#); [Marlene Keller](#); [Stephen Prée](#); [Brian Richmond](#)
Subject: Re: Public Comments - Agenda Item # 8. A.
Date: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 2:00:08 PM

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Please find attached our public comments in support of tomorrow night's Agenda Item # 8. A. re the HNA Plan.

Thanks

Audrey LIESE

Public Comment for the Record – Audrey Liese

Good evening Mayor and Councilmembers,

My name is Audrey Liese. I moved with my family to El Cerrito three years ago because of how much I loved the Hillside Natural Area.

I'm the co-founder of Friends of the Hillside, a volunteer-led group that has been working twice a week in the HNA for over a year. We're building on the efforts of Trail Trekkers and Friends of Five Creeks—joining forces to clear invasive broom, prepare burn piles, and protect native plants—reviving the land through collective care.

We're writing to express strong support for the Plan. It reflects the kind of forward-thinking El Cerrito needs—addressing fire safety, ecological restoration, and community involvement together.

While we're not here to place blame, it's important to recognize that past fire-reduction efforts have too often been insufficient and poorly planned. This is our chance to do better—through thoughtful planning, transparency, and true collaboration between the City, the Fire Department, and the local community.

Yes, we want to be actively involved in its implementation.

The Hillside Natural Area is more than an open space; it's a living landscape that connects us, teaches us, and offers hope for a more resilient future.

Respectfully,

Audrey Liese

Co-founder, Friends of the Hillside

Dear El Cerrito City Council and City Management,

My name is Janos Szlatenyi, and I'm an El Cerrito resident speaking as a concerned citizen about our city's financial situation and outlook.

First, I want to recognize the efforts made, specifically Councilmember Ktsanes' work to clarify questions and empower other civic bodies. The council's focus on the city's financial health gives me hope. However, that hope evaporates when I see that after prolonged debates, the city continues to chip into reserves without any plan for replenishment. My hope is further damaged when motions to officially discuss recommendations from civic bodies aren't even seconded. I fail to see how seconding a motion to incorporate the suggestions of civic bodies into the discussion is detrimental to the budgeting process, especially if it's not even about the current year. But I can see how not seconding it can be detrimental to the fundamental democratic process of elected officials publicly deliberating important topics and voting on them. So there is that.

CalPERS Presentation Highlights

The CalPERS presentation was excellent. Let me echo some key points:

- CalPERS' missing assumptions create liability for the city. Please repeat this sentence every time when you hear about CalPERS assumptions.
- The next 10-12 years will be increasingly difficult, even with optimistic assumptions
- The main problem is our rigid compensation and cost structure that builds liability; moving money from one pocket to another might change the speed of our trajectory but won't change the trajectory itself
- My educated guess is that the discount rate will converge to 3.6-4% long-term (if there is no longer staglatory/inflationary period), while assumed yields of 9.5% are unrealistic and surely unsustainable. If the market corrects 15-20% and the economy experiences a prolonged downturn (12+ months), the city could face bankruptcy within 4-5 years

There's significant risk concentration in the 24-36 month timeframe, as discount rate changes, prolonged taxation effects, and normal economic processes will all hit the city simultaneously, leaving only one budgeting cycle to react, with a very rigid cost structure.

The Core Problem

The city cannot handle already accumulated promises if we don't stop making unrealistic new promises immediately and create a strong single-digit surplus with conservative revenue projections. Service studies are not the solution; they're distractions that consume time and money instead of addressing fundamentals. The fundamentals are not complicated but are immensely hard to change, and the

solution is not adding 35 new fees to our existing 700, or put out a new tax on the citizens. With a heavy heart.

The problem is simple, the math is easy: inflated administrative support costs across departments, a shortened work week that triggers continuous overtime, and insufficient accountability and planning for medium-term to long term saving, a rigid and disproportionate cost structure. There are zero incentives to or practice of saving money, as the current budget clearly demonstrates it.

I understand I'm talking about the salaries and pensions, working conditions of city employees, people we rely on to run our city, to protect us, and save us from harm and danger, who are the brick and mortar, the baseline of our existence as a city. So this is hell of a hard conversation to have, especially given the high-quality service they provide. Because they do provide good service. I want these people compensated, acknowledged, respected, and happy. But when looking at our most significant cost items and financial risks, the source of the rigidity of the ledger, the vast majority are salaries and pension promises. Some conversation about organizational efficiencies and long-term cost reduction is unavoidable, and delaying this will only make it more painful.

You don't need service study to see, unlike neighboring cities, El Cerrito staff operate on a 37.5-hour schedule. This creates a 6% productivity gap per employee and triggers overtime payments that significantly increase personnel costs. There are places who have 37.5-hour work weeks (like Denmark; I would not mind if the city takes Danish municipality best practices as an example of financial prudence and how to run efficient government), but the key difference is that they provide paid days off instead of monetary compensation for overtime. Please give this some thought and think it through how this might relate to efficiency and incentives.

It's standard for some employees to earn more from overtime than their base salary, which is already competitive. In any sensible organization, management would be on the hook to address these situations rather than performing linguistic gymnastics to redefine what "overtime" and "backfill" means.

False Narratives

Despite claims of fiscal recovery, El Cerrito continues relying on reserves to balance the budget without a clear replenishment plan. How is replacing end-of-life firefighting equipment classified as a "one-time expense" paid from general fund reserves while claiming a balanced budget at the same time? This approach may technically result in a "balanced budget" on paper, but it undermines long-term financial stability and even gives false impressions about our situation. "Misleading" is the weakest expression I can use to describe this practice.

We've been here before—pre-2020, our reserves were nearly depleted, resulting in state intervention and municipal payday loans. The financial recovery was spectacular in this sense, but we're doing exactly what led us there the last time. The major difference: federal COVID-19 relief and advantages from our

highly residential neighborhood's real estate transfer and sales taxes boosted by COVID realities and helped rebuild our fund balance, but that was sheer luck. We won't always get lucky.

The budget proposal lacks substantive risk assessment or contingency planning. There's no analysis of how an economic downturn would impact our finances. Without proper risk mitigation strategies, El Cerrito remains vulnerable to economic shocks that could quickly deplete our minimal reserves, especially if we think our budget is in balance while we start draining operating reserves.

And about the operating reserves. I have strong reservations about mixing the disaster recovery fund into unrestricted operating reserves. This pattern of not clearly differentiating ongoing costs, amortization, and one-time expenses only inflates the budget yearly and chips away at reserves.

The GFOA clearly spells it out. Maybe it's my limited English understanding, but we are not doing this—we just picked a percentage and massaged the numbers to hit it. And even by doing so, the 17% is a MINIMUM, and should be adjusted based on (let me quote from their official document):

- Predictability of revenues and volatility of expenditures (check, we cannot hit neither the revenues nor the expenses in the multi-million dollar range)
- Perceived exposure to significant one-time outlays (e.g., disasters, immediate capital needs, state budget cuts) Does any of these ring a bell, the disaster recovery and 115 funds ARE NOT OPERATING RESERVES.
- The potential drain upon general fund resources from other funds, as well as the availability of resources in other funds (Hello swimming center! Hello fire truck!)

Pointing to cherry-picked GFOA guidance soundbites with total ignorance of the spirit and purpose of the suggestions drives me crazy and drives you bankrupt eventually.

Immediate Actions Required

I urge the City Council to take immediate action. It doesn't matter if a budget is already accepted. Recessions won't align with budgeting cycles or council meeting schedules, working agendas, and consent calendars. Addressing these systemic issues cannot wait:

1. **Implement a Standard 40-Hour Work Week:** Align with industry standards and neighboring cities to increase productivity and reduce unnecessary overtime costs.
2. **Streamline Administrative Structure:** Conduct a comprehensive review of management positions to eliminate redundant roles and incentivize departments to find efficiencies.
3. **Right-Size Public Services Staffing:** in agreement with the departments, normalize admin/police/fire staffing levels and align them with county and state benchmarks—or better. And just to avoid further false narratives: Benchmarks aren't targets! They're averages for comparison. If we're

consistently doing worse, we'll need to do consistently better just to match eventually the benchmark.

4. **Establish a Long-Term Financial Plan:** Develop a comprehensive, time-bound plan to rebuild and significantly expand city reserves while addressing long-term liabilities, particularly growing pension obligations. Cover foreseeable expenses, amortization, and non-discretionary spending. Start saving to bridge 2-5 years of depressed revenues without sacrificing fundamental services. Target unrestricted fund reserves on a 5 year trajectory between 20-200% with moving targets for the general reserves based on foreseeable large expenditures. (in line with the actual GFOA guidelines)
5. **Save on Structural, Spend on Cyclical:** Create over-provisioned structural balance for at least five consecutive years, generating room for later cyclical spending. Until structural balance includes 5-7% yearly savings, suspend every cyclical investment, especially those yielding further maintenance and operating expenses.

Conclusion

Our city cannot continue relying on reserves, one-time funding sources, or new tax measures to solve systemic financial challenges. The time for meaningful financial reform is now, before we face another fiscal crisis that compromises essential services and places greater burdens on residents and public service staff.

Please take meaningful action and ask for community support instead of ignoring it. The rainy days are coming. I'm not bringing them; I'm just the alarmist pointing out that discussing what color to paint the handrails on a ship that is sinking, is quite futile. Please focus on filling the holes or at least not punching new ones.

As Mayor Lurie said after being forced to cut 1,400 jobs in San Francisco just last Friday: "Here's the bottom line: We have to stop spending more than we can afford. The era of soaring city budgets and deteriorating street conditions is over."

Maybe the statement about the deteriorating street conditions is somewhat a wishfull thinking , but at least he's trying to do something after recognizing the total unsustainability of the situation. Please try to recognise it as well, that would be a perfect first step to make.

Respectfully submitted,

Janos Szlatenyi
Resident of El Cerrito

From: [Ira Sharenow](#)
To: [Holly Charléty](#); [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Lisa Motoyama](#); [William Ktsanes](#); [Rebecca Saltzman](#)
Subject: June 3, 2025 council meeting: Item 9A Budget Midcycle
Date: Monday, June 2, 2025 8:17:58 PM

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Before the council votes on a midyear budget adjustment, the government should provide clear explanations for the following.

1. How the city is going to get the CalPERS UAL under control
2. How the city is going to pay for all of the swimming pool repairs
3. How the city is going to pay for the new fire truck
4. How the city is going to pay for the fire safety equipment
5. The general fund implications of the above
6. When the community can expect to have a senior center
7. When the Ohlone Greenway will be repaved (not just a few feet)
8. When the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) will improve
9. El Cerrito's long range budget situation

10. Fiscal transparency

11. El Cerrito's failing grades from the following site:

<https://californiapolicycenter.org/fiscal-health-dashboard/#el-cerrito>

- a. Net Worth Grade F: Not Addressed
- b. Pension Costs F: Not Addressed
- c. Pension Obligations F: Not Addressed

12. The need to engage the public and FAB and to consider FAB's 2% proposal

Ira Sharenow
El Cerrito, CA