

Long Term Commitment to Environment Viewshed and Hillside Protection

Working with the Board of Supervisors and County staff, as Chair, Supervisor Beall will make establishing strong hillside development regulations and open space protection a priority. The Board of Supervisors and County Staff will work over the next three months to develop practical, strong, and uniform guidelines to protect Santa Clara County viewsheds and hillsides from incompatible development.

The goal will be to include the preservation of remaining natural and historic resources, watersheds and the beauty of the County, and to maintain the highest quality of life for our residents. Priority will be given to safeguarding scenic views and open space by barring structure from ridgelines and hilltops, unless there is no alternative.

The County Board of Supervisors oversees development regulations and policies applicable to hillsides and viewsheds in vast unincorporated areas. Ensuring that development occurs in a manner that meets the following goals is critical to the future of Santa Clara County:

- ❖ Prevents inappropriate development;
- ❖ Preserves the aesthetic and scenic qualities of such areas;
- ❖ Protects the natural conditions and respects existing topography;

Following a Land Use Workshop in August of 2005, the Board directed Planning Office staff to develop draft policies and procedures to implement preliminary recommendations related to Viewshed Protection. Additionally, staff was directed to conduct appropriate public and community outreach and report back to the Board of Supervisors with recommended policy and implementation plan by Spring 2006. A Viewshed Protection Stakeholders group has been established with representatives from each Supervisorial office.

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