



# System Generated Transmittal

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SANTA CLARA COUNTY

Board Date : August 31, 2005

Transmittal ID :

Agenda Item Details

4. Under advisement from April 19, 2005 (Item No. 64): Consider issues relating to the Santa Clara County Viewshed.
  - a. Accept Addendum to the Viewshed Report accepted by the Board on April 19, 2005.
  - b. Discuss and confirm existing high priority status of "Viewshed Protection" work plan item OR assign alternative priority.

- c. Direct Planning Office staff to develop draft policies, ordinances, guidelines, and procedures to implement preliminary recommendations outlined in the Viewshed Report including proposed additions/modifications agreed by the Board.
- d. Direct staff to conduct appropriate public and community outreach and report back to the Board of Supervisors with recommended policy and implementation plan by Summer 2006 and provide quarterly off-agenda reports on progress/project status.
- e. Direct staff to report back to the Board within 90 days identifying a proposed work plan and schedule for accomplishing activities directed, if matter is confirmed as a high priority.

**County of Santa Clara**  
**Department of Planning and Development**  
Planning Office



PLN01083105

Prepared by: Bill Shoe  
Principal Planner

Reviewed by: Michael Lopez  
Interim Planning Director

DATE: August 31, 2005

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jody Hall Esser". To the right of the signature is a circular stamp containing the letters "JHE".

Jody Hall Esser  
Interim Director of Planning and Development

SUBJECT: Under advisement from April 19, 2005 (Item No. 64): Consider issues relating to the Santa Clara County Viewshed.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- a. Accept Addendum to the Viewshed Report accepted by the Board on April 19, 2005 [Addendum responds to requests of Board for supplemental information].
- b. Discuss and confirm existing high priority status of "Viewshed Protection" work plan item or assign alternative priority;
- c. Direct Planning Office staff to develop draft policies, ordinances, guidelines, and procedures to implement preliminary recommendations outlined in the Viewshed Report [pp.

4–9 of April 19, 2005 transmittal], including proposed additions/modifications agreed to by the Board.

d. Direct staff to conduct appropriate public and community outreach and report back to the Board of Supervisors with recommended policy and implementation plan by Summer 2006 and provide quarterly off–agenda reports on progress/project status.

e. Direct staff to report back to the Board within 90 days identifying a proposed work plan and schedule for accomplishing activities directed, if matter is confirmed as a high priority.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no fiscal implications of accepting the Addendum to the Viewshed Report. Planning Office staff will conduct the analyses, policy and ordinance development, public outreach and reporting necessary to carry out this work plan item. However, if additional staff time must be diverted from cost–recovery work, there may be an impact to the General Fund.

### **CONTRACT HISTORY**

Not applicable.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

1. At its April 19, 2005 meeting, the Board of Supervisors received a presentation and report entitled "Santa Clara County Viewshed Analysis and Report" containing background information and preliminary recommendations for furthering viewshed protection.
2. The Board accepted the report and deferred taking action regarding staff direction to its August Land Use workshop. During deliberations, the Board requested additional information regarding property rights issues, use of design review and the costs of such processes, and coordination with open space acquisition agencies.
3. The Viewshed Report Addendum dated August 31, 2005, provides information in response to these requests. The Addendum supplements the information and recommendations of the April 19, 2005 Viewshed Report, but does not alter the preliminary recommendations of that report.

1. The Addendum is mostly informational and advisory. However, through staff's internal discussions and meeting with open space agency directors, staff offers certain additional minor recommendations regarding the use of design review and floor area definitions, the need to ensure better long term funding for acquisition of open space, the need to update the County Parks Master Plan, among the conclusions of the Addendum report.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Viewshed Report Addendum responds to informational requests and direction of the Board of Supervisors at its April 19, 2005 meeting. To develop this report, staff met with the directors of the County Parks and Recreation Department, Lisa Killough, Santa Clara County Open Space Authority, Patrick Congdon, and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Craig Britton. Staff's discussion with these representatives is summarized in the section "Open Space Acquisition and Coordination Among Agencies."

Information regarding the use of design review, costs to applicants, property rights issues, and economic and procedural incentives is based on Planning Office staff experience in consultation with County Counsel.

The Addendum supplements the April 19, 2005 "Viewshed Analysis and Report" with information and minor recommendations, but it does not alter in any way the main body of preliminary recommendations contained in the April 19, 2005 report. A copy of the full April 19, 2005 Viewshed Report is provided for discussion at the workshop.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION**

If the Board of Supervisors does not accept the Viewshed Report Addendum, there are no consequences to failing to accept an informational report. The main Viewshed Analysis and Report of April 19, 2005 was accepted at that previous Board meeting.

## **STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL**

Clerk of the Board will inform the Planning Office of the Board's actions for Planning Office records.

### ATTACHMENTS

- Viewshed Report Addendum, August 31, 2005
- Map of OSA and MROSD Jurisdictional Boundaries

**Santa Clara County**

**Viewshed Analysis  
and Report**

**ADDENDUM**

**August 31, 2005**

Addendum to the Report to the  
Board of Supervisors on the  
"Viewshed/Greenbelt Areas"  
Work Plan Item #10-19,  
Board Meeting of April 19, 2005

## Introduction

This report serves as an addendum to the April 5, 2005 "Viewshed Analysis and Report" reviewed by the Board of Supervisors at its April 19, 2005 meeting. At that meeting, the Planning Office made a presentation on the "Viewshed Report" and its preliminary recommendations. The Board accepted the report and referred the matter for further consideration to a planning workshop now scheduled for August 31, 2005. Furthermore, the Board made several requests for additional information on several topics during its discussion of the item on April 19.

More specifically, the Board referred the following items or topics to staff for further information:

- Review of private property rights and economic incentives;
- Discussion and focus on design review, and its cost implications;
- Partnership with the Open Space Authority; and
- A strategy for a five-year plan for preserving open space, including strategies for partnerships with the Open Space Authority and County Parks and Recreation Department.

While several of the comments and information requests made by the Board are related or overlapping, this report addendum is organized according to two main topics or categories: (1) the use of design review as a generic process, and related topics of private property rights, cost implications, and use of economic and procedural incentives for viewshed protection goals; and, (2) the concepts of open space acquisition agencies' partnership or coordination with each other, and strategic planning for open space preservation.

## 1. Design Review Issues Discussion

Design Review is a discretionary procedure intended to promote desired planning and aesthetic values by ensuring that development follows quality building and site design principles. Many local government agencies, including several cities within Santa Clara County and the County itself, have concluded that good design needs to be actively encouraged, and thus have adopted design review ordinances. In older, established communities (such as Los Gatos), the interest might be in ensuring that new buildings are compatible or complementary with existing buildings, and in maintaining or enhancing architectural integrity with building addition and remodel projects. In certain other cities, the emphasis might be on avoiding monotony in new tract construction.

Among jurisdictions where design review is utilized, a public hearing process is often, but not always, a component of the process. The hearing may be before an advisory body or commission, or at the staff level. In Santa Clara County, monthly Zoning Administration, including Design Review hearings, are conducted by the Deputy Zoning Administrator. The Zoning Ordinance defines certain minor construction



projects as being exempt from design review, such as swimming pools, certain fences, decks and small retaining walls. Other minor projects may be exempted depending on location, design, or other factors.

Santa Clara County's Design Review process was first established in the 1970s to review development along designated local scenic roads, and to implement the provisions of the Los Gatos Hillside Specific Plan for County projects within designated hillside areas of that Specific Plan. Design Review Zoning Districts ("-d" districts) have been expanded to apply to other viewshed areas including: (a) portions of the Santa Teresa Ridge of South San Jose; (b) the West Valley hillsides adjacent to Cupertino, Saratoga, Monte Sereno and Los Gatos ("-d1" district); and (c) a portion of the hillsides of the City of Milpitas ("-d2" district). The focus of design review, when it applies to viewshed areas, is minimizing visibility of structures, and designing to accommodate and compliment the natural setting. The Design Review process and adopted Guidelines generally do not dictate architectural style, but they have served to modify designs where excessive bulkiness and massive monotonous wall planes were deemed problematic and inconsistent with the Design Review Guidelines.

With regard to subdivision approvals in viewshed areas, the County has been increasingly requiring Design Review zoning as a condition of subdivision approval to implement environmental mitigations and visual impacts. Other uses of Design Review have been expanded to address the development of two-story homes on certain underlying lots in the Country Club urban pocket of Los Altos, certain fences and fence heights in exceptional situations, and review of projects within Historic Preservation zoning districts.

As a form of discretionary permit approval, the Design Review process can impose various additional costs, design modifications and compromises. It can also cause a degree of uncertainty for property owners who are designing a new house or remodeling an existing house. These costs to the individual are borne in the interest of a greater community benefit, as is the case with all planning and zoning regulations. Processes such as Design Review or Architecture and Site Approval (ASA) are necessarily discretionary and rely upon professional judgment, knowledge, and experience in applying adopted standards and guidelines to project-specific circumstances. Implementation also involves the varying values and expectations of neighbors and other participants in the process. As such, design review is often perceived by some property owners as being too subjective and as a curb on their right to design solely in accord with personal preferences and objectives.

**1.1. Property Rights:** The subject of property rights is both weighty and sensitive. All land use and development regulations have some effect on property rights. Strong opinions will likely be expressed as the public is brought into the process of creating new viewshed protection policies and ordinances, as evidenced by our experience in creating the West Valley Hillside Design Review Zoning District ("-d1") in 1997-98.

A person's right to own and use property within legal limits is fundamental to our society and economy. The Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution lays the foundation for property rights by generally prohibiting the taking of private property without just compensation. Specifically, a taking has been deemed to occur when

regulation for other than public health or safety reasons precludes all or nearly all of the use and value of a property.

Any regulation that limits the use of property has a potential impact on the value of that property. Even the most basic regulations such as septic system requirements or building setbacks limit the use of land and affect property value. However, one particular issue that arises when considering hillside viewshed protection is the fairly direct relationship between views and visibility. A house that is sited and designed to provide the best, broadest and least obstructed view will have a correspondingly high visibility factor from those areas that can be seen from the house.

The quality and quantity of views can be a significant factor in the economic value of a property, so any regulations by the County that would preclude or affect such view-priority designs will indeed affect property values, the extent of which may vary and can be difficult to objectively define. Often, very steep or ridge top "view lots" that can be very challenging to development are purchased at premium prices with an expectation that owners may design a house that suits their specific needs and desires, including maximizing views. As most of the more easily developed lots in hillside areas have been developed long ago, costs of improving such lots can be high. Access, geology, grading, septic system design, structural engineering, and other development factors are often very complex and problematic. For many, the willingness to take on the financial and development obstacles of a prized "view lot" is based on an expectation of an ideally designed and sized house with the best views the lot affords.

Based on the model ordinances that staff reviewed, staff's preliminary recommendations provide many options for reducing visual impacts of hillside development. Two of the most commonly used techniques for effective viewshed protection under consideration are:

- (a) visibility analysis for minimal or reduced-visibility siting; and,
- (b) limitations on house size and/or height.

Understandably, these may also be the most controversial and objectionable to developers. They can have an effect on property values by precluding certain development options deemed most desirable and advantageous to the property owner; and they will likely be perceived as a curb on property rights. Other design controls such as color limitations or light reflectivity value limits (LRV) and landscaping specifications are already used by Santa Clara County and many other jurisdictions, but these too limit personal choice and expression to various degrees, and thus impact perceived property rights or prerogatives.

A Design Review process with augmented viewshed protection strategies *would* impact property rights. It should not, however, preclude reasonable use and development of property. However, each new restriction the County may consider should weigh the degree of effectiveness in viewshed protection against the degree of impact on property owner prerogatives and its effect on property rights. Properly crafted viewshed protection policies and ordinance standards should practically and effectively afford greater protection for the viewshed, while providing reasonable options and flexibility

for hillside property owners, as well as process and economic incentives.

**1.2. Costs:** Land development can be a costly undertaking, particularly in Santa Clara County's hillsides, where much of the remaining undeveloped land that is left is also the most difficult to develop. Where applicable, the County's Design Review procedure presently adds to development costs in several ways, beginning with application fees that are currently around \$1,200.00. Fees would likely be increased if the County adopts new requirements that would involve a more involved, time-consuming review process for projects with major viewshed impacts. Additional application requirements, if mandated, such as story poles, profile views, or computer simulation, would also increase applicant's costs. Lastly, project conditions such as landscaping can also add to a project's costs, even though landscaping requirements are one of the most commonly used conditions in all jurisdictions.

Regarding time costs, the County's current Design Review process requires at least two months. For most projects, Design Review adds about two to three months to the time it takes for a project to obtain approval, and it brings additional uncertainty for both the timing of a project and design. Property owners who are unaware of development regulations or who are less familiar with hillside development processes are often surprised and frustrated when timing and costs substantially exceed their initial expectations. Cities and counties address these issues as best they can by providing information in a variety of ways, but there are inevitably applicants for whom there are unexpected delays and costs. The subjectivity inherent in applying design guidelines and standards to unusual or problematic lots can also increase uncertainty that can inflate costs. These costs can include holding costs for land that will remain undeveloped for additional periods of time, difficulties of coordinating with contractors for start dates, and additional design and engineering costs as a result of County-prescribed siting and design changes.

Conversely, there are real, though less tangible, costs of allowing unchecked house and site design that unnecessarily impacts and degrades the quality of the viewshed. This more public quality-of-life factor is compelling enough to have raised the viewshed protection issue to its current high-priority status for the Board of Supervisors.

***Economic and Procedural Incentives:*** Aside from the use of land acquisition (see following section), there are other ways to provide economic and procedural incentives that can promote viewshed preservation. The County's Grading Ordinance, for example, has a requirement to limit grading to the minimum necessary to establish the use. Complying with the Grading Ordinance and reducing unneeded grading serves as an economic incentive to proper design, because minimizing grading typically minimizes costs and the visual impacts of large retaining walls or slopes that appear unnaturally engineered. The County's Grading Ordinance is currently in effect, but the Viewshed Report contains proposed modifications to the Grading Ordinance's findings and standards to better address hillside development issues. Improvements would enhance this incentive while also providing greater certainty of expectations, standards, and desired outcomes.

Another means of providing incentives to reduce visual impacts could involve changes to what does or does not count towards house size. Should the Viewshed Study result

in limits or thresholds on house size, the current definition of floor area could be reconsidered and revised in such a way that it provides incentive to design a less visible house. The definition of floor area was added to the County Zoning Ordinance in 1991 to specifically address development issues in unincorporated pockets of Los Altos. It relied on the City of Los Altos' definition as a model, and the floor area definition remains today almost identical to the 1991 City of Los Altos definition. The definition includes the enclosed portions of a house that generally constitute the most visible bulk, but it also includes certain decks, basements, balconies and other minor architectural features that often do not contribute much to a house's apparent bulk, but are counted exactly the same as are the enclosed living areas.

If floor area were redefined to focus more on those components of a building that clearly constitute bulk and increase visibility, the result could be houses that are both less visible and more functional for their inhabitants. A revised definition of floor area that excludes basements that are substantially or almost entirely below grade and minor architectural features would encourage the use of basements, which are typically less visible kinds of floor area. It could also be revised not to penalize and discourage the use of some balconies, porches and other architectural features that can add character and texture to a house, improve its appearance, and achieve greater consistency with adopted Design Guidelines.

Finally, the possible use of a tiered regulatory and review process could provide effective incentives to build reasonable, moderately sized, and less visually obtrusive houses. Staff's preliminary recommendation is that the County develop such a process to create procedural and cost incentives. If the process time, uncertainty, and costs are minimized for "Tier 1" projects in return for compliance with basic standards such as size, landscaping and color, there will be incentives to design below a certain size threshold. In other words, process incentives would encourage houses smaller than a certain threshold size, which would in turn achieve an overall reduction in development costs. If the County elects to develop such a tiered review process, it will also need to devote attention and resources to the enforcement of project conditions, such as color and landscaping requirements, to ensure that projects that receive expedited review and processing maintain compliance over time.

## **2. Open Space Acquisition and Coordination Among Agencies**

Acquisition of open space for parks, wildlife refuges and habitat, and other open space uses is the fourth of five major strategies outlined in the General Plan for implementing the County's Open Space element. These strategies are outlined in the Open Space Action Program, a part of the Open Space element of the General Plan contained in Appendix #3 of Book B of the General Plan. The recommendations of the Viewshed Report are based on the framework of strategies contained in the Open Space Action Program.

The three primary local governmental agencies in Santa Clara County that are involved in acquisition and management of open space lands are the County Parks & Recreation Department ("Parks"), Santa Clara County Open Space Authority ("OSA"), and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District ("MROSD"). Reference to an open space district for Santa Clara County is most often made in regard to the Santa Clara County

Open Space Authority (OSA). However, the MROSD also has jurisdiction within Santa Clara County. The OSA is a Benefit Assessment District, and MROSD is a Special District. Each is governed by a somewhat different set of state regulations. This report includes an attached map of OSA and MROSD jurisdictional boundaries in Santa Clara County (Attachment A).

## **2.1. Acquisition Strategies and Planning**

Each of these agencies utilizes strategic plans and establishes priorities for open space acquisition. In the case of County Parks, the basis for land acquisition efforts is the Parks & Recreation element of the General Plan, which includes a Regional Parks and Scenic Highways Map element. County Parks Department also relies on their more recently adopted Strategic Plan (2004), as well as a number of established evaluation procedures and numerous criteria for proposed acquisitions, including habitat value, likely uses of the land, links with other parks or open space, and threat of development. Primary consideration is given to acquisition of (a) "inholdings," which are private lands surrounded by Parks lands, (b) lands immediately adjacent to other parks and open space, and (c) lands defined by logical, clear boundaries or which might create clear logical boundaries.

The OSA and MROSD also utilize priorities, criteria, and strategic plans, with long-term time horizons of 20 to 50 years, or longer. For example, the OSA relies upon the County's Open Space 2020 Preservation Report from 1987 in large part as a beginning point for acquisition priorities. However, OSA's priorities have been adjusted over time and as circumstances change. These agency's planning time horizons reflect the fact that fulfillment of their mission involves efforts that will continue over generations, not over a short term planning horizon such as five or even ten years, which is more typical of capital improvements programs. Their long term vision is also a reflection of the fact that successful acquisition efforts are based on seizing opportunities, adequate funding, negotiation skills, and timing, just as much, if not more so, than active pursuit of a particular property or set of properties.

The nature and mission of each agency differs somewhat. The OSA receives funding for acquisition and management of land through two benefit assessment districts. Acquisition of land is dispersed geographically throughout OSA's jurisdiction and the county. The MROSD is a special district that is defined differently in state law from the OSA and has more flexibility in its ability to acquire open space anywhere within its jurisdiction. Parks Department's mission is primarily to acquire and develop regional parks, park facilities, and trails for the enjoyment of residents of the county. However, there are commonalities. Each agency focuses on areas that are within the primary viewshed of Santa Clara County's urbanized areas, and their functions are often correlated. For example, all share acquisition priorities where connections between existing open space lands or regional trails segments are involved, particularly the Bay and Ridge Trails. Furthermore, the vision on which the Parks Master Plan is based has traditionally been referred to as a "necklace of parks" or framework of public open space immediately accessible to and surrounding the urbanized areas of the north and south Santa Clara Valleys.

## **2.2. Agency Coordination and Partnerships**

A significant amount of coordination already takes place on both a formal and informal basis between these agencies, through the working relationships of the staff. Each seeks to make the best use of each other's strengths, priorities, and resources. Coordinated funding efforts for acquisition have increased over the years, and communication is ongoing. In that regard, the County as a jurisdiction, through its Parks Department, already has a strongly established partnership with each of the other public agencies. Each agency seeks to build upon the existing foundation of cooperation and collaboration into the future.

There are also other private entities that may acquire and manage open space or obtain easements for open space and conservation of natural resources. These include private non-profit conservation organizations, such as Nature Conservancy, and land trusts. Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) is another well known private land acquisition entity. Each has developed a specific role, focus, and strategies for achieving desired acquisition of open space lands, specific to the missions of the organizations. While POST has been most active over the years in acquiring land in the Santa Cruz Mountains and along the coast of San Mateo and Santa Cruz County, the Nature Conservancy has focused recently on preserving large expanses of land within the interior of the Diablo Range.

### **2.3. Land Management Responsibilities**

Management, oversight, and enforcement of easements over private lands are also significant functions of the OSA and MROSD, as well as private entities. County Parks typically acquires land in fee, which includes management and liability. There are significant costs associated with the management and oversight of private lands where open space or conservation easements of one kind or another have been acquired. The agency holding the easement has the obligation to enforce the terms of the easement to prevent use and development that is not allowed under the terms of the easement. Furthermore, in some cases, active land restoration and conservation activities are necessary to carry out the terms of the easement. For lands owned in fee or under easement, both the OSA and MROSD are responsible for land management, resource stewardship, and general maintenance and security. Each employs a significant proportion of staff for rangers and related maintenance issues.

### **2.4. Identification of Major Issues and Findings**

Staff held discussions with these local agencies for the purpose of responding to the Board's requests for additional information at the August workshop. The general conclusions of those discussions were as follows:

- A. **Funding Issues.** Under funding is much more of an issue for each agency than coordination, collaborative acquisitions, or need for strategic planning. Data sharing, mapping, and interagency communication are all ongoing. Each agency performs its own strategic planning functions, for which some information is public and some is internal only. However, for each to be more successful, individually and collaboratively, additional long-term funding sources need to be pursued.

Continuing the Parks Charter Fund is an essential and primary component of County Parks funding, but not the complete picture.

- B. **County Parks Master Plan is Dated but Not Inadequate.** The Parks and Recreation Department's Strategic Plan indicates a need to update the County Regional Parks Master Plan, a part of the General Plan, given that the master plan was originally adopted in 1980 and is relatively unchanged since 1980. That update effort would be most successful if conducted as a distinct review process, or as part of an update of the Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan, not as a part of a comprehensive update of the General Plan.
- C. **Coordination is Ongoing and Adequate.** Partnerships and the ongoing coordination and communication between local agencies is deemed adequate. However, updating and mapping of open space lands owned in fee and various easements is a continuing need, as identified in the Viewshed Report.
- D. **Focus is on Long Term Planning and Vision.** Acquisition agencies are guided mostly by very long term planning horizons and a vision of success that spans generations. Short term strategic planning (one to five years) may apply most logically to adapting to changing situations for specific properties being tracked, and making minor adjustments in priorities related to new opportunities. These activities are conducted mostly through discussions that are internal to an agency. However, all acquisition efforts are based more on long term plans and visions, such as the County Parks Master Plan, the 1987 Open Space 2020 Report, and agency master plans. For these agencies, acquisition and land management will inevitably continue to occur over a much longer time horizon than that of a five-year interval more typical for capital projects.

Once open space land has been acquired, a capital improvement plan for various facilities may be scheduled over a one to ten year plan, depending on funding. For example, parking areas, staging areas, and trails may be developed over a short term planning horizon, with more extensive facilities taking longer, but a five year plan for major acquisitions or the completion of desired acquisitions is not commensurate with the long term horizon utilized by these agencies.

- E. **Role of County General Plan Remains Critical.** The County's General Plan and its Open Space element, including the Action Program, function as a regional planning document for open space preservation. Its goals and policies are implemented by many agencies and entities other than those of County government. The Open Space Action Program also serves as a framework for understanding how the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and other programs work collectively towards the protection of rural lands and permanent preservation of open space. Maintaining a stable General Plan and Zoning Ordinance regulations provides for reasonable, common expectations about future use and development, discourages unwarranted land speculation, and facilitates property appraisals and valuations.

## Conclusion and Summary of Findings

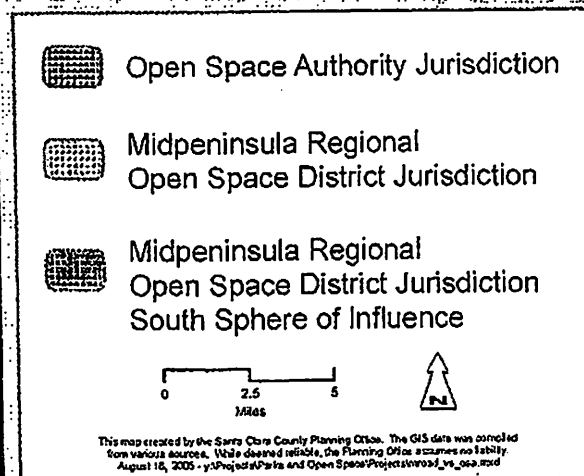
In conclusion, this informational report has been provided in response to the questions and requests of the Board made at its April 19, 2005 meeting. It serves as an addendum to the main Viewshed Report presented April 19, 2005, but contains no other preliminary recommendations for viewshed protection measures other than those contained in the main report. The findings or conclusions of this addendum are as follows:

1. Design Review entails some additional costs to property owners and applicants and like all local land use controls and regulatory processes, affects and limits in some ways the use of private property. The degree to which new regulations or development standards affects the use of private property depends on the degree of discretionary review and control the Board desires to exercise over viewshed development. Based on previous experience, the Board should expect to hear significant complaints and concerns regarding potential impacts on property rights.
2. Economic and procedural incentives to preserve open space and achieve consistency with desired goals and standards for viewshed development are included in staff's preliminary recommendations (see main report). In addition to those recommendations, this report discussed possible changes to the definition of what counts towards floor area, such as how below-grade portions of houses or basements might be addressed, as well as certain balconies, decks, or architectural features.
3. Coordination and collaboration among the major public open space acquisition agencies in Santa Clara County is adequate and ongoing. However, County Parks, Santa Clara County Open Space Authority, and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District all suggest better long term funding needs to be provided to augment existing funding.
4. The County's Parks Master Plan, which is part of the County General Plan, is dated, but not inadequate. However, it would be most appropriate to consider updating this long-range planning document in a manner similar to the way the Countywide Trails Master Plan was updated in the early 1990's, separate and distinct from any comprehensive update or review of the General Plan.
5. Open space acquisition agencies mostly operate according to very long term planning time horizons and vision statements, and they expect to achieve success over generations, not shorter-term horizons of five-year increments. Five year planning studies are more commonly applied to well-defined capital improvements and infrastructure projects.
6. A stable rural land use plan stabilizes expectations about future land development and discourages speculative purchases. Property owners also benefit from a stable, dependable General Plan in making long range plans for the use or disposition of property.



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and Santa Clara County Open Space Authority  
Jurisdictional Boundaries

THIS RELATES TO:  
8/31/05 Item No. 4  
Supplemental Information No. 18



This map created by the Santa Clara County Planning Office. The GIS data was compiled from various sources. While deemed reliable, the Planning Office assumes no liability. August 16, 2005 - y:\Project\Para and Open Space\Project\road\_vr\_gsa.mxd

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