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## REPORT TO GENERAL PLAN 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE

**Subject: Open Space and Conservation Policy Discussion**

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Open Space and Conservation are two of the mandatory elements of the General Plan. The Open Space Element addresses the protection of open space for resource conservation, hazard reduction, the “managed production of resources” (e.g., agriculture, timber, quarries, etc.), recreation, and community identity. The Conservation Element addresses the management of natural resources, including ecosystems (wetlands, oak woodlands, etc.), natural features (creeks, ridgelines, shoreline, etc.), plant and animal life, and sustainability issues such as energy and water conservation and solid waste reduction.

At the February 13 meeting, the Committee will review existing General Plan policies on these subjects and be asked to provide direction to staff on potential changes. Given the city’s built out character and the effectiveness of existing open space protection and conservation policies, it is expected that changes to these elements will be minimal.

### REPORT

#### Background

Open Space and Conservation Elements have been a mandatory part of general plans in California for the last five decades. In the 1970s and 80s, a great deal of emphasis was placed on these elements in San Rafael and Marin County, as much of the County’s undeveloped acreage was vulnerable to development. Strong open space and conservation policies, coupled with action programs and funding mechanisms, led to the successful protection of much of the County’s open space during these decades.

Today, the policy focus has shifted to the management of existing open spaces, acquisition of key properties, and the role of open space in hazard mitigation (especially wildfire and flooding). Other issues, including the protection of special status species, restoration of creeks and wetlands, and conservation of energy and water, also continue to be very important.

The matrix attached to this report lists the goals, policies and programs in the existing (2020) Open Space and Conservation Elements, followed by staff’s evaluation and recommendations for General Plan 2040. Space has been provided for Committee members to add their own comments, for those who

wish to offer suggested edits. As with the policy matrices provided at our last few meetings, Committee members are encouraged to share their thoughts on this material in writing. Ideally comments should be noted at the time of our Committee meeting, but we recognize that some Committee members may also wish to comment afterwards, while others may not have written comments. We will review all feedback received and consider it before drafting new and updated policies.

### **Highlighted Issues**

A few specific open space and conservation issues may warrant further discussion and will be addressed at our meeting, including:

- The role of wetlands and other shoreline ecosystems in addressing sea level rise and climate change
- The impacts of climate change on wetlands and other ecosystems—and any local responses
- Creek restoration and protection policies (and ordinances)
- The relationship between open space management and wildfire prevention planning
- Open space access, including trails and staging areas
- The inventory of potential open space sites (Appendix I of the General Plan)
- Control of invasive plant species
- Urban forestry, tree protection/replacement, and tree planting
- Mineral resource management and the future of the rock quarry
- Urban agriculture and local food production
- Response to encampments and other non-permitted activities on open space land
- Utilities on open space land
- Dark sky policies
- Designation of Priority Conservation Areas

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<b>Conservation Goal</b>	<b>PROTECTED HABITAT</b> It is the goal of San Rafael to have enhanced habitat for native plants and animals, and special protection for species that are listed as threatened or endangered. <i>San Rafael is rich in wildlife and native plant habitats, such as wetlands, creeks, shorelines, oak woodlands and riparian areas, as well as wildlife corridors between them, and these habitats are being protected or restored as necessary.</i>	<i>Carry forward as is.</i>	
<b>Policy CON-1</b>	<b>Protection of Environmental Resources</b> Protect or enhance environmental resources, such as ridgelines, wetlands, diked baylands, creeks and drainageways, shorelines and habitat for threatened and endangered species.	<i>Add woodlands and riparian areas.</i>	
<i>Program CON-1a</i>	<b>Plans for Environmental Protection.</b> Complete the implementation of Mahon Creek Final Conceptual Plan and the Shoreline Park Master Plan.	<i>Replace with reference to more current pending plans for environmental protection, such as Tiscornia Marsh restoration.</i>	
<b>Policy CON-2</b>	<b>Wetlands Preservation</b> Require appropriate public and private wetlands preservation, restoration and/or rehabilitation through compensatory mitigation in the development process for unavoidable impacts. Support and promote acquisition of fee title and/or easements from willing property owners.	<i>Carry forward. Add policy language on the importance of wetlands in sea level rise adaptation strategies.</i>	
<i>Program CON-2a</i>	<b>Wetlands Overlay District.</b> Continue to implement wetlands policy through the Wetlands Overlay zoning district and development review	<i>Carry forward as is.</i>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<p><b>Policy CON-3</b></p>	<p><b>Wetland Protection and Mitigation</b></p> <p>In order to protect and preserve valued wetlands, loss of wetlands due to filling shall be avoided, unless it is not possible or practical. When it is demonstrated that it is not possible or practical to avoid filling a wetland because of site constraints and conditions such as the geographic location of the wetlands, site configuration and size, require that the wetland be replaced on-site, and in-kind at a minimum ratio of 2:1 (e.g., 2 acres for each acre lost). If it is determined that on-site mitigation is not possible or practical, off-site mitigation shall be required at a minimum replacement ratio of 3:1. As assessed and determined on a case-by-case basis, the City may waive this policy for fill of small wetlands (0.1 acre or less in size), provided that: (1) the wetland is isolated meaning that it is not within, a part of, directly connected with or hydrologically-linked by natural flow to a creek, drainageway, wetland or submerged tidlands; (2) it is demonstrated by a wetland expert that the preservation of the wetland is not practical as it would not result in a functioning, biological resource because of its isolation; (3) the City has determined that filling would result in a more appropriate and desirable site plan for the project; and (4) the City consults with and considers comments received from the appropriate resource agencies with wetland oversight (State of California Department of Fish and Game and/or the California Regional Water Quality Control Board).</p>	<p><i>This policy was adopted through a General Plan Amendment in 2011 and replaced an earlier wetland protection policy from 2004. The amendments established the 3:1 ratio, and also the criteria under which small wetlands could be filled (1-4 listed here).</i></p> <p><i>Policy should be carried forward.</i></p>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<p><b>Policy CON-3, continued</b></p>	<p>a. <b>Creation of Wetlands.</b> The creation of wetlands shall be (1) of a similar habitat type to that of the existing wetlands and (2) of at least equal functional quality. The wetlands should be created or restored on or adjacent to the site, where possible. If on-site creation is infeasible due to technical constraints, compensatory habitat may be created off-site, preferably in the same drainage basin. Restoration of former filled, drained or diked wetland habitat is preferred over creation of wetlands on lands that were historically uplands. Plans for this habitat shall be prepared by a qualified wetland restoration ecologist in consultation with appropriate federal and state resource agencies. Mitigation plans shall require an annual monitoring for a period of time as specified by a qualified biologist to determine mitigation success. Contingency measures to deal with the potential for a lack of success should also be included in the plan.</p> <p>b. <b>Timing of Restoration or Creation.</b> Restoration or creation of wetlands should be completed prior to construction of the development. Where construction activities would adversely impact wetland restoration or creation, wetlands restoration or creation may be completed after construction of the development, as determined through development review.</p>	<p><i>This is the continuation of the policy on the prior page. It did not change during the 2011 amendment.</i></p> <p><i>Given the length of Policy CON-3, it might be worth breaking this off as a separate policy on the creation of wetlands / implementation of mitigation programs. <b>The content of the policy is still relevant and should be carried forward.</b></i></p> <p><i>The General Plan EIR may identify a need for additional policy and program language on wetland conservation and mitigation that may be incorporated in the Public Review Draft.</i></p>	
<p><i>Program CON-3a</i></p>	<p><b>Project Mitigation.</b> Continue the City’s practice of requiring mitigation for projects that would affect wetlands, in conjunction with recommendations of State and Federal agencies.</p>	<p><i>Carry forward. Are there other specific wetland restoration, conservation, or mitigation programs that should be added? (see earlier note regarding sea level rise—wetlands have an important role in adaptation strategies)</i></p>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<p><b>Policy CON-4</b></p>	<p><b>Wetland Setbacks</b>            Maintain a minimum 50-foot development-free setback from wetlands, including, but not limited to, paving or structures. Setbacks of greater than 50 feet may be required on lots of two or more acres as determined through development review. The City may waive this requirement for minor encroachments if it can be demonstrated that the proposed setback adequately protects the functions of the wetland to the maximum extent feasible and resulting values to the satisfaction of the City after review by the appropriate regulatory agencies.</p>	<p><i>Carry forward.</i></p>	
<p><b>Policy CON-5</b></p>	<p><b>Diked Baylands</b>            Protect seasonal wetlands and associated upland habitat contained within undeveloped diked baylands, or restore to tidal action. Support and promote acquisition from willing property owners.</p>	<p><i>Carry forward. Supplement as needed with new policy to address sea level rise adaptation.</i></p>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<p><b>Policy CON-6</b></p>	<p><b>Creek and Drainageway Setbacks</b></p> <p>Require development-free setbacks, except for specific access points as approved per policy CON-7 (Public Access to Creeks), from existing creeks and drainageways that will maintain the functions and resulting values of these habitats. Appropriate erosion control and roadway crossings may encroach into the development setback. In the absence of vegetation, promote new growth of natural habitat.</p> <p><b>a. Creek Setback.</b> Maintain a minimum 25-foot development-free setback from the top of creek banks for all new development (including, but not limited to, paving and structures), except for Miller Creek and its tributaries, where a minimum 50-foot setback shall be maintained. Setbacks up to 100 feet may be required on lots or development projects two or more acres in size where development review determines a wider setback is needed to maintain functions and resulting habitat values and in areas where high quality riparian habitat exists. The City may waive this requirement for minor encroachments if it can be demonstrated that the proposed setback adequately protects the functions of the creek to the maximum extent feasible and resulting values to the satisfaction of the City after review by the appropriate regulatory agencies.</p> <p><b>b. Drainageway Setbacks.</b> Drainageway setbacks shall be established through individual development review, taking into account existing habitat functions and resulting values.</p>	<p><i>Policy should be carried forward.</i></p> <p><i>Note: Exhibit 37 does not distinguish between “creeks” and “drainageways”—does such a map exist?</i></p> <p><i>In general, we should look for ways to beef up the creek policies. Ideas to consider:</i></p> <p><i>Creek Master Plans (for specific creeks or watersheds)</i></p> <p><i>Creek restoration pilot projects</i></p> <p><i>A policy to focus on natural, green infrastructure solutions to flood control rather than channelization</i></p> <p><i>Widening of the 25’ setback along other creeks (25’ is pretty small)</i></p>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<i>Program CON-6a</i>	<b>Municipal Code Compliance.</b> Ensure that the San Rafael Municipal Code complies with local, state, and federal regulatory agencies requirements for erosion control.	<i>Only "erosion control"? Suggest adding habitat conservation and water quality.</i>	
<b>Policy CON-7</b>	<b>Public Access to Creeks</b> Provide pedestrian access to points along creeks throughout the City where such access will not adversely affect habitat values.	<i>Carry forward. Potentially add provision for linear access along creeks where habitat would not be adversely affected?</i>	
<i>Program CON-7a</i>	<b>Creek Access Points.</b> Proactively identify and create desirable access points to creeks on public lands.	<i>Carry forward.</i>	
<i>Program CON-7b</i>	<b>Public Access.</b> Through the development review process, identify and secure areas appropriate for access points to creeks.	<i>Retitle "Public Access in Development Along Creeks." Carry forward.</i>	
<i>Program CON-7c</i>	<b>Website Publicity.</b> Use the City's website to publicize information about protecting and accessing San Rafael's creeks and waterways.	<i>Carry forward. Add outreach to local schools and coordination with conservation groups.</i>	
<i>Program CON-7d</i>	<b>Creek Signage.</b> Develop a program to provide attractive signage identifying creeks.	<i>Carry forward.</i>	
<b>Policy CON-8</b>	<b>Enhancement of Creeks and Drainageways</b> Explore enhancement of, and support continuous upgrades to, drainageways to serve as wildlife habitat corridors for wildlife movement and to serve as flood control facilities to accommodate storm drainage. Require creek enhancement and associated riparian habitat restoration/creation for projects adjacent to creeks to maintain storm flows, reduce erosion and maintenance and improve habitat values, where feasible.	<i>Carry forward.</i>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<i>Program CON-8a</i>	<b>Creek Restoration.</b> Encourage and support efforts by neighborhood associations, environmental organizations, and other interested groups to fund creek enhancement, restoration and maintenance programs.	<i>Carry forward. Are there specific restoration projects we should be advancing through General Plan 2040? Also, add “creek clean-ups”</i>	
<i>Program CON-8b</i>	<b>Tree Retention.</b> Retain trees along creeks, where possible, for preservation of riparian habitat and to inhibit growth of algae.	<i>Suggest rewording “Retain native trees and riparian habitat along creeks to sustain wildlife, reduce erosion, and improve water quality.” As stated, this is really a policy and not a program. Are specific ordinance revisions needed?</i>	
<b>Policy CON-9</b>	<b>Native and/or Sensitive Habitats</b> Protect habitats that are sensitive, rare, declining, unique or represent a valuable biological resource.	<i>Carry forward or combine with CON-13.</i>	
<i>Program CON-9a</i>	<b>Steelhead Habitat.</b> Support efforts to restore, preserve or enhance Central California Coast Steelhead habitat in Miller Creek and other creeks.	<i>Carry forward.</i>	
<i>Program CON-9b</i>	<b>Feral Cats.</b> To protect habitats, especially for birds and small animals, continue to fund programs of the Marin Humane Society including those to reduce the population of feral cats.	<i>Carry forward. Is it just cats? Maybe “potential predators such as feral cats”?</i>	
<b>Policy CON-10</b>	<b>Impacts to Sensitive Habitats</b> Minimize impacts to sensitive natural habitats through careful planning. Require compliance with applicable laws and regulations.	<i>“careful planning” is pretty vague—consider a more robust policy?</i>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<i>Program</i> CON-10a	<b>Oak Savanna/Woodland Habitat Protection.</b> Require that proposed developments with potential impacts to oak savanna/woodland habitat to either avoid, minimize, or compensate for the loss of oak savanna/woodland habitat. Avoidance would be the preferred measure where feasible. If it is deemed that an impact is unavoidable, minimization of direct and indirect impacts or compensation through habitat restoration, creation, or enhancement would be required.	<i>Carry forward—EIR may recommend more aggressive language to protect oak savanna/ woodland and other sensitive habitats.</i>	
<b>Policy</b> CON-11	<b>Wildlife Corridors</b> Preserve and protect areas that function as wildlife corridors, particularly those areas that provide natural connections permitting wildlife movement between designated sensitive habitats.	<i>Carry forward.</i>	
<b>Policy</b> CON-12	<b>Preservation of Hillsides</b> Encourage preservation of hillsides, ridgelines and other open areas that serve as habitat and erosion protection as well as visual backdrops to urban areas.	<i>Good - Carry forward. Add a second sentence “Hillsides should be managed to balance aesthetic and habitat objectives with the need to reduce fuel loads and wildfire risks.” Cross-reference Community Design policies to protect ridgelines.</i>	
<i>Program</i> CON-12a	<b>Hillside Design Guidelines.</b> Continue to implement the Hillside Design Guidelines.	<i>Carry forward. Also, add a program to implement grading regulations.</i>	
<b>Policy</b> CON-13	<b>Threatened and Endangered Species</b> Preserve and protect threatened and endangered species of plants and animals formally listed consistent with the state and federal endangered species acts including protection of their habitat.	<i>Change “Preserve” to “Conserve”—carry forward. EIR will indicate if more specific habitat protection requirements need to be in the General Plan.</i>	
<i>Program</i> CON-13a	<b>List of Species.</b> Maintain a current list of threatened and endangered and special status species.	<i>...and maps indicating areas where these species are present or potentially present.</i>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<b>Policy CON-14</b>	<b>Special Status Species</b> Preserve and protect special status plants and animals, including candidate species for listing under the state and federal endangered species acts, California species of special concern, California Native Plant Society List 1B plants, and other species protected under provisions of California Fish and Game Code.	<i>Seems like this could be combined with Policy CON-13, as the policies both call for conservation/ protection of species.</i>	
<i>Program CON-14a</i>	<b>Surveys.</b> Require that vacant sites be surveyed for the presence or absence of relevant special status species prior to development approval.	<i>Carry forward. This should also apply for threatened and endangered species (CON-13).</i>	
<i>Program CON-14b</i>	<b>Minimization.</b> Require that where impacts to special status species are deemed unavoidable, potential impacts to the identified species are minimized through design, construction, and operation of the project. Compensation measures could include on-site set asides or off-site acquisitions (e.g. conservation easements, deed restrictions, etc.) that would be required if project impacts result in direct loss or indirect impacts that cannot be mitigated in other ways. This might also involve species-specific enhancement restoration efforts for the mitigation lands.	<i>Carry forward. EIR may yield more robust mitigation measures for specific species (salt marsh harvest mouse, etc.) that could require specific programs.</i>	
<b>Policy CON-15</b>	<b>Invasive Non-Native Plant Species</b> Remove and control selected undesirable invasive non-native plant species from City-owned open space and road right of ways, and encourage the removal and control of these invasive plant species from non-City owned ecologically-sensitive areas.	<i>Carry forward.</i>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<i>Program CON-15a</i>	<b>Invasive Plant Ordinance.</b> Consider the legality, feasibility and enforceability of an Invasive Plant Ordinance addressing the removal of invasive species on private and public properties. As part of the ordinance, evaluate the benefits and impacts of using herbicide on invasive species where there are no other feasible controls.	<i>Potentially replace this with a program oriented toward wildfire prevention and creation of defensible space through control of invasive fire-prone vegetation.</i>	
<i>Program CON-15b</i>	<b>Removal of Invasive Species on Public Property.</b> Institute a program to remove invasive plant species on public properties. Consider the use of volunteers and private organizations to assist in this effort.	<i>OK to carry forward—or reframe to indicate the City will support a multi-jurisdictional effort (rather than doing this alone)</i>	
<b>Policy CON-16</b>	<b>Landscape with Native Plant Species</b> Encourage landscaping with native and compatible non-native plant species, especially drought-resistant species.	<i>Edit last clause: “especially drought-resistant and fire-resistant species”</i>	
<i>Program CON-16a</i>	<b>Distribution of Information.</b> Distribute Marin Municipal Water District and other organizations’ educational materials about native plant landscaping.	<i>Carry forward.</i>	
<p><i>Editor’s Notes:</i></p> <p><i>Add a new policy that provides a framework for environmental review, and expresses the overall philosophy that environmental impacts should be mitigated when development occurs.</i></p> <p><i>Add a policy on urban forest enhancement and the importance of vegetation for carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas reduction. In general, the tree protection, tree replacement policies, etc. are pretty light, especially given the designation as a Tree City.</i></p> <p><i>Add a policy on mineral resource management (minimizing the impacts on neighborhoods and ensuring compliance with SMARA)—reclamation?</i></p> <p><i>Add a policy supporting urban agriculture and local food production.</i></p> <p><i>Add a dark skies/ light pollution policy?</i></p> <p><i>Energy conservation policies and actions in the Sustainability Element will be moved to this chapter. Also, air and water quality policies will likely be integrated here.</i></p> <p><i>Consider Priority Conservation Area (PCA) designations anywhere?</i></p> <p><i>Should there be a policy to protect the Bay, fish and marine life, and aquatic habitat value?</i></p>			

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
Open Space Goal	<p><b>PROTECTED OPEN SPACE</b></p> <p>It is the goal of San Rafael to preserve and protect open space and the natural environment for all to enjoy. Preservation of open space and the natural environment have been a priority for San Rafael residents for many years. Whenever possible, the natural terrain and vegetation of the community should be preserved and maintained.</p>	<p>Carry goal forward.</p>	
Policy OS-1	<p><b>Open Space Preservation</b></p> <p>Preserve, through a variety of methods, the open space areas identified in the Inventory of Potential Open Space Sites (See Appendix I). Retain and protect open space areas that serve as delineators between neighborhoods and between adjacent communities, as wildlife habitat, and as visual assets for the community. Open space areas can also function as connections between neighborhoods, for example with the creation of pathways in environmentally appropriate areas.</p>	<p>Move the first sentence to Program OS-1a below, or to a new policy focused on open space acquisition. The first policy should emphasize retention of the open space “frame” around San Rafael and management of the 10,000 acres of permanent open space in the Plan Area. Sentences 2 and 3 do this pretty well.</p>	
Program OS-1a	<p><b>Open Space Inventory.</b> Update the inventory of potential open space sites. Identify and prioritize open space parcels for future protection. Maximize the use of available resources when assessing City involvement in securing open space by applying the following non-prioritized evaluation criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Environmental health and safety issues (specifically geology and hydrology) and potential geo-seismic hazards.</li> <li>b. Resource areas and aesthetics (visual backdrop or edge, unique site features, shorelines/ ridgelines, wetlands, wildlife habitat including wildlife movement corridors, and habitat for endangered species).</li> </ol>	<p>Retain this program, but add “Ability to mitigate potential climate-related impacts, including reduction of wildfire hazards and protection from sea level rise.”</p>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Importance to the community as a whole or adjoining neighborhoods.</li> <li>d. Merits of alternative uses.</li> <li>e. Proximity to other open space uses.</li> <li>f. Recreation potential.</li> <li>g. Accessibility.</li> <li>h. Availability of outside financial assistance.</li> <li>i. Potential maintenance and management costs and liability exposure for the City.</li> </ul>		
<i>Program OS-1b</i>	<p><b>Preservation Opportunities.</b> Through the development review process, preserve open space areas identified on the Open Space Inventory. Encourage the dedication of open space areas that are adjacent to public open space. Possibilities also include acquisition of fee title or acquiring easements for preserving open space. When potential open space is not contiguous to existing public open space, the preference is to retain the open space in private ownership. When portions of a site are retained as private open space, ensure the preservation and management of that open space through appropriate means, including required maintenance, as determined through development review. Work with other public and non-profit agencies to identify sources for acquisition and maintenance of open space.</p>	<p><i>Carry forward—but again, the focus of the programs needs to shift to open space management rather than open space acquisition.</i></p>	
<i>Program OS-1c</i>	<p><b>Cluster Development.</b> As part of the development review process, encourage the clustering of development to preserve desired open space.</p>	<p><i>Carry forward. Ensure that provisions for maintenance and management of common open space are included.</i></p>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<b>Policy OS-2</b>	<p><b>Open Space Management</b></p> <p>Maintain and manage City Open Space lands. Designate appropriate uses to specific sites. Determine maintenance needs to address uses and the preservation of natural amenities. Address illegal camping and campfires, disease control, erosion control, urban/wildlife interface, recreation and other activities harmful to open space environment, as well as vegetation management and wildlife habitat protection issues.</p>	<p><i>This should be broken into four separate policies addressing the following topics:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>(1) Management of City open space lands</i></li> <li><i>(2) Coordination with the other public agencies that manage open space in San Rafael</i></li> <li><i>(3) Maintenance and vegetation management needs</i></li> <li><i>(4) Threats to open space (listed here)</i></li> </ol>	
<i>Program OS-2a</i>	<p><b>Open Space Management Plan.</b> Establish a committee with representatives from neighborhood associations, environmental organizations, user groups and other stakeholders to prepare an Open Space Management Plan(s). The plan should address use and ongoing maintenance of open space areas. The management plan should address appropriate access points, parking areas, public information signage, trail extensions, restoration of erosion and other degraded areas, and guidelines for the location of amenities such as picnic tables and benches. Amend zoning provisions as needed. Funding options should be explored and identified for open space management such as open space maintenance assessment districts, agreements with other public agencies for maintenance, neighborhood "adoption," volunteer programs, private funding and other means.</p>	<p><i>Preparing an open space management plan is still a valid program. It should be linked to ongoing actions addressing wildfire prevention and sea level rise. Reword as needed. This should be done in collaboration with the Marin County Open Space District, the State Park system, and other agencies that control open space in the city.</i></p>	
<i>Program OS-2b</i>	<p><b>Removal of Invasive Species.</b> Use volunteer and other types of work crews to remove selected invasive vegetation from open space areas.</p>	<p><i>Replace "other types of work crews" with "conservation work crews" Ok to carry forward.</i></p>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<i>Program OS-2c</i>	<b>Diseased Vegetation.</b> Work with County and regional experts in finding solutions for the prevention and disposal of diseased vegetation, such as vegetation affected by Sudden Oak Death Syndrome.	<i>OK to carry forward—also expand to cover trees killed by drought, pine beetles, etc. and hazardous trees in general.</i>	
<i>Program OS-2d</i>	<b>Illegal Encampments.</b> Continue to work with private and public property owners to identify and remove illegal encampments in open space areas.	<i>Potentially expand this, and link to ongoing fire prevention and homelessness programs. “Removing” encampments requires identifying suitable alternative locations for those being removed.</i>	
<b>Policy OS-3</b>	<b>Open Space Use</b> Protect and preserve the natural value of open space and wildlife habitat areas while permitting educational and recreational uses compatible with these resources. Specific use objectives include: a. Open space areas should be maintained in a natural state. b. Open space areas are a community resource for use and enjoyment by the residents of San Rafael. c. Uses of open space areas shall be secondary to open space preservation and limited to those uses with a minimal impact on the environment.	<i>Suggest editing to clarify that the primary purpose of protecting and preserving open space is habitat preservation, environmental quality, and hazard reduction. Recreational/ educational uses and public access may be considered to the extent they are compatible with these objectives.</i>	
<i>Program OS-3a</i>	<b>Management of Private Open Space.</b> In designating open space as part of a development project or with the dedication of land for open space, identify limitations to uses in those areas, such as restrictions on ornamental landscaping, structures and fences.	<i>Link to OS-1C. Use restrictions are important, but so is ongoing maintenance and management. Should include those in the text, as the title suggests.</i>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<b>Policy OS-4</b>	<b>Access to Open Space</b> Encourage provision of access to open space areas in the design of adjacent development. Secure access paths shown on Exhibit 34 as part of subdivision approvals and design access paths to avoid or minimize neighborhood and user conflicts with sensitive wildlife habitat areas.	<i>Need to verify that the “dots” on Exhibit 34 still represent desired and feasible access points to the open space system. Access to open space, and avoidance of conflicts with habitat, certainly remain desired outcomes.</i>	
<i>Program OS-4a</i>	<b>Access Points.</b> Through the development review process, identify access points and parking areas to be retained and required improvements.	<i>Reword: Use the development review process to identify open space access points and required features such as signage, trailheads, and parking.</i>	
<b>Policy OS-5</b>	<b>Coordination with Other Jurisdictions</b> Coordinate San Rafael’s open space system with adjacent cities, Marin County, the State, and regional and private open space systems.	<i>Edit to clarify: “Coordinate the planning and management of San Rafael’s open space system with...”</i>	
<i>Program OS-5a</i>	<b>Coordination with Other Jurisdictions.</b> Continue to work with public agencies managing open space within the San Rafael Planning Area to ensure a coordinated system.	<i>Carry forward. Are there any specific actions that need to be referenced? Potentially add another program regarding coordination on implementing the Wildfire Action Plan as it applies to open space?</i>	
<b>Policy OS-6</b>	<b>Utilities in Open Space</b> Discourage utilities in open space areas. Necessary utilities in open space should be located and designed to minimize harm to the area's environmental and visual quality.	<i>Generally still valid, but should we be more specific---perhaps specify that this refers to electric transmission and distribution lines? What about cellular equipment? The second sentence is good.</i>	
<i>Program OS-6a</i>	<b>Utilities in Open Space.</b> Use zoning ordinance provisions and the design and environmental review processes to evaluate the location and design of public utilities.	<i>OK as is. Wireless facility siting criteria?</i>	

## CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS POLICY MATRIX

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
<b>Policy OS-7</b>	<b>Public Education</b> Provide education programs to residents about wildlife, fire hazard, watershed protection and open space habitat.	<i>Carry forward</i>	
<i>Program OS-7a</i>	<b>Public Education.</b> Continue outreach and public education. Examples include the dissemination of educational materials and programs related to wildland fire prevention, feral cats, and Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (MCSTOPPP) requirements.	<i>Carry forward. Potentially add another program on interpretive facilities, environmental education centers, educating youth about the environment, etc.</i>	
<p><i>Suggest adding a policy on the role of open space in addressing sea level rise</i></p> <p><i>May also want to address urban agriculture and opportunities for food production in open space areas</i></p> <p><i>Also—add a policy encouraging walking/cycling trails through open space areas as a way to link neighborhoods and reduce dependence on cars?</i> <i>At the moment, trails are not really addressed in this element at all</i></p>			