



# LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT



*“A man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can afford to let alone.”* — Henry David Thoreau

- Introduction .....30
- Changes Since 1988 .....31
- General Plan Land Use Designations .....34
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas .....42
- Adjacent Lands .....47
- Relationship Between the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.....48
- Goal LU1, Policies, and Strategies .....50

---

## INTRODUCTION

The Land Use and Community Design Element is a guide to the uses of land in Woodside, the character of the built environment, and the relationship of both to the natural environment. This Element is intended to define the goals, policies, and strategies that will allow Woodside to maintain its rural character, yet allow for reasonable development of private property.

The pattern of land uses described in this Element is driven by:

- the natural setting of Woodside;
- the established pattern of development;
- the relationship of Woodside to adjacent communities and employment centers;
- population growth and change; and,
- the present and future means of travel within the Town and between the Town and the outside area.

Land use policies are designed to prevent overuse of land and control intensity of use. The overuse or overcrowding of individual sites with primary residential uses or accessory uses creates environmental impacts such as excessive drainage, soil erosion, loss of vegetation and other resources, and destroys the open, natural characteristics of the Town.

Historically, land use intensity in Woodside has been defined by: population density, building coverage, extent of impervious surfaces, public service requirements, traffic volumes, topography, natural hazards, fire safety, and natural resources. Although this Element describes and maps ten Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) it should be noted that as an urban/wildland interface community, virtually all areas of Town are subject to issues of environmental sensitivity.

The Town of Woodside has the reputation of being one of the most visually pleasing communities in the State. The principal reasons are: the wooded hillsides; narrow country roads; natural stream corridors; fields of wild grasses and wildflowers; scenic vistas; great groves of oak, redwood, and buckeye trees; large lots containing paddocks, riding rings, and stables; open fields; and buildings which are subordinate in appearance to the land.

The Flood Zones Map for the Town (Map NH3), as well as other hazard maps are located in the Natural Hazards and Safety Element.

Policies in this Element have been formulated to enhance the rural and natural qualities of this unique community.

## CHANGES SINCE 1988

The following land use and community design changes have occurred since 1988:

### COMMERCIAL

Commercial land is very limited in Woodside. Commercial properties are located in two small centers: the Town Center on Highway 84 (Woodside Road); and the Skylonda Center on Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard). No expansion of the commercial areas has occurred since 1988, although some significant changes occurred in the Town Center during this period, including: the development of the Town government center and the Woodside Road/Whiskey Hill parking areas. Currently, peak activity in these areas occurs weekdays at mid-day and on weekends. The popularity of the Town's restaurants, bars, and market contributes to traffic, circulation, and parking challenges at these times. During this General Plan update, residents expressed a strong, continued desire to address circulation issues and to encourage commercial services and facilities that meet their day-to-day needs. Current market conditions, however, have proved challenging as rent of commercial space for office use can be more lucrative and stable than rent for retail, personal service, and restaurant uses. Residents see an update to the Town Center Plan as a top planning priority.

### INSTITUTIONAL

A number of changes have occurred to institutional properties in the last two decades.

Town Hall and public parking was constructed near the southeast corner of Woodside and Whiskey Hill Roads, and the Town acquired and constructed Barkley Fields and Park on Farm Hill Boulevard.

A portion of Cañada College was deannexed to the City of Redwood City to allow for the construction of 60 units of affordable faculty and staff housing, of which the Town received a credit of 24 units toward its State affordable housing requirement.

A new parking program was initiated on Woodside Road in the Town Center and Woodside Elementary School vicinity. Woodside Elementary School contributes traffic, circulation, and parking challenges during its peak periods: student drop off and pick up times.

### OPEN SPACE

Since 1988, two open space areas were combined with adjacent open spaces, and one open space areas was lost.

Open Space Area 10, Dennis Martin Creek, was purchased by Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and incorporated into Open Space Area 13, Thornewood. Open Space Area 21, Sandstone Caves, was also purchased by Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and incorporated into Open Space Area 15, El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve. Reference the Open Space Element for more detail.

Lastly, Open Space Area 31, Los Altos Hunt Pony Club, was lost to residential development.

The Open Space Element includes a comprehensive discussion and description of open spaces in Town.

---

## **RESIDENTIAL**

Residential properties in Woodside are single-family residential properties. No lands are designated for multi-family use. Accessory dwelling units are allowed on single-family residential properties and the Housing Element proposes a possible overlay zone for multi-family staff and faculty housing at Cañada College. Improvements to residential properties continued to be strong, including: remodeling, the construction of additional accessory structures, demolition and replacement of existing residences, and construction of new residences on the limited inventory of vacant lots.

## **TIMBER PRODUCTION**

State law requires that a land use category be designated that provides for timber production parcels or real property that have been zoned for timberland production. No lands within the Town are designated for timber production.

## **MILITARY**

State law requires that the General Plan Land Use Element consider the impact of new growth on military readiness activities carried out on military bases, installations, and operating and training areas. No military installation or activities are located or occur within the Town.

## **PUBLIC UTILITIES**

Reference the Public Utilities Element for information regarding solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, and other public and private utility infrastructure.

## **TOWN-WIDE REGULATORY CHANGES**

Challenges with the Municipal Code which are currently being debated and addressed include: paved coverage limitations and the Municipal Code's consideration of features (e.g., tennis courts, swimming pools, patios, walkways) rather than type of paving material; the R-1 development standards, nonconforming regulations, and nonconforming parcels and structures; the need for a voluntary lot merger process; the scope of basement proposals; and the location and required setbacks for the newly required water line backflow preventers.

One of the most significant regulatory changes in Woodside since 1988 has been the adoption of new fire regulations. In 2008, the Woodside Town Council adopted an ordinance designating the western foothills and Emerald Hills as "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones" (VHFHSZ). In 2009, the Woodside Town Council adopted an ordinance designating new regulations incorporating fire resistive materials and construction methods. In summary, these fire prevention regulations required a higher level of fire resistance materials and construction methods throughout Town, and imposed additional site improvement and defensible space requirements for properties located in the VHFHSZ. While these new regulations respond to the health

and safety issues associated with living in an urban/wildland interface community, they also created the need to revisit the building material and landscape references in the Town's Residential Design Guidelines.

## RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Town developed and adopted Residential Design Guidelines in 2000. In 2011, in response to new green building requirements, new fire regulations, and an ongoing community desire to preserve the rural character of Woodside, the Town Council appointed a subcommittee comprised of Town Council members, Planning Commissioners, Architectural and Site Review Board (ASRB) members, and staff to revise and update these Guidelines. The General Plan Task Force also expressed an interest in adopting the concepts set forth in the draft Fence Guidelines. These draft Guidelines were developed in 2007 by a subcommittee comprised of members from ASRB; and the Open Space, Conservation, and Environmental Health and Trails Committees.

The Residential Design Guidelines should be consistent with the goals, policies, and strategies of the General Plan; and the regulations contained in the Woodside Municipal Code. Should any conflict arise between the Design Guidelines and those goals, policies, strategies, and regulations, the General Plan and Municipal Code prevail.

---

## GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

In Woodside, there are seven General Plan land use designations. Each parcel of land in Town receives a General Plan land use designation (See Map LU1, General Plan Land Use Designations). Each parcel of land also receives a zoning designation. The purpose of each, and their relationship to each other, is described in the Relationship Between the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance section. The primary land use intended for each General Plan designation is described below. Additional allowable uses are set forth in the Woodside Municipal Code according to a property's zoning designation.

### **C: COMMERCIAL**

The Commercial ("C") land use designation allows for businesses that primarily serve the day-to-day needs of the local community. Secondly, low-intensity, small scale office use is acceptable.

### **IN: INSTITUTIONAL, PUBLIC AND QUASI-PUBLIC**

The Institutional ("IN") land use designation provides for educational, governmental, and institutional uses, such as schools, libraries, places of worship, meeting halls, and public parks.

### **OS: OPEN SPACE**

The Open Space ("OS") land use designation preserves open space for natural resources, allows opportunities for outdoor recreation, and safeguards the public health and safety.

### **OS-ESA: OPEN SPACE / ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREA**

The Open Space land use designation with an environmentally sensitive overlay ("OS/ESA") preserves natural resources and habitat, with a higher degree of sensitivity than the "OS" areas. Low-impact and low-intensity recreational uses, such as hiking, are allowed in OS-ESA.

### **R: RESIDENTIAL**

The Residential ("R") land use designation allows for a variety of residential densities. Residential development can range from large rural estates with multiple accessory buildings, such as Mountain Home Road; to smaller, single-family homes within compact neighborhoods, such as The Woodside Glens.

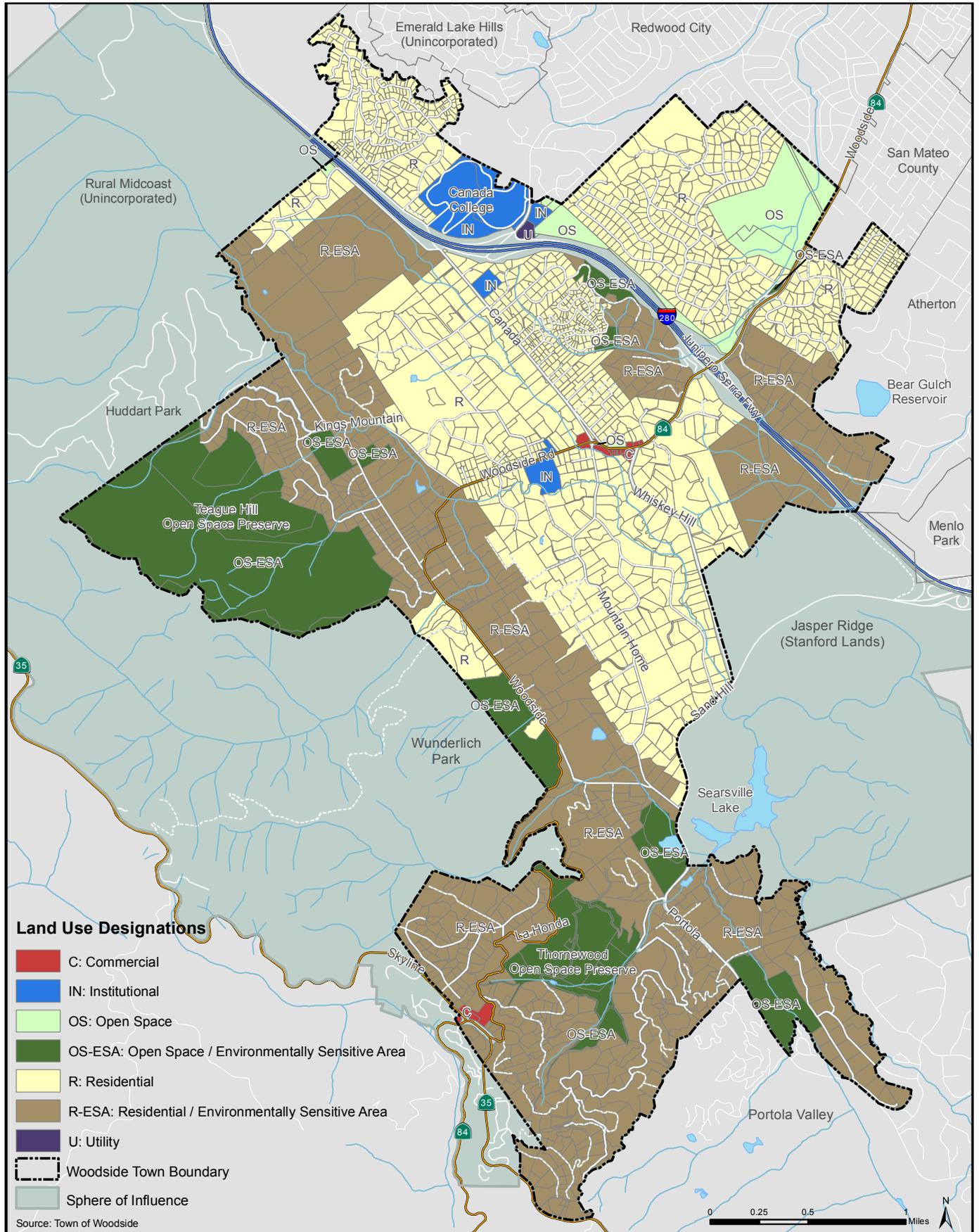
### **R-ESA: RESIDENTIAL / ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREA**

The Residential land use designation with an environmentally sensitive overlay ("R-ESA") designation is assigned to parcels requiring a greater degree of environmental protection due to characteristics such as steep hillsides, geological hazards, difficult road access, or soil or water problems.

### **U: UTILITY**

The "U" designation is for general utility uses such as public works, corporation yards, and maintenance buildings.

### Map LU1: General Plan Land Use Designations



---

## "C" COMMERCIAL LAND USES

There are two Commercial ("C") areas in Town: the Town Center on Woodside Road, and the Skylonda Center at the intersection of State Highways 35 and 84.

### Town Center Area

The Town Center Area is located on both sides of Woodside Road between Whiskey Hill Road and just west of Cañada Road (Map TC1). Uses in this Area include stores, offices, specialty shops, and consumer service establishments needed to meet the day-to-day needs of local residents. Historically, stores and services have included convenience shopping needs such as groceries, drugs, and hardware; and services, such as banking and dry cleaning. The purchase of larger items, such as furniture, appliances and automobiles occurs in the larger, more urban adjacent communities. The provision of convenience shopping services should be emphasized in future planning, so that these uses stay in balance with office and administrative uses and reduce vehicular trips to outside the community. In addition to retail and service establishments, this is also an appropriate location for public and private institutions serving the entire community. It is expected that change and development within the Town Center Area will continue to be gradual, and that it will take place by a combination of private initiative and public action.

The Town Center Area is more specifically defined in the Town Center Area Plan. Planning issues include parking deficiencies, constraints to traffic circulation and access, and the need for adequate equestrian and pedestrian paths.

### Skylonda Center Area

The Skylonda Center Area includes properties along both sides of State Highway 35, north of State Highway 84 (Map SL1). Its primary function is to offer convenience goods and consumer services to nearby residents and travelers along Skyline Boulevard. Appropriate uses in the Skylonda Center include stores and shops providing convenience goods and consumer services, and small offices. Careful review of appearance, intensity of use, parking, sewage disposal, and water supply need to be made before any expansion of activities in this Center is permitted.

The Skylonda Center Area Plan sets forth specific policies for buildings, landscaping, site development, sign design, lighting, circulation, and land use and development. The Plan promotes the maintenance of the existing physical scale and visual informality of the retail center.



**Town Center commercial area.**



**Skylonda Center.**

## INSTITUTIONAL, PUBLIC, AND QUASI-PUBLIC LAND USES

Institutional, public, and quasi-public land uses in Town are located on Woodside, Cañada, and Farm Hill Roads. Existing public and private institutions in the Town of Woodside include schools, fire stations, a library, a church, local government buildings, and museums. These land uses currently have a variety of General Plan designations, but all are allowable uses in their zoning district.

### Churches

One church is located within the Town of Woodside: the Woodside Village Church at 3154 Woodside Road. This church shares its facilities for a variety of public uses, including Woodside Recreation Committee classes.

### Clinics

\*\*Add text for National Center for Equine Facilitated Therapy (NCEFT)\*\*

### Fire Stations

The entire Town of Woodside is in the Woodside Fire Protection District (WFPD), with its headquarters (Station 7) located at 3111 Woodside Road near the Town Center. Fire protection is provided by Woodside Fire Protection District and Cal Fire stations outside of Town limits, and by mutual aid agreements with Redwood City, the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, and Stanford University.

### Library

The Woodside Library, a branch of the San Mateo County Library, is located at 3140 Woodside Road. In 1988, the Town owned the library site land and the San Mateo County Library owned the library building. On July 1, 1999, the County of San Mateo transferred title of the building to the Town when the library system became subject to a Joint Powers Agreement between the County and the fourteen cities and towns served by County branch libraries. Under the agreement, the County of San Mateo provides the direct library services and the cities and towns maintain the facilities. The Woodside Library allows the use of its facilities for a variety of public functions. The rear grounds of the Woodside Library are developed with a nationally recognized California native, drought-tolerant garden, which is maintained by the Woodside/Atherton Garden Club.

### Post Office

There is an active post office within the Town of Woodside located on Woodside Road, within the Town Center Area. Although the post office is an institutional use, it is located in a leased space within an office building under private ownership, and is therefore not located on a parcel designated as Institutional.



**Woodside Village Church.**



**Woodside Fire Protection District fire station.**



**Woodside Library.**



**The garden behind the library provides a peaceful escape from busy Woodside Road.**



**Woodside Elementary School.**

### **Public Schools**

Public school service to the Planning Area is provided by four separate school districts: Woodside, Las Lomas, Portola Valley and Redwood City (See Map LU2, School Districts within Woodside). Each district serves grades kindergarten through eighth.

The only school located within Town limits is the Woodside Elementary School. This school occupies a fourteen acre site located near the Town Center at 3195 Woodside Road. Since 1988, Woodside Elementary School has undergone major renovations and constructed additions. Woodside Elementary School shares its facilities for a variety of public uses, including classes sponsored by the Town's Recreation Committee.

The entire Planning Area is within the boundaries of the Sequoia Union High School District. Public school students from Woodside attend the Woodside High School, located at 1999 Churchill Avenue (just south of the corner of Woodside Road and Alameda de las Pulgas in the unincorporated area).

The entire Planning Area is within the boundaries of the San Mateo Community College District. The Cañada College campus, located at 4200 Farm Hill Boulevard, serves the Redwood City-Woodside-Portola Valley area. The majority of the Cañada College campus is located within the Town of Woodside. Cañada College makes its facilities available to support Town events, such as allowing use of its parking lots for shuttle services to Town events.



**Woodside Community Museum.**

### **Museums**

Two museums are located within the Town of Woodside: the Woodside Community Museum and the Woodside Store (Tripp Store).

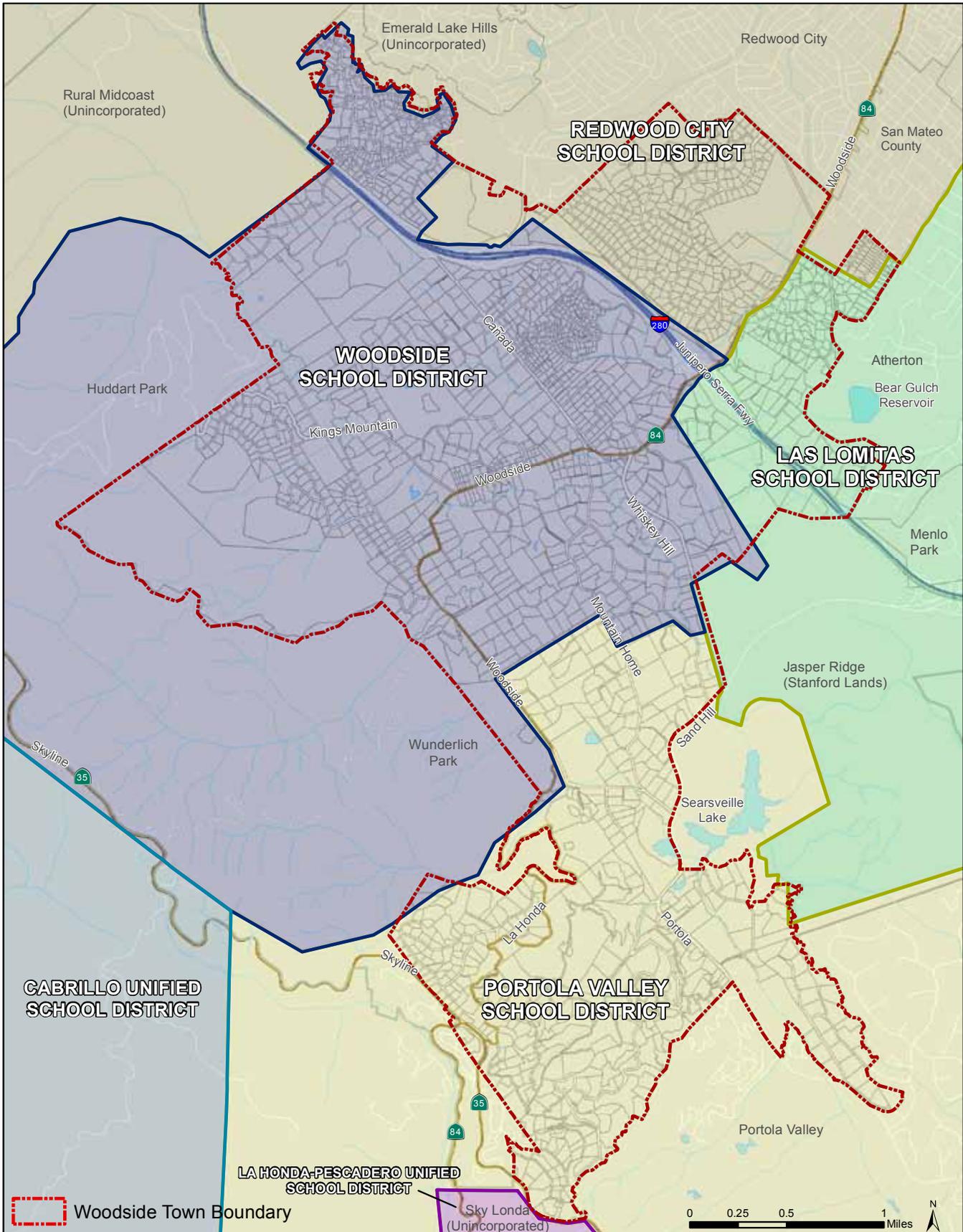
The Woodside Community Museum, owned and operated by the Town is located adjacent to the Town Hall. The museum houses exhibit space, a Woodside History Committee archives office, and two offices available for lease to non-profit organizations. The museum building is an adaptive reuse of the Mathisen Farmhouse built in 1906. Preservation of this residence, which was originally slated for demolition during the construction of Phase II of the public parking lot project, was spearheaded by the Woodside History Committee, with support from the Woodside Community Foundation and other community members. The building was relocated approximately 50 feet to the south (away from the commercial buildings on Woodside Road and toward the Town government offices).



**Woodside Store (Tripp Store.)**

The Woodside Store (Tripp Store), located at 3300 Tripp Road, was built by Dr. Robert Orville Tripp and Matthias A. Parkhurst in 1854 among the saw mills and redwood groves. The store was operated by Dr. Tripp himself, who also served as dentist, librarian, postmaster, and community leader, until his death in 1909. The store was purchased by the County of San Mateo in 1940, and opened as a public museum on September 7, 1947. The Woodside Store is State Registered Historic Landmark No. 93.

Map LU2: School Districts within Woodside





**Town of Woodside Government Center (Independence Hall).**

### **Town Government Offices and Public Parking**

In 1988, the Town government offices were located in rented space at the Woodside Elementary School. In 1988-89, the Town initiated the development of a Town Hall complex and public parking for the commercial area. It acquired land behind the Pioneer Hotel building and the strip of commercial properties along Woodside Road, including the Mathisen farmhouse property. The Town also established the Woodside Road/Whiskey Hill Road Parking Assessment District at this time and, through two construction phases, built over 140 public parking spaces to support the Town Hall complex and the adjacent commercial establishments. The land acquisition and parking construction were funded by a combination of Special Assessment District bonds, paid for through assessments on the involved commercial property owners, and Town funds, totaling just over \$3.2 million.

The architect for the new Town Hall complex was Esherick Homsey Dodge & Davis, of San Francisco. Town Hall was formally dedicated on December 8, 1990. Construction cost was about \$2.3 million, financed by the issuance of 25-year Certificates of Participation, a kind of lease-financing mechanism. These were retired in 2006, nine years early.

Independence Hall, built in 1884 and acquired by the Town in 1978, was relocated from its original location two miles west of where it stands today. It was completely renovated in 1991 as the last element of the Woodside Town Hall complex project.

### **“OS” OPEN SPACE LAND USES**

Lands designated as Open Space (“OS”) are shown on Map LU1, General Plan Land Use Designations Map, and are more specifically described in the Open Space Element and depicted on Map OS2, Open Space Inventory Map. Open Space Areas 4, 6, 7, and 29, are designated “OS”. These open space lands are set aside for public health and safety, resource conservation, visual aesthetics, and recreation.

### **“OS-ESA” OPEN SPACE LAND USES, ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS**

Lands designated as Open Space with the “ESA” overlay (“OS-ESA”) are considered more environmentally sensitive than the area designated only Open Space (“OS”). The “OS-ESA” area are shown on Map LU1, General Plan Land Use Designations, and are more specifically described in the Open Space Element and depicted on Map OS2, Open Space Inventory Map. Open Space Areas 5, 8, 13, 14, 16, 23, 26, 28, 30, and 33, are designated “OS-ESA”. These open space lands are set aside for resource conservation, aesthetics, and recreation.

## “R” RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

The Residential (“R”) land use designation is intended to allow for a variety of residential parcel sizes that are compatible with the historic development pattern of Woodside, and at the same time safeguard Woodside’s natural environment. Residential density in Woodside ranges from large, rural lots to denser, smaller lots.

The number of structures and intensity of uses allowed in the Residential land use designation depends on a property’s size, environmental constraints, and compatibility with the surrounding area. On lots with adequate space and limited environmental sensitivity, more development options are available, such as barns, pools, pool houses, accessory dwelling units, other accessory structures, commercial vineyards, and stables. In contrast, development in areas that have numerous environmental constraints and/or smaller lots should have fewer structures and less intensive use.

## “R-ESA” RESIDENTIAL LAND USES, ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

Lands designated as Residential with the “ESA” overlay (“R-ESA”) are considered more environmentally sensitive than the area designated only Residential (“R”). These lands are environmentally constrained by steep slopes, geological hazards, difficult road access, or soil or water problems. In response, the zoning ordinance requires larger minimum lot sizes and applies more restrictive site development standards.

## “U” UTILITY LAND USES

Lands designated “U” are reserved for public utilities. Only one parcel in Town is so designated.



**Home in a single-family, residential neighborhood.**



**Barns may be permitted on appropriately sized parcels.**



**Commercial vineyards may be permitted on larger sites.**



**Steep slopes are an example of an environmentally sensitive constraint.**

## ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

The purpose of the “environmentally sensitive area” (ESA) designation is to identify those areas of the Town which contain significant environmental constraints. This information will be used when considering the appropriateness of development proposals. ESA areas are shown on Map LU1, General Plan Land Use Designations.

Environmental constraints dictate the number of building sites or intensity of development. Each area has constraints that require special planning consideration. The presence of one or more of these constraints, therefore, will reduce the allowable density in any zoning district.

Environmentally sensitive areas may contain the following constraints: steep slopes, geological hazards (Maps NH1 and NH2), lack of water supply, fire hazards (Map NH4), poor road access, excessive noise exposure (Map N1), flooding (Map NH3), proximity to stream corridors (Map CV1), significant biological resources (Map CV2), or major scenic corridors and viewsheds (Map CL2).

The majority of these areas occur in the steeper Western Hills of the Santa Cruz Mountains (all lands west of Kings Mountain Road, Woodside Road, and Portola Road), along the main trace of the San Andreas Fault, and adjacent to the Interstate 280 (I-280) corridor. Most of these areas are partially developed with single family dwellings and accessory uses. There are two other significant environmentally sensitive areas which are largely undeveloped: Summit Springs (Teague Hill), located in the Western Hills, and the lands located immediately southwest of I-280.

Ten areas designated as environmentally sensitive areas are shown on Map LU3 and are described below. While these areas have specific characteristics of environmental sensitivity, they are not the only areas in Town which are environmentally sensitive (also see the Conservation Element).

### 1. GREER ROAD AREA

This area includes the lands between the Rancho Cañada Subdivision and Kings Mountain Road, which are dependent upon Greer Road for access. West Union Creek flows through the area. These lands are heavily wooded. Problems with access exist due to the narrow widths of pavement and right-of-way for Greer Road, and other physical constraints making road widening extremely difficult. Any general widening of the roadway would have adverse environmental impacts. In addition, Greer Road is a “dead end” road with no adequate turnaround. Emergency vehicle access and operating problems are particularly severe.

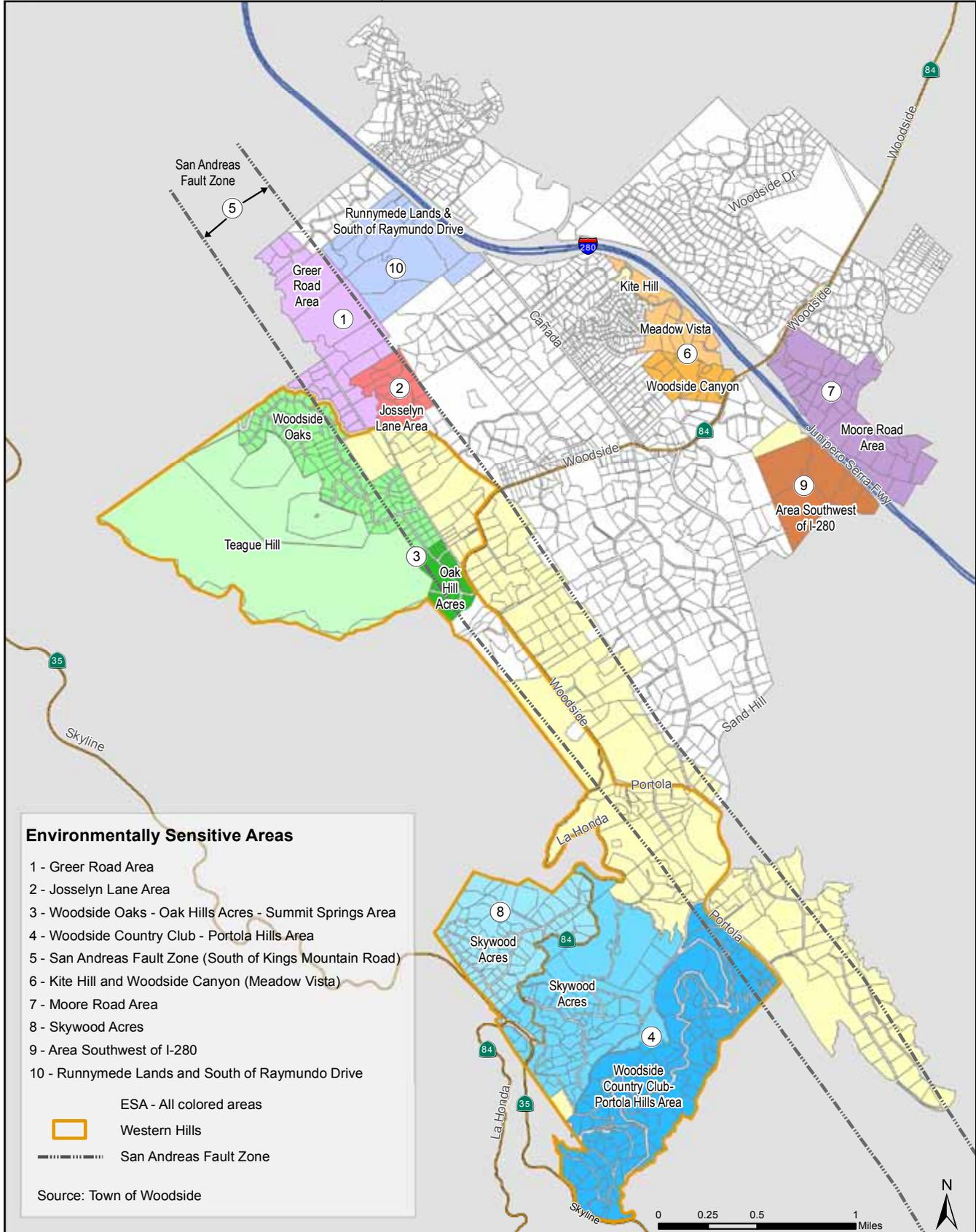


**This hillside and stream corridor are an example of an environmentally sensitive area.**



**1. Greer Road Area.**

### Map LU3: Western Hills and Environmentally Sensitive Areas





**2. Josselyn Lane Area.**

In addition to access problems, terrain and geologic hazards impose severe limitations on development. Although some improvements were made in 1975, water supply is deficient for fire protection. Potentially active traces of the San Andreas fault zone are mapped through the area, but fault investigations indicated that these traces do not exist in at least the southeast portion of this area.

## **2. JOSSELYN LANE AREA**

This area includes lands dependent upon Josselyn Lane for access. Access is poor. Narrow road width, poor alignment, and short curves impairing sight distance create hazards for all traffic, particularly for emergency vehicles. Water supply is substandard for both fire and domestic purposes through most of this area. Parts of this area have steep slopes with a high potential for landsliding, and an active trace of the San Andreas fault zone extends through this area. Most of the existing parcels are developed with residences.



**3. Summit Springs Road in the Woodside Oaks - Oak Hills Acres - Summit Springs Area.**

## **3. WOODSIDE OAKS - OAK HILLS ACRES - SUMMIT SPRINGS AREA**

This area divides into two parts: a lower part consisting of the Woodside Oaks and Oak Hill Acres subdivisions, with residences on most of the lots; and an upper part, Summit Springs, which is the 620 acre Teague Hill Open Space Preserve.

The existing subdivisions are characterized by lots that are too small for the terrain conditions, slope instability problems, and road and drainage problems due to the steep terrain and inadequate design and improvement in the original infrastructure development. This area has experienced more damage to private and public property from landslides than any other area of Town. Summit Springs Road, a public road, and Oak Hill Drive, a private road, present special problems because of excessively steep grades.

The 620 acre Teague Hill Open Space Preserve presents particularly difficult development problems because of steep terrain, slope stability problems, and excessively steep grades on Summit Springs Road and Oak Hill Drive, which are the only existing roads leading to the parcel. Improving access could be difficult as Oak Hill Drive is a private road. Heavily wooded, steep sided canyons divide the parcel into a number of separate parts.



**4. Woodside County Club-Portola Hills Area.**

## **4. WOODSIDE COUNTRY CLUB-PORTOLA HILLS AREA**

This area consists of all of the lands south of Woodside Road between Portola Road and Skyline Boulevard, except for the Phillip Road Subdivision and public lands. This area is characterized by problems of access, water supply, and slope instability. Most of this area was subdivided prior to 1920 and the road and small lot size present many problems. Except for Old La Honda Road, all roads are private. Although most of the parcels have been developed, some vacant parcels remain. In some cases, additional development may not be feasible because geologic hazards are coupled with other problems.

### 5. SAN ANDREAS FAULT ZONE (SOUTH OF KINGS MOUNTAIN ROAD)

This area is bounded on the southwest by Tripp and Woodside Roads and on the northeast by the active trace of the San Andreas fault zone. It includes the active (1906) trace and mapped potentially active traces of the San Andreas fault. Portions of this area are subject to flooding and some parts have a high water table and a potential for liquefaction. Several creeks flow through this area. (Also see the Natural Hazards and Safety Element.)



**5. South of Kings Mountain Road Area.**

### 6. KITE HILL AND WOODSIDE CANYON (MEADOW VISTA)

This area presents development problems because of limited access, steep terrain, potential slope instability, and identified landslides. The area is divided into two distinct parts by an inactive (bedrock) fault that separates serpentine and sandstone bedrock. It is an excellent example of differences in landscape character caused by underlying rock formations.

The less steep portion is a serpentine landscape area which supports an abundance of wildflowers and other plants which have adapted to the serpentine land. Prior to the construction of Interstate 280 (I-280), it was part of a large serpentine landscape area which included Open Space Lands Area No. 6 marked for Preservation of Natural Resources in the Open Space Element. Undisturbed serpentine landscape in the Bay Region is limited, therefore, special measures are appropriate to conserve the essential qualities of these areas. In 1978, a portion of this area was dedicated to the Town as a wildflower preserve, and the balance was subdivided (the Meadow Vista Subdivision). A major portion of the heavily wooded steep portion of this area sloping down to Redwood Creek is in the Scenic Corridor along I-280. Special measures should be taken to protect the visual qualities and to maintain vegetative cover to control erosion.



**6. Kite Hill.**

### 7. MOORE ROAD AREA

This area comprises lands dependent on Moore Road for access. It is constrained primarily because of noise exposure from I-280; and the narrowness of Moore Road, a private road which limits access for emergency equipment. A substantial part of the area is in the scenic corridor of I-280, which is designated as a Scenic Highway by the State. The traffic access and safety problems may not be severe for the existing developed properties, but it imposes restraints on subdivision and development of acreage properties which otherwise could be subdivided.



**7. Moore Road Area.**



**8. Skywood Acres.**

## 8. SKYWOOD ACRES

This area includes the lands north of State Highway 84, south of Wunderlich Park and east of Skyline Boulevard. The primary constraints to development in this area are steep slopes, potential landsliding, and poor surface and groundwater conditions. The general topography is steep and the hillsides are wooded. Existing landslides may reactivate under heavy precipitation or seismic shaking.

Other potential constraints include expansive surficial and bedrock materials. Concentrated runoff as a result of residential development may also lead to erosion problems on steep slopes. The Pilarcitos fault zone (inactive) runs north-south through the area. Alambique Creek flows west-east through the area.

## 9. AREA SOUTHWEST OF I-280

This six parcel area is approximately 130-acres and consists mostly of vacant land with one single-family home. The area is adjacent (southwest) to I-280, and approximately midway between Sand Hill Road and Woodside Road.

This area is characterized by steep slopes, deeply incised creek corridors and swampy areas, potential external and internal access problems (such as difficulty in crossing creeks and surmounting steep areas), potential slope instability, a high degree of visibility from the I-280 scenic corridor, and potential noise problems associated with vehicular traffic along the I-280 route. A development application (Sand Hills Estates) was approved in 2007 for the infrastructure improvements needed to develop the five underlying residential legal lots of record, including a private roadway, two bridges, a detention basin, and drainage improvements.



**9. Southwest of I-280 aerial photo.**

## 10. RUNNYMEDE LANDS AND SOUTH OF RAYMUNDO DRIVE

This area is located west of Runnymede Road and is in the I-280 scenic corridor. Portions of this area are exposed to high noise levels from the I-280 corridor. A significant portion of this area is undeveloped, featuring grasses, stands of oak, and gentle foothills.



**10. Runnymede Lands.**

## ADJACENT LANDS

Adjacent lands, those lands beyond Town limits but within Woodside's Planning Area (Map TF2), comprise private and public lands which are both developed and undeveloped. They provide a buffer or transition zone between Woodside and the surrounding areas; they contain important natural and aesthetic resources that contribute to Woodside's quality of life; or they have environmental constraints such as steep or unstable slopes which, if developed improperly, could adversely affect the area. Adjacent lands comprise half of the land area of the Woodside Planning Area, which is roughly 23 square miles.

For developed lands, any changes or intensification of land uses should be sensitive to the environmental conditions of the site and the surrounding area. For undeveloped lands, open space, agricultural, and equivalent land uses are most appropriate. Parklands should be maintained as open space as much as possible, and should provide for low-intensity recreational use. Intensity of recreational development, suitability of access, and sensitivity of the terrain should be considered in park planning. Jurisdictions in the subregion should participate in cooperative planning efforts to assure that all affected parties have early input on proposed development or planning decisions.

### AREAS OF INFLUENCE ASSIGNED TO THE TOWN

Adjacent lands within the sphere of influence of the Town are assigned by the San Mateo County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). Lands east of the municipal boundaries in this category are Stanford Lands. Stanford Lands include Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve and Searsville Marsh, part of the Stanford Linear Accelerator (SLAC), and The Horse Park at Woodside (also known as Guernsey Field). Stanford's 2004 Land Use by Function Map designates Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve as "Open Space," SLAC as "Institutional or Public Facility," and Horse Park at Woodside as "Agricultural/Academic Preserve."

Stanford lands have important aesthetic and natural resource value to Woodside and the surrounding area. Lands west of I-280 along Sand Hill Road serve as a visual gateway to the rural setting of Woodside and the hills beyond. Preservation of these resources is encouraged. Town comments on changes proposed by Stanford should take preservation of these resources into account. Recreational, agricultural, or equivalent uses are encouraged for these areas.

Lands west of the municipal boundaries in this category are:

- The Phleger Property (Open Space Area No. 22, Open Space Element);
- Bear Gulch Watershed (Open Space Area No. 1, Open Space Element);
- Huddart Park (Open Space Area No. 17, Open Space Element);
- Bear Gulch Road Area (Open Space Area No. 24, Open Space Element);
- Cañada College (see Institutional section in this Element); and,
- Wunderlich Park (Open Space Area No. 23, Open Space Element).



**Searsville Lake, located adjacent to Woodside.**



**Adjacent lands are primarily natural and have low-intensity recreational uses.**



**Stanford Linear Accelerator in the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, located east of Woodside.**

## AREAS WITHIN OTHER INCORPORATED JURISDICTIONS OR THEIR SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

Adjacent lands outside of Woodside’s sphere of influence include:

- Bear Gulch Reservoir, within the Town of Atherton;
- Stanford Lands east of I-280, within the City of Menlo Park;
- Edgewood County Park, within the Town; and, Redwood City’s sphere of influence.

Lands in the unincorporated area of San Mateo County not assigned to any sphere of influence include:

- Lands west of Skyline; and,
- San Francisco Watershed Lands.

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING ORDINANCE

The General Plan designates land uses in general, long-term categories. In addition, the zoning code (Chapter 153 of the Woodside Municipal Code) designates specific allowable uses of land. The zoning code is the primary means of implementing a General Plan, and prescribes the specific allowed uses and development standards for each zoning designation. State law requires that the General Plan and zoning ordinance be consistent. Table LU1 below lists existing General Plan and zoning designation pairings in Town.

**Table LU1: Relationship Between General Plan and Zoning**

General Plan Land Use Designation:	Zoning Designation:
"C", Commercial	"CC", Community Commercial
"IN", Institutional, Public & Quasi-Public	"R-1", Residential "SR", Suburban Residential
"OS", Open Space	"OSH", Open Space for Health and Safety "OSN", Open Space for Preservation of Natural Resources "OSM", Open Space for Managed Production of Natural Resources "OSRL", Open Space for Low Intensity Outdoor Recreation "OSRM", Open Space for Medium Intensity Outdoor Recreation "SCP-10", 10 Acre Minimum
"OS-ESA", Open Space/Environmentally Sensitive	"OSN" "OSRL" "SCP-10", 10 Acre Minimum
"R", Residential	"R-1", Residential "SR", Suburban Residential "RR", Rural Residential
"R-ESA", Residential/Environmentally Sensitive	"SCP-5", Special Conservation Planning, 5 Acre Minimum "SCP-7.5", 7.5 Acre Minimum "SCP-10", 10 Acre Minimum "RR", Rural Residential*
"U", Utility	"SR", Suburban Residential

Limited to three specific parcels.

**Table LU2: Zoning Districts**

<b>Commercial Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Minimum Lot Size</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
"CC", Community Commercial		
<b>Residential Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Minimum Lot Size</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
"R-1", Residential	20,000 square feet or larger	To provide a higher intensity of suburban residential uses and to acknowledge a land use pattern which existed prior to the incorporation of the Town.
"SR", Suburban Residential	1 acre or larger	To provide for suburban land or uses within the Town's predominantly rural setting.
"RR", Rural Residential	3 acres or larger	To preserve the Town's primarily rural, single family character.
"SCP-5", Special Conservation Planning - 5	5 Acres or Larger	To provide for reduced human densities for lands with such characteristics as steep hillsides, geologic hazards, difficult road access, and soil and water problems.
"SCP-7.5", Special Conservation Planning - 7.5	7.5 acres or larger	To provide for reduced human densities for lands with such characteristics as steep hillsides, geologic hazards, difficult road access, and soil and water problems. The SCP-7.5 district has a greater number of constraints than the SCP-5 district.
"SCP-10", Special Conservation Planning - 10	10 acres or larger	To provide for reduced human densities for lands with such characteristics as steep hillsides, geologic hazards, difficult road access, and soil and water problems. The SCP-10 district has a greater number of constraints than the SCP-7.5 district.
<b>Open Space Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Minimum Lot Size</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
"OSH", Open Space for Health and Safety	None	To implement the policies of the Open Space Element, principally to open space for the preservation of natural resources, outdoor recreation, and public health and safety.
"OSN", Open Space for Preservation of Natural Resources	None	Same as above.
"OSM", Open Space for Managed Production of Resources	None	Same as above
"OSRL", Open Space for Low Intensity Outdoor Recreation	None	Same as above
"OSRM", Open Space for Medium Intensity Outdoor Recreation	None	Same as above

---

# GOAL LU1

Preserve and enhance Woodside as a scenic, rural residential community.

---

The goal of the Land Use Element is to:

1. Preserve and enhance Woodside as a scenic, rural residential community;
2. Protect and enhance the unique character of the Town;
3. Preserve the natural environment of the Town and minimize disturbance of the natural terrain;
4. Preserve the visual resources of the community, including important vistas, such as those of the western hillsides as seen from the valley below, and those of the valley as seen from the hillsides;
5. Protect persons and property from unreasonable exposure to hazards which may occur in the local environment, such as fire, flood, unstable ground, erosion and earthquakes;
6. Preserve the natural hillsides and wooded areas as much as possible so that persons traveling through the Town perceive the effect of development as rural and natural; and,
7. Limit commercial uses to services and facilities which meet the day-to-day needs of residents.

## **POLICY LU1.1 – GIVE HIGH PRIORITY TO PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

Preserve and conserve the Town's natural resources by subordinating development to the land, employing conservation best management practices, and acquiring conservation and open space easements. Valuable natural features, such as streams and stream corridors, scenic corridors, woodlands, meadowlands, ridge tops and hill tops, and significant stands of trees, shall be preserved and protected through imaginative planning, good conservation practices and, where appropriate, the dedication of open space, conservation, or scenic easements. Stream corridors, ponds, and wetlands must

be kept free of structures and maintained in a natural condition, except for erosion and flood control measures and other uses beneficial to the water regimen.

### Strategies:

#### **a. Residential Design Guidelines**

Revise the Residential Design Guidelines to encourage or require concept and site planning review prior to submittal of a development proposal for entitlement.

#### **b. Update Regulations**

Review and update the Woodside Municipal Code definition of stream corridor to address hydrology, riparian vegetation, and geomorphic conditions.

#### **c. Dedication of Easements**

Support and encourage the voluntary dedication of easements for open space, conservation, scenic resources, and trails.

## **POLICY LU1.2 - LIMIT INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT**

Property shall be developed with minimum disturbance to the natural terrain. The natural environment and rural character of the Town should be retained or restored as much as possible, including measures to:

1. Retain open space;
2. Decrease land use intensity on steep hillsides and the mountainous areas where it is necessary to limit storm runoff, prevent increased erosion, avoid natural hazards, protect vegetation and watersheds, and maintain scenic qualities;
3. Minimize grading and alteration of natural land forms;
4. Manage intensity of use of individual parcels and buildings by considering health and safety, impacts on adjoining properties from noise, traffic, night lighting, or other disturbing conditions, and protection of natural land characteristics;

5. Limit principal uses and accessory uses to those which can be accommodated without encroaching upon areas identified in the Open Space element of this Plan for conservation of natural resources, general open spaces, or upon areas that present hazards for the type of use and occupancy accommodated on the parcel; and,
6. Encourage the maintenance of livestock, particularly horses, as an important component of the rural character of the Town.

### Strategies:

#### a. Update Regulations

Review and update the Woodside Municipal Code requirements for consistency with Policy LU1.2, including:

1. Natural State;
2. Grading/Slope;
3. Land Use Intensity; and,
4. Development Standards.

#### b. Encourage the Keeping of Livestock

Review and update the Woodside Municipal Code and Residential Design Guidelines to encourage the keeping of livestock, particularly horses.

## POLICY LU1.3 - MAINTAIN COMMUNITY AESTHETICS

New development will be reviewed for conformity with design policies, including;

1. Site and Structure Relationship

Structures should be designed to be subordinate to the natural environment, responsive to site constraints, and compatible with the rural character of the community. Large, bulky structures should be discouraged, particularly if they are visible from the road. All building designs should conform to the topography and scale of the land and should not be silhouetted against the

skyline as viewed from any Town or State scenic road. The visual impact of the structure should be mitigated either through minimizing building bulk or increasing setbacks. In general, hillside structures should be designed to step down the natural hillside in order to achieve a low building profile and minimize grading.

#### 2. Colors and Materials

Encourage the use of fire-safe, natural, and natural appearing materials. Exterior colors shall blend with the surrounding natural landscape by using earth tones or natural finishes.

#### 3. Landscaping

Landscaping should be designed to complement the natural attributes of the site, rather than relied upon to reduce the visual impacts of inappropriately designed and scaled structures. Avoid linear planting which can result in green fences and walls. Natural vegetation should dominate, and the use of drought-tolerant and native plants is strongly encouraged. Fences should be wildlife-friendly and avoid creating visual walls and tunnel effects along roadways. Landscaping plans and materials should be informal in character and provide smooth transitions between buildings, parking lots, adjacent roadways, and open areas.

#### 4. Utilities

Utility lines and other infrastructure should be installed to minimize visual and environmental impacts.

### Strategies:

#### a. Residential Design Guidelines

Revise the Residential Design Guidelines, Specific Plans, and Area Plans to provide clear direction on designing development projects of a size and scale appropriate to the site. Site planning, architectural design, colors, materials, and landscaping should be in keeping with the rural aesthetic, and should also reflect new fire and green building regulations.

---

### **b. Scenic corridor architectural standards**

Continue to enforce the Town's architectural standards by which:

1. All buildings and building sites located on visible ridge-lines are subject to architectural review.
2. No building may be located on a ridge where the building will be silhouetted against the sky.
3. All designs for structures visible from any scenic corridor must be of a mass and scale which subordinates structures to the site. Landscape patterns shall be informal and complement the natural setting.
4. No building sites or grading are permitted on steep slopes unless no practical alternative exists.
5. All visible grading must be contour-graded to blend with the adjacent land form.
6. Building materials and colors must be in harmony with the adjacent land forms and native vegetation. Finished structures shall have the appearance of receding into the natural background.
7. All structures must be set back a minimum of 200 feet from the edge of the State scenic road right-of-way.
8. A significant amount of a sloping building site must remain in a natural state. The steeper the slope, the greater the area to remain in a natural state.

### **c. Fence and Gate Design**

Adopt guidelines which address the environmental and aesthetic impacts of fence and gate design, with particular attention to: fencing along roads and trails, perimeter fencing, fencing in riparian areas, fencing around pools and athletic courts, livestock fencing, security fencing, and gates and pylons.

### **d. Code Compliance**

Continue the Town's code compliance program to ensure neighborhood preservation.

## **POLICY LU1.4 – EMPHASIZE RESIDENTIAL LAND USES CONSISTENT WITH RURAL ENVIRONMENT**

Residential lands are intended for a main dwelling as the principal use of a parcel, together with uses and structures customarily accessory to it. Accessory uses should be subordinate to the main residence and be in keeping with the rural residential quality of the community. Accessory living quarters within the main dwelling, or in a separate structure, are appropriate on larger parcels.

The following also are compatible uses in residential areas: (a) conservation of natural resources; (b) agricultural pursuits; (c) horse trails, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and roads for local circulation; (d) utility lines and facilities necessary to serve the community; (e) low intensity recreational uses; and (f) low intensity institutional uses. All such uses should have adequate on-site parking, traffic access, and utilities. Adverse off-site impacts on neighboring residences and the surrounding community shall be avoided.

### **Strategies:**

#### **a. Update Regulations**

Review and update the Woodside Municipal Code requirements for large house size exceptions and number of allowable accessory structures on a single parcel.

## **POLICY LU1.5 – THOROUGHLY EVALUATE CHANGES TO PARCEL BOUNDARIES**

### **1. Land Divisions**

Land division opportunities in Woodside are limited, and require environmental review to ensure adherence to all applicable State regulations, such as Subdivision Map Act and the California Environmental Quality Act; and local regulations, such as subdivision development standards and zoning, and the development potential of the parcels in light of site constraints. At a minimum, an Initial Study, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), shall be prepared by Town staff for all land division proposals.

The number of lots permitted in a land division is dependent on the characteristics of the area, as well as the minimum lot area required by the Woodside Municipal Code. Lots shall be adequate in size and appropriate in shape for the range of accessory uses which are potentially allowed without creating a feeling of overcrowding, negative environmental impacts, or the need for variances.

Visibility of structures, preservation of natural land form and vegetation, topography, noise exposure, maintenance of rural quality, zoning, and the relationship to surrounding properties shall be considered in preparing land division designs. Land division density, or number of lots, will ultimately be determined by these and other factors. The designation of building envelopes shall be required on final maps.

In the review of new land divisions, particular attention shall be given to soils and geological problems in order to avoid the creation of unstable building sites.

Division of property containing existing structures of cultural or aesthetic merit shall be carefully conceived to preserve the integrity of original “core” estate buildings, grounds, and heritage trees.

## 2. Lot Line Adjustments

Although land division proposals are rare in Woodside, lot line adjustment applications are more common. Lot line adjustments can result in new development opportunities which would not exist without boundary adjustments. Given that these proposals most typically occur in steep hillside areas, CEQA review is required. Care should be taken in reviewing and approving such proposals to avoid incompatibility with neighborhood character.

## 3. Lot Mergers

Lot merger applications in Town are most typically used to combine underlying legal lots of record which have been, or will be, used as one residential property. This

is encouraged. The Municipal Code currently does not provide for a voluntary lot merger process. Occasionally lot merger applications are submitted to create new development opportunities and should be evaluated in light of the policies expressed herein.

## Strategies:

### a. Update Regulations

Review and update the lot line adjustment and lot merger regulations of the Municipal Code to: (1) address unintended, increased, and inappropriate development potential; and, (2) include a process for voluntary lot mergers.

## POLICY LU1.6 - EMPHASIZE COMMERCIAL LAND USES WHICH SERVE THE DAY-TO-DAY NEEDS OF THE RESIDENTS

Each commercial establishment should be on a site which is adequate to accommodate all buildings, landscaping, storage for waste disposal, on-site truck loading, and off-road parking, except where joint use arrangements are authorized to substitute for on-site facilities. Intensity of use of a site should be limited to that which is compatible with adjoining uses and in keeping with the rural character of Woodside. Uses should not generate traffic in excess of the capacity of the circulation system. Buildings should be of moderate size and scale, and designed and constructed of materials compatible with the residential scale and rural character of the community.

Sites should be landscaped attractively. Trees and other planting should be used to shield adjacent residential developments from activities on commercial properties. Native plants should be used where practicable. Night lighting in commercial areas should provide for safety and identification, and should be of low intensity, shielded from the view of passing traffic and adjacent residential areas.

---

Sites should be designated and developed to provide safe, convenient, pleasant access for equestrians, pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Parking spaces should be grouped in moderate sized areas, and located close to the enterprises they serve. Traffic patterns shall be efficient and safe. Bicycle parking should be provided by commercial enterprises when feasible and appropriate.

### Strategies:

---

#### **a. Local-Serving Commercial**

Develop a collaborative strategy to encourage convenience, retail, and personal services uses meeting the day-to-day needs of the Town residents over office and administrative uses.

#### **b. Update Area Plans**

Update the Town Center and Skylonda Center Area Plans to include specific recommendations for circulation, including: provisions for multiple modes of transportation: equestrians, pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists; parking; community gathering space; public art; and landscaping improvements.

#### **c. Update Regulations**

Consider revisions to the Municipal Code to allow a limited number of small bed and breakfast facilities in the Commercial areas. Boarding houses, inns, bed and breakfast facilities, hotels and motels are not currently allowed uses in Town.

Review and consider revisions to the Commercial Parking Standards.

### **POLICY LU1.7 - LIMIT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS TO THOSE REQUIRED FOR THE WELL-BEING OF THE COMMUNITY**

Institutional uses should be limited to those which provide a non-commercial service or facility for local residents and contribute to the general well-being of the community. The intensity of use of an institutional site should be limited to that which is compatible with adjoining uses, and in keeping with the rural character of Woodside. Institutional uses should not generate excessive noise or traffic. Institutional buildings should be of a size and scale compatible with the rural residential atmosphere of the community.

Sites should be landscaped attractively. Trees and other plantings should be considered to shield adjacent residential developments from activities on institutional properties. Native plants shall be used where practicable. In particular, parking areas should be screened from view from roads and adjacent residential properties. Institutions shall have access from arterial roads.

### **POLICY LU1.8 - ENCOURAGE AND PLAN PARKS AND RECREATION IN KEEPING WITH THE RURAL SETTING**

Parks and recreational areas and facilities, when needed, shall be planned, developed, and used in a manner which is in keeping with their rural setting and compatible with uses on adjacent lands. Use of park and recreation areas shall be controlled to limit noise and motor vehicular traffic both internally and externally. Recreation areas shall be located and designed so that access by pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists is encouraged.

Natural open space recreation land within the Planning Area should be carefully managed and uses controlled to ensure that vegetation, soil, wildlife, and visual qualities are protected and, where possible, enhanced. The concepts and principles of the Conservation Element should be observed in park use and management.

It is Town policy to utilize volunteers and private funds in combination with public funds for acquisition, maintenance, and operation of recreation facilities. Public recreation facilities and programs should be considered when there is a clear demand to supplement private facilities and programs. Local recreational programs shall be responsive to the needs of residents.

The Town shall coordinate and partner with public schools to make their facilities available for public recreation activities in addition to school uses.

#### Strategies:

##### **a. Recreation Program**

Continue providing recreational programs that meet the needs of Woodside residents.

##### **b. Cooperative Efforts**

1. The Town should continue its cooperation with the Woodside Elementary School District in the provision of recreational facilities.
2. The Town should continue its cooperation with San Mateo County in planning for the future use of Wunderlich Park, Huddart, and Edgewood Parks.
3. The Town of Woodside should continue its cooperation with the City of San Francisco in planning for limited low impact recreational use, such as trails, of the San Francisco watershed lands.

## POLICY LU1.9 - MONITOR AND PARTICIPATE IN THE PLANNING ACTIVITIES OF ADJACENT LANDS

The Woodside Planning Area is an urban/wildland interface area that provides important natural and aesthetic resources to the Town of Woodside and local area. The Town of Woodside should monitor and participate in the planning activities of adjacent lands to encourage preservation of the natural environment and conservation of natural resources.

#### Strategies:

##### **a. Cooperative Planning Efforts**

The Town should continue to participate in cooperative planning efforts, such as with County Parks and Stanford University, to assure that all affected parties have early input on any proposed development.

## POLICY LU1.10 – MAINTAIN DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Maintain demographic data to adequately assess land use needs, such as housing, commercial services, private and public institutions, and parks and recreation.

#### Strategies:

##### **a. Town Website**

Maintain Town demographic data on the Town website as appropriate.

##### **b. Data Bases**

Maintain current demographic data from sources such as the United States Census and the Association of Bay Area Governments.