

Town of Portola Valley General Plan

Land Use Element

Last amended March 11, 2015

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Land Use Element

Introduction

- 2100 The land use element sets forth guidelines for land occupancy and describes the location and distribution aspects of land uses. Land use interrelationships and land use circulation relationships are also defined.
- 2101 Land use proposals in the plan include those for residential areas, those for community facilities and services, and those for region-serving facilities. For the purposes of this plan, all land uses are discussed separately in the following sections: residential areas; parks, recreation areas and open spaces; commercial and research - administrative areas; institutions; and public facilities and services. In these sections, objectives, principles, and standards are given, followed by a description of the plan proposals.

General Objectives

- 2102
1. To provide for residential uses and related facilities and services that will preserve and enhance the quality of living enjoyed by local residents.
 2. To maintain the natural character of the planning area and to provide for limited park, recreation and open space uses in appropriate scenic areas where the uses will be compatible with the maintenance of the residential nature and quality of the planning area.
 3. To minimize the need for non-local traffic to penetrate the planning area.
 4. To minimize consumption of energy from non-renewable sources and to encourage the use of renewable energy sources while preserving the scenic and aesthetic qualities of the area.

5. To encourage and, where appropriate, require the conservation of water in new and existing developments and buildings.
6. To ensure that development in areas subject to geologic, fire and flooding hazards is controlled so that people and structures are not exposed to unacceptable levels of risk.

General Principles

- 2103
1. The planning area should have the low intensity of development which is appropriate to its location on the fringe of the urban area of the Peninsula and should provide a transition between urban densities of adjoining communities and non-intensive land uses west of the skyline.
 2. Uses of land should include homes, open spaces, agricultural pursuits and such other private, office and commercial uses as are required to serve the frequent needs of local residents.
 3. In addition to uses serving primarily local residents, public, private and limited commercial recreational facilities serving a broader area would be appropriate in locations on the periphery of the planning area but so located as not to encourage traffic through the town.
 4. Those public and private facilities such as schools, parks, churches, public buildings, stores and offices which serve all or a major portion of the planning area should be grouped in readily accessible centers to the greatest extent permitted by site and location requirements of the individual facilities.
 5. In any development within the planning area, full consideration should be given to the geologic conditions so that development on unstable land can be avoided or minimized.
 - 5.1. In areas subject to flooding, including those identified in the safety element, development shall be precluded or designed to minimize risk.
 6. In order to maintain the rural atmosphere of Portola Valley, all buildings should be subordinate to their natural surroundings in size, scale and siting. Monumental buildings should be avoided.
 7. Non-residential buildings should generally be of small or moderate size and, where groups of buildings are used, connected by plazas, terraces, porches, arcades, canopies or roofs to provide a pleasant environment and safety and shelter to pedestrians.

8. In order to help minimize the adverse effects of higher intensity uses upon lower intensity uses, landscaping areas of primarily native plants appropriate to the site should be provided. Such buffers should be of a size and design that will provide an effective visual buffer.
9. In all developments in the planning area, full consideration should be given to fire protection needs, including those identified in the safety element, and adequate measures should be taken to ensure that these needs are met.
 - 9.1. Development should be limited in areas when fire risk cannot be reduced to an acceptable level and adequate emergency access cannot be provided. Also, recognizing fire protection measures could have adverse effects on native vegetation, development should be configured to minimize damage as well as fire hazard.
10. The rate of development and location of projects should not exceed the capacity of the town, special districts and utility companies to provide all needed services and facilities in an orderly and economic manner.
11. Conservation of energy from non-renewable sources should be considered in the design, improvement, reconstruction and remodeling of buildings.
12. The use of passive and active solar energy should be encouraged in the siting, design and construction of buildings.
13. Where feasible, development proposals should incorporate unified planning for the largest land area practically possible in order to preserve open space, conserve unique natural features of the area, allow logical extensions of the trail and paths system, maximize the opportunities for controlling the extent and impacts of development and otherwise help ensure the application of good land use planning principles.
14. Grading shall normally be the minimum necessary to accommodate development; however, in those instances where increased grading can provide for greater compatibility of development with the natural setting and not cause significant adverse effects on the environment, such grading shall be preferred.
15. For all new developments within the planning area, full consideration shall be given to the fiscal ability of the town and other affected local governmental agencies to provide essential services. When fiscal impact will exceed tax revenue to be generated, provisions may be made to require off-setting fiscal impact fees.

16. In the planning, design, construction and operation of development within the planning area, water conservation should be a high priority.
17. In all new developments, the undergrounding of utilities should be considered a high priority.

Residential Areas

Objectives

- 2104
1. To assure that all building sites and residences are developed in a manner minimizing disturbance to natural terrain and vegetation and maximizing preservation of natural beauty and open space.
 2. To organize residential areas in a manner providing maximum convenience in the daily use of local facilities such as parks, recreation area, commercial facilities and access to major roads, consistent with the attainment of other objectives stated within the general plan.
 3. To provide for the grouping or clustering of residential buildings where this will maximize the opportunity to preserve natural beauty, habitat and open space without generally increasing the intensity of development otherwise possible.
 4. To maintain the present character of established residential areas.
 5. To control the occupancy of parcels so as to:
 - a. Prevent overcrowding of dwellings.
 - b. Insure that occupancy of land and dwellings will be in balance with service facilities such as on-site parking, traffic capacity of access streets and capacity of utilities such as water and sewage disposal.
 - c. Insure against adverse impact on neighboring residences.
 - d. Fix responsibility for use, occupancy and conduct on the premises in relation to town standards and requirements. That is, on each parcel and in each main dwelling, someone must be "in charge" as owners or tenant of the owner.

Principles

- 2105
1. Lands indicated for residential use on the comprehensive plan diagram should be used primarily for residential living, a use of land characterized by a single household occupying a main detached dwelling as the principal use of a parcel, together with uses and structures customarily accessory to a main dwelling in a rural residential community.
 2. In addition to other accessory uses and structures, accessory living quarters within the main dwelling or in a separate structure should be deemed an appropriate accessory use on parcels large enough and under conditions adequate to insure the objectives cited in Sec. 2104.5 are met. Specific limits on accessory living quarters should be included in the zoning ordinances.
 - 2.1. Agricultural uses are encouraged as interim or long-term uses in residentially designated areas provided they are compatible with nearby nonagricultural uses and do not result in the significant degradation of the natural environment.
 3. Population densities within the planning area should be guided by considerations of topography, geology, vegetative cover, access to transportation and services, fire hazards, emergency access, impact on pre-existing residential development and other factors such as:
 - a. The highest densities should be located on relatively level land close to local shopping and service areas, other local facilities and transportation facilities. Densities should decrease as the distance from these facilities increases.
 - b. Population density should decrease as steepness of terrain increases.
 - c. The lowest densities and largest lots should be located on the steepest hillsides on which the town allows development and in mountainous areas where it is necessary to limit storm runoff, prevent erosion, preserve existing vegetation, protect watersheds, avoid potentially unstable ground and maintain the scenic quality of the terrain.
 4. Steep slopes, potentially unstable ground, canyons and ravines should be left undisturbed as residential open space preserves.
 - 4.1 When residences are grouped or clustered in areas where intensity standards require one acre or more per dwelling unit:

- a. Each residence should have substantial direct frontage on a common open space of sufficient size to convey a feeling of being on the edge of a large and significant open space.
 - b. Clusters should generally consist of a small number of detached residences, and each cluster should be well-separated from adjacent clusters rather than interconnected in a linear form.
5. On tree covered buildable slopes, development should be designed to preserve groves of trees as well as individual trees and native understory to the maximum extent possible.
6. (Not used.)
7. To the extent feasible, all structures (including residences) should complement and blend in with the natural setting of the planning area; and to this end, the following principles should be adhered to:
 - a. Structures may be located in existing tree covered areas to the extent possible and still be consistent with slope, geologic and related conditions and the need to preserve locally unique or especially beautiful wooded areas.
 - b. Largely bare slopes and sparsely wooded ridges visible from large portions of the town or planning area should be kept free of structures to the maximum extent possible.
 - c. If development does take place on highly visible barren slopes or ridges, it must be unobtrusive and of a scale and design to maintain the character of the natural setting, and with required planting of native trees and plants where appropriate.
8. In all residential areas of the town, or its spheres of influence, particular attention must be given to the effects of approaching the maximum amount of development permitted on individual parcels. The cumulative effect of buildout under appropriate ordinances and policies should be examined and steps taken to ensure that its effect will not be injurious to the unique and desirable characteristics of each area. Overall development levels as measured by floor area ratios and impervious surfaces should be limited so as to preserve the rural setting.
9. To the extent feasible, the design of subdivisions should retain a representative composition of habitats on the site and their interrelationships.

10. Residential development should not occur in areas subject to flooding as shown on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps issued under the National Flood Insurance Program by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Standards.

2106 Residential areas are shown in ~~eight~~four-land use intensity categories, as described below in the table and text:

<u>Residential Category</u>	<u>Intensity in Dwelling Units per Acre (du/a)</u>
<u>Gateway</u>	<u>10-20 du/a</u>
<u>Multi-Family – Medium</u>	<u>3-20 10-20 du/a</u>
<u>Mixed-use Residential</u>	<u>4-6 du/a</u>
<u>Multi-Family – Low</u>	<u>2-4 du/a</u>
<u>Low-medium</u>	<u>>1 du/a</u>
<u>Low</u>	<u>.5 - 1 du/a, on average</u>
<u>Conservation Residential</u>	
<u>a. Existing Development</u>	<u>.25 - .5 du/a</u>
<u>b. Undeveloped Lands</u>	<u>.111 - .5 du/a</u>
<u>Open Residential</u>	<u>.333 - .0555, for slopes from 0% to 50%</u>

1. Gateway – Existing developed and undeveloped areas where density is no more than twenty dwelling units per acre. These areas are generally geologically stable, in relatively level terrain, and have good accessibility.
2. Multi-family – Medium—Existing developed areas where density is no more than twenty dwelling units per acre. These areas are generally geologically stable, in relatively level terrain, and have good accessibility.
3. Mixed-use—Existing developed areas where density is no more than six dwelling units per acre. These areas are generally geologically stable, in relatively level terrain, and have good accessibility.

4. Multi-family - Low—Existing developed areas where density is no more than four dwelling units per acre. These areas are generally geologically stable, in relatively level terrain, and have good accessibility.

Opt-In Housing Program Rezoning – low density – This program will permit a maximum of 12 units during the 2023-2031 Housing Element cycle to be developed as up to four units on single family lots meeting prescribed screening criteria.

5. Low-medium—Existing developed areas where net residential land area per housing unit is less than 1 acre.

62. Low—Existing developed areas where net residential land area per housing unit averages from 1 to 2 acres. These areas are generally geologically stable, in only moderately steep terrain, and have good accessibility.

73. Conservation-Residential—Includes:

- a. Existing developed areas where net residential land area per housing unit averages from 2 to 4 acres.
- b. Relatively accessible undeveloped lands with few to considerable potential geologic instabilities. To be developed with a slope-intensity standard whereby the net residential land area per housing unit increases from 2 acres on level to 9 acres on slopes of 50 percent or greater.

84. Open Residential—Relatively inaccessible sparsely developed and undeveloped areas generally with extreme geologic instabilities and steep slopes. Fire hazards are often high and erosion potential great. These areas are often also of ecologic, scenic or historic importance. To be developed with a slope-intensity standard whereby the net residential land area per housing unit increases from 3 acres on level land to 18 acres on slopes of 50 percent or greater.

Additionally, the Housing Element establishes a Supportive Housing Overlay for 4394 Alpine Road to provide flexibility for the potential development of supportive housing at that site.

2106a Portions of some of these residential areas are classified as “residential open space preserves.” These preserves possess one or more of the following characteristics: slopes, canyons and ravines generally in excess of 30% in slope, unstable lands, lands of significant scenic value to the town, historic resources, riparian environments, and lands inaccessible without traversing potentially unstable lands. To the maximum extent possible, these preserves should be kept free of structures

and left in a natural condition with respect to terrain and vegetation. New residential subdivisions should provide for the clustering of residences outside of residential open space preserves so that these areas are left undisturbed for visual enjoyment and limited local use. However, on lands also shown as open residential, residences might be appropriate, if clustering is not possible, if acceptable development standards for access, utilities and geologic stability can be met, and if scenic qualities and historic features are preserved. Low intensity recreation uses would be appropriate in residential open space preserves, and drainage and erosion control measures should be undertaken where necessary.

2106b The slope-intensity standards for the conservation residential and open residential categories recognize in part the overall problems of the development in areas with potential geologic instabilities. However, the intensity of development in individual developments should be further reduced as necessary to reflect specific geologic conditions encountered, to minimize significant visual impacts, to preserve scenic qualities and historic features, and to avoid high fire hazards and inadequate emergency access.

2106c Residential development and related improvements should be permitted only where geologic stability meets the standards of the town for the specific uses.

2106d Land use intensities may be increased beyond those specified in this section in accordance with provisions for the inclusionary [lot program adopted by ordinance by the Town Council and Policy 2, Program 2-1 of the specified in Section 2478 of the Housing Element](#).

~~2106e Population densities are a function of the number of housing units per acre and the number of persons per housing unit. Based on the 1990 U.S. Census, the average persons per household unit in the town was approximately 2.6. Applying this average to the land use intensity categories (typical land area per dwelling or housing unit) of the general plan, and assuming one household per housing unit, the following typical anticipated population densities are derived (Persons/Acre):~~

~~**Residential Category Acres/HU Persons/Acre**~~

~~Low medium less than 1 2.6 plus~~

~~Low 1 2 2.6 1.3~~

~~Conservation Residential 2 4 1.3 0.65~~

~~Open Residential more than 4 less than 0.65~~

~~Where geologic conditions limit development on properties, these densities will be less.~~

~~Second units, where permitted, may increase densities; however, based on Section 2487, it would appear the increase would not exceed 15%–30%.~~

~~Densities in multiple family affordable housing, as provided for in Section 2482, may be greater than the densities in the above table as a result of there being more housing units. Such densities, however, shall not exceed 3 times the densities stipulated in the above table.~~

Description

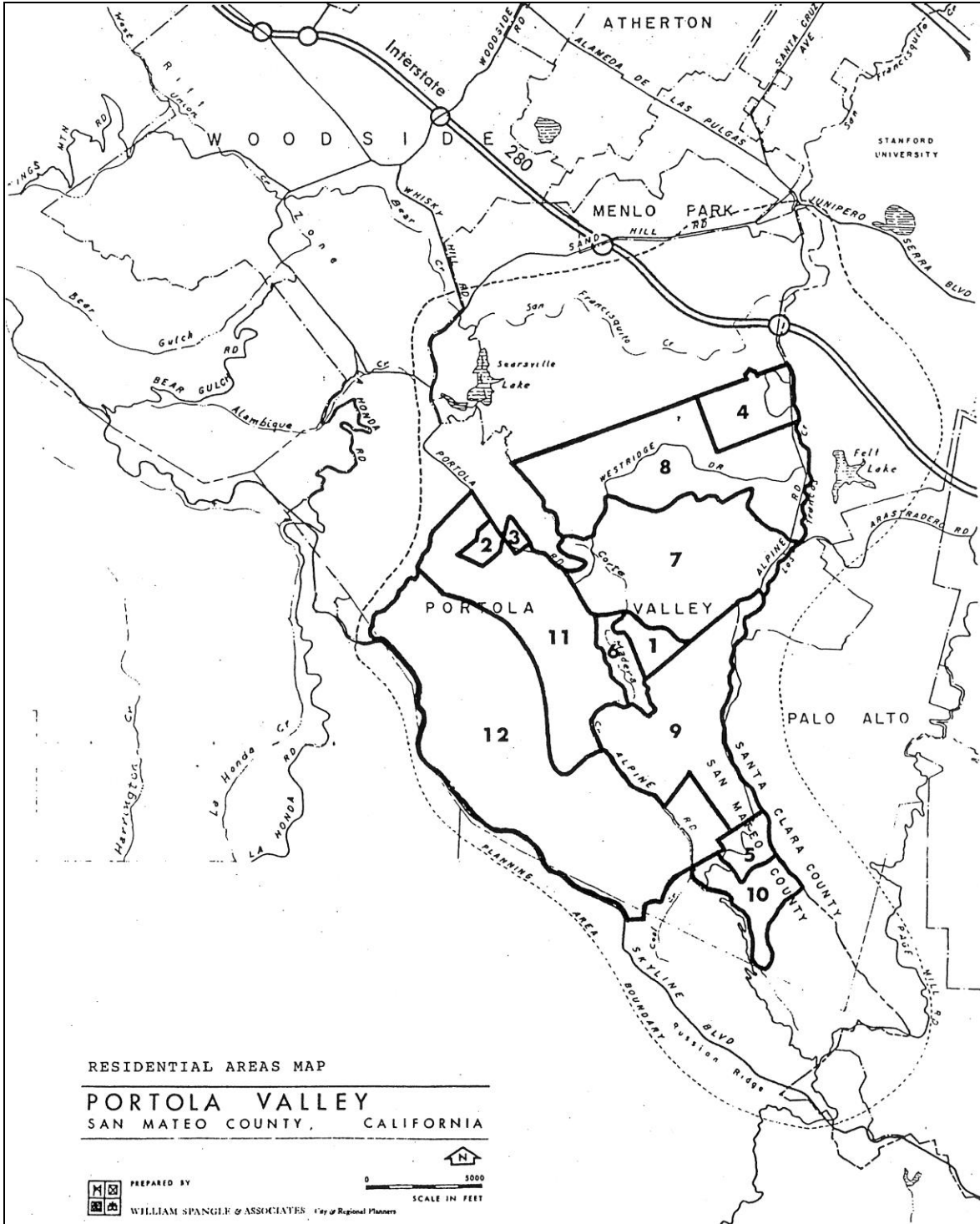
- 2107 Residential areas of low intensities are the predominant land use proposed in this general plan. ~~Eight~~Four categories of residential land use intensities are indicated. The multi-family – medium, mixed use, multi-family - low, low-medium and low intensities are restricted to areas of existing development. The conservation residential intensity is assigned to less steep land close to community and circulation facilities and existing development. The open residential intensity is applied to most undeveloped lands which have generally rugged topography, scenic qualities or historic features, are further from community facilities and major circulation routes, and have extreme geologic instabilities. These several residential intensities are generally similar to and compatible with intensities existing and proposed for most areas adjacent to the planning area.
- 2107a In addition to the ~~eight~~four residential land use intensities described in Section 2107 above, possible residential land uses are indicated in Section 6100, Nathorst Triangle Area Plan, and Section 6300, Town Center Area Plan. These sections should be consulted to determine the recommended residential land use intensities ~~and population densities~~ for these areas.
- 2108 Land use intensity standards provide a guide for the intensity of residential development within which considerable flexibility remains as to design solutions. They indicate the maximum number of housing units to be permitted on a given piece of land but do not prescribe type of design in relation to a minimum lot standard. Specific conditions may require lower intensities.
- 2109 Superimposed upon the residential land use indicated on the comprehensive plan diagram is a tree symbol representing residential open space preserve. The residential open space preserve should be primarily a permanent open space, but should in addition accommodate a variety of recreational uses well suited to the natural terrain and which preserve the continuity of native vegetation. Such uses include riding and hiking trails, informal play areas, scenic walks, picnic areas, and

residences subject to suitable conditions (see foregoing standards). These areas can be either privately controlled by the local property owners or held by a public agency.

- 2110 The delineation of the residential open space preserve usually is intended to be general in nature. As specific areas develop, it will be necessary to apply with care the objectives, principals and standards set forth in this plan in the preparation of detailed designs.
- 2111 Based on an evaluation of the slope and geologic constraints for each residential area, estimated holding capacities have been prepared and are included in Appendix 1 of this land use element. The holding capacity figures represent the maximum number of housing units estimated to be feasible under the criteria included in this plan.
- 2112 Each residential area is generally described below and shown on the following residential areas map.
- 2113 **Residential Area No. 1.** This area comprises the Brookside Park and Brookside Orchard subdivisions. The low-medium intensity recognizes the long-established character of the area. The area is almost fully developed with homes. Attention should be continually given to conserving and enhancing this residential area.
- 2114 **Residential Area No. 2.** This area comprises the Woodside Highlands subdivision. The low-medium intensity recognizes the character of this old subdivision. Originally an area of summer homes, this area has been converted to year-around living, is served by narrow roads and individual sewage disposal systems, and includes some areas of unstable ground. Some few lots are without homes. Continuing attention should be given to improving the quality and amenities of this area while protecting its individual character.
- 2115 **Residential Area No. 3.** This area comprises the Portola Redwoods subdivision. The low-medium intensity is consistent with the long-established nature of this subdivision. Virtually all lots are developed with homes. The character of this small residential area should be preserved and continual attention should be given to maintaining appropriate land use relationships between this area and surrounding and nearby non-residential uses.
- 2116 **Residential Area No. 4.** This area, in the town's sphere of influence, comprises the Ladera subdivision. The low-medium intensity recognizes the established character of this area. The area contains but a very few vacant lots. The existing character of Ladera should be maintained and attention should be continually given to assuring compatibility of uses on the Webb Ranch with the residential character of Ladera.

- 2117 **Residential Area No. 5.** This area, in the town's sphere of influence, consists of the Los Trancos Woods subdivision. The low-medium intensity is consistent with the character of the long-established residential area. Originally an area of summer homes, it is now used for year-around living, is served by narrow roads and individual sewage disposal systems, and is affected by some areas of geologic instability. Some lots are still vacant. Efforts should be made to improve the quality and amenities of the area while preserving its character.
- 2118 **Residential Area No. 6.** This area comprises the Willowbrook subdivision, with parcel sizes of 1 acre or more, and several larger parcels along the eastern side of the area. The area is shown in the low intensity category and is virtually entirely developed with homes. The character of this area should be preserved and efforts should be made to reduce through traffic.
- 2119 **Residential Area No. 7.** This area is composed primarily of the Arrowhead Meadows, Alpine Hills, Hillbrook, Stonegate, Stonegate Meadows, Corte Madera Acres, Palmer Estates, Portola Terrace, Portola Heights, and Pine Ridge subdivisions. All of these subdivisions have minimum parcel sizes of 1 acre or more. In addition, there are unsubdivided areas of larger parcels, namely in the vicinity of Georgia Lane. The entire area is shown in the low intensity category.
- 2120 As the unsubdivided areas are developed, attention should be given to ensuring careful integration into the largely already developed area so as to ensure compatibility. Particular attention will need to be given to land use relationships in the vicinity of the non-residential uses along Portola and Alpine Roads.
- 2121 **Residential Area No. 8.** This area is composed of the Westridge and Oak Hills subdivisions plus a steep undivided area between Westridge and Alpine Hills subdivision. The area is shown in the conservation residential intensity. Few lots are vacant in the subdivisions. The character and quality of the area should be conserved as the area plays an important part in maintaining the open space character of the town.
- 2122 **Residential Area No. 9.** The development pattern for a large portion of this area has been set by the Portola Valley Ranch subdivision where there are slightly in excess of two acres per housing unit. Most of the balance of the area is in large ownerships. The area is shown in the conservation residential intensity category.
- 2123 Most of the area has good access to local town roads, most utilities, schools, and shopping. Parts of the area are quite stable geologically, while other parts are highly unstable, and slopes range from moderate to steep. The plan diagram indicates large areas in the residential open space preserve category.

- 2123a In the area along Alpine Road, any development should be kept well back from the road so as not to encroach on the Alpine Road Corridor, Portola Road Corridor, and Nathhorst Triangle Area.
- 2124 **Residential Area No. 10.** This area, in the town's sphere of influence, comprises the Vista Verde subdivision. The area is shown in the conservation residential intensity category. There are some vacant lots in the subdivision. Geologic instabilities in the area warrant careful continuing evaluation as additional homes are built.
- 2125 **Residential Area No. 11.** This area consists of the lower portion of the western hillsides and is unsubdivided except for the old Coombsville subdivision, which occupies a small part of the area. The area is shown in the conservation residential intensity category. It is characterized by gentle to steep slopes, geologically stable to unstable lands and grass covered slopes to tree covered canyons. The major development potential on the western slopes is confined to this area, which is less steep, enjoys somewhat more stable lands than the upper portion of the western hillsides, and has greater accessibility to roads, utilities, schools, and shopping. A major portion of this area is owned by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.
- 2126 Most of the undeveloped portion of this area is in a few large holdings. This provides an opportunity for imaginative designs making full use of the range of



natural features present. It should be possible and practical to preserve a large amount of the area in a natural state. In particular, it is desirable that the natural character of the open ridge leading up to the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve and the orchards and meadow adjacent to Portola Road and town center be retained.

2127 **Residential Area No. 12.** This area consists primarily of the upper portion of the western hillsides. It is similar in character to residential area No. 11; however, it is more removed from local town roads, utilities, schools and shopping, has steeper slopes, has a significantly colder, more foggy, and more windy climate and is somewhat less geologically stable. The most feasible access appears to be from Skyline Boulevard, and fire protection is minimal. Its reduced density is compatible with the adjoining agricultural, recreational, and forest resource region west of Skyline Boulevard. This area is shown in the open residential intensity category.

2128 It is envisioned that development in this area will be minimal. The foregoing factors make the area unsuitable for more than very sparse development. Large areas are shown in the residential open space preserve category. Any development in this area should have adequate access by roads which ensure prompt access to and from public facilities and commercial areas, and for fire, police and other emergency services.

2129 The barren ridge leading up to Windy Hill from the east is a visually dominant feature of Portola Valley and highly noticeable from much of the Midpeninsula area. It should remain in its natural state to the maximum extent possible. Development which might go on these lands should preferably be located elsewhere on the same parcel of land. If any development takes place in this area, extreme care should be taken to ensure absolute minimum disruption of existing visual characteristics. A major portion of this ridge is owned by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

2129a A small portion of the area lies east of Alpine Road next to Los Trancos Woods and Vista Verde. This area is included because it is similar to the balance of the area in terms of remoteness and geologic instability, and also because it contains steep slopes, scenic qualities and the historic Coal Mine Ridge Trail.

Other Residential Areas

2130 In addition to the areas described above, there are several other residential areas included within the planning area. These areas, although in other jurisdictions, are of concern to the planning area because of common problems relating to drainage, circulation, public facilities and visual amenities.

2131 The portion of the Town of Woodside northeast of Portola Road and known as Hidden Valley Farm and Family Farm is shown on the plan diagram because of its

close physical relationships to Portola Valley. This area is shown as conservation residential and is consistent with the Town of Woodside's General Plan. There is a need to maintain compatible land use relationships between Hidden Valley Farm and the non-residential uses fronting on Portola Road within the Town of Portola Valley.

- 2132 The portion of the Town of Woodside along the Portola Valley town boundary between Portola Road and Skyline Boulevard is included because of the need to maintain compatible land uses on either side of the town boundary. The area in Woodside is shown as conservation residential and is consistent with the Woodside General Plan.
- 2133 Two areas of low-medium intensity are shown on the comprehensive plan diagram in the northern portion of the planning area: the Stanford Hills subdivision and the Stanford Weekend Acres area. The inclusion of these areas at these intensities indicates concurrence with plans of Menlo Park and San Mateo County. Continued attention to traffic control measures along Alpine Road in the vicinity of Stanford Weekend Acres appears warranted in order to help assure traffic safety.

Parks, Recreation Areas and Open Spaces

Objectives

- 2134
1. To retain areas of natural terrain and vegetation sufficient to preserve the overall natural open character and quality of the area, and to buffer the town from its neighbors and its constituent neighborhoods from each other while permitting reasonable development of private lands.
 2. To provide for appropriate park and recreation areas for community and neighborhood use.
 3. To encourage public parks, recreation areas and open spaces serving other than primarily local residents only in locations where they will not be a disruptive influence on local residents and where they will preserve unique natural resources for use by residents of the larger region.

Description

- 2135 Extensive parks, recreation areas and open spaces are proposed in the plan. Each proposal is based upon the natural resources of the planning area and related to the needs of local residents, Midpeninsula residents, or other Bay Area residents. These proposals and the elements in which they are described are indicated in Table 1: Guide to Park, Recreation, and Open Space Proposals in the General Plan.

2136 Each park or recreation area proposed is so located and served by circulation facilities that it can be reached and used by the intended users without interfering with the enjoyment of nearby areas. Thus, facilities serving other than primarily local residents should be located on the edges of the planning area accessible from major thoroughfares.

2136a The comprehensive plan diagram proposes certain parks, recreation areas and open space uses on privately owned land. It is anticipated that some of these proposals will be implemented through appropriate dedications pursuant to planning regulations when private development takes place. In some instances, rights in land may be purchased by the town or other appropriate agency. In other instances, the private use of the land for a recreation or open space use constitutes conformity with the plan. Nonetheless, there may be instances when a property owner wishes to put land to a use not shown on the comprehensive plan diagram and the town or some other public agency is not able to obtain public rights through regulation and does not negotiate a purchase with the owner. In such instances and only for lands designated on the comprehensive plan diagram as neighborhood preserve, community preserve, scenic corridor and greenway, or labeled "Other Community," the general plan hereby permits:

1. private use of a character and intensity no greater than the public use indicated on the comprehensive plan diagram, or
2. private use at the lowest residential intensity suitable for the property and designed to maximize the open space character of the land.

In implementing the foregoing policy with respect to any proposal by a property owner, the approving authority of the town shall exercise judgment in approving a use to ensure compatibility with surrounding and nearby uses, circulation facilities and the applicable objectives of this general plan. Any use permitted must, of course, conform to the zoning for the property.

Table 1. Guide to Park, Recreation, and Open Space Proposals in the General Plan

<i>Park, Recreation or Open Space</i>	<i>Park and Recreation Element</i>	<i>Open Space Element</i>	<i>Trail & Path Element</i>	<i>Scenic Roads and Highways Element</i>	<i>Land Use Element</i>
Neighborhood Preserve	X				
Neighborhood Park	X				
Community Preserve	X				
Community Park	X				
Other Community Parks or Preserves	X				
Regional Park or Private Regional Facility	X				
Open Space Preserve		X			
Scenic Corridor	X				
Greenway	X				
Open Space Limited Development		X			
Agriculture		X			
<i>Secondarily Park, Recreation, or Open Space*</i>					
Residential Open Space Preserves					X
Trails and Paths			X		
Scenic Roads and Highways				X	
* These land use categories serve primarily for residential or circulation purposes, but have secondary uses as parks, recreation areas, or open spaces.					

Commercial and Research – Administrative

Objectives

- 2137
1. To provide goods and services to satisfy the most frequently recurring needs of local residents.
 2. To limit other commercial development to the maximum extent possible consistent with other objectives of the plan.
 3. To group related facilities attractively for convenient use and to prevent continuous commercial development along arterials which would detract from the scenic character of the area.
 4. To control commercial development in a manner that will minimize its impact on neighboring residential areas.

Principles

- 2138
1. Convenience goods and services and limited shopping goods should be available in local shopping centers in sufficient quantity and variety to meet

the most frequently recurring needs of the residents of the Town of Portola Valley and its spheres of influence.

2. The development of new commercial and office floor area should be controlled to avoid premature availability and should only be permitted when it is demonstrated that the proposed additional space and uses are needed, within the objectives of this plan, to serve the existing population or the population anticipated over a reasonable time period.
3. Local shopping and service centers should be centrally located with respect to the population served, have direct access from major streets and have sufficient parking and service areas.
4. Individual sites should be landscaped attractively with native plants so as to integrate the entire development visually with its neighbors and the overall natural qualities of the planning area. Protecting residential areas from noise, unsightliness, odor and other nuisances should be accomplished through adequate landscape buffers that also enhance pedestrian access and through other appropriate design features.
5. Night lighting visible from the exterior of buildings should be strictly limited to that necessary for security, safety and identification. All night lighting, including signs, should be low intensity and shielded from view from residential areas.
6. All commercial uses should be compatible with adjacent development in terms of scale, general visual character and siting. (For principles relating to design objectives, building size and scale, conservation of natural beauty, and landscaping, see "General Principles" of the land use element and "Principles" of the open space element and "Principles" of the Nathhorst Triangle Area Plan.)

Standards

- 2139
1. In local shopping and service areas, a small percentage of the total net site area (exclusive of street and road rights-of-way) should be occupied by buildings. A substantial percentage of the site area should be left as natural and/or developed as landscaped open space using native plants.
 2. Within local shopping and service areas, the ratio of total floor area to net site area for commercial uses shall not exceed 0.18 and for office uses shall not exceed 0.13.

Description

- 2140 The major shopping, service and employment opportunities in nearby areas are recognized, and hence a duplication is not proposed within the planning area. Thus, while frequently needed local shopping and service facilities are proposed within the area, activity centers outside the planning area such as the Stanford-Palo Alto shopping area are relied upon for more specialized goods and services.
- 2141 Four local shopping and service centers are indicated on the plan diagram. These centers are all existing at the present time and have sufficient area to meet the needs of local residents when the planning area is fully developed. The four centers are Ladera Country Shopper, Nathhorst Triangle Area, Town Center, and Sharon Heights Shopping Center.
- 2142 The two centers within the town, the Nathhorst Triangle Area and Town Center, should strictly adhere to the objective that these centers should provide only those goods and services necessary to satisfy the most frequently recurring needs of residents of the town and its spheres of influence. Thus, these centers are seen as including but not being limited to: hardware stores, food service stores, drug stores, beauty parlors and similar convenience goods, and very limited shopping goods. Limited office uses, such as doctors, banks and real estate offices serving the same population are also appropriate. Uses which would attract a majority of patronage from outside the service area should more appropriately be located in larger and more centrally located commercial and office centers elsewhere on the Midpeninsula or the Bay Area. These centers are related by the Portola Road corridor, which is described in the Corridor Plan starting with section 6400 of this General Plan.
- 2143 It is recognized that the Sharon Heights Shopping Center and the Ladera Country Shopper and adjoining professional center do not completely meet the criteria for commercial uses described above. These centers, outside the town and developed under other criteria, do however, provide largely convenience goods and services with limited shopping goods. The Ladera professional center also provides general office space not geared to serving local residents. Both of these centers are well-served by circulation and are accepted by this plan as appropriate for the locations involved. The undeveloped hillside behind the Ladera Country Shopper should be left as open space to balance the intensive development of the remainder of the site and provide a buffer between the shopping center and nearby residences.
- 2144 Existing research-administrative areas are recognized. The major use is the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC). This facility will have a continuing major impact on the planning area. Employment and access traffic to SLAC should be confined to Sand Hill Road. Attention should be given to assuring maximum compatibility of this installation with the surrounding area. Those aspects of the

development continuing to require special attention include: power transmission to the accelerator, control of noise and exterior lighting, traffic, landscaping and building design. It is likely that continuing attention to “temporary” installations will also be required. An existing research building complex on Arastradero Road is also recognized. The existing tree nursery, because of its largely impervious gravel surface, contributes considerable runoff to the creek. This use and similar uses should provide a buffer along the creek to minimize runoff, erosion and disturbance of habitats. In addition, present controls over these areas should be maintained or strengthened.

- 2145 Additional areas are shown for research-administrative use north of the Junipero Serra Freeway as proposed on the Menlo Park General Plan. Uses in these areas should be of very low intensity in order to be compatible with uses in nearby residential areas. Sites used for research-administrative purposes should be primarily open, buildings should be low and perhaps in small clusters, and the site development and landscaping should be designed to blend the buildings into the natural landscape.
- 2145a One area for research-administrative use is shown along Arastradero Road in Palo Alto. This use is inconsistent with Portola Valley’s position as to appropriate uses in this area, but is recognized because of the substantial investment involved and the limited extent of the uses. No additional development of this intensity is shown on the comprehensive plan diagram for this area because of the adverse impact such uses have on the surrounding area. In particular, the road system is not adequate to accommodate the heavy traffic characteristic of such uses, and in addition, such uses tend to attract additional high intensity uses which are not compatible with the low intensity residential character of Portola Valley.
- 2145b Near the area for research-administrative use along Arastradero Road is a headquarters for a tree maintenance service which serves the Midpeninsula. This use is relatively low intensity and is not shown separately on the comprehensive plan diagram. The town recommends that this use be kept within limits which are compatible with the low intensity character of the surrounding area.
- 2145c The “Lee” quarry on Los Trancos Road in Palo Alto is within the town planning area. The quarry scar is visible from Portola Valley, but efforts have been made and should continue to be made to reduce the negative impacts of the quarry, including long-range restoration of the quarry to a more natural appearance.

Institutions

Objectives

- 2146
1. To provide for those institutions that are for the use of local residents and in harmony with the residential character of the Valley.
 2. To ensure that existing institutions will be properly served by trafficways and are properly related to adjacent land uses.
 3. To provide an appropriate area for the grouping of major community-serving institutional facilities.

Principles

- 2147
1. All institutional uses should be served directly by major collector roads or roads with higher capacities.
 2. All institutional uses should be compatible with adjacent development in the planning area in terms of scale, general visual character and siting.
 3. Space should be provided for all local institutional uses that may be necessary such as elementary and intermediate schools, churches, libraries and local governmental buildings.
 4. Major community facilities should be located where convenient to the entire planning area.
 5. Schools should make recreation areas and facilities available for use during non-school hours.
 6. Schools should be located so as to minimize the time necessary to be spent in travel to and from school.
 7. Schools should be located to provide safe and convenient access giving particular attention to the requirements of young children.
 8. (For principles relating to building size and scale, and landscaping, see "General Principles" of the land use element.)
 9. If an institutional land use ceases to exist, the town shall consider an appropriate alternate institutional use or development for other appropriate uses giving due consideration to the relationship to adjacent and nearby land uses.

Standards

- 2148 1. Residential type institutional facilities should be limited to a density of population no greater than that proposed for adjoining residential areas in the general plan. Section 2106.e. provides guidance with respect to appropriate ranges for building intensities and population densities.
2. Public Schools:

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Maximum Desirable Travel Time</u>
K-5	20 minutes
K-6	20 minutes
6-8	30 minutes
High School	40 minutes

Description

- 2149 Institutions needed to serve all or parts of the planning area are proposed and are located so as to be convenient to their service areas. Institutional uses proposed include schools, churches and fire stations.
- 2150 Schools. With regard to public schools, the plan indicates one elementary school and one intermediate school in the planning area.
- 2151 The Portola Valley Elementary School District serves the Town of Portola Valley plus some areas beyond the town boundary. The Ormondale elementary school serves the entire Town of Portola Valley as does the Corte Madera intermediate school. Thus, most children in the town have to travel considerable distances to school. As the population of the town grows, there may be a need for additional school facilities. The changing age composition of the population, however, makes it very difficult to project the number of school age children accurately. It is recommended that population changes be watched closely and appropriate school facility decisions be made in advance of any deficiencies.
- 2152 The Las Lomas Elementary School District serves Ladera and a considerable area to the north. The Ladera elementary school, well located to serve that local community, is integrated with the adjoining recreational facilities of the Ladera Recreational District. The school is currently leased to a private school. Should the use of the school change, any new use should be compatible with the surrounding residential uses.
- 2153 One private school is shown on the plan diagram, the existing Woodside Priory school with grades 6 through 12.

- 2154 Churches. Five churches are shown, three of which are in the town. All are well served by major thoroughfares. Additional churches may be needed in the planning area in the future. Those areas indicated as “institutional” on the plan diagram provide suitable locations for additional churches.
- 2155 Fire Stations. Fire protection to the town and most of the planning area is provided by the Woodside Fire Protection District. The district has a station on Portola Road near Alpine Road as shown on the comprehensive plan diagram. This station will provide primary service to the town. The other district station is located to the north in the Town of Woodside. For further description of fire service and fire hazards, see the safety element.
- 2156 Other Institutional Uses. Other appropriate institutional uses that may be needed in the town would include but not necessarily be limited to local governmental buildings. Each institutional use should be judged separately and, if compatible with other uses in the area, could be located in one of the local shopping and service areas or in the vicinity thereof.
- 2156a The town center contains the historic schoolhouse, town hall (administration building), meeting rooms, indoor recreation facilities, outdoor recreation facilities and the library. The site is within the San Andreas Rift Zone and occupancy of buildings should be related to the risk due to earthquake hazards. The outdoor recreation facilities at the site should be used and augmented as appropriate as a part of the town center (see the recreation element for further description).
- 2157 An extensive area is shown as “low intensity academic reserve” for Stanford University. This area is presently being used for various radio telescopes, antennas, other experimental installations, stabling and training facilities for horses, and agriculture. Where it does not interfere with these primary uses, lands are also used for grazing. Much of this area is visible from the Portola Valley area. The retention of agricultural uses is encouraged. Any further developments in this area by Stanford University should be referred to the local governments in the nearby areas so that the effects on these areas can be properly evaluated and modifications recommended where necessary and desirable.
- 2158 Another area owned by Stanford University and shown as “low intensity academic reserve” is the area designated “Webb Ranch” on the comprehensive plan diagram, Part 5. A portion of this area designated for agricultural use is described in the open space element. A variety of uses would be appropriate on the balance of the Webb Ranch and therefore a detailed plan for this area is not appropriate at this time. Town guidelines for development are appropriate, however, and are as follows:

1. Lands within the area are appropriate for development of Stanford University's academic program and closely related land uses provided the intensity of development and use conforms with standards and criteria set forth in this plan. Opportunities exist for outdoor education including study of plant and animal life, geology and paleontology.
2. The retention of agricultural uses is encouraged. These activities allow use of the land while retaining the essential natural open space qualities of the area. The combining of agricultural uses with educational programs may be feasible. Agricultural uses would be appropriate on all lands shown as low intensity academic reserve, as an interim use on lands ultimately to be used for academic purposes, or as permanent open space. Proper attention should be given to prevent stream pollution from agricultural activities.
3. Intensity of use should be compatible with present and planned uses of adjoining and nearby lands when measured by such factors as vehicular traffic, ratios of building coverage and floor space in buildings to land area, building height, daytime and nighttime population density, artificial light, glare, noise, emission of smoke, smog, dust, odor, vibration and radiation or other deleterious factors. The volume of site traffic generated (people and vehicle) should not exceed the capacity of off-site transportation facilities to handle such traffic with reasonable convenience. The limited traffic capacity of the system is a major factor in determining the appropriate intensity of development within this area. Expansion of transportation facilities should be controlled to preclude aesthetic or ecological damage. Because of physical limitations, road access within the area can be developed at only two points on Alpine Road. In addition, in the freeway design and construction, provision has been made for only one road under the freeway interconnecting the Stanford lands to the north and south. Consideration should also be given to potential failure of Searsville Dam and consequent downstream flooding.
4. Development on the "low intensity academic reserve" areas should allow very substantial open space (all natural or replanted). Paved areas and building ground coverage shall not count as open space. Each developed area should emphasize uninterrupted open space. All development should be concealed from view, through location, from Freeway 280, Alpine Road and residential uses as much as possible. The low intensity academic reserve designation is intended to help meet the objectives of Section 2158,3. and the scenic roads and highways element.

2159 – 2162

Not used.

Public Facilities and Services

Objectives

- 2163
1. To ensure the development of public utilities in a manner that will cause minimum disruption of the natural beauty of the area.
 2. To provide utilities adequate to serve local needs in the planning area.
 3. To conserve natural resources and prevent pollution of water and air.

Principles

- 2164
1. All lines and facilities related to the transmission and distribution of power and telecommunications should be placed underground. If this is not practical and such lines or facilities are to be placed aboveground, the impact should be compensated by the undergrounding of lines or facilities in other locations within the planning area. The undergrounding of lines and facilities should be balanced against adverse effects on native vegetation.
 2. A program should be developed for progressively placing existing overhead lines underground.
 3. All utility installations should be sited, designed, developed and landscaped so as to blend with the natural scenery of the area.
 4. All utility installations should be designed to minimize damage from identified geologic hazards.
 5. Water, electric and gas supply lines should be loop systems where feasible.
 6. Water supply systems must conform with established health and fire protection standards.
 7. Waste water must not pollute ground water or streams or cause public or private nuisance.
 8. Vegetative ground cover should be sustained to prevent storm water erosion. Unobstructed natural drainage channels should remain the principal storm drainage system, and riparian vegetation along their sides should be maintained in order to reduce erosion and bank failure and preserve habitat. Publicly owned drainage structures should be provided and maintained in accordance with the current Storm Drainage Plan of Portola Valley.

9. A solid waste and hazardous waste program which will assure adequate services, protect health, reduce waste generation and conserve energy and resources without adversely affecting the environment should be supported. Wastes resulting from animal keeping should also be controlled and disposed of in a sanitary manner.
10. The planting of native vegetation in developments should be encouraged as a water conservation measure.
11. Utilities should first serve adjoining areas and then be incrementally extended to serve contiguous new development rather than be extended so as to allow development to “leap-frog” over intervening lands.
12. Whenever there is a known limited supply of a public facility or service which is beyond the control or ability of the town to overcome, such limited facility or service shall be allocated approximately evenly over the time period of the anticipated shortage.

Description

- 2165 It is recognized that this general plan shows areas for development which are not served by utilities or which have utilities inadequate to serve additional development. Such areas shall not be developed until all utilities are supplied.
- 2165a In the planning area, where the preservation of the natural scenery and environment is the one most important consideration by most residents, it appears appropriate to require that all public facilities not detract from the natural environment but to the maximum extent possible blend into the natural setting. In order to ensure that this is done, adequate review procedures should be established.

Land Use Element Appendix 1: Calculating Holding Capacity for the Land Use Element

The holding capacity of the general plan is an estimate of the total number of housing units ~~and persons~~ that could be accommodated within the planning area under the plan proposals when and if the land is fully developed. It is a maximum figure and may be approached in time, but will probably never be achieved since some properties will never be developed to their fullest potential. The holding capacity shows a reduction in the overall holding capacity projected at the time the general plan for the Portola Valley area was originally prepared in 1964. This reduction is primarily a result of greater awareness by the town of development constraints imposed by unstable lands and conscious policies to reduce unnecessary exposure of persons and property to potential geologic hazards. The housing unit ~~and population~~ holding capacities were derived in the following manner.

1. Within existing subdivisions, the number of existing houses, vacant lots and potential lots that could be created through resubdivisions were counted. A small percentage of the vacant lots may never be built upon due to geologic hazards.
2. In unsubdivided areas, the residential land use intensity standards and policies contained in Sections 2106, 2106a and 2106b of the land use element were applied to obtain an estimate of the potential number of lots (see the detailed explanation below).
3. The number of lots from 1 and 2 above were added to obtain the housing unit holding capacity.
- ~~4. The number of lots obtained in 3 above were multiplied by the estimated household size to yield a population holding capacity.~~

Estimating the number of lots in unsubdivided areas

The housing unit holding capacity for undeveloped lands was calculated by applying the residential land use intensity standards for each parcel and considering analysis of slope, unstable lands, and land that could be reasonably developed within the objectives and principles of the land use element. In some cases, the other factors analyzed reduced the holding capacity below the level that would be expected if only the basic land use intensity standard were applied. This is true in particular for lands with severe geologic stability problems whose holding capacity was calculated as follows:

1. Areas of geologic instability (Pmw, Ms, Pd, Psc, Md, Pf) and areas of geologic stability (Sbr, Sun, Sex, Sls, Ps) were identified. These areas are shown on the map "Movement Potential of Undisturbed Ground" for Portola Valley as of 1/23/76, as amended through 1995.

2. The land use intensity standards for the parcel were determined from the comprehensive plan diagram and section 2106 of the land use element. The methods of applying the standards are those in effect in the Portola Valley zoning ordinance.
3. The land use intensity standards were applied to geologically stable areas providing a housing unit yield for stable lands.
4. The land use intensity standards were applied to the geologically unstable lands to obtain a housing unit yield that would be expected if there were no severe geologic constraints present. Then, to account for geologic instability, the yield was reduced by 90%. This reduction stems from the provisions of Sec. 2106 b. of the general plan. It was assumed that the remaining housing unit yield of 10% could be transferred to stable portions of the same parcel.
5. The housing unit yield from 3 and 4 above were added to obtain total housing unit holding capacity for the parcel.

HOLDING CAPACITIES

<i>Residential Area</i>	<i>Land Use Intensity</i>	<i>Estimated Existing 1996 Housing Units</i> ¹	<i>Holding Capacity</i>	
			<i>Housing Units</i>	<i>Population</i> ²
1	Low-Medium	205	207	518
2		100	116	290
3		30	37	93
4 ³		539	542	1,355
5 ⁴		<u>149</u>	<u>157</u>	393
		1,023	1,059	2,649
6	Low	56	60	150
7		<u>553</u>	<u>582</u>	1,455
		609	642	1,605
8	Conservation Residential	268	322	805
9		224	290	725
10 ⁴		105	143	358
11 ⁵		<u>46</u>	<u>116</u>	290
		643	871	2,178
12	Open Residential	15	44	110
<i>Planning Area Total (all areas)</i>		2,290	2,616	6,542 <i>approx. 6,500</i>
<i>Portola Valley Total (Areas 1-3, 6-9, 11, 12)</i>		1,497	1,774	4,504 <i>approx. 4,500</i>

Totals may not add due to rounding

¹ Estimated numbers of existing housing units are from available records for approximately March 1996. The records were least accurate for areas 5 and 10. Due to the small number of housing units in these areas, however, minor inaccuracies would not significantly affect the planning area totals.

² ~~In the 1990 U.S. Census, there were 1,675 housing units and 4,143 persons in households (excluding those in group quarters), for an average of approximately 2.5 persons per housing unit.~~

³ The existing number of housing units in 1996 is from the Los Trancos Woods Community Association.

⁴ The existing number of housing units in 1996 is from the San Mateo County Planning Department.

⁵ Although residential area 11 includes The Sequoias, the number of housing units and persons at The Sequoias are not included in the area 11 figures. Since the population at The Sequoias is approximately 325, the total holding capacity for the town is approximately 5,000 persons and for the planning area approximately 7,100 persons.

Land Use Element Appendix 2: Implementation of the Land Use Element

Actions to date:

1. A wide range of recommendations are set forth in Appendix 5 of the Portola Valley General Plan adopted in 1965 pertaining to needed rezonings and other regulating ordinances. These recommendations were all subsequently enacted. These regulations guide implementation of the plan except where public purchase of property may be required. (See Open Space Appendix 2: Implementation of the Open Space Element for examples).
2. The 1977 general plan amendments included provisions regarding a new “Open Residential” category, revised guidelines for clustering, allowed only partial density credit for unstable lands and added impervious surface limitations and new provisions for accessory living quarters, among other changes. These changes have been reflected in amendments to the zoning ordinance.
3. The 1980 general plan amendments, among other matters, changed the land use intensity for the “Conservation-Residential” category from one to two net acres per housing unit. This change has been reflected in the zoning ordinance.

Future actions:

1. The town should undertake the preparation of a plan for the Portola Road corridor.

Town of Portola Valley General Plan

Nathhorst Triangle Area Plan

Amended December 10, 1997

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Nathhorst Triangle Area Plan

Introduction

- 6100 The Nathhorst Triangle Area Plan deals with one sub-area of the town. While basic policy affecting the setting for the Nathhorst Triangle Area (NTA) is found elsewhere in the general plan, the most detailed proposals for this area are found in this sub-area plan. To obtain the fullest understanding of the town's policy for the development of the NTA, reference should be made to this sub-area plan, other pertinent parts of the town general plan, and to Appendix 20 for pertinent references to planning regulations. Background studies are on file with the town. Studies of particular relevance to population and commercial acreage projections include "Nathhorst Triangle Area, Preliminary Design Study for the Town of Portola Valley, January 17, 1967" and memorandum to the planning commission from the town planner, "Subject: A-P Zoning District Regulations", August 28, 1970; and Reevaluation of C-C and A-P Zoned Properties, Town of Portola Valley, January 9, 1992.
- 6101 The plan is intended to guide, unify and enhance, both functionally and aesthetically, the development of the separately owned private properties in coordination with public spaces and facilities, roads, trails and paths. The plan includes: objectives, principles and standards; description; and the plan diagram.

Planning Area

- 6102 This sub-area plan includes all land bordered by Alpine Road, Portola Road and Nathhorst Avenue, plus adjoining related lands as shown on the plan diagram. The planning area includes lands proposed for commercial and service activities serving

the town, public uses serving the town, and residential lands. The area is sufficient, when combined with the other commercial area in the town, to meet the needs of the town for local goods and services when the town is completely developed in conformance with the general plan.

6103 (Not Used.)

Objectives

- 6104
1. To develop the Nathhorst Triangle area (NTA) as a focal point for businesses and institutional type uses serving the residents of Portola Valley and its spheres of influence and as an informal social gathering place.
 2. To produce a unified commercial-service-institutional-residential complex with a scale and design quality compatible with the rural setting of the town.
 3. To serve the NTA with a system of roads, paths and trails that provide for safe, convenient and enjoyable access to, from and through the area.

Principles

- 6105
1. In order to serve as a community focal point, the NTA shall provide space for:
 - a. Convenience, goods and services and limited shopping goods in the community commercial areas.
 - b. Offices for businesses serving the community in the community service areas.
 - c. Institutional uses such as churches, a fire station and similar uses.
 - d. Those facilities which tend to bring people together informally such as an outdoor cafe and sitting areas.
 - e. Residential uses at a scale which blends with the existing and proposed commercial uses.
 2. In order to meet desired design objectives:
 - a. Growth shall be orderly and ultimately uninterrupted along property lines between commercial uses.
 - b. Flexibility shall be allowed as to land use on those community commercial parcels which due to location and access can reasonably accommodate commercial, office or residential uses. Requirements
- 6106

shall be established to ensure their compatibility with surrounding land uses.

- c. Non-residential uses shall not adversely affect nearby residential property.
- d. Noise, sight, odor and other nuisances shall be held to a reasonable minimum.
- e. Excessive grading shall be avoided and attractive natural features such as the creek shall be preserved and enhanced.
- f. Structures shall be designed so that all sides are attractive.
- g. Parking lots shall permit convenient automobile movement, parking and access to facilities, avoiding unduly large, inefficiently arranged paved areas and avoiding automobile conflict with pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians.
- h. Service areas shall be segregated from other areas, and trash containers shall be screened. Equipment noises and emissions shall be minimized.
- i. Fire hydrants and good circulation for fire protection shall be provided as needed.
- j. Utilities including electric and communication services shall be underground, consistent with the regulatory authority of the town.

6107

3. In order to provide desired circulation:

- a. Alpine and Portola Roads may need to be widened where turning lanes are required.
- b. Safe vehicle ingress and egress shall be accomplished by limiting points of access to public roads.
 - 1) Driveway entrances serving different property owners shall be combined at common property lines when serving non-residential uses.
 - 2) Driveways shall be a minimum safe distance from road intersections as determined by traffic safety standards.
 - 3) Not Used.

- 4) Easements and/or mutual use agreements may be required among the various property owners to connect driveway entrances in order to facilitate off-street circulation and reduce the number of driveway entrances required.
 - c. Safe pedestrian and bicycle access to and inter-communication among non-residential developments shall be provided.
 - 1) Separate pedestrian and bicycle paths, preferably separated from public roads, shall be installed in the front setbacks or road rights of way along Alpine and Portola Road frontages.
 - 2) Safe paths between the roadside and on-site improvements shall be required and compatible developments shall be interconnected.
 - d. Safe horse trails, separated from paths and roads, shall provide access to and through the NTA providing access to uses suitable for equestrians while assuring compatibility with land uses in the area.
- 6107a. In order to assist in providing housing pursuant to the provisions of the housing element, parcels of land classified as community commercial which are found not to be needed for such uses may be used for residential purposes if suitably located.

Standards

- 6108 Standards for development should be set forth in the town zoning, subdivision and site development regulations.

Description

- 6109 The plan sets forth a framework for the development of the NTA within which considerable latitude exists for design and development of individual properties. The basic distribution of land uses and key circulation features are set forth as controlling elements. Sensitive design on individual properties woven into the overall framework can produce a splendid center for the town. While the objectives, principles and standards set forth in the preceding sections are the guiding statements for future development, the plan diagram, when viewed in the context of this description, should convey an understanding of the type of development the town is seeking for this area.

Community Commercial

6110 The community commercial area is shown in two segments. The largest area is intended to be developed as a community shopping center for the town. The center is shown as served by six permanent entrances from bordering roads. Internal circulation between parcels is shown diagrammatically and would need to be adjusted to fit specific designs for development. Trails and/or paths run along three sides of the center. It is intended that normal yard setbacks of the zoning ordinance would be reduced or waived as necessary between parcels in the shopping center in order to achieve a unified design. Setback requirements along Portola and Alpine Roads, landscaping and open space requirements, parking requirements, floor area ratio and height limitations are set forth in the zoning ordinance.

6110a Two parcels are shown and numbered on the plan diagram as being suitable for alternate uses: community commercial, community service or residential.

1. This flexibility of use is based on two major factors:
 - a. The parcels have unusual locational attributes. **Parcel #1**, at the corner of Nathhorst Avenue and Portola Road can gain access from Portola Road and, if developed residentially, need to be linked internally by circulation with the adjoining community commercial parcel. **Parcel #2**, due to a lack of frontage on Alpine Road or Portola Road, can accommodate uses which do not require frontage, such as office or residential uses.
 - b. Projections of the amount of land needed for commercial uses indicate that these two parcels can be used for a non-commercial use and the town will still have sufficient acreage in commercial uses to meet the needs of the community for community-serving businesses.
2. Each of these parcels can be developed with any one of the alternate uses or a combination thereof and through careful design be well-related to the other parcels shown as community commercial as well as other adjoining uses. The flexibility of use on these parcels can and should be handled so as to not disrupt the continuity of commercial use on the three remaining community commercial parcels.
3. **Parcel #1** is shown with an alternate residential land use of low intensity residential. This intensity is compatible with the adjoining residential parcel and the parcels across Nathhorst Avenue. The parcel could also be developed at a low-medium intensity. If the parcel is residentially developed, it should be pursuant to a planned unit development (PUD) in which the

appropriate density is established as a part of the PUD, but in no case shall it exceed 5.8 housing units per net acre (exclusive of street and road rights-of-way).

4. **Parcel #2** is shown with an alternate residential land use of low-medium intensity residential. This intensity is appropriate since the parcel is bounded on three sides by office and commercial lands. Any residential development should be a planned unit development (PUD) in which the appropriate density is established as a part of the PUD, but in no case shall it exceed 5.8 housing units per net acre (exclusive of street and road rights-of-way).*

6110b One parcel shown and numbered on the plan diagram as **Parcel #3** is suitable for the following alternate uses: community commercial or community service. This flexibility is based on the following factors:

1. There may not be sufficient demand for community commercial space which would warrant the use of the parcel for commercial use; therefore, community service is indicated as an alternate use.
2. Community service uses would reduce the intensity of use of the parcel over community commercial uses and thereby be more compatible with nearby residential uses and provide a transition to parcels #1 and #2 in the event they are used for community service or residential purposes.

6111 In the other community commercial area, which is in the southwest corner of Alpine and Portola Roads, very careful design will be required due to its small size. Design and landscaping will be very important in order to make this corner attractive and to visually integrate it with the other community commercial area.

6111a. Any residential development in the community commercial areas shall create an internal and external environment that is consistent with the residential qualities of the town including appropriate open spaces, planting and building design. While the intensity of development may be higher than generally found in the town, the overall feeling should blend in with the residential quality of the town rather than being distinctively different.

Community Service

6112 The community service areas are intended to provide space for office uses that are necessary to serve the needs of the residents of the town. These areas are also suitable for institutional uses such as public buildings, churches, etc. Perimeter access by trail and path is proposed to both community service areas. Limited

* This standard is based on the existing minimum lot size of 7500 square feet, which is a density of approximately 5.8 housing units per acre.

access to Alpine Road is shown with coordinated internal circulation between properties. Setback requirements along Portola and Alpine Roads, landscaping and open space requirements, parking requirements, floor area ratios and height limitations are set forth in the zoning ordinance.

Community Park, Open Space and Buffer Planting

- 6113 This designation includes portions of parcels shown for community commercial and community service uses, and land within the public right of way at the intersection of Alpine and Portola Roads.
- 6114 The community park at the intersection of Alpine and Portola Roads, Triangle Green Park, has been developed as a fitting landscape design for this important intersection.
- 6115 The existing creek is shown as a major feature of the NTA. Where the creek crosses private lands, it should be planted and located in an open space easement. Structural crossings of the creek should be held to the minimum feasible. Any area on private land proposed for open space land or buffer planting could be counted as part of the required open space for the particular parcel as required by the zoning ordinance. The rear portions of the two corner parcels at Nathhorst Avenue and Alpine Road are appropriate for private open space uses related to the uses on the remainder of the parcels as well as for buffer planting along the property line to the northwest.

Institutional Uses

- 6116 The only institutional land within the planning area is the fire station. Much of the balance of the NTA area, however, is shown as suitable for low intensity residential or institutional use.

Low Intensity Residential Uses

- 6117 The plan indicates extensive areas for low intensity use (typically 1 – 2 acres per housing unit). Where residential and other uses adjoin, site design of the other uses should minimize adverse impacts on residential parcels. Similarly, any residential use should be carefully designed so as not to be unduly exposed to possible external influences.
- 6118 The creek and creekside trees running through the parcel at the northeast side of the intersection of Nathhorst Avenue and Alpine Road, while not shown as having any special design treatment on the plan diagram, should be preserved in a natural state to the maximum extent possible. This creek plus the special building setback required along Alpine Road by the zoning ordinance should help shelter the remainder of the parcel from Alpine Road.

Low-Medium Intensity Residential

6119 This area is zoned for single family residential use at a density of 15,000 sq. ft. per housing unit.

Streets

6120 The plan diagram shows only the street rights of way and does not show paving width or location. These details should be the subject of traffic studies. Paving widths on Nathhorst Avenue should probably be to normal town standards. Paving widths, on Alpine and Portola Roads, however, will need to be based on careful studies of the needs of these roads. Basically, two lanes for traffic on each of these two roads plus turning lanes should be adequate to handle projected traffic.

6121 The plan diagram shows driveway entrances to only a portion of the planning area – the community commercial and community service uses within the area bounded by Nathhorst Avenue and Alpine and Portola Roads. These points of access are shown to indicate how adjoining properties should share access points in order to minimize driveway entrances on these two busy roads. Minor shifts in location of access points are acceptable if the same mutual access to properties is maintained and traffic engineering aspects are acceptable. Access points to other properties on Alpine and Portola Roads should also be limited.

6122 A possible future street is shown at the bend in Nathhorst Avenue. This street extends up a hill at a slope in excess of 15%. The lands it would serve also have access onto Sausal Drive. As uses are proposed in the area, the wisdom of developing this road will need to be studied. A straight steep road can be hazardous and unattractive. Landscaping and changes in alignment could help the situation. The road would, however, bring increased traffic to the area. One option would be for the road to serve only the lower portion of the hill, with the rest of the hill being served from Sausal Drive.

6123 (Not Used.)

Pedestrian Paths

6124 Pedestrians should be able to walk to, from and through the NTA on all-weather surfaces. The proposed pedestrian paths, plus the bicycle path which should also be available to pedestrians, provide for such circulation. While the steeper pedestrian paths need probably only be built to the usual town standard of a rock base with oil seal, the more level paths along Nathhorst Avenue, Portola Road, Alpine Road and Canyon Drive should probably have an asphalt surface to permit limited use by bicycles. While the proposed paths have been located with considerable care, slight changes in alignment are to be expected as more detailed plans for developments are prepared.

Bicycle Path

6125 One bicycle path is proposed – along Alpine and Portola Roads. This path should be built to at least the town standard width for bicycle paths of five feet, and preferably six feet because it will also serve pedestrian traffic. Where the path serves considerable two way traffic, it should preferably be eight feet wide. In some places the street right of way will probably be wide enough to accommodate the path while in other locations it will need to be located on easements adjacent to the right of way.

Riding Trails

6126 While heavy equestrian use in the area is not anticipated, some provision must be made for horses. The main trails include one along Alpine Road – Nathhorst Avenue – Portola Road, and the second one along Alpine Road. The other horse trails consist of connections. The trail for which federal funds were expended at an earlier time follows the north side of Alpine Road, the north side of Nathhorst Avenue and the east side of Portola Road.

Bicycle Lanes

6127 Future bicycle lanes are shown along the very popular Alpine-Portola Road route used by residents and bicyclists from surrounding communities. These lanes provide for bicycle traffic that might be hazardous on the bicycle paths which accommodate leisurely bicycling and walking. Also, bicycle lanes are shown heading southwest on Alpine Road; these lanes are part of a proposed system destined to link to Page Mill Road.

Plan Diagram

6128 The plan diagram is part of this sub-area plan and is labeled Nathhorst Triangle Area Plan Diagram and can be found in a pocket following this general plan.

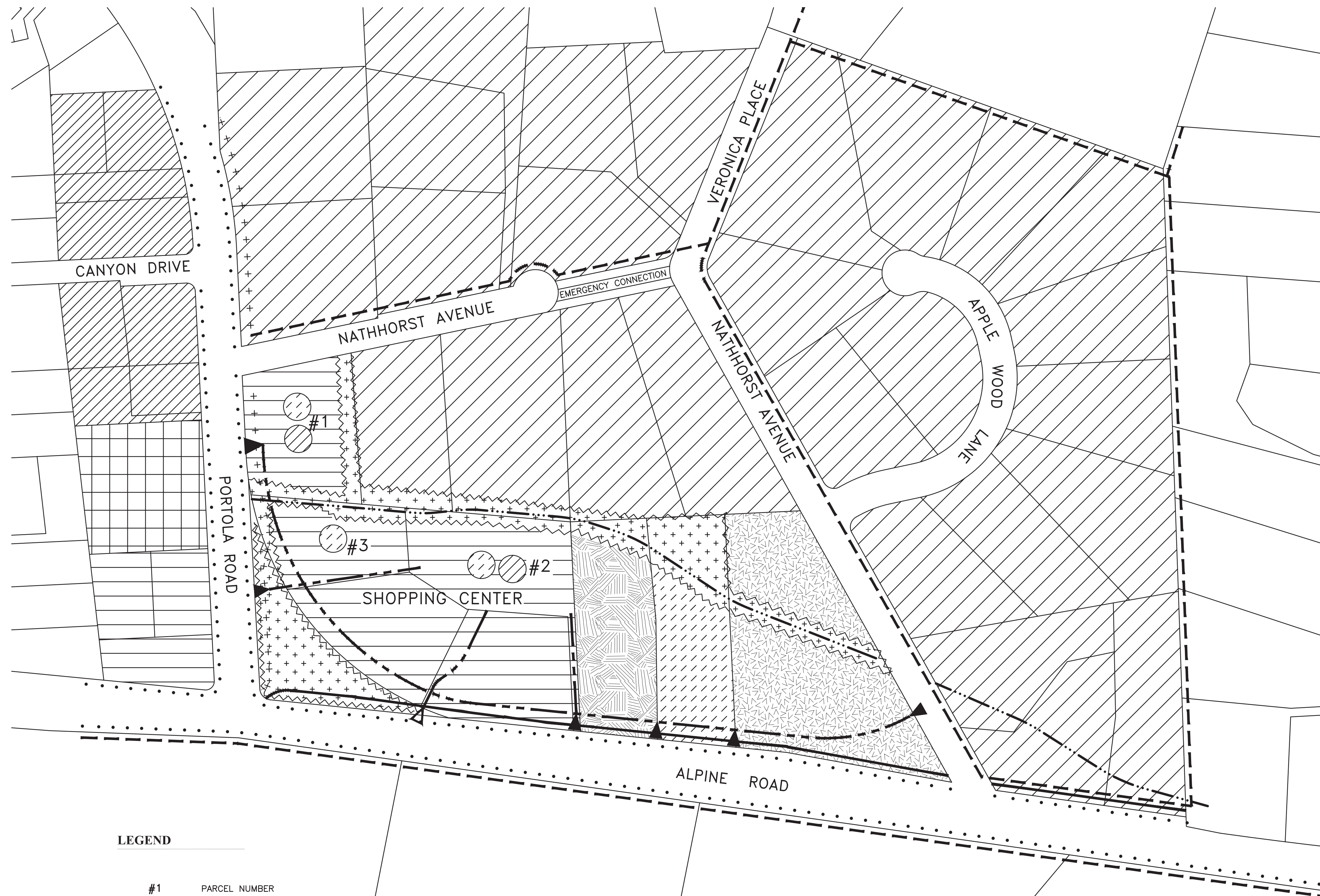
Nathhorst Triangle Area Plan Appendix 1: Implementation of the Nathhorst Triangle Area Plan

Actions to date:

1. The lands shown as community commercial on the Nathhorst Triangle area plan diagram have been zoned C-C (community commercial) and A-P (administrative professional) (municipal code sections 18.20.010, 18.22.010).
2. Limitations on building coverage, floor area and height have been established for the permitted uses (municipal code sections 18.48.010 - 18.56.020).
3. Special provisions for total open space on parcels and for landscaping along Alpine and Portola Roads have been established (municipal code section 18.56.020).
4. Off-street parking requirements have been established (municipal code chapter 18.60).
5. Special conditions to help ensure compatibility with the intent of the districts have been included (municipal code chapters 18.20, 18.64, 18.72 and 18.40).
6. Planned unit development provisions have been added to allow design flexibilities including yards, heights and building coverage (municipal code chapters 18.52 and 18.54)

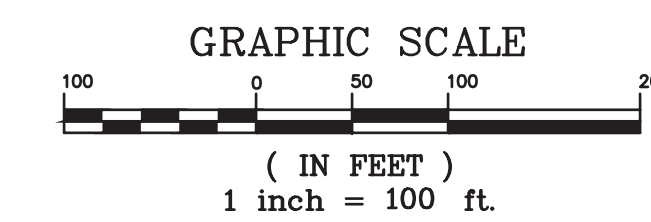
Future actions:

1. The town should continue to apply the zoning standards and procedures that are in place.



LEGEND

- #1 PARCEL NUMBER
- PROPERTY LINE
- [Hatched Box] COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL
- [Diagonal Hatched Box] COMMUNITY SERVICE
- [Wavy Hatched Box] COMMUNITY PARK, OPEN SPACE, GREENWAY, CREEK Community Park, Private Open Space, Greenway, Creek/Drainage
- [Grid Hatched Box] INSTITUTIONAL
- [Diagonal Hatched Box] LOW-MEDIUM INTENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- [Diagonal Hatched Box] LOW INTENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- [Cross-hatched Box] MULTI-FAMILY (20)
- [Stippled Box] MIXED USE
- ALTERNATE LAND USE
- + + + + + MULTIUSE CORRIDOR
- BICYCLE PATH
- - - - - EQUESTRIAN/HIKING TRAIL
- • • • • BICYCLE ROUTE
- - - - - INTERNAL CIRCULATION (GENERAL LOCATION)
- · - · - · CREEK Ephemeral Creek/Drainage
- ▲ DRIVEWAY ENTRANCE
- △ TEMPORARY DRIVEWAY ENTRANCE



ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS			
PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION	DATE	TOWN COUNCIL RESOLUTION	DATE
1976-602	01/14/76	1973-422	05/23/73
1988-1244	03/23/88		
1990-1329	03/28/90		
1992-1421	12/09/92		
1995-1489	03/08/95		
1997-1618	12/10/97		

Town of Portola Valley General Plan

Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan

Last amended April 25, 2001

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Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan

Introduction

The Route

6200 The Alpine Corridor extends from the base of the foothills at Santa Cruz Avenue up to the Skyline Boulevard summit, a distance of nearly ten miles. The integrating features for the entire length of the corridor are Alpine Road, trails and paths for walkers, equestrians and bicyclists, and the natural features of the corridor. Alpine Road changes greatly in character from an arterial road to a major collector and then to a minor collector and finally to an emergency road over its length. In addition, most of the corridor follows in succession portions of three creeks: San Francisquito, Los Trancos and Corte Madera. The route in part follows along the mutual boundary of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties and goes through sections of Menlo Park and Palo Alto in addition to Portola Valley.

Purpose

6201 The Alpine Scenic Corridor is a schematic guide for the conservation and development of the corridor. The plan:

1. delineates the approximate outlines of the scenic corridor,
2. includes creeks, road, trail and path facilities in general locations,
3. proposes activities appropriate within the scenic corridor,
4. identifies particular problems and opportunities regarding the scenic corridor, and

5. suggests some of the values of the scenic corridor to the communities it touches and identifies its importance to the larger Midpeninsula community.

6202 In addition to longer range actions, the plan focuses public attention on the actions that can be taken at this time to create, maintain and protect the scenic corridor. It also lists measures that can be taken, both public and private, to prevent damage to the corridor by actions that could seriously affect its future value.

6202a The basic goal of this plan is the conservation and enhancement of the beauty of landscape and the rich variety of plants and wildlife of the scenic corridor so as to maintain this band of pleasant open country for the enjoyment of all. A further goal is to carry local traffic and to provide recreational opportunities while preserving to the maximum extent possible the natural setting with improvements limited to trails, paths and features designed to protect and enhance the natural character and the public safety.

Character of the Scenic Corridor

6203 The Alpine Scenic Corridor is of particular importance since it serves as the gateway from the more developed urban peninsula to the rural setting of Portola Valley. The roadsides and creeksides in the corridor remain in a natural state through much of the route, although the lower section of Alpine Road is a busy thoroughfare linking Portola Valley, Ladera and other foothill communities to Midpeninsula employment and shopping centers. Residential properties, shopping centers, and tennis and swim clubs touch the roadway, yet most of the land is still rural in appearance with grassland pastures, rolling grass-covered hills studded with oaks, and steeper wooded hill and mountain sides. Low density building, generous setbacks and the native woods have preserved much of the natural setting and rural feeling. Magnificent stands of trees border the San Francisquito and Los Trancos creeks—oaks, bays and alders, 75 to 100 feet tall, many of them hundreds of years old. Small open meadows remain in bends of the creeks.

6204 The upper reaches of the Corte Madera canyon and the ridges above where the road climbs to the summit are only occasionally touched by development and are still in the wild state. The narrow winding Alpine Road parallels Corte Madera Creek for several miles and overlooks the fern covered banks of this year-around stream. At Ciervos Road, Alpine Road changes to a dirt road intended for only emergency vehicles, hikers, equestrians and bicycles. It then leaves the tight canyon at the Vista Verde Subdivision entrance and climbs to the wooded ridge with views across the canyon to Skyline Ridge and occasional dramatic vistas of the Bay plain.

6205 (Not Used.)

Objectives

- 6206
1. To establish the San Francisquito Creek system as an important element in the Midpeninsula waterway system.
 2. To protect the Alpine Scenic Corridor, providing a natural link between the mountains and the Bay plain, to add to the sense of order and well-being of those who live in the Midpeninsula – with intimate views of the creeks, the sight of rolling hills, and striking vistas of the Santa Cruz Mountains.
 3. To retain the natural beauty of the scenic corridor, a route through which many people travel and will travel daily so that the corridor will continue to provide a welcome contrast with the nearby urban activity centers.
 4. To define a scenic corridor that preserves the intrinsic qualities of the creeks and creeksides of the San Francisquito Creek system.
 5. To provide for the use and enjoyment of the creeks, valleys and canyons in a manner consistent with preservation of their integrity as natural features.
 6. To utilize the opportunity for passive and active recreation at appropriate locations within the corridor.
 7. To provide a basis for interjurisdictional arrangements needed to protect and enhance the corridor.
 8. To exercise extreme care to preserve the Corte Madera Creek riparian corridor when undertaking maintenance or improvement of Alpine Road between Willowbrook Drive and Ciervos Road. Particular attention should be given to utilizing biotechnical slope protection techniques.

Description

- 6207 The watershed landscape is a major unifying element of the corridor. The creeks and creekside trees, the valleys through which they flow, the canyons, the confining ridges and the mountain tops all relate to the watershed of the San Francisquito and its tributaries, including the Corte Madera and Los Trancos Creeks.
- 6208 (Not Used).
- 6209 The corridor is in essence a linear park which includes scenic resources, creeks, routes of travel, natural preserves, recreation sites and vista points. Two existing public recreation areas are shown: Ford Park, an essentially open park with a little league baseball diamond, and the soccer field south of Arastradero Road. Also, two

existing developed recreation sites and one commercial recreation facility are recognized in the plan—the Ladera Oaks Swim and Tennis Club, the Alpine Hills Swim and Tennis Club, and Alpine Beer Gardens at the site of Rossotti's historic monument. No additional "developed" recreation areas are proposed. The scenic corridor includes vista corridors and roadside areas that are specifically identified in order to 1) establish the basis for the regulations appropriate to protect the natural setting of the corridor, and 2) suggest a framework for cooperative community actions that can enhance desirable features or correct undesirable conditions.

The Creeks

6210 Although much of the scenic corridor is within the Town of Portola Valley, this scenic route is also of vital interest to the larger Midpeninsula community. Of prime concern are the creeks that form the common boundary of San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. These creeks are not "wild" throughout their length, in the sense of remaining free flowing and unaltered by people, but they are largely unspoiled and offer opportunities by trail and path for education and enjoyment. They are a resource of great value, of a kind that is fast disappearing in our urban area. Therefore, these creeks and their immediate banks, including the well-defined band of trees along the creeksides and a suitable minimum width (at least 200') on either side of the creek, comprise a natural resource area which should be protected through public acquisition, stringent regulation and other appropriate means.

The Scenic Corridor

6211 The Alpine Scenic Corridor includes four areas of special concern: the creekside environment, the immediate roadside, the primary vista corridor and secondary vista corridor. All four of these areas contribute to the natural quality of the scenic corridor. Distant views seen from the road are identified in the element but are not included within the corridor. While all structures and modifications to the natural environment within the corridor are of concern, the degree of concern with details decreases with distance from the road. Unless otherwise noted, the following items are of concern within the four areas described in Sections 6212, 6213 and 6214, but the degree of concern should be tempered based on the visual impact when viewed from areas along the road.

1. Points of access to Alpine Road should be limited to the maximum extent possible.
2. All utilities along Alpine Road should be underground.
3. Building setbacks along Alpine Road should be increased as necessary to reduce the feeling of encroachment on the road.

4. In commercial areas, particular attention should be given to signs, lighting, parking and planting so as to provide the least possible intrusion on the natural feeling of the corridor.
5. Buildings and structures should be subservient to the natural landscape in design, materials and color.
6. Planting should be in keeping with the natural landscape, leaving native trees and open space grasslands where possible and using native plant materials or other drought resistant plants in keeping with the natural scene.
7. Removal of trees or other native vegetation cover should be stringently controlled.
8. On-street parking should be limited to the maximum extent possible.
9. The effects of any building near a riparian corridor or any alteration to the riparian corridor must be minimized in the planning and/or building process.

The Immediate Roadside

6212 This band on either side of the roadway, generally 50 to 100 feet wide, extends to the nearby stands of trees at the edge of the roadside, or to fences, banks or other features tending to define the roadside area. No specific limits of this area are indicated on the plan diagram. This strip is of great importance to the scenic values of the corridor. Here buildings, grading, clearing, planting and access roads should be carefully regulated.

Primary Vista Corridor

6213 The lands in view beyond the roadside determine the character of the scenic corridor and are thus designated as the "Primary Vista Corridor." This corridor takes in the nearby ridges viewed from the road and includes the foreground, up to an arbitrary 1000', where long vistas extend up valleys beyond the corridor. It is not practical to prohibit all building within this corridor, but in the development of individual properties, building construction and planting should be designed to be compatible with and retain the natural and rural appearance of the area.

Secondary Vista Corridor

6214 In the secondary vista corridor, including hills in the middle distance and the land in view down open valleys, all major projects should be carefully reviewed and stringently regulated to prevent any significant alterations of the natural scene.

Circulation

- 6215 The plan diagram establishes general routes for roads, trails and paths for local and through use. These routes will serve both general travel needs and provide recreation opportunities.
- 6216 **Roads.** The lower portion of Alpine Road, from Junipero Serra Boulevard to Willowbrook Drive, is an essential traffic carrier for Portola Valley, but this function should be subordinated to the natural features within the scenic corridor to the maximum extent feasible. Protection of the visual quality and mitigation of traffic impact in the corridor should be given highest priority.
- 6217 In the section of Alpine Road between Portola Road and the intersection of the Junipero Serra Freeway (Route 280) some improvements may be needed to increase safety and manage traffic.
- 6218 Between Portola Road and Willowbrook Road, the present facility should be adequate for anticipated future traffic with minor improvements.
- 6219 From Willowbrook Road south to Ciervos Road, Alpine Road is in the steep sided canyon of Corte Madera Creek. Because substantial widening or realignment in this narrow canyon is not possible without destructive cuts and fills, this portion should remain as a narrow, winding, low capacity route—a single lane road in some areas with turnouts for passing. Because of the limitations of this section of the road, it should be used for limited purposes, as follows: access for residents of the town to their homes; use by residents of Los Trancos Woods and Vista Verde, primarily in emergencies; and other public access, primarily by foot.
- 6220 Above Ciervos Road, Alpine Road should remain permanently closed to general public vehicular travel and maintained for only walking, riding, bicycling and emergency and service vehicles. Access to abutting properties should be provided from other roads connecting to Skyline Boulevard.
- 6221 **Trails and Paths.** Trails and paths along the corridor will serve both general travel and recreation needs for both local and through traffic, connecting with destinations outside of this corridor. The creekside is particularly suited to trail use because of the relatively few road crossings. The paths and trails shown are diagrammatic. Precise alignment will require more detailed studies giving more consideration to terrain and particular points of interest. The trails and paths element indicates general routes through the corridor. It further defines the standards and principles and the relationship of the trails and paths in the corridor to other local and through routes leading to destinations outside the corridor. The following types of trails and paths are shown on the corridor plan and are defined in the trails and paths element: hiking trail, riding trail, pedestrian path, bicycle

lane, bicycle path, through trail or path, local trail or path. Wherever possible, trails and paths should be separated from the traveled way to protect pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians.

Land Use

6222 A policy statement issued by the Town of Portola Valley, July 1969, indicates the nature of uses of land considered to be suitable for the corridor.

The policy of the Town of Portola Valley has always been to maintain a tranquil, rural atmosphere, and to preserve a maximum of green open space. The Alpine Corridor should be developed in accord with this policy. The natural look and feeling of the land between the road and the creek should be maintained. Trees and natural growth should be preserved and increased. Recreational uses should be in keeping with a peaceful and rural atmosphere.

We recognize that a scenic corridor along a public road should be for public use. The hiking and riding trail and the bicycle path will be open to everyone. The Little League field, the soccer field, the Alpine Beer tavern and the tennis clubs are existing public and semi-public uses. Aside from this, we envision opportunities for peaceful, uncrowded recreation for the benefit of the residents of the Town and others. In order not to attract crowds that would make this impossible, we feel that there should be no advertisement to the transient passer-by, such as picnic tables visible from the road or visible parking areas.

(Note: In the foregoing, the term Alpine Corridor is used, but this term was subsequently changed to Alpine Scenic Corridor.)

6223 The recreation uses proposed in this plan conform to this concept of a corridor.

1. The creeksides and adjacent meadows should be considered as a natural reserve—a wildlife conservation area to be protected from over use—with only such uses permitted as are consistent with conserving these still natural areas. Large areas of impervious surfaces are to be avoided.
2. The creeks themselves, with running water and the plants and creatures associated with the creeks, are features of principal interest for those using paths and trails.
3. Sufficient public access to creeks and creeksides is essential to the enjoyment of the corridor, and opportunities should be provided for public use of this tranquil and natural landscape.

4. Recreation sites should be small in scale and access chiefly limited to trails and paths.
5. Areas of special educational interest should be identified for nature study and conservation education programs.
6. Viewpoints, groves of trees and creek areas of special interest should be identified as destinations for paths and trails.
7. Sites appropriate for group use by children should be identified, such as small natural amphitheaters and clearings suitable for club activities and school excursions.
8. Near Skyline Boulevard, the corridor should be integrated with the open spaces and trails of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.
9. Any residential or mixed use projects constructed along the corridor shall be designed to respect the scenic principles set forth in this plan.
10. Any residential or mixed use projects constructed along the corridor shall provide sufficient setbacks for the Town's use of Alpine Road as a major evacuation corridor.

Plan Diagram

6224 The plan diagram is hereby incorporated into this element of the General Plan.

Plan Diagram Notations

6225 The Alpine corridor divides naturally into two sections. One is the lower rolling foothill section, which contains the meander of the San Francisquito and Los Trancos creeks and is characterized by the gentle grades and rounded contours of grassy oak-studded knolls contrasted with steep hillsides densely wooded with dark green live oaks and chaparral. The second is the upper section in the narrow canyon of the Corte Madera Creek, where the corridor closely follows the creek, climbs to the northern ridge and finally emerges from the forest to the open hilltops near the Skyline.

6226 Notations on the plan diagram mark specific features along the route such as vistas, recreation sites and problems where protective action is indicated. Some specific features have been noted to point up some of the important kinds of actions, programs and regulations that should be initiated at this time. Other notes indicate actions needed in the future. The following notations are keyed to the plan diagram and numbered, except for those in Sections 6231-6235 which concern

upper Alpine Road. This area is north of the region shown on Sheet #5 and is not included in the plan diagram.

Sheet #1

- 6227 This portion of the scenic corridor is beyond the town limits and the primary actions will be needed by other jurisdictions.
1. View across golf course to East Bay hills; protect through regulations.
 2. Overhead wires on both sides of road from Junipero Serra Boulevard for at least 1/2 mile to south; needs undergrounding program.
 3. Small meadow with stand of buckeye trees; needs protection.
 4. Corridor along path is arbitrarily set at 200 feet although views may be more distant; preserve tree cover.
 5. Very harsh roadside; needs additional grading and low landscaping.
 6. First view (after starting from north end of scenic corridor) of Jasper Ridge and most importantly the Skyline; keep open, needs special control of structures and tree planting.
 7. View of freeway interchange, Ladera, Westridge, Skyline and boarding stable; needs additional planting of native trees and shrubs to soften roadside but not block distant view.
 8. –
 10. Left open.

Sheet #2

- 6228
11. Bare freeway ramps to west, groves of trees to east; needs landscaping of bare portion of freeway interchange.
 12. Harsh bank on west side; needs to be planted in harmony with tree cover on east side of road.
 13. Tree canopy is valuable for sequence of views; protect trees.
 14. Shopping and professional centers of excellent design, buildings with good roof lines and planting to screen auto parking; maintain quality by attention to planting, signs, lighting and colors. Signs should be externally lighted.

15. Creek in this area has water through much of year; protect creekside through adequate setbacks and retention of riparian vegetation.
16. Band of very large oaks screens houses from Alpine Road; these trees need protection.
17. Large tree farm; operation needs to be controlled regarding runoff, traffic and creek pollution.
18. Vista to Skyline; keep view open.
19. (Not Used).
20. Antenna project on immediate creekside plain is a jarring visual element; urge removal when no longer being used.
21. Residential development; keep planting and buildings in view of Alpine Road compatible.
22. (Not Used).
23. Meadow and group of trees are creekside elements valuable to the scenic corridor, but Little League use detracts from visual aspects and creates traffic hazards; continued attention, such as through screen planting, is needed to enhance visual quality and minimize traffic hazards.
24. (Not Used).
25. Views of hills and oaks important to corridor; work with Stanford to retain open space quality.
26. Shallow creekside bowl bordered by trees; suggests possible opportunities for creekside study.
27. View of ridge behind Stanford; retain.
28. Vista to mountains; retain.
29. Steep wooded canyon and hillside (Stanford land); extreme care needed in design and construction if lands are developed in the future; maintain as permanent open space if possible.
30. Diversion ditch to Felt Lake; consider possible trailside point of interest.
31. Dam on Los Trancos Creek and fish ladder divert water to Felt Lake; possible trailside point of interest.

- 32. Rossotti's, an historic monument; enforce strict architectural and site development controls.
- 33. –
- 50. Left open

Sheet #3

- 6229 51. Vista to Skyline; keep open.
- 52. Tree covered, steep roadside (subdivided); control development since any change in this area would have significant impact on views from road.
- 53. This stretch of creek dominated by tall alders and bays; protect.
- 54. Residences; cooperative action needed in unifying planting and fencing and to decrease adverse visual impact because of unsympathetic use of materials and color.
- 55. (Not Used).
- 56. Portola Valley Garage; appropriate screen planting including trees needed to mitigate adverse visual qualities.
- 57. Open vistas of Skyline to north and west; preserve.
- 58. Residences, yards close to roadside.
- 59. Residential development close to roadway; increase planting.
- 60. Vista opens up of Skyline range to the north; protect view.
- 61. (Not Used).
- 62. Residential and commercial development near roadway; replace exotics with more compatible planting and add screen planting.
- 63. Commercial development, Nathhorst Triangle; needs continual attention re: planting, signs, lights, colors and traffic control.
- 64. Residential development near roadside; maintain screen planting.
- 65. Vista to hills; keep open.
- 66. Corte Madera School; maintain planting to soften school appearance.

- 67. Residential development fairly well screened by hillside planting; keep screen plantings.
- 68. Vista to Bay; keep open.
- 69. -
- 79. (Not Used).
- 80. Bottom portion of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve, a beautiful stretch of the creek and related uplands located at the junction of trails; keep largely in its natural state for the enjoyment of users of the trail and path system.

Sheet #4 and Sheet #5

- 6230 Occasional property access roads cross the creek, and there are scattered homes along the hill. Additional access roads, bridging and building would seriously threaten the wild quality of this part of the corridor. Trash dumped from the road now mars the creek. Continued control and maintenance are needed.
- 81. Strip of creekside dedicated to town for park purposes; preserve open space.
- 82. Steep hillsides on both sides of canyon; protect from development.
- 83. Narrow road along canyon above creek and very steep bank above road; do not widen road other than for occasional turnout.
- 84. Occasional flats along creek will allow for small study areas and trail stops.
- 85. A number of footpaths follow along the creek; care needed to minimize erosion on steep slopes.

Upper Alpine Road (north of the area shown on Sheet #5)

- 6231 The portion of Alpine Road above Ciervos Road is closed to general public vehicular travel and use is restricted to emergency vehicles, equestrians, bicyclists and hikers; retain these use restrictions.
- 6232 In the canyon woods are dense—maple, bays, oaks, and ferns on steep north banks—and at intervals, along the creek, there are a number of small flats for trail destinations; preserve this environment.
- 6233 Just above Ciervos Road, Alpine Road now crosses the creek and climbs by sharp switchbacks to a narrow ridge. Coal Mine Ridge comes into view across the canyon to the south, and from a few vista points along the road there are panoramic views across the Bay plain to the east. Preserve this area.

- 6234 Nearing the summit, the road goes under a canopy of trees in a dense oak forest, then emerges on the edge of small grassy meadows near the Page Mill intersection. In this part of the corridor are possible sites for picnic spots and loop trails that could be a part of the Skyline Scenic Regional Recreation Road.
- 6235 Fine vista points near the intersection of Page Mill and Alpine Roads overlook Montebello Ridge and the range of the Santa Cruz Mountains to the south.

Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan Appendix 1: Implementation of the Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan

Actions to date:

1. Special setbacks of 75 feet from the right-of-way have been adopted in the zoning regulations for Alpine Road from the town boundary at Ladera to Portola Road.
2. All new residences and major additions are subject to review by the architectural and site control commission. Such reviews require analysis with respect to the Alpine scenic corridor plan.
3. The town has adopted design guidelines that include lists of native plants that are to guide the ASCC in its actions. The use of native plants in the scenic corridor will help retain the natural beauty of the area.
4. Special planting requirements have been imposed on properties zoned C-C (community commercial) and A-P (administrative-professional).
5. Ford Field and the “Rossotti” soccer field, both of which have been acquired by the town, provide permanent open space within the corridor.
6. Striped road shoulders have been provided which are used by bicyclists although they do not meet state standards for bike lanes.
7. Some overhead lines have been installed underground through undergrounding district #1.

Future actions:

1. Additional open space acquisitions of land within the corridor are set forth in Open Space Element Appendix 2: Implementation of the Open Space Element.
2. Where acquisitions of land to protect the corridor are not appropriate, easements should be obtained to protect the corridor.
3. In any new developments with frontage on Alpine Road, care should be taken to preserve natural land forms and vegetation in close proximity to the road to protect the corridor.
4. Consideration should be given to adding the design review combining district of the zoning regulations to land along Alpine Road.

5. From Los Trancos Road to the southern town boundary, easements or dedications in fee should be secured as undeveloped acreage is subdivided. To the west of the road, implementation will be somewhat difficult because of the prevalence of small parcels of land. A combination of regulation and acquisition of easements or full fee title through purchase or dedication will be needed.

For the trail and path system, easements for recommended trails should be acquired as part of the subdivision process. Some easements on the west may need to be purchased. A bicycle lane in the roadway is recommended. This will require more detailed design study.

6. It is recommended that the town request a resolution by San Mateo and Santa Clara County Supervisors declaring mutual concern in San Francisquito and Los Trancos Creeks and their watersheds as valuable natural resources along their common boundary and designating these streams as “scenic streams.” The San Mateo County Supervisors should be asked to also designate Corte Madera Creek as a “scenic stream.” The entire corridor should be designated as an open space scenic preserve.
7. Change in creek flow of Los Trancos and San Francisquito Creeks should be investigated to determine whether there have been long term undesirable effects from diversion of waters and what remedial action, if any, may need to be taken. The need for creek bank protection in critical locations should be evaluated.
8. Advice of an ecologist or arborist should be sought for recommendations on tree care, particularly for large important trees. Valley oaks are reportedly not replacing themselves. Seeding, with protection of young trees from grazing cattle and other damage for a few years, could ensure perpetuation of these valuable groves on the hillsides. Introduced species of trees such as eucalyptus have seeded along the creek in some section and should be removed where undesirable. County cooperation should be sought.
9. The town should continue to pursue undergrounding of overhead lines through funds obtained from the utility companies.
10. Outside of the town, the town should seek the cooperation of other jurisdictions in the corridor to have overhead lines placed underground.
11. The town should cooperate with CRMP (Coordinated Resource Management and Planning) Process in its efforts to protect the San Francisquito Creek.
12. The town should sponsor programs for appropriate tree planting and for encouraging cooperative actions by residents and other property owners in landscaping and maintenance compatible with the scenic corridor.

