



**Regular Meeting Agenda
Planning Commission**

JAMES WILSON - CHAIR
MOHAMMAD HABIB - VICE-CHAIR
PAUL LAKE - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
JOSEPH MUELLER - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
WAYNE TANDA - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
DAVID LOVATO - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
LIAM DOWNEY - PLANNING COMMISSIONER

**Tuesday, November 11, 2025
7:00 PM**

**Council Chamber Building
17555 Peak Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA 95037**

Morgan Hill Planning Commission meetings are held in person with the option for the public to attend in-person or participate by teleconference/video conference. Information on how the public may observe and participate in the meeting is below.

MEETING PARTICIPATION

To access written translation during the meeting, a QR Code will be provided during the meeting.

Para tener acceso a servicios de traducción escrita durante la reunión, un código QR será disponible durante la reunión.

Use a headset on your phone for audio or read the transcript on your device. Tablets and disposable headphones will be provided in-person during the meeting to those who do not have their own devices.

Usa unos audífonos con tu teléfono para escuchar el audio o lee la transcripción en su pantalla. Se darán tabletas y audífonos desechables en persona durante la reunión a quienes no tengan sus propios aparatos.

The community can participate by attending in person, joining via Zoom (video/teleconference). The meetings are also live-streamed on the City's website and Facebook page.

Those wishing to participate in the meetings remotely must register in advance at <https://bit.ly/PlanningCommissionMtg>. Additionally, Zoom participants must be running the latest version or will be required to update to the latest version before being able to join the meeting remotely.

Remote participation is also available by calling (669) 900-9128 and entering webinar id: 862 0324 6251#. Dial *9 to raise your hand, and be called upon to speak for up to 3 minutes. Dial *6 to unmute.

As a courtesy, and technology permitting, for members who attend online, the City cannot guarantee that the public's access to online technology will be uninterrupted, and technical difficulties may occur from time to time. Unless required by the Ralph M. Brown Act, the meeting will continue despite technical difficulties for participants using the online option.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment may be offered verbally at the meeting or in writing before the meeting.

Those attending remotely may only offer public comment for items on the agenda in any of these three categories:

- Consent Calendar
- Other Business
- Public Hearings

Public comment will be heard from those attending in person first with the submission of a speaker card. Once that is complete, we will move to those on Zoom that have their hand raised. Following public comment from Zoom, we will close the public comment period for that item.

Remote public comment for items not on the agenda will not be accepted.

Written public comment may be submitted to the Planning Office:

- In person at the Planning Commission Meeting;
- Via email to pcpubliccomment@morganhill.ca.gov; or
- Hand delivered or mailed to the Planning Division at 17575 Peak Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA 95037

Please email your comments to the Planning Office no later than 3:00 p.m. on Monday (the day before the Planning Commission meeting) so that your comments can be submitted to the members of the Planning Commission with sufficient time to review them. You may continue to provide written comments up to noon on Tuesday (the day of the meeting), although Planning Commissioners may not have sufficient time to review them before the meeting. Public comments submitted to the Planning Division

after noon (12:00 p.m.) the day of the meeting will be provided to the Planning Commission as time allows.

Written comments WILL NOT be read aloud during the Planning Commission Meeting. Please note that written comments are posted on the City's website. It is recommended that you do not include any personal information that you do not want to be posted on the web. Please be advised that communications directed to the Planning Commission are public records and are subject to disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act and Brown Act unless exempt from disclosure under the applicable law. Communications will NOT be edited for redactions and will be printed/posted as submitted.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you are a disabled person and you need a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting, please contact the Planning Office at (408) 310-4709 or by email at planning@morganhill.ca.gov. Requests must be made as early as possible and at least two full business days before the start of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

DECLARATION OF POSTING

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public are entitled to address the Planning Commission concerning any item within the Morgan Hill Planning Commission's subject matter jurisdiction. Public comments are limited to no more than three minutes. Except for certain specific exceptions, the Commission is prohibited from discussing or taking action on any item not appearing on the posted agenda. (See additional noticing at the end of this agenda)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MINUTES APPROVAL

1. SEPTEMBER 23, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

Recommendation:

1. Accept the September 23, 2025, Meeting Minutes.

2. OCTOBER 14, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

Recommendation:

1. Accept the October 14, 2025 meeting minutes.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

3. GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (GPA2024-0002) TO ADD A HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL ELEMENT TO THE TEXT OF THE MORGAN HILL 2035 GENERAL PLAN IN COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE BILL 1000

Recommendation:

1. Open/Close Public Hearing; and
2. Adopt Resolution recommending City Council approval to add the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element to the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan.

4. GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (GPA2024-0004) TO AMEND THE TEXT OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT OF THE MORGAN HILL 2035 GENERAL PLAN IN COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE BILL 1425

Recommendation:

1. Open/Close Public Hearing; and
2. Adopt Resolution recommending City Council approval of an amendment to the Natural Resources and Environment Element of the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE

Any documents produced by the City and distributed to the majority of the Planning Commission less than 72 hours prior to an open meeting, will be made available for public inspection at the front counter at City Hall located at 17575 Peak Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA, 95037 and at the Morgan Hill Public Library located at 660 West Main Avenue, Morgan Hill, California, 95037 during normal business hours. (Pursuant to Government Code 54957.5)

PUBLIC COMMENT

November 11, 2025

Members of the Public are entitled to directly address the Planning Commission concerning any item that is described in the notice of this meeting, before or during consideration of that item. If you wish to address the Planning Commission on any issue that is on this agenda, please complete a speaker request card located in the foyer of the Council Chambers and deliver it to the Minutes Clerk prior to discussion of the item. You are not required to give your name on the speaker card in order to speak to the Planning Commission, but it is very helpful. When you are called, proceed to the podium and the Chair will recognize you. If you wish to address the Planning Commission on any other item of interest to the public, you may do so during the public comment portion of the meeting following the same procedure described above. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes or less.

Please submit written correspondence to the Minutes Clerk, who will distribute correspondence to the Planning Commission.

Persons interested in proposing an item for the Planning Commission agenda should contact a member of the Commission who may plan an item on the agenda for a future Commission meeting. Should your comments require Planning's action, your request may be placed on the next appropriate agenda. Planning Commission discussion or action may not be taken until your item appears on an agenda. This procedure is in compliance with the California Public Meeting Law (Brown Act) Government Code §54950.

City Council Policies and Procedures (CP 03-01) outlines the procedure for the conduct of public hearings. Notice is given, pursuant to Government Code Section 65009, that any challenge of Public Hearing Agenda items in court, may be limited to raising only those issues raised by you or on your behalf at the Public Hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the Commission at, or prior to the Public Hearing on these matters.

The time within which judicial review must be sought of the action by the Commission, which acted upon any matter appearing on this agenda is governed by the provisions of Section 1094.6 of the California Code of Civil Procedure.

For a copy of Commission Policies and Procedures CP 97-01, please contact the City Clerk's office (408) 779-7259, (408) 779-3117 (fax) or by email cityclerk@morganhill.ca.gov.



**Meeting Minutes
Planning Commission**

*JAMES WILSON - CHAIR
MOHAMMAD HABIB - VICE-CHAIR
PAUL LAKE - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
DAVID LAVATO - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
JOSEPH MUELLER - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
LIAM DOWNEY - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
WAYNE TANDA - PLANNING COMMISSIONER*

**Tuesday, September 23, 2025
7:00 PM**

**Council Chambers
17555 Peak Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA 95037**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

Minutes Clerk Jenna Luna called the roll at 07:00 p.m.

PRESENT	James Wilson, Mohammad Habib, Paul Lake, Joseph Mueller, Wayne Tanda, Liam Downey
EXCUSED	David Lovato

DECLARATION OF POSTING

Minutes Clerk Luna Declared the Posting of Agenda at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Planning Commissioner Lake led the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:01 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Wilson opened the Public Comment Period at 7:01 p.m. The following individuals were called to speak:

- Rocke Garcia
- Glenda Garcia

Hearing no further requests to speak, the Public Comment Period was closed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

There were no changes made.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. JULY 8, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Recommendation:

1. Accept meeting minutes

MOTION:

Accept the July 8, 2025 Meeting Minutes.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Planning Commissioner Downey
SECONDER:	Planning Commissioner Mueller
AYES:	Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Habib, Planning Commissioner Lake, Planning Commissioner Mueller, Planning Commissioner Tanda, Planning Commissioner Downey
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Planning Commissioner Lovato

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. **ZA2025-0001: Condit – Auto Park PD Amendment to the Development Plan for the Auto Park PUD located on the southwest corner of Condit Road and Diana Avenue.**

ZA2025-0002: Condit – Condit Road PD Amendment to the Development Plan for the Condit Road PUD located on the west side of Condit Road between E. Dunne Avenue and Tennant Avenue.

ZA2025-0005: Laurel - Honda PD Amendment to the Allowed uses of the CH (PD) Overlay Zone on the easterly terminus of Laurel Road.

Recommendation:

1. Open/close public hearing
2. Adopt Resolution recommending City Council approval of the Zoning Amendment ZA2025-0001: Condit – Auto Park PUD
3. Adopt Resolution recommending City Council approval of the Zoning Amendment ZA2025-0002: Condit – Condit Road PUD
4. Adopt Resolution recommending City Council approval of the Zoning Amendment ZA2025-0005: Laurel Road – Honda PUD

Chair Wilson introduced the item at 7:07 p.m.

Economic Development Coordinator Brittney Sherman presented the Staff Report at 7:08 p.m.

Chair Wilson opened the Public Hearing at 7:44 p.m. Hearing no requests to speak, the Public Hearing was closed.

MOTION:

Adopt a Resolution recommending City Council approve the Zoning Amendment for the Condit – Condit Auto Park PUD and the Zoning Amendment for Laurel Road – Honda PUD.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Planning Commissioner Mueller
SECONDER:	Planning Commissioner Lake
AYES:	Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Habib, Planning Commissioner Lake, Planning Commissioner Mueller, Planning Commissioner Tanda, Planning Commissioner Downey
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Planning Commissioner Lovato

MOTION:

Adopt a Resolution recommending City Council approve the Zoning Amendment for the Condit - Condit Road PUD.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Planning Commissioner Mueller
SECONDER:	Planning Commissioner Lake
AYES:	Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Habib, Planning Commissioner Lake, Planning Commissioner Mueller, Planning Commissioner Downey
NAYS:	Planning Commissioner Tanda
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Planning Commissioner Lovato

OTHER BUSINESS

None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Principal Planner Adam Paszkowski made an announcement at 8:53 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 8:54 p.m.

MINUTES PREPARED BY:
Jenna Luna, Minutes Clerk



Meeting Minutes
Planning Commission

JAMES WILSON - CHAIR
MOHAMMAD HABIB - VICE-CHAIR
PAUL LAKE - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
DAVID LAVATO - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
JOSEPH MUELLER - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
LIAM DOWNEY - PLANNING COMMISSIONER
WAYNE TANDA - PLANNING COMMISSIONER

Tuesday, October 14, 2025
7:00 PM

Council Chambers
17555 Peak Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA 95037

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

Minutes Clerk Luna called the attendance at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT	James Wilson, Mohammad Habib, Paul Lake, Joseph Mueller, Wayne Tanda, David Lovato
EXCUSED	Liam Downey

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Planning Commissioner Lovato led the pledge of allegiance at 7:01 p.m.

DECLARATION OF POSTING

Minutes Clerk Luna declared the posting of the agenda at 7:02 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Wilson opened the Public Comment Period at 7:02 p.m. Hearing no requests to speak, the Public Comment Period was closed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

There were no changes made.

MINUTES APPROVAL

MOTION:

Accept the August 12 and September 9, 2025 meeting minutes.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Planning Commissioner Lake
SECONDER:	Planning Commissioner Mueller
AYES:	Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Habib, Planning Commissioner Lake, Planning Commissioner Mueller, Planning Commissioner Tanda, Planning Commissioner Lovato
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Planning Commissioner Downey

1. AUGUST 12, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Recommendation:

1. Accept Meeting Minutes

2. SEPTEMBER 9, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Recommendation:

1. Accept Meeting Minutes

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 3. AAE2025-0003: TENNANT - TENNANT STATION PUD: AMENDMENT TO THE TENNANT STATION PLANNED DEVELOPMENT (PUD) TO MODIFY THE MAXIMUM SQUARE FOOTAGE ALLOWED FOR THE EXISTING FITNESS USE AND ADD AN ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION TO MAKE MINOR CHANGES TO SQUARE FOOTAGES IN THE FUTURE. THE PROPERTY, IDENTIFIED BY ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBERS 817-06-041,**

817-06-055, 817-06-056, 817-06-057, AND 817-06-058, IS LOCATED ON THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF MONTEREY ROAD AND TENNANT AVENUE. CEQA: CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT PURSUANT TO SECTION 15061(B)(3) COMMON SENSE EXEMPTION.

Recommendation:

1. Open/close public hearing; and
2. Adopt Resolution recommending City Council approval of the Zoning Amendment AAE2025-0003 Tennant Station PD.

Chair Wilson introduced the item at 7:03 p.m.

Development Services Director Jennifer Carmen presented the Staff Report at 7:05 p.m.

Chair Wilson opened the public at 7:15 p.m. The following individual was called to speak:

- Mitchell Gardner

Hearing no further requests to speak, the Public Hearing was closed.

MOTION:

Adopt a Resolution recommending City Council approval of the Zoning Amendment with an added sentence that if an increase to the size of the above uses results in impacts to the Center, the appropriate permitting process would be required.

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Planning Commissioner Mueller
SECONDER:	Planning Commissioner Lake
AYES:	Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Habib, Planning Commissioner Lake, Planning Commissioner Mueller, Planning Commissioner Lovato
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	Planning Commissioner Wayne Tanda
ABSENT:	Planning Commissioner Downey

The Planning Commission meeting recessed at 7:26 p.m.
The Planning Commission meeting reconvened at 7:33 p.m.

OTHER BUSINESS

4. HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL WORKSHOP

Recommendation:

Review and discuss the City of Morgan Hill draft Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element.

Principal Planner Adam Paszkowski presented the Staff Report at 7:33 p.m.

The Planning Commissioners asked questions of Staff.

Chair Wilson opened the Public Comment Period at 8:01 p.m. The following individuals were called to speak:

- Ella Ekiano
- Frankie Luna
- Jesus
- Suman Ganapathy
- Doug Miurhead
- Sendy Ramirez
- Christopher Claraderan
- Ella Ekiano
- Jesus

Hearing no further requests to speak, the Public Comment period was closed.

Assistant City Manager for Community Development Edith Ramirez addressed the Planning Commissioner's questions at 8:35 p.m.

Chair Wilson reopened the Public Comment Period at 8:56 p.m. The following individuals were called to speak:

- Suman Ganapathy

Hearing no further requests to speak, the Public Hearing was closed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Development Services Director Jennifer Carman made an announcement at 9:08 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

MINUTES PREPARED BY:
Jenna Luna, Minutes Clerk

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: November 11, 2025

PREPARED BY:

Adam Paszkowski, Principal Planner

APPROVED BY: Jennifer Carman

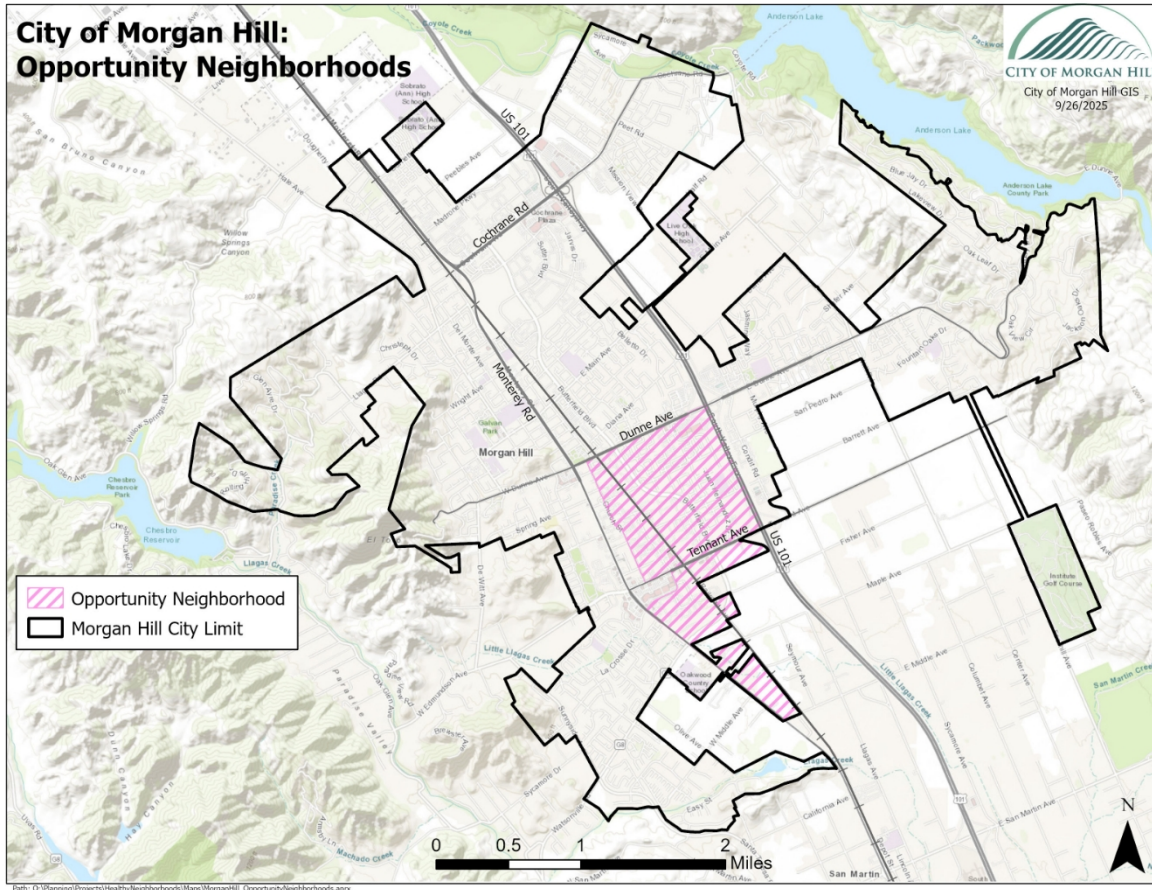
GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (GPA2024-0002) TO ADD A HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL ELEMENT TO THE TEXT OF THE MORGAN HILL 2035 GENERAL PLAN IN COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE BILL 1000

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Open/Close Public Hearing; and
2. Adopt Resolution recommending City Council approval to add the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element to the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan.

LOCATION MAP/PROJECT INFORMATION:

The Healthy Neighborhoods for All (HN4A) Element is a new Environmental Justice Element of the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan, prepared in compliance with [Senate Bill 1000 \(SB 1000\)](#), Planning for Healthy Communities Act. Opportunity Neighborhoods are primarily located south of Dunne Avenue between Highway 101 and Monterey Road, as shown on the map below. These neighborhoods, identified through the HN4A Background Review Report and community input, are disproportionately affected by environmental burdens such as air pollution, traffic-related emissions, limited access to healthy food, and higher housing cost burdens.



BACKGROUND:

The Planning Commission held a workshop regarding the draft HN4A Element on October 14, 2025, providing direction and feedback to Staff on the proposed text, goals, policies, and actions.

SB 1000 requires local jurisdictions to identify 'disadvantaged communities' in their jurisdictions and address environmental justice in their general plans. This law has several purposes, including facilitating transparency and public engagement in local governments' planning and decision-making processes, reducing harmful pollutants and the associated health risks in 'disadvantaged communities', and promoting equitable access to health-inducing benefits, such as healthy food options, housing, public facilities, and recreation.

In Morgan Hill, the term "Opportunity Neighborhoods" has been used in place of the State term 'disadvantaged communities' to reflect a strengths-based approach. These neighborhoods, identified through the HN4A Background Review Report and community input, are disproportionately affected by environmental burdens such as air pollution, traffic-related emissions, limited access to healthy food, and higher housing cost burdens.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

In addition to the direction and feedback on the text of the HN4A Element from the Planning Commission during the October 14, 2025, workshop, Staff also received comments and feedback from the ¡Morgan Hill Prospera! steering committee, and the Climate Action Pathways for Schools interns.

¡Morgan Hill Prospera! Steering Committee

The ¡Morgan Hill Prospera! steering committee was a community-based advisory group formed as part of the City of Morgan Hill's HN4A initiative. Members shared local concerns, priorities, and lived experiences directly with City staff to be incorporated into the development of the HN4A Element. The committee received regular briefings on the progress of the HN4A Element and related planning efforts, and it fostered a dialogue among diverse stakeholders, including residents, community-based organizations, and city representatives. The steering committee played a key role in shaping equitable planning policies by ensuring that community input is embedded in the development of the HN4A Element.

Climate Action Pathways for Schools

City Staff assisted Climate Action Pathways for Schools (CAPS), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, secure a \$300,000 grant over the course of three years from the James Cary Smith Community Grant Program to recruit, hire, and train Morgan Hill Unified School District (MHUSD) students to lead sustainability projects within Morgan Hill. One of the projects under the grant consisted of reviewing the draft goals, policies, and actions of the HN4A Element and providing a presentation to Staff of their recommendations. Several of the recommendations from the interns were incorporated into the draft HN4A Element.

Revisions to the draft HN4A Element

Based on input received by the Planning Commission, ¡Morgan Hill Prospera! steering committee, and the CAPS interns, the following changes have been made to the draft HN4A Element:

- Action HN-1.D (Engagement) was modified to also include 'social media, community boards and clear concise language' to encourage engagement participation.
- Action HN-1.E (Healthy Neighborhoods Promotoras) was amended to also include 'youth' ambassadors.
- Policy HN-2.1 (Reduce Pollution) was expanded to reduce pollution and air quality issues identified within the 'HN4A Background Review Report'.
- Action HN-3.A (Health and Fitness) clarifies that educational information will be 'multilingual'.
- Action HN-3.B (Inclusive Parks) was expanded to include 'cultural programming and multilingual signage'.
- Action HN-3.D (Park Distribution) was modified to also include 'park amenities' and to be consistent with the draft language within Action NRE-1.F (Equitable Open Space Access) of the Natural Resources and Environment Element Update.
- Action HN-3.E (Bicycle Racks) was added to 'review and revise the City's Bicycle Parking Ordinance requiring new developments provide bicycle connections to adjacent uses and Install bicycle racks near building entrances to encourage cycling'.
- Policy HN-4.1 (Affordable Produce) was modified to provide examples of fresh affordable produce, including 'produce stands and mobile food vendors'.
- Policy HN-5.2 (Anti-Displacement and Tenant Protections) was corrected to reference 'all neighborhoods'.
- Action HN-5.A (Mobile Home Rent Stabilization Ordinance) was revised to 'review and update' Chapter 5.36 (Mobile Home Park Rentals).
- Action HN-5.B (Tenant Protection) was modified to 'evaluate existing City tenant protection programs consistent with Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) policy'.
- Action HN-6.A (Overall Healthy Education) was expanded to provide multilingual materials 'through newsletters, community boards, newspaper, and other mechanisms'.
- Action HN-6.B (Mobile Clinics) was revised to 'review and, if warranted, amend' the Code to allow mobile preventative health and dental care clinics.
- Action HN-6.E (Extreme Heat Mitigation) was expanded to include 'heat-vulnerable communities' to be consistent with draft Action NRE-15.F (Urban Heat Mitigation) within the

draft Natural Resources and Environment Element Update.

- Action HN-7.B (Safe Routes to Schools) was elaborated to include trails and bike infrastructure 'connecting Opportunity Neighborhoods to schools'.
- Action HN-7.C (Lighting in Public Spaces) was revised to include reviewing lighting standards for 'private spaces' to ensure well-lit areas 'as a community safety initiative'.
- Action HN-7.E (Community Schoolyards) was added to 'work with the Morgan Hill Unified School District to utilize school playgrounds as community schoolyards outside of school hours'.

PROJECT ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

Adoption of the HN4A Element into the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan will meet the requirements of SB 1000 by highlighting and expanding upon existing policies throughout the General Plan related to topic areas in one central location. The draft HN4A Element strives to uphold existing high-quality public spaces and amenities while creating the space for more inclusive practices where all community members have equal access and opportunities, regardless of where they live in the City.

ANALYSIS

The proposed project was analyzed with respect to conformance with: 1) Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan:

1. General Plan Land Use Consistency

The draft HN4A Element meets the letter and intent of the general plan goals and policies as it complements existing policies and is consistent with the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan vision to maintain Morgan Hill's family-friendly character and strong sense of community while the community grows and prospers.

CONCLUSION:

The HN4A Element represents a significant step toward equitable, healthy, and resilient neighborhoods in Morgan Hill. It addresses statutory requirements, responds to community-identified priorities, and positions the City to pursue funding for initiatives within Opportunity Neighborhoods.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt the resolution recommending City Council approval to add the HN4A Element to the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan.

CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act):

Exempt

The HN4A Element has been reviewed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The proposed draft goals, policies, and actions are primarily programmatic and policy-level, and will not result in any direct impact upon the physical environment. Any development that occurs in the future subject to such standards will undergo an independent analysis per the requirements of CEQA. The HN4A Element is covered under the certified Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan EIR, and no further environmental review is required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15183.

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan was prepared in accordance with CEQA and certified by the Morgan Hill City Council on July 27, 2016 (SCH#2015022074).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

The City implemented an outreach and engagement program to inform the community and seek input regarding the HN4A Element, as documented in the HN4A Outreach and Engagement Summary, which included 59 events between August 2024 and August 2025, reaching 1,529 participants. Engagement formats included pop-up events, visioning workshops, community meetings, and targeted outreach within Opportunity Neighborhoods. Materials and surveys were provided in English and Spanish and interpretation was available at events. The engagement process built trust, particularly in Spanish-speaking communities, and directly shaped the Element's goals, policies, and actions.

The Planning Commission held a workshop on October 14, 2025, to obtain direction and feedback on the draft text of the HN4A Element.

A 10-day public hearing notice was published in the Friday, November 7, 2025, edition of the Morgan Hill Times pursuant to Government Code Sections 65090-65096.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Planning Commission Resolution
2. Revised Draft Healthy Neighborhoods For All Element
3. Staff Presentation
4. Presentación del Personal en Español

RESOLUTION NO. 25-17

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF
THE CITY OF MORGAN HILL RECOMMENDING
APPROVAL OF A GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT
(GPA2024-0002) OF THE TEXT OF THE MORGAN HILL
2035 GENERAL PLAN TO ADD A HEALTHY
NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL ELEMENT IN COMPLIANCE
WITH SENATE BILL (SB) 1000**

WHEREAS, the State of California requires cities and counties to adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan for the physical development of the City, pursuant to Government Code Section 65302;

WHEREAS, Senate Bill (SB) 1000 requires local agencies to address environmental justice in their General Plan;

WHEREAS, environmental justice includes, but is not limited to, reducing pollution exposure and improving air quality, promoting healthy food access, safe and healthy homes, physical activity, inclusive public engagement, as well as public facilities and infrastructure prioritization;

WHEREAS, SB 1000 amended Government Code Section 65302 require cities and counties with “disadvantaged communities,” which the statute defines to include low-income areas that are disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation;

WHEREAS, SB 1000 requires local agencies to amend their General Plan to include environmental justice goals, policies, and actions to reduce unique and compounded health risks, promote civil engagement in the public decision-making process, and prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities, collectively known as Opportunity Neighborhoods within the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element;

WHEREAS, adoption of the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element into the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan will meet the requirements of SB 1000 by highlighting and expanding upon existing policies throughout the General Plan related to topic areas in one central location. The Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element strives to uphold existing high-quality public spaces and amenities while creating the space for more inclusive practices that foster a Morgan Hill where all community members have equal access and opportunities, regardless of where they live in the City;

WHEREAS, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines, a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (SCH No. 2015022074) for the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan Update was prepared and certified by the City of Morgan Hill in July 2016;

WHEREAS, the City of Morgan Hill acting as a lead agency has completed an environmental analysis and determined that the goals, policies, and actions of the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element are primarily programmatic and policy-level, and will not result in any direct impact upon the physical environment, and any development that occurs in the future subject to such standards will undergo an independent analysis per the requirements of CEQA. Therefore, the City has determined that the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element is covered under the certified Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan EIR, and no further environmental review is required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15183.

WHEREAS, such request was considered by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of November 11, 2025; and

WHEREAS, testimony received at a duly noticed public hearing, along with exhibits and other materials have been considered in the review process.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE MORGAN HILL PLANNING COMMISSION DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element is found to be consistent with the policies and provisions of the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan as described in the staff report to the Planning Commission, incorporated herein by this reference.

SECTION 2. The Planning Commission recommends that the City Council approve the adding the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element to the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan as set forth in Exhibit "A" and by this reference incorporated herein.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 11th DAY OF NOVEMBER 2025, AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS:

NOES: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS:

ATTEST:

JENNA LUNA, Deputy City Clerk

APPROVED:

JAMES WILSON, Chair

EXHIBIT 'A'

Healthy Neighborhoods For All Element

Adopted XXXXX 2025



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Increase Overall Health	HN-17
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Introduction

PURPOSE

To identify and reduce unique and compounded health risks, increase community assets, and improve overall health.

This Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element focuses on reducing pollution exposure, improving air quality, and promoting public facilities, affordable healthy food access, safe and healthy homes, physical activity, and overall health. To better address community needs, this Element also encourages and supports inclusive public engagement in City decisions. Together, these efforts work to advance Healthy Neighborhoods across the City and improve the quality of life for all Morgan Hill community members.

Varied development patterns within a city can lead to unequal impacts in communities. Development that generates jobs and enriches a community may also increase air pollution in the surrounding communities. An absence of development can also negatively affect a community. A lack of grocery stores in a community can limit access to healthy food, which has been linked to increased obesity rates and poorer health outcomes. Communities have suffered – and continue to suffer – more from the adverse effects of varied development patterns by carrying a more significant and disproportionate burden of the associated health risks. The Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element is intended to address the imbalances in our communities.

Senate Bill 1000

This Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element satisfies the statutory requirements for the Environmental Justice Element of the General Plan. Senate Bill 1000 (SB 1000), Planning for Healthy Communities Act, was adopted in

2016 which requires local governments to address pollution and other hazards that disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color in their jurisdiction by identifying any “disadvantaged communities” within its planning area. In place of using the State term “disadvantaged communities”, the ¡Morgan Hill Prospera! steering committee has coined the term “Opportunity Neighborhoods”.

Opportunity Neighborhoods

Opportunity Neighborhoods (formerly referred to as Communities of Concern) describes areas of the City most impacted and negatively affected by environmental burdens and associated health risks, as shown in Figure HN-1.

Healthy Neighborhoods for All ensures that people of all races, cultures, and incomes are equally and equitably valued, protected, and served. This includes policies and regulations that affect the quality of the environment, such as mobility, parks, open space, public space, public services, and use of land. This Element strives to uphold existing high-quality public spaces and amenities while creating the space for more inclusive practices that foster a Morgan Hill where all community members have equal access and opportunities, regardless of where they live in the City.

The identification of Opportunity Neighborhoods was informed by the *Healthy Neighborhoods for All Background Review*

Report and from input by the ¡Morgan Hill Prospera! steering committee.

Healthy Neighborhoods for All

The City has made efforts to advance Healthy Neighborhoods for All and many related policies have already been adopted by the City Council, including recent amendments to the General Plans Housing Element, as well as policies and actions within the City and Neighborhood Form, Economic Development, Healthy Community, Transportation, Natural Resources and Environment, and Safety, Services, and Infrastructure Elements.

This Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element is specifically added into the General Plan to call out its importance but is not intended to replace other environmental justice policies throughout the General Plan and other City plans and policies. This element is rather intended to supplement already existing plans and policies.

However, despite prior efforts, more must be done. Opportunity Neighborhoods experience unique challenges, such as proximity to Highway 101, industrial uses, and heavy commercial uses; as well as unique challenges pertaining to transportation, extreme heat, and concerns of pollution.

The Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element becomes even more critical in addressing and rectifying these imbalances. Major emergency events serve as a stark reminder of the urgent need to prioritize equitable development and ensure that all communities, regardless of their development patterns, are resilient in the face of environmental challenges. To advance environmental justice issues across the City, this Element sets goals, policies, and actions categorized by the following topics:

- A. Inclusive Public Engagement in City Decisions;
- B. Pollution Exposure and Air Quality;
- C. Promoting Physical Activity;
- D. Affordable Healthy Food Access;
- E. Safe and Healthy Homes;
- F. Increase Overall Health; and
- G. Public Facilities and Infrastructure.

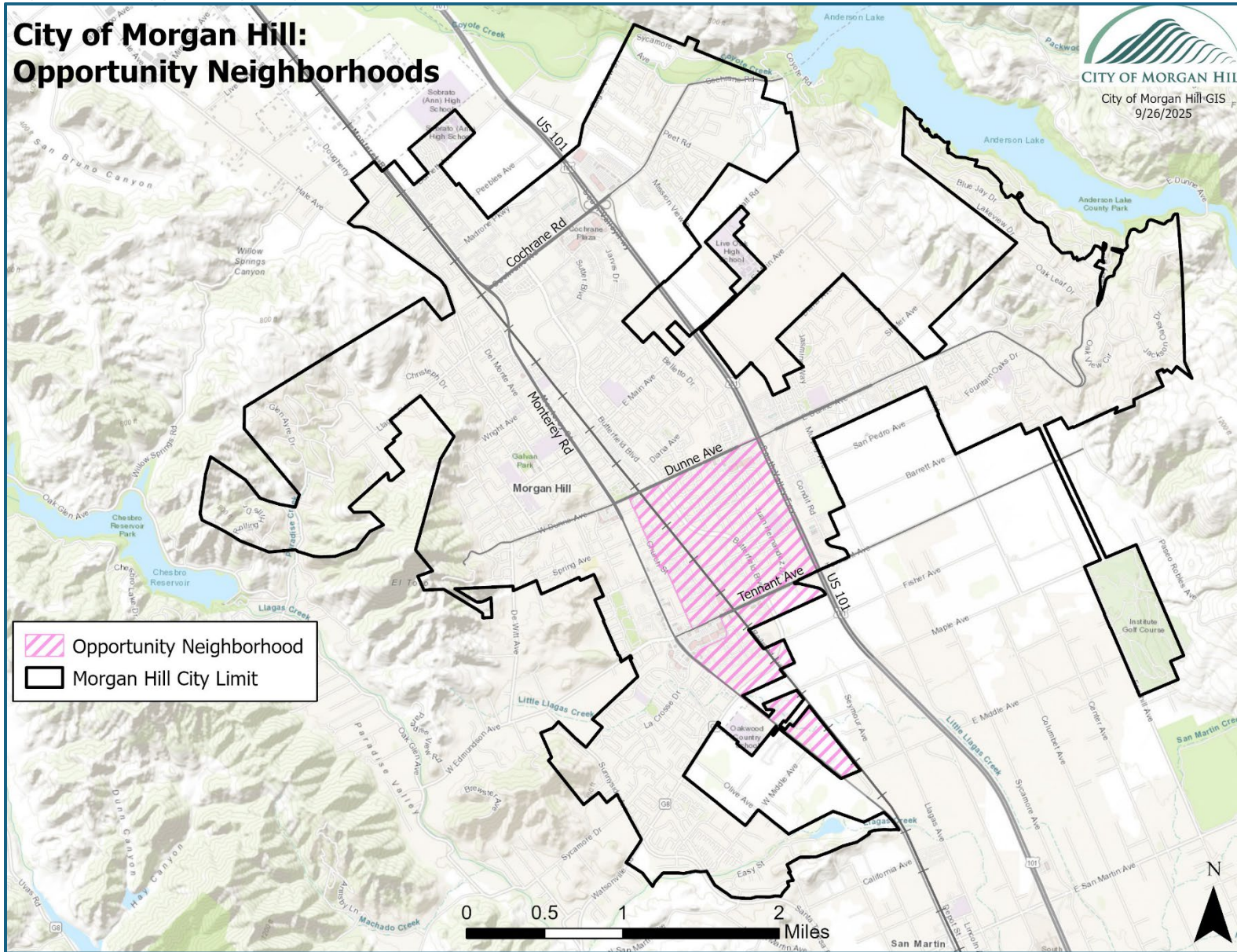
While this Element applies Citywide, special attention is needed in Opportunity Neighborhoods to advance climate, equity, and sustainability goals.

The identification of Opportunity Neighborhoods is important in terms of implementing the City's vision of prioritizing investments in the areas of greatest need. From an environmental justice perspective, Opportunity Neighborhoods are the areas of the City with the greatest need for investments to reverse environmental injustices. Opportunity Neighborhoods are also areas that can be prioritized for federal or state funding.

Ongoing implementation and ongoing monitoring will be critical to achieving the goals of this Element. Through regular General Plan monitoring, the City will be able to report on, and make adjustments to, policies, objectives, and proposed actions based on ongoing community feedback, availability of new information, or changes in circumstances.



Figure HN-1 Opportunity Neighborhoods



Inclusive Public Engagement in City Decisions

GOAL HN-1 Equitable access to decision-making, safe and welcoming civic spaces, and the resources necessary to live in healthy, connected, and empowered communities regardless of race, national origin, income, or neighborhood.

Advancing inclusive public engagement is fundamental to addressing environmental injustices within Opportunity Neighborhoods. Public input is an integral part of the decision-making process and can help highlight topics and concerns that need to be addressed, as well as offer an opportunity to expand upon issues most pressing to community members.

Building awareness around City initiatives and programming is the first step to gathering input and supporting community members in becoming familiarized with existing policies and actions, which can translate to more meaningful engagement.

Ensuring access to information and opportunities to provide feedback that will be considered as part of the planning process can establish trust between the City and community members. This is critically important in Opportunity Neighborhoods where community members are most vulnerable due to compounded health risks and where the needs are greatest. Public engagement events are opportunities to collect meaningful ideas and input and hear from a diversity of community members and affected stakeholders.

Intentional and inclusive engagement is especially critical in Opportunity Neighborhoods, where over 50-percent of the population is Hispanic or Latino, versus 34-percent Citywide, and where the population of children in Opportunity Neighborhoods is 32-percent versus 25-percent Citywide.

The General Plan contains a couple policies, as shown in Table HN-1, that promote community involvement in City decisions. The policies below build upon these policies to create additional opportunities for meaningful public input.

Policies

Policy HN-1.1 Trust and Transparency.
Foster trust between City staff and community members through transparency and implementing best practices to make information easily accessible.

Policy HN-1.2 Meaningful, Relevant Engagement.
Pursue opportunities to promote engagement at evening meetings, weekend workshops, and community meetings.

Policy HN-1.3 Community Partners.
Partner with community-based organizations on an ongoing basis to develop and implement effective outreach programs, increase opportunities for community involvement in civic processes, and build a deeper understanding of city governance within the community.

Actions

Action HN-1.A Interpretation at Public Meetings. Provide access to Spanish interpretation at public meetings, as requested.

Action HN-1.B Translation for Public Notices. Publish public meeting notices in English and Spanish.

Action HN-1.C Distribution of Information. Distribute City information to all community members such as numbers to call for city and community partner programs, housing needs, and general City information.

Action HN-1.D Engagement. Encourage successful engagement participation by utilizing differing social media platforms and community boards, using clear concise language on agenda items, providing alternative meeting locations, food, interpretation services, childcare, giveaways, or other methods, when warranted, that reduce or remove barriers to participation.

Action HN-1.E Healthy Neighborhoods Promotoras. Evaluate the need to recruit, train, and compensate resident and/or youth ambassadors from Opportunity Neighborhoods to conduct outreach, provide multilingual interpretation, and bridge gaps in obtaining community feedback.

Table HN-1 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Inclusive Public Engagement in City Decisions

Element	Section	Policy/Action
City and Neighborhood Form	Land Use Decisions	Policy CNF-1.1 Coordinated Planning Decisions
Healthy Community	Parks, Recreation, and Trails	Policy HC-3.19 Community Involvement



Pollution Exposure and Air Quality

GOAL HN-2 Pollution reduction in Opportunity Neighborhoods with no segment of the community disproportionately burdened by environmental conditions.

Exposure to pollution and poor air quality directly impacts physical and mental health. Scientific studies link exposure to polluting substances in air, water, and soil to a variety of health problems with short and long-term effects, such as headaches, inflammation of the nose, throat and painful breathing to asthma, heart disease, and cancer. Protecting against environmental degradation of natural resources is critical to protecting human health and wellbeing.

There are many factors that contribute to pollution exposure and poor air quality, including illegal dumping, industries, and exhaust from vehicles.

Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM2.5) are tiny particles or droplets in the air that can come from sources such as cars and trucks, industrial emissions, construction activities, wood burning, and even natural sources like dust and pollen. PM2.5 particles are small enough to travel deep into the lungs and can cause health problems when present in high concentrations, including heart and lung disease.

Exhaust from trucks, buses, trains, and other equipment with diesel engines contain a mixture of gases and solid particles. These solid particles are known as diesel particulate matter (DPM) and are a major contributor to PM2.5 pollution. Higher concentrations of DPM can often be found in urban areas with heavy traffic congestion and industrial activity where diesel-powered vehicles and equipment are prevalent.

Both PM2.5 and DPM are significant air pollutants that can have detrimental effects on human health, including respiratory and cardiovascular problems. Reducing PM2.5 and DPM is especially important for reducing pollution exposure and improving air quality for the health and well-being of community members across Morgan Hill.

As part of a comprehensive strategy, it is important to identify lands suitable for residential and prime industrial purposes. This approach is needed to achieve a sustainable and balanced future for the City, striving to enhance the overall well-being of its community members, protect the environment, and promote good jobs.

Policies to limit pollution exposure are included within the Transportation and Natural Resources and Environment Elements of the General Plan and are identified in Table HN-2. The policies in this Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element build on those policies and provide additional guidance. Together, these policies support and promote improved air quality and health outcomes.

Policies

Policy HN-2.1 Reduce Pollution. Strive to reduce pollution exposure and air quality issues experienced in Opportunity Neighborhoods [identified in the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Background Review Report](#).

Policy HN-2.2 Air Quality Monitoring. Collaborate with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) to support the expansion of air quality monitoring efforts in Morgan Hill, prioritizing Opportunity Neighborhoods, to inform area-specific improvement actions and other Community Emissions Reduction Programs (CERPs).

Policy HN-2.3 Land Use Compatibility. Buffer incompatible uses within Opportunity Neighborhoods to reduce exposure to pollution and other health impacts.

Actions

Action HN-2.A Sensitive Site Protection. Require new residential development in Opportunity Neighborhoods located within 500 feet from Highway 101 or adjacent to Butterfield Boulevard to implement appropriate measures to reduce exposure to traffic-related air pollution, including but not limited to, increased landscape buffers and setbacks, restrict outdoor common and private open space adjacent to roadways, and high-efficiency indoor air filtration.

Action HN-2.B Heavy Duty Truck Routes. Limit truck routes adjacent to sensitive receptors where feasible, post anti-idling signage where necessary, and coordinate targeted enforcement in Opportunity Neighborhoods through the evaluation of Chapter 10.60 (Truck Route and Parking Ordinance) of the Municipal Code in conformance with Assembly Bill 98.

Action HN-2.C Reduce Potential Pollution Exposure. Require new development adjacent to incompatible uses to incorporate mechanisms to reduce potential exposure to pollution, including but not limited to, buffers, setbacks, building orientation, and high-efficiency filtration.

Action HN-2.D Zero-Emission Standards. Evaluate and consider zero-emission standards for businesses.



Table HN-2 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Pollution Exposure and Air Quality

Element	Section	Policy/Action
Transportation	Transportation Demand Management	Policy TR-10.5 Air Quality and Transportation Demand Management
Natural Resources and Environment	Air Quality	Policy NRE-10.1 Regional and Subregional Cooperation
		Policy NRE-10.2 State and Federal Regulation
		Policy NRE-10.4 Reduced Automobile Use
		Policy NRE-11.1 TACs and Proposed Sensitive Uses
		Policy NRE-11.2 TACs and Existing Sensitive Uses
		Policy NRE-11.3 Health Risk Assessments
		Policy NRE-12.2 Conditions of Approvals
		Policy NRE-11.6 Vegetation Buffers
		Action NRE-12.A Standard Measures for Demolition and Grading
		Policy NRE-13.1 Building Materials
		Policy NRE-13.2 Construction and Pre-Occupancy Practices
		Action NRE-13.A Building Materials Ordinance
		Action NRE-13.B Construction and Pre-Occupancy Practices Ordinance
	Energy Efficiency	Policy NRE-16.5 Energy Efficiency



Promoting Physical Health

GOAL HN-3 Geographically accessible, safe, inclusive, and active public spaces for all residents.

People who live in Opportunity Neighborhoods in the City are more likely to suffer from diabetes, physical inactivity, and overall poor health.

Public facilities and physical activity are intertwined and play an important role in contributing to public health. Public facilities include public spaces like parks, community centers, and recreational facilities. Individuals with access to public spaces, such as safe and enjoyable parks and open spaces and safe streets for walking and biking, have more opportunities to incorporate activities into their daily lives that support physical health and overall mental well-being.

Connectivity, accessibility, and safety are important aspects of public facilities such as well-lit streets connected to everyday destinations such as schools, parks, and grocery stores. These factors significantly impact individual choices regarding walking/rolling and biking. Opportunity Neighborhoods often lack these attributes—limiting opportunities for physical activity. Investing in improving infrastructure in communities where the needs are greatest will build toward providing safe, connected, and accessible public spaces equitably and support the physical health and well-being of all Morgan Hill residents regardless of where they live in the City.

The General Plan includes policies in other Elements, as shown in Table HN-3, to advance connections, access, and safety of public facilities and promote physical activity. This Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element

provides additional guidance for promoting physical health. Together these policies support public facilities, promote physical activity, and overall well-being.

Policies

Policy HN-3.1 Affordable Recreation.

Ensure affordable access to the Centennial Recreation Center and Aquatics Center and associated programs by offering subsidized fees, expanding free or low-cost recreation activities, and partnering with healthcare and community providers to offset costs to community members.

Policy HN-3.2 Prioritize Parks within Opportunity

Neighborhoods. Prioritize the siting of new parks and recreation facilities within Opportunity Neighborhoods that support physical health.



Actions

Action HN-3.A Health and Fitness. Provide multilingual educational information to community members regarding the availability of financial assistance and no-cost memberships for health and fitness programming and senior adult programs at the Centennial Recreation Center.

Action HN-3.B Inclusive Parks. Design new parks to be inclusive, equitable, and accessible for all ages, abilities, and cultural needs, while transforming existing parks to accommodate the recreational needs of all users, such as cultural programing and multilingual signage.



Action HN-3.C Community Events and Recreation. Expand community events and free recreation opportunities, including extended Splash Pad hours and seasonal programming at the Community and Cultural Center.

Action HN-3.D Park Distribution. Ensure an equal distribution of parks and park amenities within the City; strive to achieve a goal that all homes within Opportunity Neighborhoods are within one-quarter mile walking distance of at least one usable park and/or open space with amenities.

Action HN-3.E Bicycle Racks. Review and revise the City's Bicycle Parking Ordinance requiring new developments provide bicycle connections to adjacent uses and install bicycle racks near building entrances to encourage cycling.

Table HN-3 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Promoting Physical Health

Element	Section	Policy/Action
City and Neighborhood Form	Commercial/Industrial	Policy CNF-18.1 Vibrant Job Centers
Economic Development	Commercial Development	Policy ED-7.4 Compatible Uses in Retail Centers
Healthy Community	Parks, Recreation, and Trails	Policy HC-3.1 Universal Recreation
		Policy HC-3.10 Walking Distance
		Policy HC-3.12 Bikeways
		Policy HC-3.13 Sports Fields
		Policy HC-3.14 Streamside Trails
		Policy HC-3.21 Multiuse Facilities

Affordable Access to Healthy Food Options

GOAL HN-4 **Equitable access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food within a short, safe distance from home.**

Health implications due to food insecurity can have far-reaching consequences on both physical and mental well-being. It can lead to nutritional deficiencies that can hinder proper growth and development in children, chronic health conditions such as type-two diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, obesity and weight gain, complications related to maternal and child health, and can also negatively impact cognitive function. For areas that lack safe, convenient, and affordable access to healthy and fresh food options, more grocery stores, along with produce stands, community gardens, and food banks, in areas lacking access, can play a significant role in reducing food insecurity by offering better options for obtaining nutritious and affordable food.

A multifaceted policy approach can support healthy food consumption and food security. Strategies include identifying opportunities to improve availability, access and affordability to fresh and healthy food, as well as sharing information on healthy food options and nutrition education. Well-connected urban gardens, produce stands, grocery stores and quality public spaces are among the strategies that can be used to support these efforts and offer the potential to further sustainability goals; improve public health and equity through better access to fresh healthy food; promote food system security by reducing reliance on long distance supply chains; reduce the amount of energy used to transport food; and foster economic development opportunities, including micro-

enterprises. At the same time, supporting programs that expand the affordability of fresh food is crucial to making healthy food an option when faced with food insecurity.

The Healthy Community Element contains policies and actions, as shown in Table HN-4, that promote fresh and healthy food by expanding the opportunities for food carts, urban agriculture, community gardens, and residential gardens, as well as food education, particularly to residents who might otherwise have a hard time accessing high-quality fresh food.

The policies below work together to facilitate programming in both public and private spaces to advance the availability, access, and affordability of fresh fruits and vegetables to promote a healthy food system.

Policies

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Policy HN-4.1 | Affordable Produce.
Promote access to fresh affordable produce, <u>such as produce stands and mobile food vendors</u> , within Opportunity Neighborhoods. |
| Policy HN-4.2 | Hispanic Grocery Store.
Advocate for the siting of a Hispanic grocery store within Opportunity Neighborhoods to meet the cultural needs of the area. |

Policy HN-4.3 Healthy Food Literacy. Increase healthy food literacy and provide resources to community members through collaboration with the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department, schools, community groups, and other partners.



Actions

Action HN-4.A Fresh Produce Sales and Cultivation. Amend the Zoning Code to permit flexibility for the sale and cultivation of fresh affordable produce via permanent produce stands, mobile produce vendors, community gardens, and urban farming.

Action HN-4.B Food Banks. Support the efforts of local organizations to expand the reach of food bank and pantry distribution centers by extending operating hours and facilitating the siting of new locations within Opportunity Neighborhoods.

Action HN-4.C Senior Nutrition Program. Continue to sustain the Senior Nutrition Program, providing free lunch to low-income seniors.

Action HN-4.D Health and Wellness Education. Encourage the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department to provide multilingual health education such as wellness classes, nutrition education, healthy cooking classes, as well as to raise awareness of healthy habits and other current public health concerns within Morgan Hill.

Table HN-4 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Affordable Access to Healthy Food Options

Element	Section	Policy/Action
Healthy Community	Healthy Foods	Policy HC-6.1 Garden Partnerships
		Policy HC-6.2 School Gardens
		Policy HC-6.3 Zoning
		Policy HC-6.4 Open Space Requirements
		Policy HC-6.5 Food Education
		Policy HC-6.6 Residential Gardens
		Policy HC-6.7 Agricultural Retention
		Policy HC-6.8 School Wellness
		Action HC-6.A Open Space
		Action HC-6.B Identify Sites
		Action HC-6.C Zoning
		Action HC-6.D Home Gardens
		Action HC-6.E Produce Carts



Safe and Healthy Homes

GOAL HN-5 Safe, affordable, and stable housing for people to thrive in their communities regardless of race, national origin, income, or neighborhood

Homes designed, constructed, and maintained to promote the physical, mental, and social well-being of occupants offer many benefits, including stability, reduced stress, and good health. Children raised in safe and healthy environments tend to have better opportunities for physical and cognitive development. Access to clean air, natural light and stimulating surroundings positively influences a child's growth and learning capabilities. Location, quality, and affordability of homes also play a role in fostering comfortable and secure living environments for all ages.

The Child Opportunity Index measures neighborhood resources and conditions that affect childhood development. The index has neighborhood-level indicators including access and quality of early childhood education, high-quality schools, green space, healthy food, toxin-free environments and socioeconomic resources as shown on Figure HN-2.

Rising housing costs and lack of affordable homes is a cause of housing insecurity. Households that spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing costs are considered housing-burdened, and those that spend 50 percent, or more are significantly housing burdened. Households that are housing-burdened have fewer financial resources for food, healthcare, and other basic needs.

Within the City, 22 percent of households are housing burdened, and 15 percent are significantly housing burdened. However, renters are more cost-burdened than owners,

with over 25 percent being housing burdened and nearly 24 percent being significantly housing burdened.

Access to safe housing that is sustainable to maintain with an individual's living wage offers economic stability and community stability. People who live in affordable, secure, and well-maintained homes are more likely to be productive in their personal and professional lives.

The benefits of safe and healthy housing extend beyond the immediate inhabitants. As generations grow up in such environments, they are more likely to carry forward healthier lifestyles and contribute successfully to their communities. The Housing Element sets goals, policies, and actions to guide the development of homes. The Housing Element addresses housing concerns relating to home location, home quality, and home affordability. Several Housing Element policies and actions that address environmental justice issues, such as substandard living conditions and affordable housing preservation, as identified in Table HN-5.

Policies

Policy HN-5.1	Promote Affordable Housing.
	Promote development of subsidized and affordable housing across affordable income categories.

Policy HN-5.2 Anti-Displacement and Tenant Protections.

Implement anti-displacement strategies and tenant protections in ~~vulnerable~~ all neighborhoods.

Policy HN-5.3 Healthy Homes. Partner with the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department and community organizations to promote safe, sanitary, and healthy housing practices.

Actions

Action HN-5.A Mobile Home Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

~~Update~~ Review and update, where appropriate, the Mobile Home Rent Stabilization Ordinance within Chapter 5.36 (Mobile Home Park Rents) of the Municipal Code to protect mobile home park residents from sudden rent increases and ensure affordable housing options.

Action HN-5.B Tenant Protection. ~~Evaluate existing City tenant protection programs, conduct~~ Conduct a feasibility analysis, and develop a new program to protect tenants through legal assistance, prevent foreclosures, provide rental assistance, or enforce fair housing laws consistent with Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) policy.

Action HN-5.C Healthy Homes Filtration.

Explore the feasibility of a program to provide residents within Opportunity Neighborhoods with air purifiers or the resources to retrofit their homes to filter air contaminants inside their homes.



Figure HN-2 Child Opportunity Levels

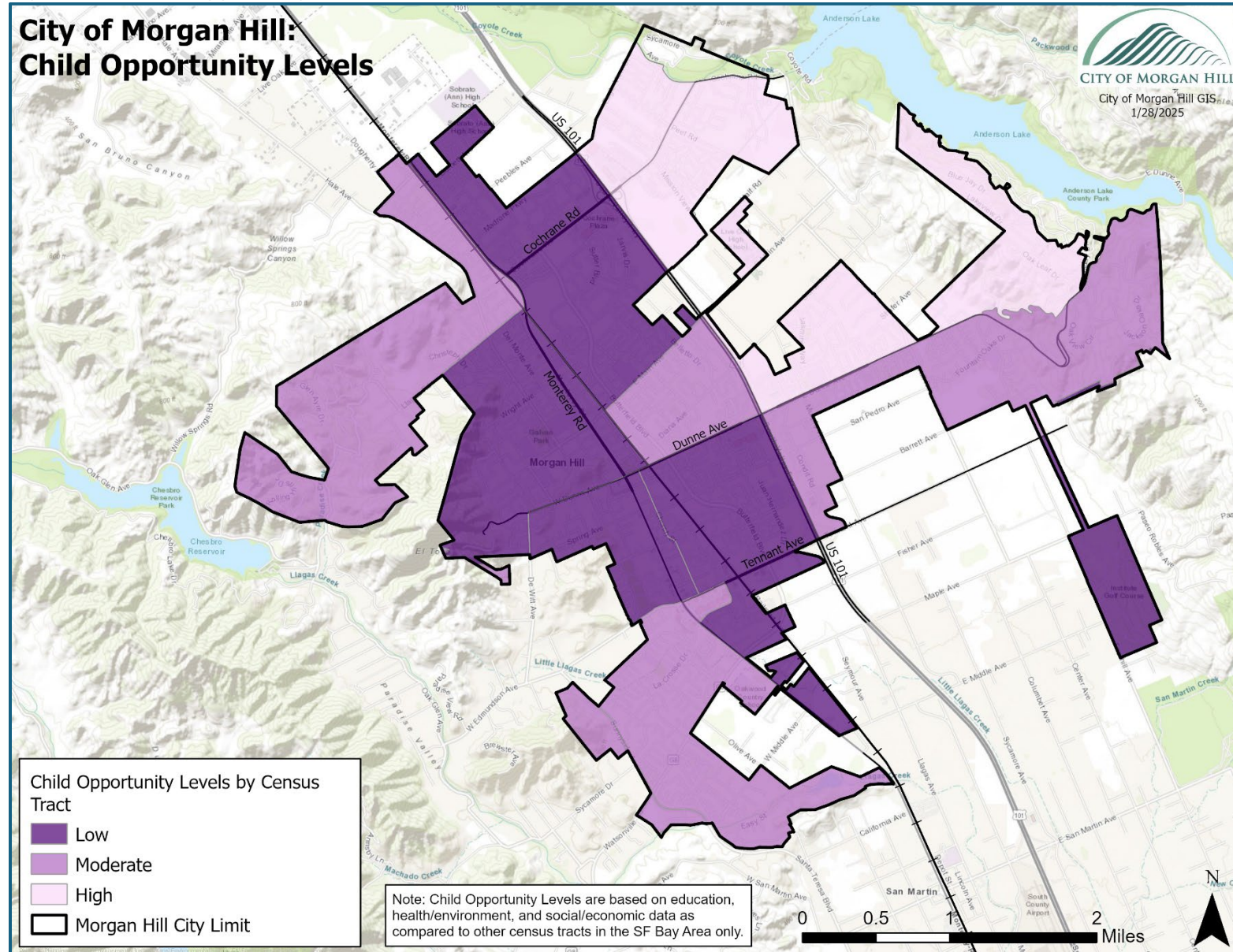


Table HN-5 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Safe and Healthy Homes

Element	Section/Goal	Policy/Action
Housing	Goal 1. Provide a diversified housing stock to meet the full range of future community housing needs	Policy HE-1.4 Market Rate Developments
		Policy HE-1.17 Relocation Assistance
		Policy HE-1.18 Rental Assistance Programs
	Goal 2: Encourage Extremely Low-Income (ELI) housing production, increasing availability of affordable and workforce housing	Policy HE-2.4 Programs Providing Extremely Low-, Very Low-, and Low-Income Housing
		Policy HE-2.14 Support Farmworker Housing
		Policy HE-2.15 Farm Worker Housing Advocacy
	Goal 3: Advance equity and inclusion throughout the City	Policy HE-3.1 Increase Affordable Housing Opportunities
		Policy HE-3.2 Displacement
		Policy HE-3.4 Fair Housing Education
		Action HE-3.T Elevate Morgan Hill
	Goal 4: Preserve and rehabilitate existing housing supply	Policy HE-4.7 Rehabilitation Loan Programs
		Policy HE-4.10 Preserve Existing Mobile Home Parks
		Policy HE-4.11 Rent Stabilization Ordinance
		Policy HE-4.12 Rehabilitation and Sustainability
		Action HE-4.B Preserve Affordable Housing
	Goal 6: Provide adequate housing for groups with special needs	Action HE-4.C Rehabilitation
		Policy HE-6.11 Emergency Home Repairs and Accessibility Retrofits

Increase Overall Health

GOAL HN-6 Equitable access to physical activity, recreation, and wellness opportunities for all residents, especially within Opportunity Neighborhoods.

Overall health is shaped by the interplay of physical, mental, and social well-being, and is deeply influenced by the environments in which people live, work, and play. In Morgan Hill, residents of Opportunity Neighborhoods face compounded health risks due to factors such as limited access to medical care, fewer safe and affordable recreation opportunities, higher exposure to extreme heat, and transportation barriers that make it harder to reach essential services. These inequities contribute to disparities in chronic disease rates, mental health outcomes, and life expectancy.

Improving overall health requires a holistic approach that addresses both the conditions that cause illness and the resources that promote wellness. This includes ensuring that all residents—regardless of race, income, or neighborhood—can access preventive healthcare, culturally relevant health education, safe spaces for physical activity, and reliable transportation to medical and wellness services.

Environmental conditions also play a critical role. Extreme heat events, for example, disproportionately affect residents in areas with limited tree canopy and shade, increasing the risk of heat-related illness. Similarly, landscaping choices can either exacerbate or alleviate respiratory conditions such as asthma and allergies. Integrating health considerations into land use, transportation, and urban design decisions can help reduce these risks and create healthier, more resilient neighborhoods.

Partnerships with healthcare providers, schools, community-based organizations, and public agencies are essential to delivering health services and education in ways that are accessible, multilingual, and culturally responsive. Mobile clinics, micro-transit programs, and neighborhood-based outreach can bridge gaps in service delivery, particularly for residents who face mobility, cost, or language barriers.

Prioritizing equitable access to health resources can help reduce preventable illness, improve quality of life, and strengthen community resilience. The policies and actions in this section aim to ensure that every Morgan Hill resident has the opportunity to live a healthy life—supported by the built environment, informed by accessible health education, and sustained by strong community connections.

Several Healthy Community and Transportation Element policies and actions address healthy living and overall health, as identified in Table HN-6; the policies below expand on these policies to promote wellness.

Policies

Policy HN-6.1 Health Advocacy. Advocate for community members health and increase health awareness through multilingual health education materials.

Policy HN-6.2 Medical Siting. Encourage siting of medical clinics, mobile medical clinics, and mobile dental clinics within Opportunity Neighborhoods.

Policy HN-6.3 Transit Access. Advocate for increased transit access connecting community members to alternative transportation to medical appointments, grocery stores, and recreation.

Policy HN-6.4 Urban Heat. Require new development, and pursue funding for existing areas of the City, to accommodate street trees or other shade coverage along key pedestrian and bicycle routes and near transit stops.

Actions

Action HN-6.A Overall Health Education. Partner with the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department to provide multilingual health education materials, through newsletters, community boards, newspaper, and other mechanisms, regarding asthma, allergies, nutrition, overall health, and other current public health concerns within Morgan Hill, including resources for mental health services, substance use services, and suicide prevention.

Action HN-6.B Mobile Clinics. Review and, if warranted, Amend the Municipal Code to allow mobile preventative health and dental care clinics.

Action HN-6.C Asthma-Friendly Landscaping. Evaluate and consider revising Chapter 18.64 (Landscaping) of the Zoning Code, and other landscaping policies, to prioritize asthma-friendly plant species.

Action HN-6.D Transit and Micro-Transit Access. Pursue funding for a revived MoGo-style micro-transit program, or alternative service model program, to provide first/last-mile service.

Action HN-6.E Extreme Heat Mitigation. Increase urban tree canopy, shaded areas, and open space within heat-vulnerable communities, especially in Opportunity Neighborhoods, to mitigate extreme heat and improve health outcomes, prioritizing heat-exposed sidewalks, transit stops, parks, and multi-family housing.



Table HN-6 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Overall Health

Element	Section	Policy/Action
Healthy Community	Schools	Policy HC-1.7 Neighborhood Activities
	Youth and Seniors	Policy HC-2.6 Healthy Kids
		Policy HC-2.7 Underage Tobacco Access
		Policy HC-2.8 Underage Alcohol Access
	Access to Health Care	Policy HC-7.1 Mental Health
		Policy HC-7.3 Transit
		Action HC-7.A Medical Zoning
Transportation	Transit	Policy TR-6.11 Transit for a Healthy and Active Community
	Bikeways	Policy TR-8.1 Bikeways for All Abilities
	Pedestrian Network	Policy TR-9.2 Walking as an Alternate Mode



Public Facilities and Infrastructure

GOAL HN-7 Safe, well-maintained, and accessible public spaces, facilities, and infrastructure that support active lifestyles and community well-being.

Infrastructure is not just the physical structures that surround us, it is the essential fabric that connects us to opportunity. Community members drive down roads and wait at transit stops, walk down sidewalks to drop their children off at school, meet with friends and family in parks, borrow books and media from the Morgan Hill library and pass under streetlights. When infrastructure is high quality, located where it is needed, and well-maintained, community members can access economic opportunities, use essential services, and deepen social connections, resulting in healthy and stable communities. Infrastructure lays the foundation for safe, healthy, and connected communities.

Public infrastructure is funded through a variety of funding sources such as the City infrastructure fund, General Fund, grants, development impact fees, and other funding sources. Funding and prioritizing public facilities equitably are critical to advancing Opportunity Neighborhoods and improving access for Morgan Hill residents of all ages and abilities.

The Healthy Community and Transportation Element contains policies and actions, as shown in Table HN-7, that encourage innovative partnerships, funding, and development programs to maintain and develop parks and recreation that current and future residents of all ages, incomes, and mobility levels can conveniently access as the community grows. The policies in this section builds upon the Healthy Communities and Transportation Elements.

Policies

Policy HN-7.1 Active Transportation Network. Implement an active transportation network that links residential uses with schools, shopping, entertainment, recreation, transit, and employment centers, and addresses traffic congestion and safety barriers that limit pedestrian and cycling access to parks and community services.

Policy HN-7.2 New Public Amenities. Prioritize and allocate new public amenities in Opportunity Neighborhoods.



Actions

Action HN-7.A Safe and Active Transportation. Pursue funding to improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, including sidewalks, lighting, and traffic calming, to promote safe and active transportation as identified in the Transportation Master Plan and the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, prioritizing Opportunity Neighborhoods.

Action HN-7.B Safe Routes to Schools. Partner with Morgan Hill Unified School District to implement and expand “Safe Routes to Schools”, including trails and bike infrastructure connecting Opportunity Neighborhoods to schools.

Action HN-7.C Lighting in Public Spaces. Review and revise lighting standards for sidewalks, trails, parks, and public and private spaces to ensure they are well-lit to enhance comfort and usability as a community safety initiative.

Action HN-7.D Physical Fitness Park Amenities. Provide public amenities that promote free opportunities for physical fitness, including but not limited to, community gardens, outdoor exercise equipment in parks, and shade structures.

~~Action HN-7.D~~ **Action HN-7.E Community Schoolyards.** Work with the Morgan Hill Unified School District to utilize school playgrounds as “community schoolyards” outside of school hours.



Table HN-7 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Public Facilities and Infrastructure

Element	Section	Policy/Action
Healthy Community	Parks, Recreation, and Trails	Policy HC-3.1 Universal Recreation
		Policy HC-3.3 Park Land Fees
		Policy HC-3.8 Private Open Space
		Policy HC-3.9 Open Space Requirements
		Policy HC-3.10 Walking Distance
		Policy HC-3.11 Conservation Coordination
		Policy HC-3.12 Bikeways
		Policy HC-3.13 Sports Fields
		Policy HC-3.14 Streamside Trails
		Policy HC-3.15 County Parkland
		Policy HC-3.16 Greenbelt Areas
		Policy HC-3.21 Multiuse Facilities
		Policy HC-3.22 School Coordination
		Policy HC-3.24 Parkland Acquisition
		Policy HC-3.25 Partnerships
		Policy HC-3.28 Funding
Transportation	Bikeways	Action HC-3.F Pursue Funding
		Action HC-3.N El Toro Trails
Transportation	Bikeways	Policy TR-8.10 Safe Routes to Schools





Healthy Neighborhoods for All

Planning Commission
November 11, 2025



Healthy Neighborhoods for All

Proposed changes to the draft Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element incorporates comments and feedback from:

- Planning Commission Workshop (October 14, 2025)
- iMorgan Hill Prospera! steering committee (October 2, 2025)
- Climate Action Pathways for Schools (CAPS) Interns (October 7, 2025)



Inclusive Public Engagement in City Decisions

- **Action HN-1.D Engagement.** Encourage successful engagement participation by utilizing differing social media platforms and community boards, using clear concise language on agenda items, providing alternative meeting locations, food, interpretation services, childcare, giveaways, or other methods, when warranted, that reduce or remove barriers to participation.
- **Action HN-1.E Healthy Neighborhoods Promotoras.** Evaluate the need to recruit, train, and compensate resident and/or youth ambassadors from Opportunity Neighborhoods to conduct outreach, provide multilingual interpretation, and bridge gaps in obtaining community feedback.

Pollution Exposure and Air Quality

- **Policy HN-2.1 Reduce Pollution.** Strive to reduce pollution exposure and air quality issues experienced in Opportunity Neighborhoods identified in the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Background Review Report.

Promoting Physical Health

- **Action HN-3.A Health and Fitness.** Provide multilingual educational information to community members regarding the availability of financial assistance and no-cost memberships for health and fitness programming and senior adult programs at the Centennial Recreation Center.
- **Action HN-3.B Inclusive Parks.** Design new parks to be inclusive, equitable, and accessible for all ages, abilities, and cultural needs, while transforming existing parks to accommodate the recreational needs of all users, such as cultural programing and multilingual signage.
- **Action HN-3.D Park Distribution.** Ensure an equal distribution of parks and park amenities within the City; strive to achieve a goal that all homes within Opportunity Neighborhoods are within one-quarter mile walking distance of at least one usable park and/or open space with amenities.
- **Action HN-3.E Bicycle Racks.** Review and revise the City's Bicycle Parking Ordinance requiring new developments provide bicycle connections to adjacent uses and install bicycle racks near building entrances to encourage cycling.

Affordable Access to Healthy Food Options

- **Policy HN-4.1 Affordable Produce.** Promote access to fresh affordable produce, such as produce stands and mobile food vendors, within Opportunity Neighborhoods.

Safe and Healthy Homes

- **Policy HN-5.2 Anti-Displacement and Tenant Protections.** Implement anti displacement strategies and tenant protections in ~~vulnerable~~ all neighborhoods.
- **Action HN-5.A Mobile Home Rent Stabilization Ordinance.** ~~Update-Review~~ and update, where appropriate, the Mobile Home Rent Stabilization Ordinance within Chapter 5.36 (Mobile Home Park Rents) of the Municipal Code to protect mobile home park residents from sudden rent increases and ensure affordable housing options.
- **Action HN-5.B Tenant Protection.** Evaluate existing City tenant protection programs, conduct ~~Conduct~~ a feasibility analysis, and develop a new program to protect tenants through legal assistance, prevent foreclosures, provide rental assistance, or enforce fair housing laws consistent with Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) policy.

Increase Overall Health

- **Action HN-6.A Overall Health Education.** Partner with the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department to provide multilingual health education materials, through newsletters, community boards, newspaper, and other mechanisms, regarding asthma, allergies, nutrition, overall health, and other current public health concerns within Morgan Hill, including resources for mental health services, substance use services, and suicide prevention.
- **Action HN-6.B Mobile Clinics.** Review and, if warranted, Amend the Municipal Code to allow mobile preventative health and dental care clinics.
- **Action HN-6.E Extreme Heat Mitigation.** Increase urban tree canopy, shaded areas, and open space within heat-vulnerable communities, especially in Opportunity Neighborhoods, to mitigate extreme heat and improve health outcomes, prioritizing heat exposed sidewalks, transit stops, parks, and multi-family housing.

Public Facilities and Infrastructure

- **Action HN-7.B Safe Routes to Schools.** Partner with Morgan Hill Unified School District to implement and expand “Safe Routes to Schools”, including trails and bike infrastructure connecting Opportunity Neighborhoods to schools.
- **Action HN-7.C Lighting in Public Spaces.** Review and revise lighting standards for sidewalks, trails, parks, and public and private spaces to ensure they are well lit to enhance comfort and usability as a community safety initiative.
- **Action HN-7.E Community Schoolyards.** Work with the Morgan Hill Unified School District to utilize school playgrounds as “community schoolyards” outside of school hours.

Healthy Neighborhoods for All

Recommendation

1. Open/Close Public Hearing; and
2. Adopt Resolution recommending City Council approval to add the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element to the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan.

Questions?



Barrios Saludables Para Todos

Planning Commission
11 de noviembre de 2025



Barrios Saludables Para Todos

Los cambios propuestos al borrador del Elemento Barrios Saludables para Todos incorporan comentarios y sugerencias de:

- Taller de la Comisión de Planificación (14 de octubre de 2025)
- ¡Morgan Hill prospera! Comité directivo (2 de octubre de 2025)
- Pasantes de Caminos de Acción Climática para Escuelas (CAPS) (7 de octubre de 2025)



Participación pública inclusiva en las decisiones de la ciudad

- **Acción HN-1.D Participación.** Fomentar la participación activa mediante el uso de diferentes plataformas de redes sociales y foros comunitarios, utilizando un lenguaje claro y conciso en los puntos de la agenda, ofreciendo lugares de reunión alternativos, comida, servicios de interpretación, cuidado infantil, obsequios u otros métodos, cuando sea necesario, que reduzcan o eliminen las barreras a la participación.
- **Acción HN-1.E Promotoras de Barrios Saludables.** Evaluar la necesidad de reclutar, capacitar y remunerar a embajadores residentes y/o jóvenes de Barrios de Oportunidad para realizar actividades de divulgación, brindar interpretación multilingüe y facilitar la obtención de retroalimentación de la comunidad.

Exposición a la contaminación y calidad del aire

- **Política HN-2.1 Reducir la Contaminación.** Esforzarse por reducir la exposición a la contaminación y los problemas de calidad del aire en los Barrios de Oportunidad *identificados en el Informe de Revisión de Antecedentes de Barrios Saludables para Todos.*

Promoción de la salud física

- **Acción HN-3.A Salud y Bienestar.** Brindar información educativa *multilingüe* a la comunidad sobre la disponibilidad de asistencia financiera y membresías gratuitas para programas de salud y bienestar, así como para adultos mayores, en el Centro Recreativo Centennial.
- **Acción HN-3.B Parques Inclusivos.** Diseñar nuevos parques que sean inclusivos, equitativos y accesibles para todas las edades, capacidades y necesidades culturales, a la vez que se transforman los parques existentes para satisfacer las necesidades recreativas de todos los usuarios, *como la programación cultural y la señalización multilingüe.*
- **Acción HN-3.D Distribución de Parques.** Garantizar una distribución equitativa de parques *y servicios* en la Ciudad; procurar que todas las viviendas en los Barrios de Oportunidad se encuentren a menos de un cuarto de milla a pie de al menos un parque o espacio abierto utilizable con servicios.
- **Acción HN-3.E Aparcabicicletas.** *Revisar y modificar la Ordenanza Municipal de Aparcamiento de Bicicletas, que exige que los nuevos desarrollos proporcionen conexiones para bicicletas con usos adyacentes e instalen aparcabicicletas cerca de las entradas de los edificios para fomentar el uso de la bicicleta.*

Acceso asequible a opciones de alimentos saludables

- **Política HN-4.1 Productos Asequibles.** Promover el acceso a productos frescos y asequibles, como puestos de venta de frutas y verduras y puestos ambulantes de comida, en los Barrios de Oportunidad.

Hogares seguros y saludables

- **Política HN-5.2 Prevención del Desplazamiento y Protección de Inquilinos.** Implementar estrategias contra el desplazamiento y protección de inquilinos en todos los vecindarios *vulnerables*.
- **Acción HN-5.A Ordenanza de Estabilización de Alquileres de Casas Móviles.** ~~Actualizar~~ Revisar y actualizar, cuando corresponda, la Ordenanza de Estabilización de Alquileres de Casas Móviles, según el Capítulo 5.36 (Alquileres de Parques de Casas Móviles) del Código Municipal, para proteger a los residentes de parques de casas móviles de aumentos repentinos de alquiler y garantizar opciones de vivienda asequibles.
- **Acción HN-5.B Protección de Inquilinos.** Evaluar los programas municipales de protección de inquilinos, realizar un análisis de viabilidad y desarrollar un nuevo programa para proteger a los inquilinos mediante asistencia legal, prevenir ejecuciones hipotecarias, brindar asistencia para el alquiler o hacer cumplir las leyes de vivienda justa, de conformidad con la política de Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) de la Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC).

Aumentar la salud general

- **Acción HN-6.A: Educación para la Salud Integral.** Colaborar con el Departamento de Salud Pública del Condado de Santa Clara para proporcionar materiales educativos multilingües sobre salud, a través de boletines informativos, foros comunitarios, periódicos y otros medios, sobre asma, alergias, nutrición, salud integral y otras preocupaciones actuales de salud pública en Morgan Hill, incluyendo recursos para servicios de salud mental, servicios para el abuso de sustancias y prevención del suicidio.
- **Acción HN-6.B: Clínicas Móviles.** Revisar y, si procede, ~~Modificar~~ el Código Municipal para permitir clínicas móviles de salud preventiva y atención dental.
- **Acción HN-6.E: Mitigación del Calor Extremo.** Aumentar la cubierta arbórea urbana, las áreas de sombra y los espacios abiertos en comunidades vulnerables al calor, especialmente en los Barrios de Oportunidad, para mitigar el calor extremo y mejorar la salud, priorizando las aceras, paradas de transporte público, parques y viviendas multifamiliares expuestas al calor.

Instalaciones e infraestructura públicas

- **Acción HN-7.B Rutas Seguras a las Escuelas.** Colaborar con el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Morgan Hill para implementar y expandir las "Rutas Seguras a las Escuelas", incluyendo senderos e infraestructura para bicicletas que conecten los Barrios de Oportunidad con las escuelas.
- **Acción HN-7.C Iluminación en Espacios Públicos.** Revisar y modificar las normas de iluminación para aceras, senderos, parques y espacios públicos y privados para garantizar que estén bien iluminados y mejoren la comodidad y la usabilidad como iniciativa de seguridad comunitaria.
- **Acción HN-7.E Patios Escolares Comunitarios.** Colaborar con el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Morgan Hill para utilizar los patios escolares como "patios escolares comunitarios" fuera del horario escolar.

Barrios Saludables Para Todos

Recomendación

1. Audiencia pública abierta/cerrada; y
2. Adoptar una resolución que recomiende la aprobación del Concejo Municipal para agregar el elemento Barrios Saludables para Todos al Plan General de Morgan Hill 2035.

¿Preguntas?

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: November 11, 2025

PREPARED BY:

Adam Paszkowski, Principal Planner

APPROVED BY: Jennifer Carman

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (GPA2024-0004) TO AMEND THE TEXT OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT OF THE MORGAN HILL 2035 GENERAL PLAN IN COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE BILL 1425

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Open/Close Public Hearing; and
2. Adopt Resolution recommending City Council approval of an amendment to the Natural Resources and Environment Element of the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan.

LOCATION MAP/PROJECT INFORMATION:

The Natural Resources and Environment Element of the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan is proposed to be updated to be in compliance with [Senate Bill \(SB\) 1425](#).

[Government Code Section 65302](#) mandates the requirements of general plans as well as the mandatory elements, including the Open Space Element and the Conservation Element. Pursuant to the State's General Plan Guidelines, elements can be prepared in any order or combined; therefore, within Morgan Hill, the Open Space Element and the Conservation Element are combined into one Element named the Natural Resources and Environment Element.

In the 2021-2022 state legislative session, [SB 1425](#) was passed and signed into law. This bill requires that Open Space Elements be updated by January 1, 2026, with expanded requirements, including:

1. Access to open space for all residents in a manner that considers social, economic, and racial equity, correlated with the environmental justice element or environmental justice policies in the general plan, as applicable.
2. Climate resilience and other co-benefits of open space, correlated with the safety element.
3. Rewilding opportunities, correlated with the land use element.

Rewilding is defined in SB 1425 as: opportunities to preserve, enhance, and expand an integrated network of open space to support beneficial uses, such as habitat, recreation, natural resources, historic and tribal resources, water management, and aesthetics, and establishing a natural communities conservation plan to provide for coordinated mitigation of the impacts of new development.

BACKGROUND:

The Natural Resources and Environment Element is part of the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan and guides the long-term conservation of natural resources and preservation of available open space areas. The Natural Resources and Environment Element was last updated in 2016, when the General Plan was adopted, and is required to be updated by recent State law, SB 1425. SB 1425

requires local governments to revise their open-space plans to enhance equitable access to open spaces, promote climate resilience, and explore rewilding opportunities.

The Natural Resources and Environment Element advocates preserving open space, agricultural uses, hillsides, riparian areas, wildlife habitat, and other natural features. Policies seek to establish a greenbelt around the City, preserve El Toro, conserve resources and protect the City's cultural heritage, all to help Morgan Hill retain its rural atmosphere as it continues to grow. A number of policies in this element derive from the South County Joint Area Plan, which addresses a variety of open space, conservation, and regional planning concerns unique to the area around Morgan Hill and Gilroy. The Element provides some brief background information and related goals, policies, and actions on the following topics:

- Open Space, Hillsides, and Scenic Features
- Agricultural Resources
- Biological Resources
- Water Quality and Conservation
- Air Quality
- Climate Change
- Energy Conservation

Senate Bill 1425 Open-space element

Senate Bill (SB) 1425 requires that every city and county review and update its local open space plan by January 1, 2026. The bill requires the local open space plan to include plans and an action program that address specified issues, including equitable access, climate resilience, and rewilding opportunities, correlated with the Environmental Justice Element (Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element), Safety Element (Safety, Services, and Infrastructure Element), and Land Use Element (City and Neighborhood Form Element) respectively.

Open space planning plays a critical role in shaping healthy, equitable and resilient communities across California. Open space lands, ranging from natural habitats and agricultural areas to neighborhood parks and greenways, support essential community benefits. These include opportunities for recreation and physical activity, improved mental and physical health, biodiversity and wildlife conservation, aesthetic and cultural value, agricultural viability, flood risk reduction, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Historically land use and infrastructure decisions in California have not benefited all communities equally. Many communities have experienced disinvestment, exclusionary zoning, and a lack of public investment in parks and open space. These structural inequities have led to disparities in access to safe, healthy and climate-resilient environments. As a result, many communities continue to lack access to open spaces that support well-being and provide protection from hazards such as extreme heat, flooding and poor air quality.

Today, as California faces intensifying development pressures and climate-related risks, open space planning is more important than ever. It offers a framework to balance conservation with housing, transportation, and energy needs while also redressing historical inequities, ensuring a California for all. Open space planning is not simply about land preservation, it is a lever for achieving environmental justice, public health, and long-term climate resilience.

Climate Action Pathways for Schools

City Staff assisted Climate Action Pathways for Schools (CAPS), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, secure a \$300,000 grant over the course of three years from the James Cary Smith Community Grant Program to recruit, hire, and train Morgan Hill Unified School District (MHUSD) students to lead sustainability projects within Morgan Hill. One of the projects under the grant consisted of reviewing

SB 1425, including researching other city's Open Space Elements, best management practices, and developing a recommendations report (see attachment). Several of the recommendations from the interns were incorporated into the draft Natural Resources and Environment Element Update.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

SB 1425 explicitly requires that open space plans address equity, climate resilience, and rewilding in coordination with related general plan elements.

Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element and equity:

SB 1425's emphasis on equitable access to open space aligns with SB 1000 (2016), which requires jurisdictions to adopt environmental justice policies in their general plans. Integrating the Natural Resources and Environment Element with the proposed Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element ensures that Opportunity Neighborhoods' benefit from parks, green infrastructure, and natural resources, and that planning processes are inclusive and community-driven.

The draft Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element includes improving opportunities for physical activity, increasing food access, enhancing equitable access to public lands and facilities, and generally addressing disproportionate health burdens within Opportunity Neighborhoods. Strategies for equitable access to open space can include:

- Building or expanding parks, gardens, or green spaces in Opportunity Neighborhoods;
- Designing regional trails, greenways, or open space networks that provide increased connectivity and access to Opportunity Neighborhoods; and
- Improving access to education, stewardship, and job opportunities for Opportunity Neighborhoods.

Safety, Services, and Infrastructure Element and resilience:

Open space is a critical tool for building local climate resilience. Laws such as [SB 379 \(2015\)](#), [SB 1035 \(2018\)](#), and [AB 2684 \(2024\)](#) require climate adaptation strategies within the Safety, Services, and Infrastructure Element. These include responses to extreme heat, flooding, drought, and wildfire. SB 1425 reinforces these requirements by encouraging jurisdictions to leverage open space for nature-based hazard mitigation, ecosystem services, and long-term adaptation planning. This includes preserving and restoring landscapes that buffer communities from climate threats while enhancing public health and environmental quality.

SB 1425's requirement for open space elements to address climate resilience offers an opportunity to adopt goals, policies, ordinances, or programs to support the management of open space to provide nature-based solutions to the climate crisis.

City and Neighborhood Form Element and rewilding:

As defined in SB 1425, rewilding refers to the protection, enhancement, and expansion of open spaces to support habitat connectivity, recreation, cultural and Tribal community resources, water management, and other beneficial uses. It encompasses both local and regional strategies, such as Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs), to offset development impacts and promote ecological integrity. Rewilding supports the state's biodiversity and climate goals, as established under [Executive Order N-82-20](#) and [AB 1757 \(2022\)](#), and should be grounded in local ecological context, community values, and compatible land uses. It applies to all jurisdiction types, whether urban or rural, and can range from small-scale efforts, such as planting native species in landscape buffers, to large-scale conservation initiatives. Tools may include land acquisition, ecological restoration, habitat conservation plans, and stewardship partnerships.

Rewilding, when viewed strictly as a conservation policy, is a biodiversity conservation strategy that prioritizes the needs of apex predators and keystone species. It is essential to ensure habitat

connectivity because apex predators require very large and connected habitat areas for their survival that may span multiple jurisdictions, regions, or even states. By protecting or restoring the large areas of connected habitat needed by apex predators, many other species benefit and climate resilience improves. While rewilding necessarily occurs at very large scales, city- and county-scale planning can address important portions of large-scale rewilding goals.

Together, these connections underscore SB 1425's promotion of a holistic approach to open space planning, where climate action, environmental justice, and ecological conservation are mutually reinforcing.

Given the expansive scope of the law, local agencies may pursue a variety of approaches to meet statutory requirements. For example, jurisdictions may consider how restored and rewilded ecosystems, such as riparian corridors, grasslands, and urban forests can support climate resilience by sequestering and storing carbon, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, mitigating urban heat, improving air and water quality, and buffering communities from flood, fire and drought hazards. These nature-based solutions also provide opportunities to restore cultural practices, enhance community access to nature, and redress long-standing disparities in environmental benefits.

Natural Resources and Environment Element Update

The revisions to the Natural Resources and Environment Element utilized feedback gathered from the community engagement collected during the Healthy Neighborhoods for All outreach. As such, the draft goals, policies, and actions seek to promote efforts to address equitable park access, climate resilience, and rewilding opportunities consistent with SB 1425 requirements through the following:

- Ensure that all homes in designated Opportunity Neighborhoods are within a quarter-mile walking distance of a usable park or open space with amenities.
- Designing parks that are accessible and culturally responsive to all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.
- Support for food access through gardens and farms in Opportunity Neighborhoods, directly addressing environmental equity.
- Enhance ecological corridors, support biodiversity, and provide passive recreation and educational opportunities.
- Prioritize open space preservation in areas that offer floodplain resilience, urban heat mitigation, and biodiversity benefits.

PROJECT ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

ANALYSIS

The proposed project was analyzed with respect to conformance with: 1) Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan:

1. General Plan Land Use Consistency

The draft Natural Resources and Environment Element update meets the letter and intent of the general plan goals and policies as it complements existing policies and is consistent with the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan vision to maintain Morgan Hill's family-friendly character and strong sense of community while the community grows and prospers.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed update to the Natural Resources and Environment Element meets the requirements of SB 1425 as the draft policies address:

- Providing open space that meets the needs of all community members;
- Mitigating climate impacts on open space and environmental assets; and
- Providing nature-based solutions, to protect open space and habitat networks.

The Natural Resources and Environment Element update represents a significant step toward equitable and resilient neighborhoods in Morgan Hill. It addresses statutory requirements, as well as responds to community-identified priorities.

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the attached Resolution recommending City Council approval to amend the Natural Resources and Environment Element of the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan to meet the requirements of SB 1425.

CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act):

Exempt

The Natural Resources and Environment Element Update has been reviewed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The proposed draft goals, policies, and actions are primarily programmatic and policy-level, and will not result in any direct impact upon the physical environment. Any development that occurs in the future subject to such standards will undergo an independent analysis per the requirements of CEQA. The Natural Resources and Environment Element Update is covered under the certified Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan EIR, and no further environmental review is required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15183.

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan was prepared in accordance with CEQA and certified by the Morgan Hill City Council on July 27, 2016 (SCH#2015022074).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Community engagement gathered from the Healthy Neighborhoods for All outreach was utilized in the development of the Natural Resources and Environment Element update. Community engagement through Healthy Neighborhoods for All was extensive, multilingual, and inclusive, which included 59 events between August 2024 and August 2025, reaching 1,529 participants. Engagement formats included pop-up events, visioning workshops, community meetings, and targeted outreach in Opportunity Neighborhoods. Materials and surveys were provided in English and Spanish, and interpretation was available at events. Key themes from community input included:

- Concerns about traffic-related pollution and the need for more green space.
- Need for affordable recreation and expanded park access.
- More trees and green spaces are needed to improve air quality and overall environmental health.
- Community members expressed the need to have closer parks, parks for all abilities, and ages.
- Public park facilities in Opportunity Neighborhoods are limited (there is only one public park).
- Trails to schools.

The engagement process built trust, particularly in Spanish-speaking communities, and directly shaped the Element's goals, policies, and actions.

A 10-day public hearing notice was published in the Friday, November 7, 2025, edition of the

Morgan Hill Times pursuant to Government Code Sections 65090-65096.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Planning Commission Resolution
2. Draft Natural Resources and Environment Element Update (Redline Version)
3. CAPS Student Interns Recommendations Report
4. Staff Presentation
5. Presentación del Personal en Español

RESOLUTION NO. 25-17

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF
THE CITY OF MORGAN HILL RECOMMENDING
APPROVAL OF A GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT
(GPA2024-0002) OF THE TEXT OF THE MORGAN HILL
2035 GENERAL PLAN TO ADD A HEALTHY
NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL ELEMENT IN COMPLIANCE
WITH SENATE BILL (SB) 1000**

WHEREAS, the State of California requires cities and counties to adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan for the physical development of the City, pursuant to Government Code Section 65302;

WHEREAS, Senate Bill (SB) 1000 requires local agencies to address environmental justice in their General Plan;

WHEREAS, environmental justice includes, but is not limited to, reducing pollution exposure and improving air quality, promoting healthy food access, safe and healthy homes, physical activity, inclusive public engagement, as well as public facilities and infrastructure prioritization;

WHEREAS, SB 1000 amended Government Code Section 65302 require cities and counties with “disadvantaged communities,” which the statute defines to include low-income areas that are disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation;

WHEREAS, SB 1000 requires local agencies to amend their General Plan to include environmental justice goals, policies, and actions to reduce unique and compounded health risks, promote civil engagement in the public decision-making process, and prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities, collectively known as Opportunity Neighborhoods within the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element;

WHEREAS, adoption of the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element into the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan will meet the requirements of SB 1000 by highlighting and expanding upon existing policies throughout the General Plan related to topic areas in one central location. The Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element strives to uphold existing high-quality public spaces and amenities while creating the space for more inclusive practices that foster a Morgan Hill where all community members have equal access and opportunities, regardless of where they live in the City;

WHEREAS, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines, a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (SCH No. 2015022074) for the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan Update was prepared and certified by the City of Morgan Hill in July 2016;

WHEREAS, the City of Morgan Hill acting as a lead agency has completed an environmental analysis and determined that the goals, policies, and actions of the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element are primarily programmatic and policy-level, and will not result in any direct impact upon the physical environment, and any development that occurs in the future subject to such standards will undergo an independent analysis per the requirements of CEQA. Therefore, the City has determined that the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element is covered under the certified Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan EIR, and no further environmental review is required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15183.

WHEREAS, such request was considered by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of November 11, 2025; and

WHEREAS, testimony received at a duly noticed public hearing, along with exhibits and other materials have been considered in the review process.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE MORGAN HILL PLANNING COMMISSION DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element is found to be consistent with the policies and provisions of the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan as described in the staff report to the Planning Commission, incorporated herein by this reference.

SECTION 2. The Planning Commission recommends that the City Council approve the adding the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element to the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan as set forth in Exhibit “A” and by this reference incorporated herein.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 11th DAY OF NOVEMBER 2025, AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS:

NOES: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS:

ATTEST:

JENNA LUNA, Deputy City Clerk

APPROVED:

JAMES WILSON, Chair

EXHIBIT 'A'

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

8

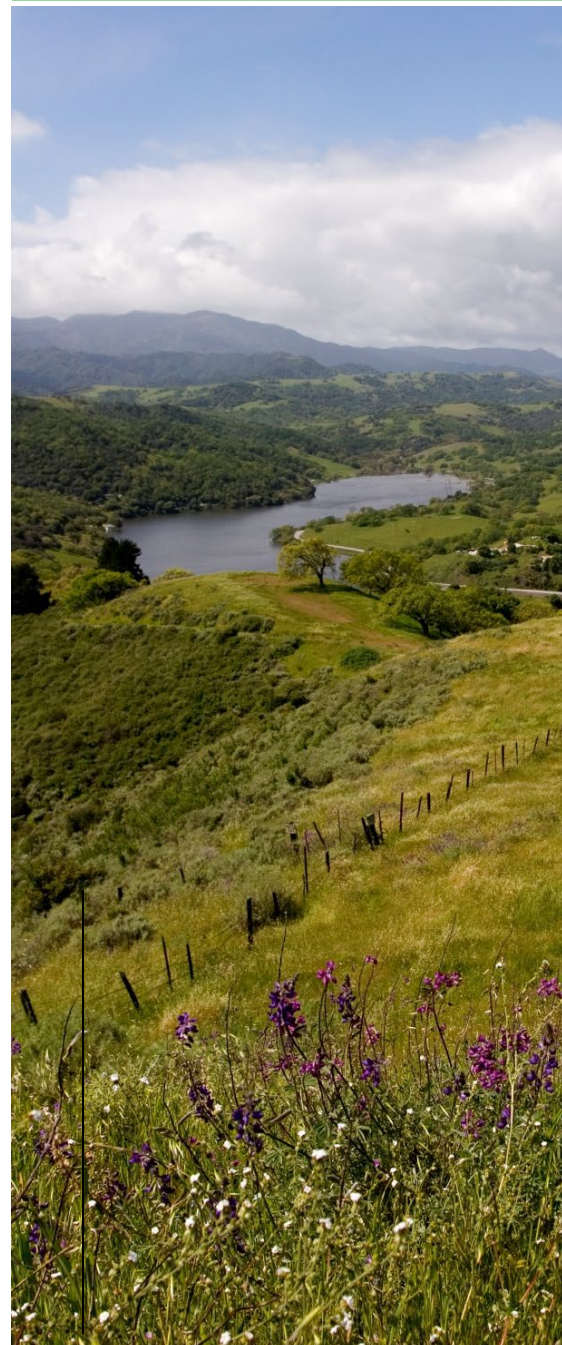
CHAPTER PURPOSE

The Natural Resources and Environment Element advocates preserving open space, agricultural uses, hillsides, riparian areas, wildlife habitat, and other natural features. Policies seek to establish a greenbelt around the City, preserve El Toro, conserve resources and protect the City's cultural heritage, all to help Morgan Hill retain its rural atmosphere as it continues to grow. A number of policies in this element derive from the South County Joint Area Plan, which addresses a variety of open space, conservation, and regional planning concerns unique to the area around Morgan Hill and Gilroy. This Element provides some brief background information and related goals, policies, and actions on the following topics:

- Open Space, Hillsides, and Scenic Features
- Agricultural Resources
- Biological Resources
- Water Quality and Conservation
- Air Quality
- Climate Change
- Energy Conservation

Several policies and actions were added to this Element to address equitable access to open space for all residents, climate resilience and other co-benefits of open space, and rewilding opportunities.

Rewilding refers to the opportunities to preserve, enhance, and expand an integrated network of open space to support beneficial uses, such as habitat, recreation, natural resources, historic and tribal resources, water management, and aesthetics, and establishing a natural communities conservation plan to provide for coordinated mitigation of the impacts of new development.



OPEN SPACE, HILLSIDES, AND SCENIC FEATURES

OPEN SPACE

The abundance of open space within and around Morgan Hill is a key contributor to quality of life for City residents and visitors. Preserving open space, including in conjunction with new development, is essential to maintaining the uniqueness and quality of life of Morgan Hill.

HILLSIDES AND SCENIC RESOURCES

The slopes that flank Morgan Hill to the east and west play a major role in shaping the character of the City. They provide a scenic backdrop for the community and access to trails and open spaces. Maintaining views of the hillsides from public rights of way, as well as preserving their important resources, are City priorities.

GREENBELTS

The Natural Resources and Environment Element identifies a Greenbelt, which is intended to physically define the City and separate it from San Jose and San Martin. The Greenbelt includes both public open space and private properties as shown on Figure NRE-1. Identification of areas as “Greenbelt” does not change the development potential or restrictions imposed under Santa Clara County development policies and regulations. Rather, it indicates that the City will work with the County to minimize off-site visual impacts of new development. In addition, the Greenbelt is intended to identify areas where a targeted program of acquisition of open space easements or fee title to land may occur.

Areas outside of the Urban Growth Boundary that have been substantially subdivided into parcels smaller than 10 acres generally are not included in the identified Greenbelt areas. Many of the parcels in these areas are developed or are eligible for construction of single-family homes. The existing and potential density of development in these areas minimizes their value as Greenbelt areas. However, the rural character of these areas does

help to define and distinguish the urbanized City area from other urban and rural county areas.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

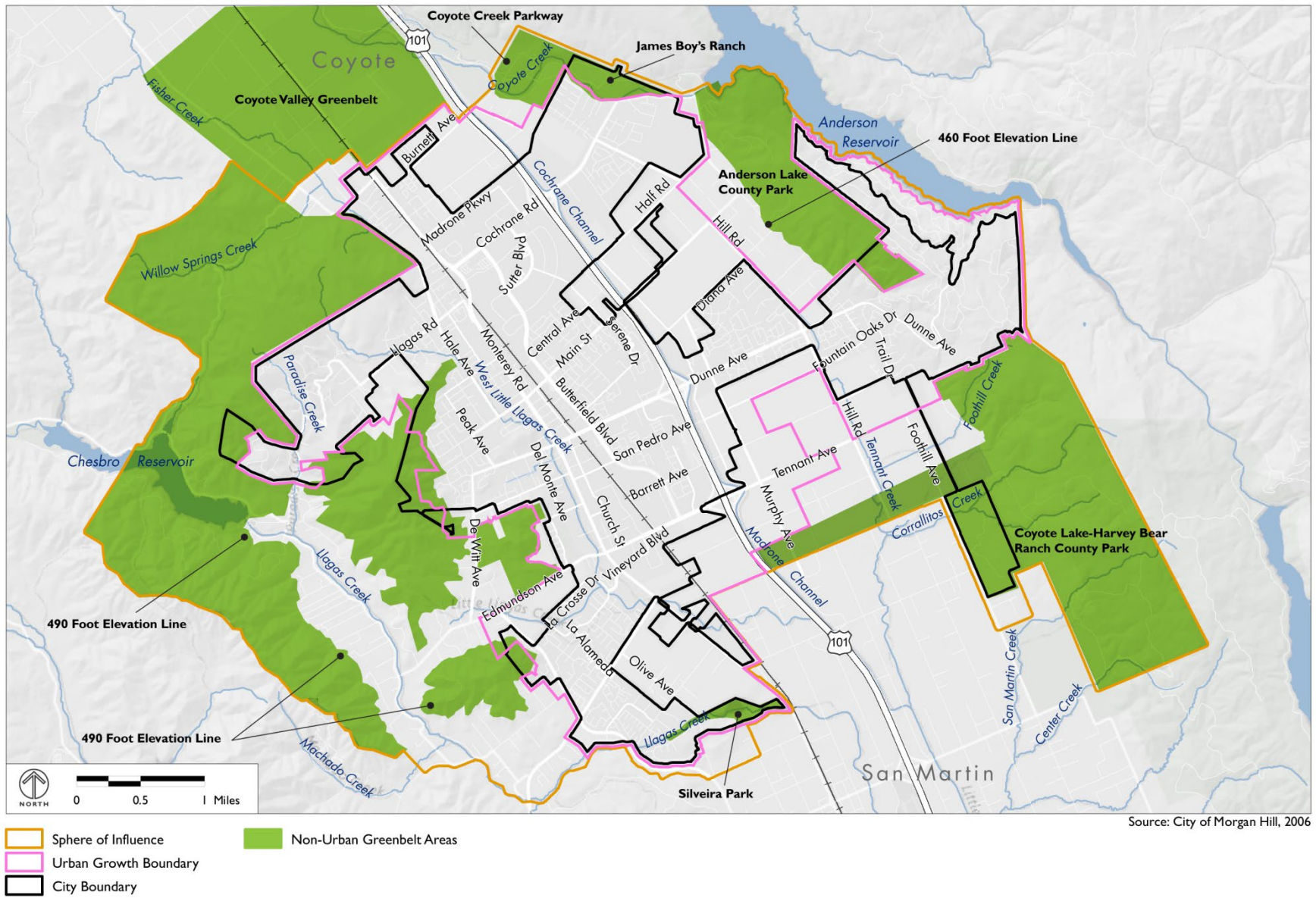
Agriculture has been important to the City throughout its history as an industry and employment generator, in addition to contributing to the City's rural character. The City's economy once depended on the cultivation of stone fruits, pears, apples, and nuts. Although the local economy diversified, agriculture is still an important asset to the region, as evident by the surrounding nurseries, orchards, and vineyards, which boost the region's economy and the local tourism industry.

Supporting agriculture requires finding innovative ways to help farming and ranching operations become and remain competitive in an increasingly global economic environment. Agricultural development policies intend to retain the historic agricultural character of lands surrounding Morgan Hill, and to minimize conflicts between urban development and agricultural uses.

Agricultural land can be found within the Morgan Hill City limit and within the Sphere of Influence (SOI). The Morgan Hill area includes prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, farmland of local importance, unique farmland, and grazing land, as classified by the State Department of Conservation. As shown in Figure NRE-2, most of the prime farmland is located on the eastern side of the City, east of Highway 101. However, the Department of Conservation's data reflect conditions as of 2010. Since the time the State published the data, some limited pieces of land may have been developed or may now be under development review. Nevertheless, the data provide a broad picture of the agricultural resources within Morgan Hill today.

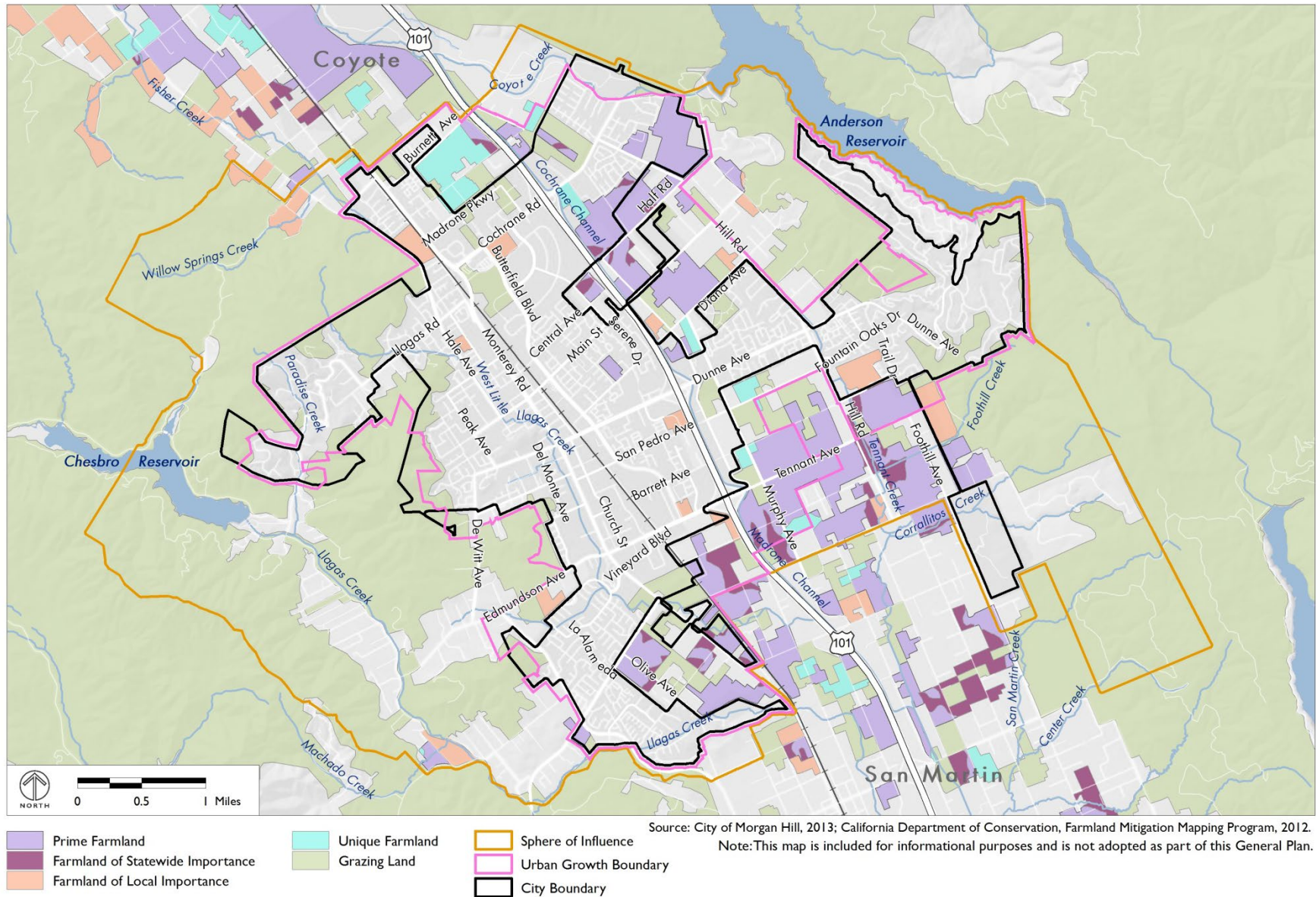


Figure NRE-1 Greenbelts



The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, also known as the Williamson Act, provides tax relief for landowners who preserve their agricultural and open space property under Williamson Act contracts. Under contract, the tax on a Williamson Act property is assessed at a rate consistent with its actual use, rather than the potential value. These contracts run for 10 years, are automatically renewable on an annual basis, and may be terminated by the initiative of either the property owner or the legislative body. There are a number of parcels under Williamson Act contracts in and around Morgan Hill.

Figure NRE-2 Important Farmland



BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

NATURAL COMMUNITIES

A natural community refers to a group of species that occurs in the same habitat or area. Six natural communities and two non-natural communities are present in the Morgan Hill City limits and SOI (Figure NRE-3). The six natural communities include:

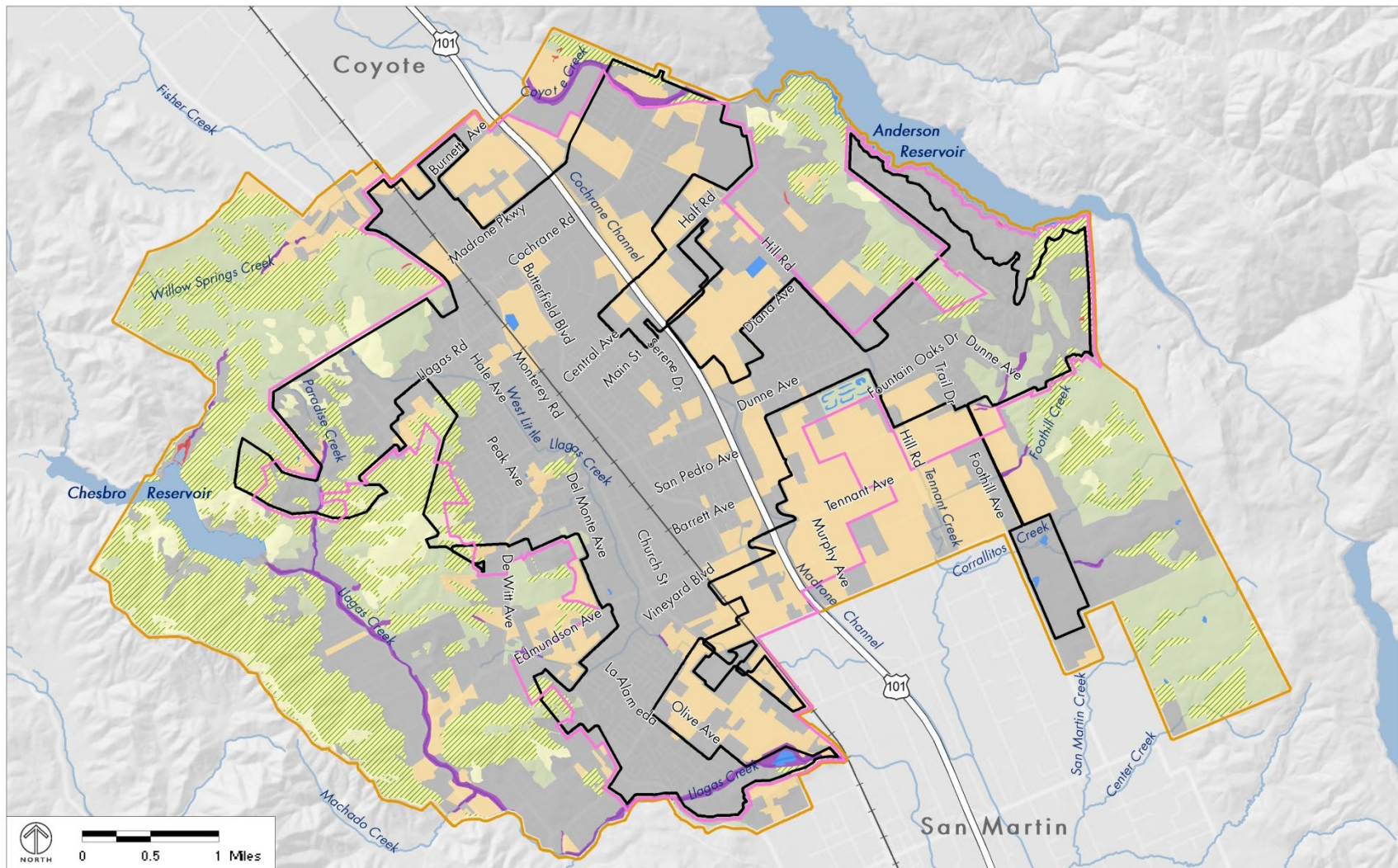
- oak woodland (3,221 acres within the SOI),
- grassland (2,518 acres within the SOI) chaparral and coastal scrub (546 acres within the SOI),
- riparian forest and scrub (236 acres within the SOI),
- open water (181 acres within the SOI), and
- wetland (13 acres within the SOI).

The two non-natural land cover types consist of developed land (9,373 acres) and agricultural lands (3,486 acres).

SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITIES

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has identified several native plant communities that are rare and/or diminishing within California. Although some of these communities represent important biological resources and may be unique to California, they have no legal protective status. Nevertheless, substantial losses of some of these plant communities may be considered “significant” under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Plant communities that CDFW considers sensitive in the Morgan Hill City limits and SOI (see Figure NRE- 4) include serpentine bunchgrass grassland, valley oak woodland, and blue oak woodland. Areas of well-developed riparian woodland and scrub, such as central California sycamore alluvial woodland, as well as other wetlands, are also considered sensitive because they are valuable to plant and wildlife diversity and are diminishing.

Figure NRE-3 Natural Communities



Source: City of Morgan Hill, 2013; Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan, 2012

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

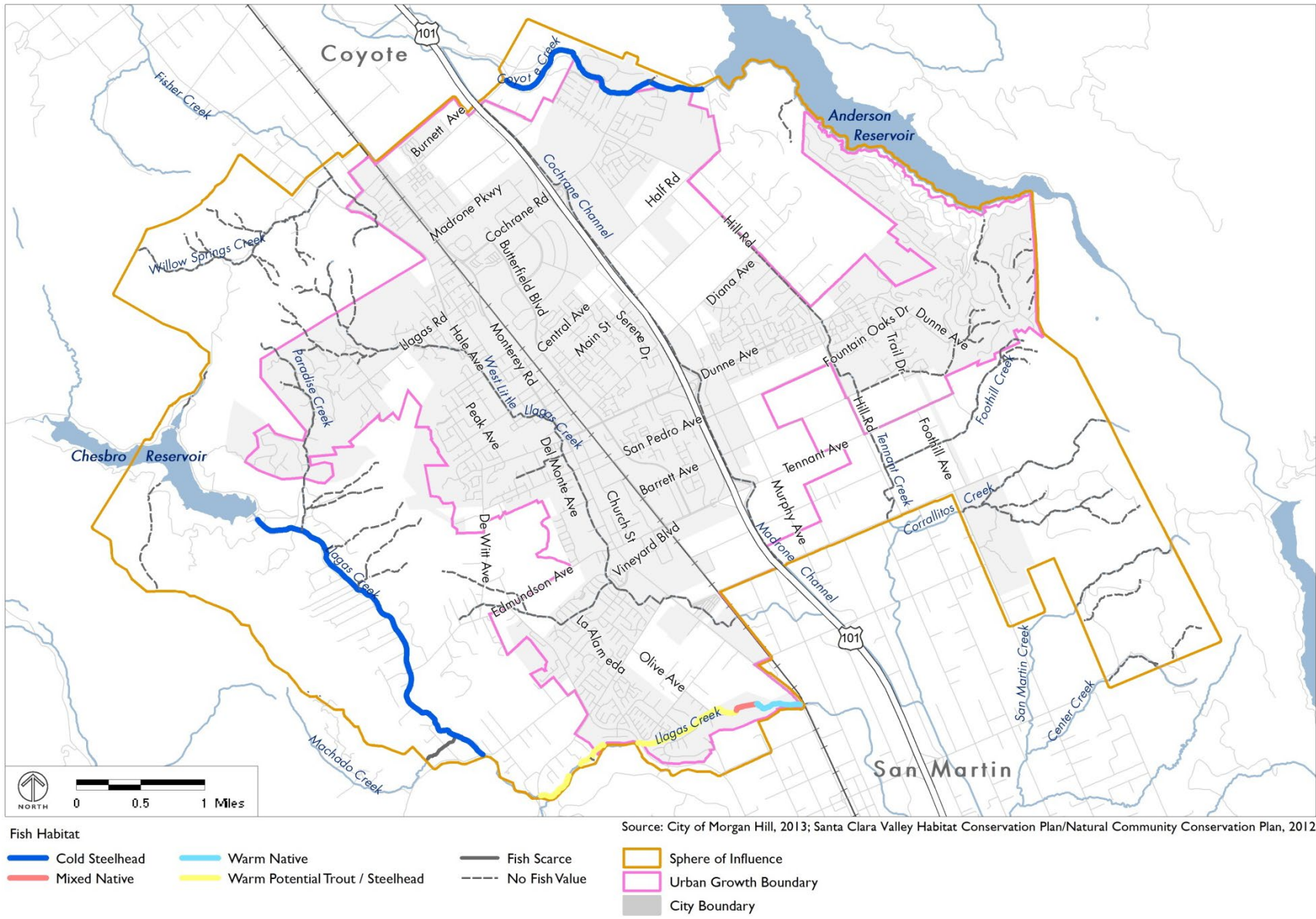
Natural Community

- Chaparral & Northern Coastal Scrub
- Grasslands
- Oak Woodland
- Open Water (Aquatic)

- Wetland
- Riparian Forest and Scrub
- Irrigated Agriculture
- Developed

- Sphere of Influence
- Urban Growth Boundary
- City Boundary

Figure NRE-4 Fish Habitat



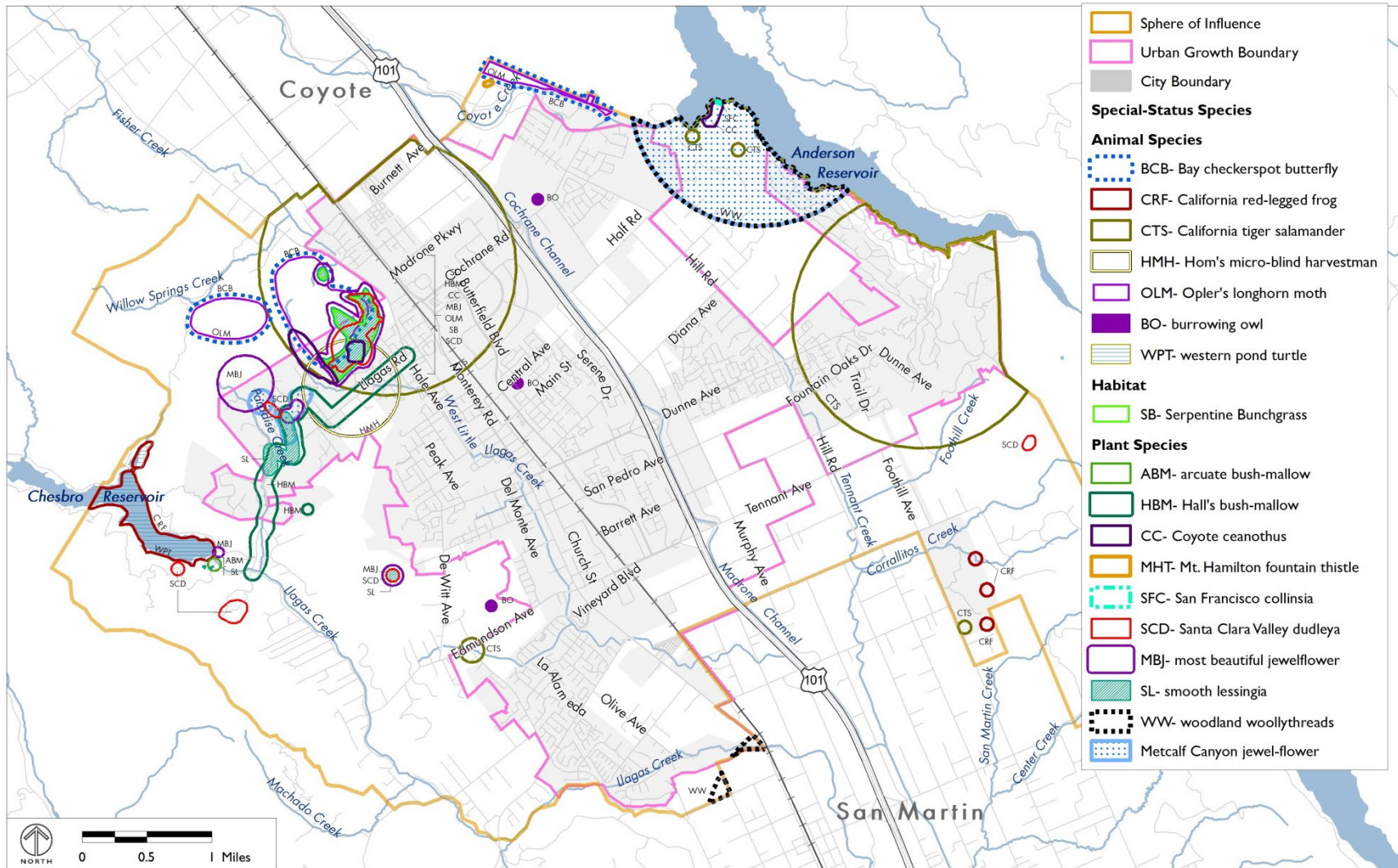
RIPARIAN AREAS AND AQUATIC HABITAT

Five creeks traverse Morgan Hill: Coyote and Fisher Creeks drain north to the San Francisco Bay, and Edmunson, Tennant and West Little Llagas Creeks flow into Monterey Bay. The City creeks and drainages can complement existing and new development by providing recreational access, pedestrian and bicycle connections, and places where people can go to appreciate the natural environment. Efforts to retain and rehabilitate water courses and adjacent banks will benefit the entire community.

A variety of aquatic species have the potential to occur within Morgan Hill and the SOI. The creeks in Morgan Hill support riverine habitats for fish and amphibian species. Five habitat types are present within Morgan Hill as shown on Figure NRE-5:

- **Cold Steelhead Habitat:** This habitat is primarily located downstream of reservoirs. High stream flows (due to reservoir releases), sufficient sun, and high water clarity provide for suitable steelhead habitat conditions.
- **Warm Potential Trout/Steelhead Habitat:** This habitat is located further downstream of reservoirs and has higher water temperatures and/or lower stream flows than the cold steelhead habitat. Its high water temperatures increase steelhead food demands, but its low stream flows and poor turbidity characteristics often do not produce enough insects to feed the fish. Increasing stream flows or reducing water temperatures can make the habitat more suitable for steelhead. Warm-water fish often dominate in this habitat type.
- **Warm Native Habitat:** This habitat is suitable for native warm-water fish, such as Sacramento sucker, hitch or California roach, Sacramento pikeminnow, threespine stickleback, and prickly sculpin.
- **Mixed Native and Introduced Habitat:** This habitat has warm water temperatures, which provide suitable habitat conditions for native and introduced species, such as tule perch (*Hysterocarpus traski*).

Figure NRE-5 Known Occurrences of Special Status Species



Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

- **Fish-Scarce Habitat:** This habitat is mostly dry during summer and fall, but it can provide migration routes for steelhead and other fish or a reproductive habitat for amphibians.

PLANTS AND WILDLIFE

Morgan Hill is home to federally and State listed special-status species. The City is committed to protecting significant native flora and fauna. Ensuring that development does not compromise existing habitat will be a part of future land use decisions.

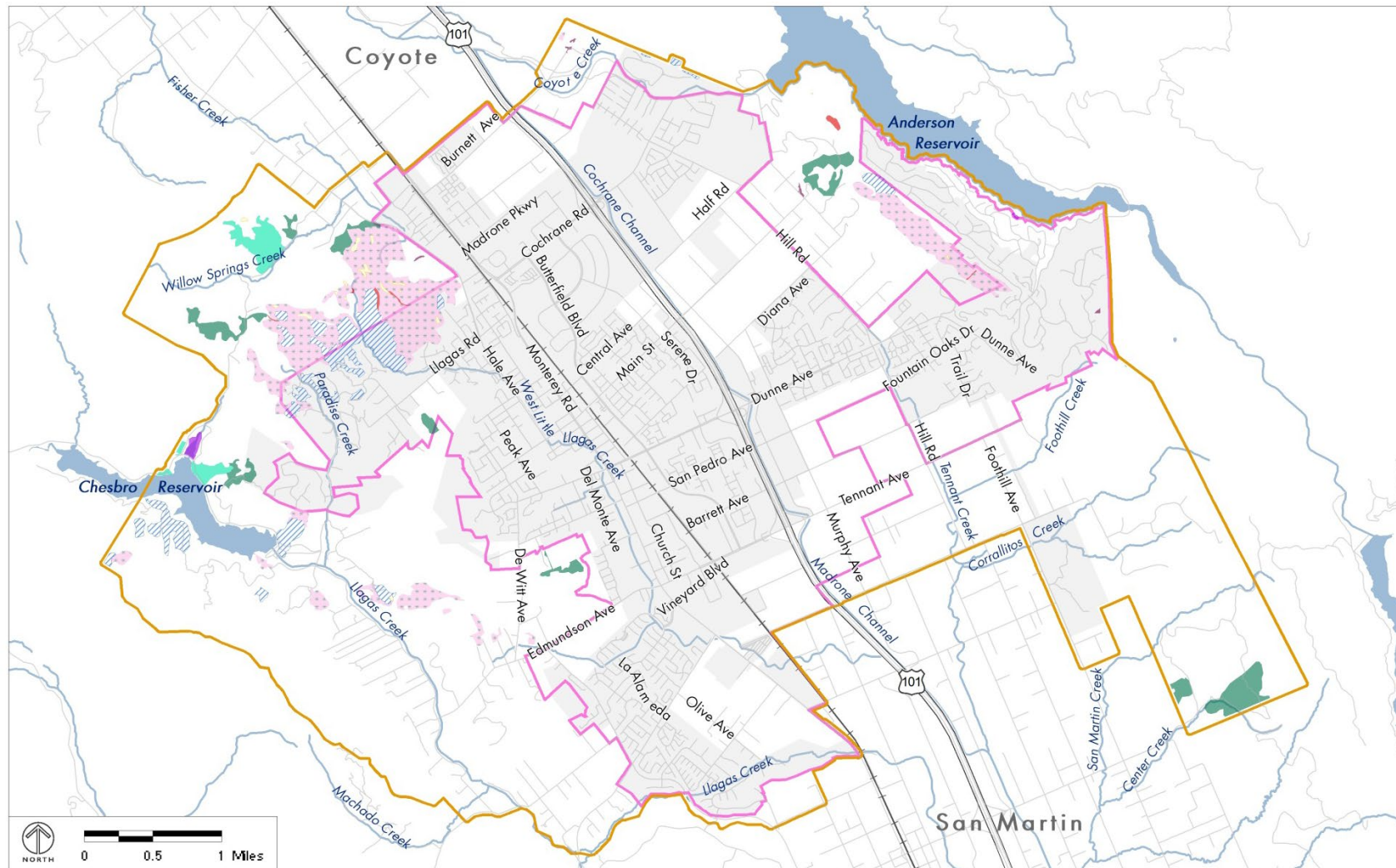
In addition to plant and animal species, a special-status habitat, serpentine bunchgrass, has been identified in Morgan Hill. Figure NRE- 6 illustrates the locations of known occurrences of special-status species.

HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

In October 2012, the City of Morgan Hill adopted the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), which is a regional partnership between six Local Partners (the County of Santa Clara, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, Santa Clara Valley Water District, and the Cities of San Jose, Gilroy, and Morgan Hill) and two Wildlife Agencies (the CDFW and the USFWS), in order to protect special-status species. The HCP provides a framework for promoting the protection and recovery of natural resources, including endangered species, as well as aims to streamline the permitting process for planned development, infrastructure, and maintenance activities under the jurisdictions of the County of Santa Clara (County), the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD), the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) and the Cities of Gilroy, Morgan Hill, and San José.

The Habitat Conservation Plan is currently under revision by the Habitat Agency and is expected to be adopted in early 2026.

Figure NRE-6 Sensitive Natural Communities



Source: City of Morgan Hill, 2013; Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan, 2012.

Note: This map is included for informational purposes and is not adopted as part of this General Plan.

Sensitive Natural Community

- Serpentine Bunchgrass
- Serpentine Rock Outcrop/Barren
- Serpentine Seep
- Mixed Serpentine Chaparral

- Valley Oak Woodland
- Blue Oak Woodland
- Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh
- Vernal Pools

- Sphere of Influence
- Urban Growth Boundary
- City Boundary

WATER QUALITY AND CONSERVATION

REGIONAL WATERSHEDS

A watershed refers to the entire area that drains to a single waterway, such as a stream, lake, aquifer, or the ocean. The Morgan Hill City limits and SOI lie in two regional watersheds: the Coyote Creek and Uvas-Llagas Watersheds. As illustrated in Figure NRE-7, most of the City is located within the Uvas-Llagas Watershed, part of the Pajaro River Watershed, which drains southward towards Monterey Bay. The Coyote Creek Watershed, the largest watershed in Santa Clara County, covers the northern portions of the City. Coyote Creek originates in the Diablo Range and flows to Anderson Reservoir and then northward towards South San Francisco Bay through the flat Santa Clara Valley.

There are four reservoirs in the vicinity of Morgan Hill (Figure NRE- 8). Two of them are part of the Coyote Creek Watershed: Anderson Reservoir, located adjacent to the City's eastern boundary, and Coyote Reservoir, located 3 miles south of Anderson Reservoir. Chesbro and Uvas Reservoirs are located on the west side of the City within the Uvas-Llagas Watershed. The southern portion of Chesbro Reservoir lies within the SOI.

LOCAL CREEKS AND DRAINAGE CHANNELS

As shown in Figure NRE- 7, several creeks traverse Morgan Hill. Coyote and Fisher Creeks flow north to the San Francisco Bay. Edmundson, Tennant, and West Little Llagas Creeks drain south into Monterey Bay. While creeks in the hills remain generally natural and provide riparian habitats, most creeks in developed areas have been straightened and channelized to prevent flooding. Engineered drainage channels running through the City include Butterfield and Madrone Channels and some parts of West Little Llagas Creek and Tennant Creek.

Figure NRE-7 Groundwater Basins

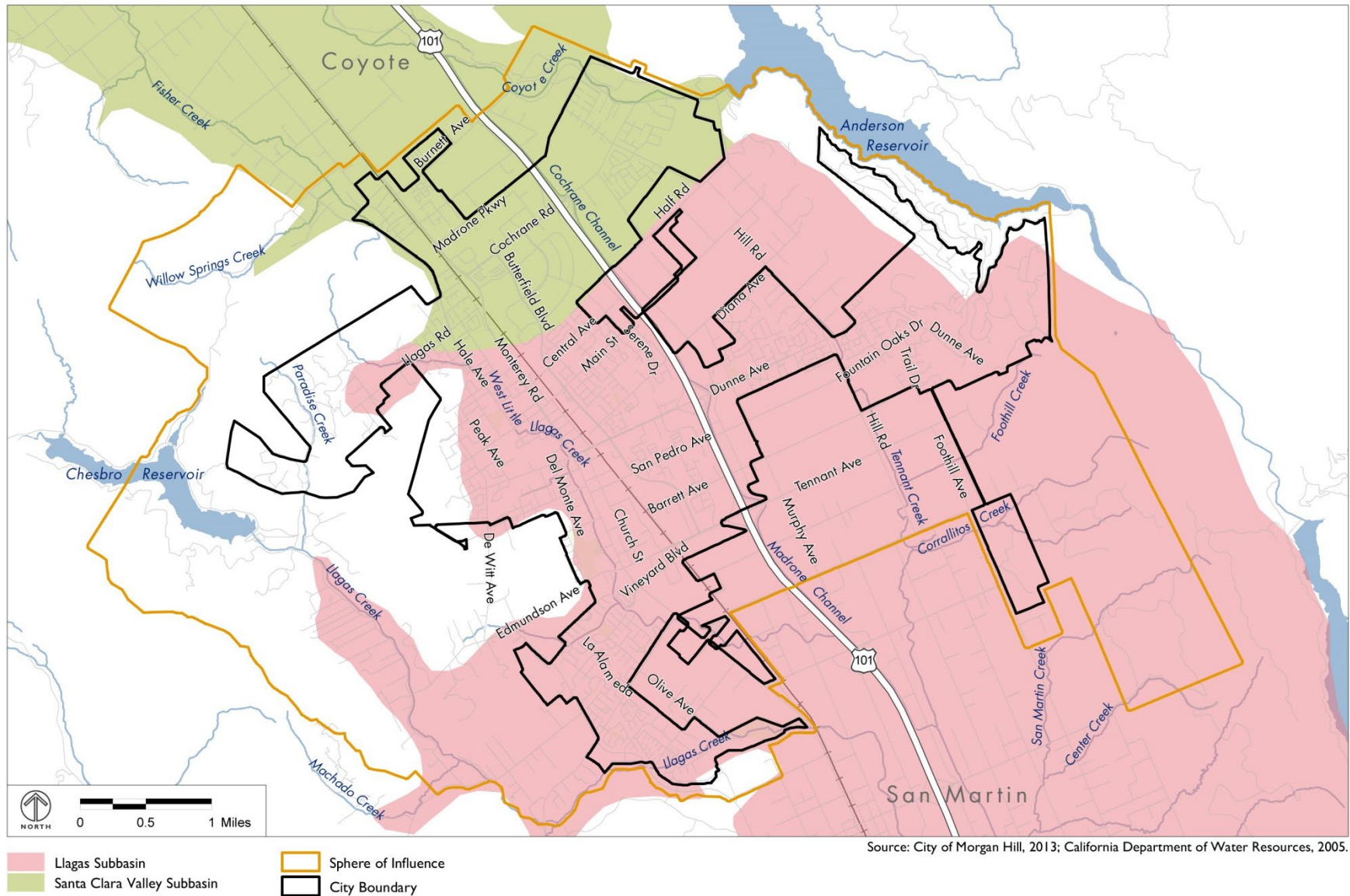
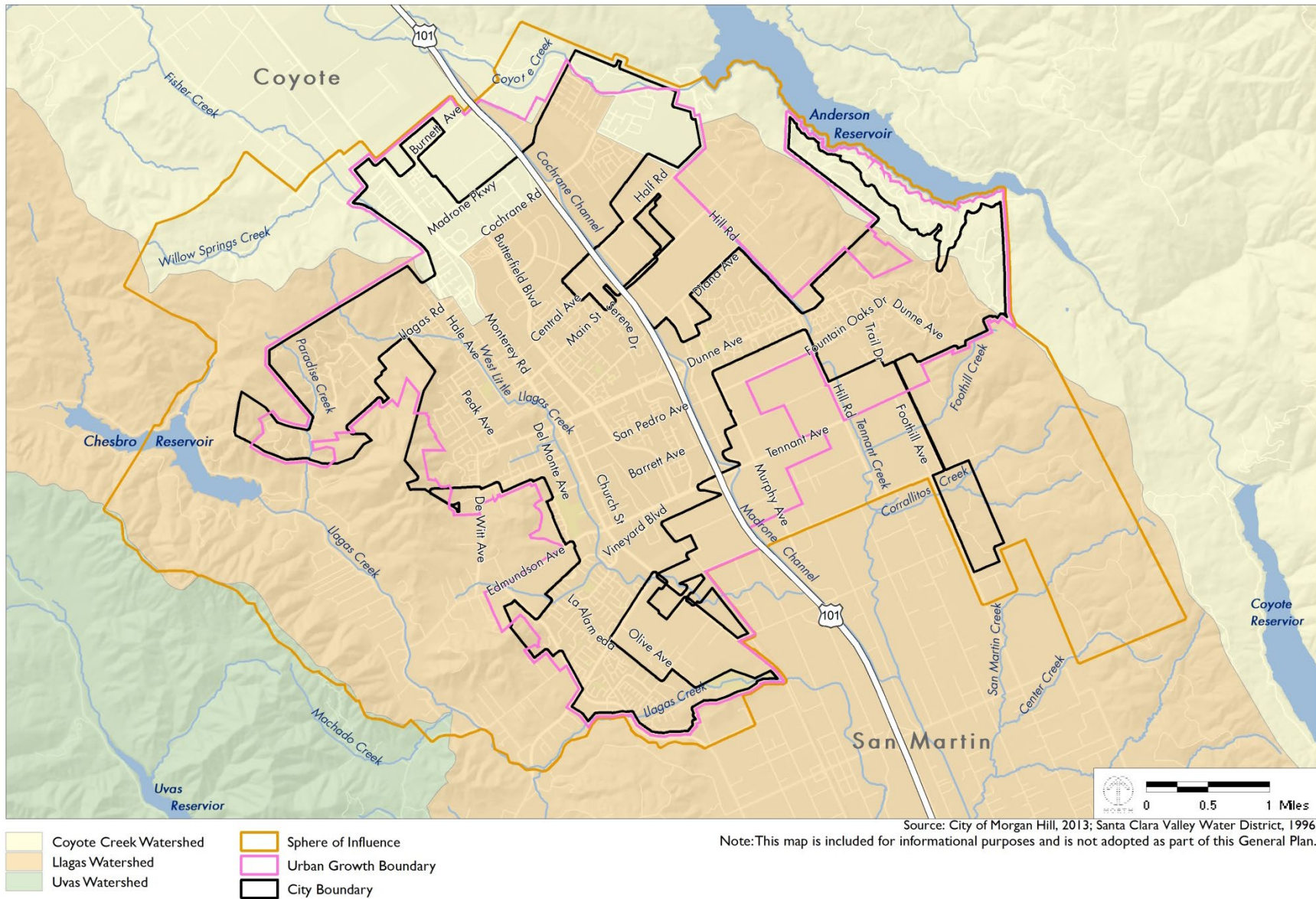


Figure NRE-8 Watersheds



GROUNDWATER

Morgan Hill lies within two groundwater subbasins: the Santa Clara Subbasin and the Llagas Subbasin, as shown in Figure NRE-7.

The City of Morgan Hill pumps groundwater from the Coyote and Llagas Subbasins for its water supply. The Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD), of which the City of Morgan Hill is a member agency, manages all groundwater basins in Santa Clara County and utilizes a Groundwater Recharge Program to maintain groundwater levels. According to Morgan Hill's 2010 Urban Water Management Plan, the groundwater basins are not in condition of overdraft, and groundwater levels are not expected to drop.

AIR QUALITY

Morgan Hill is located within the San Francisco Air Basin, which is managed by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The Air Basin comprises all of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties; the southern portion of Sonoma County; and the southwestern portion of Solano County. Air quality in this area is determined by such natural factors as topography, meteorology, and climate, in addition to the presence of existing air pollution sources and ambient conditions.

Air pollutants of concern in Morgan Hill include ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxide (NO₂), and particulate matter (PM). These pollutants originate from sources both within and outside of Morgan Hill. Natural gas use for energy, heating and cooking, vehicle trips, and area sources such as landscaping equipment and consumer cleaning products are the primary sources of air pollutants in Morgan Hill.

Sensitive receptors include those segments of the population that are most susceptible to poor air quality, such as children, elderly people, and sick people, as well as sensitive land uses, such as schools, hospitals, parks, and residential communities. Air quality problems intensify when sources of air pollutants and sensitive receptors are located near one another. Since residential areas are

located throughout the city, as are schools, parks, and medical facilities, the consideration of sensitive receptors is an important aspect of the General Plan.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The earth's atmosphere is composed of naturally occurring and human-caused greenhouse gases (GHGs) that trap heat in the atmosphere and affect the Earth's temperature. This phenomenon, known as the greenhouse effect, is responsible for maintaining a climate suitable for human life. Human activities, including burning fossil fuels and removing trees, have contributed to an excessive release of carbon in the form of carbon dioxide into the earth's atmosphere. Consequently, the amounts of GHGs in the atmosphere have increased, intensifying the natural greenhouse effect. This intensified greenhouse effect has contributed to global warming, which is an increased rate of warming of the earth's surface temperature. Warming of the earth's lower atmosphere induces large-scale changes in ocean circulation patterns, precipitation patterns, global ice cover, biological distributions, and other large-scale changes to the ecosystem.

In the State's efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change, the Governor of California signed Assembly Bill (AB) 32 in 2006, codified under the Global Warming Solutions Act, into legislation. The Act requires that California cap its GHG emissions at 1990 levels by 2020. This legislation requires the California Air Resource Board (CARB) to establish a program for statewide GHG emissions reporting, as well as monitoring and enforcement of that program. CARB is also required to adopt rules and regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emission reductions.

Senate Bill (SB) 375 also responds to AB 32, and calls for the automobile and light truck industry to produce reduced-emission vehicles and requires metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to prepare sustainable communities strategies, which will demonstrate how a region will meet CARB's GHG reduction targets by reducing the amount of vehicle miles traveled.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Conserving resources often depends on modifying established behavior patterns. The plan intends to encourage residents and businesses to conserve energy by supporting programs that are easy to participate in.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

OPEN SPACE, HILLSIDES, AND SCENIC FEATURES

GOAL NRE-1 Preserve, enhance, and equitably expand open space areas and natural features in Morgan Hill to support ecological health, climate resilience, cultural identity, and access for all residents.
~~Preservation of open space areas and natural features.~~

Policy NRE-1.1



Natural Features. Preserve and restore outstanding natural features, such as the skyline of a prominent hillridgelines and rock outcroppings, by integrating them into ecological corridors and climate-resilient landscapes.

Policy NRE-1.2



Large Open Space Areas. Work with the County, the Open Space Authority, appropriate conservancy organizations and land trusts, and property owners to preserve large open space areas, such as agricultural lands and outdoor recreation areas, to conserve natural resources and retain the City's unique identity. Prioritize partnerships in areas that provide floodplain resilience, urban heat mitigation, or biodiversity co-benefits.



Policy NRE-1.3

Designated Open Space. ~~Maintain land~~ Connect designated ~~as~~ “Open Space” lands on the Morgan Hill General Plan Land Use Map (Figure CNF-3); ~~in accordance with Measure C, through fiscal year 2019/20~~ through expanded trail networks and pedestrian infrastructure to improve connections between homes, schools, parks and public services, with attention to safety and accessibility.

Policy NRE-1.4



South County Open Space. Preserve and maintain the wide variety of open spaces in the South County; including greenbelt areas, parks, and agricultural uses. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.00). Promote interjurisdictional efforts to address equitable park access and rewilding opportunities in South County open spaces.

Policy NRE-1.5



Coordinated Action. Continue to coordinate with Gilroy and Santa Clara County to implement South County open space goals and objectives and participate in the development of regional open space preservation programs. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.19 & 16.20)

Policy NRE-1.6



Open Space Preservation Tools. Use a variety of open space preservation tools to protect open space, including public acquisition, land use regulation, urban development policy, economic incentives to landowners, open space easements, transfer of development rights, planned cluster development, assessment districts, and dedication of additional lands upon development. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.17). Incorporate equity-based prioritization tools and incentives to support open space preservation in Opportunity Neighborhoods identified in the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element.

Policy NRE-1.7



Priority Areas for Preservation. The South County includes a variety of open space areas, including the valley floor, stream corridors, lands around reservoirs, foothills, inter-mountain valleys, and mountain areas beyond the foothills. Of these geographic areas, stream corridors, lands around the reservoirs, lands which provide greenbelts, and significant hillside features should receive highest priority for preservation as open space and future regional park location. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.01 & 16.02)

Policy NRE-1.8



County Parks and Open Space Programs. Support County programs to:

- a) acquire and develop regional parks in the South County, providing just compensation for the taking of private lands;
- b) protect open space resources by prohibiting the introduction of uses incompatible with open space resource preservation, and preserve open space through planning, regulation, acquisition and/or development rights transfer programs;
- c) plan and regulate land use to avoid hazardous areas and protect critical natural resources; and
- d) continue to provide property tax relief via the Williamson Act to land owners who agree to maintain their lands in open space uses. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.21)

Policy NRE-1.9

Poppy Jasper. Preserve Poppy Jasper as a natural resource unique to Morgan Hill.

Policy NRE-1.10 Wetland Delineation and Mitigation. Require wetland delineation, ~~and mitigation, and long-term enhancement measures—including native species planting, flood storage functions, and community access—during~~ as part of the environmental review of future land development applications.

~~**Policy NRE-1.11 Wetlands Enhancement.** Encourage enhancement of sensitive wetlands as part of future development.~~

~~**Policy NRE-1.11 Prioritize Open Space within Opportunity Neighborhoods.** Prioritize the siting of open space, new parks, and recreation facilities within Opportunity Neighborhoods that support physical health.~~

Action NRE-1.A Identification of Lands to Preserve. Identify appropriate lands to preserve as open space.

Action NRE-1.B Open Space Acquisition and Maintenance. Formulate a program for open space acquisition and maintenance that could involve a variety of funding sources and stewardship agencies.

Action NRE-1.C Orderly Development. Retain important open space lands through planning for orderly, staged urban development. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.20)

~~**Action NRE-1.D Prohibition of Poppy Jasper Mining.** Work cooperatively with the County to ensure that County regulations prohibit the mining of Poppy Jasper.~~

- Action NRE-1.E Inclusive Parks and Open Space.** Design new parks and open space to be inclusive, equitable, and accessible for all ages, abilities, and cultural needs, while transforming existing parks to accommodate the recreational needs of all users.
- Action NRE-1.F Equitable Open Space Access.** Ensure an equal distribution of parks and park amenities within the City; strive to achieve a goal that all homes within Opportunity Neighborhoods – as identified in the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element – are within one-quarter mile walking distance of at least one usable park and/or open space with amenities.
- Action NRE-1.G Equitable Access to Healthy Food.** Support community gardens, cultural easements, and urban farms in open space plans, especially in food deserts and Opportunity Neighborhoods, to improve food access and community cohesion.
- Action NRE-1.H Culturally Significant Landscapes.** Incorporate art, signage and programming that reflect the languages, traditions and identities of local communities, and protect culturally significant landscapes in open space planning.
- Action NRE-1.I Rewilding and Open Space.** Incorporate rewilded areas into open space networks that provide passive recreation, nature interpretation, and educational opportunities, while preserving ecological integrity.
- Action NRE-1.J Indigenous Ecological Knowledge Integration.** Collaborate with Indigenous communities to incorporate traditional stewardship practices and cultural interpretation into open space management.

GOAL NRE-2 Preservation of hillside areas as open space and scenic features.

- Policy NRE-2.1 Hillside and Ridgeline Views.** Protect views of hillsides, ridgelines, and prominent natural features surrounding the City. These features help define the City's historic rural character, sense of place, image and identity.
- Policy NRE-2.2 El Toro Mountain as Landmark Feature.** Retain the City's unique identity by preserving its landmark natural feature, El Toro Mountain.
- Policy NRE-2.3 Scenic Hillside Preservation.** Preserve scenic hillsides around the City in an undeveloped state, wherever feasible. Provide for retention of hillside areas as open space through the dedication and/or purchase of scenic easements and/or open space easements, transfer of development rights and other appropriate measures.
- Policy NRE-2.4 Building Distance below Ridgelines.** Limit all building pads located within the hillside areas to an elevation at or below the 80-foot vertical drop from the ridgeline.
- Action NRE-2.A Rural Hillsides.** Limit the hillside/mountain areas to the east and west to low-intensity rural uses compatible with open space in order to maintain their integrity as the South County's major scenic and natural resources. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.08)
- Action NRE-2.B El Toro Mountain Preservation.** Preserve El Toro Mountain in open space above the 500-foot contour line on all sides, with the exception of the Llagas and Paradise Valleys (where all land above

the 600-foot contour elevation should be preserved).

Action NRE-2.C Purchase of Easements. Purchase lands and/or open space easements on El Toro Mountain through funds provided by a general bond election and/or grants from State, federal, and private sources.

Action NRE-2.D El Toro Mountain and Santa Clara County Parks. Work with Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department and/or the Open Space Authority of Santa Clara Valley (OSA) to incorporate a portion of El Toro Mountain into the County park system or into the OSA managed system of open space.

Action NRE-2.E Hillside Ordinance. All hillside areas with an average slope of 10 percent or greater shall be regulated by the Hillside Ordinance.

GREENBELTS

GOAL NRE-3 A stable, long-term City boundary reinforced by a greenbelt

POLICIES REGARDING CREATION OF THE GREENBELT

Policy NRE-3.1 Greenbelt as a Community Separator. Maintain a greenbelt to separate the northern and southern boundaries of the City from surrounding rural lands and the urbanized areas of San Jose and San Martin, using rewilded landscapes to define urban edges, prevent leapfrog development, and reduce infrastructure strain.

Policy NRE-3.2



San Jose Coyote Valley Greenbelt. Work with the City of San Jose and Santa Clara County to ensure that the San Jose Coyote Valley Greenbelt, which includes the area south of Palm Avenue and north of the Morgan Hill City limits and is located within the San Jose Sphere of Influence, shall continue to provide the non-urban buffer for the north side of Morgan Hill.

Policy NRE-3.3



Greenbelt Easements. Acquire easements on properties using an approach that would maintain some appropriate development potential, maximize the use of available funds for greenbelt and open space protection, and minimize land management and maintenance costs.

Policy NRE-3.4



Land in Fee Title for Greenbelts. Acquire land in fee title when the City's objectives include allowing public access to the site for recreational or related activities.

Policy NRE-3.5



"Willing Seller" Greenbelt Acquisition. Acquire properties and easements on a "willing seller" basis.

POLICIES REGARDING USES WITHIN THE GREENBELT

Policy NRE-3.6



No Commercial/Industrial Uses within Greenbelts. Support County policies prohibiting commercial and industrial uses (excluding agricultural industry) in the unincorporated and greenbelt areas surrounding the City.

Policy NRE-3.7



Appropriate Greenbelt Land Uses. Encourage land uses appropriate within a greenbelt, which might include: a) low-density residential development on lots 10 acres or more in size; b) public parks and recreational areas; c) privately operated recreation areas (e.g., golf courses and riding stables); and, d) agriculture. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.16)

Policy NRE-3.8



Appropriate Greenbelt Land Uses. Require appropriate uses within Greenbelt areas such as parks and other designated open spaces, scenic/open space easements, golf courses, low intensity public facilities involving minimal permanent improvements and agricultural activities are appropriate uses. Existing residential may remain and new residential uses should be located and designed to have minimal visual and other environmental impacts.

Policy NRE-3.9



Greenbelt Areas on Private Land. Greenbelt areas which are privately owned are not intended for public recreational use.

ACTIONS REGARDING CREATION OF THE GREENBELT

Action NRE-3.A



Tools to Create a Greenbelt. Use a variety of tools to create a greenbelt, including public acquisition, land use regulation, urban development policy, economic incentives to landowners, open space easements, transfer of development rights, planned cluster development, assessment districts, and dedication of additional lands upon development.

Action NRE-3.B



Greenbelt Acquisition Program. Pursue a targeted program for acquisition of Greenbelt land in fee title or conservation easements. Prioritize undeveloped properties that are most threatened with development which, if acquired, would provide significant public benefit.

Action NRE-3.C



Greenbelt Monitoring Program. Develop a comprehensive program for monitoring land uses and acquiring and maintaining certain Greenbelt areas. Components of the program should include staffing and/or contract resources, identification of and securing funding for acquisition of easements and fee title to property, and administration of the program.

Action NRE-3.D



Regional Approach to Form a Greenbelt. Work with San Jose and Santa Clara County to establish and preserve a defined, permanent greenbelt between Morgan Hill and San Jose in the southern Coyote Valley, comprised of agricultural uses, rural estates, and the Coyote Park chain. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.13 & 16.14)

Action NRE-3.E



Regional Greenbelt Plan Implementation. Work with San Jose, Gilroy and Santa Clara County to implement plans for the preservation of greenbelts between the cities. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.22)

Action NRE-3.F



Greenbelt Funding Source. Work with San Jose, Gilroy and the County to identify and establish a viable source of funding for acquiring and developing regional parks, pathways, and open space. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.22)

Action NRE-3.G **Greenbelt Priority Areas.** The highest priority areas for Greenbelt preservation include the east side of El Toro, the Edmundson/DeWitt/Sunset area, and the foothills on the eastern side of the valley north of Dunne Ave.

Action NRE-3.H **Greenbelt Secondary Priority Areas.** The second highest priority areas for Greenbelt preservation include the west side of El Toro and the hill area south of Edmundson.

Action NRE-3.I **Greenbelt Tertiary Priority Areas.** The third highest priority areas for Greenbelt preservation include the west side of Paradise Valley, the Baird Ranch (north of Llagas Road), and the Boy's Ranch/Coyote Creek Park area.

Action NRE-3.J **Fair Market Value.** When acquiring fee title or easements, offer property owners fair market value using industry standard appraisal techniques.

Action NRE-3.K **Habitat Connectivity and Landscape Resilience.** Connect fragmented open spaces using greenways, easements, and habitat corridors, focusing on key linkages for wildlife movement across jurisdictional boundaries.

ACTIONS REGARDING USES WITHIN THE GREENBELT

Action NRE-3.L **Land Uses that Supports Greenbelts.** Support the County maintaining low densities and large minimum lot size requirements for undeveloped areas not planned for urbanization and lands identified as Greenbelt.

~~Action NRE-3.L~~ **Action NRE-3.M City Influence in Unincorporated**

RC

Areas. Actively work with the County to find mechanisms that would provide the City with greater influence over development in the unincorporated areas of the City's Sphere of Influence.

~~Action NRE-3.M~~ **Action NRE-3.N Low Impact Development in**

RC

Hillside Greenbelt Areas. Subject new development within City hillside Greenbelt areas to a site and design review process that encourages minimizing environmental impacts including minimizing the amount of grading and encouraging location of structures in areas where they are least visible from the valley floor.

~~Action NRE-3.N~~ **Action NRE-3.O Visibility of Structures within**

RC

Greenbelts. Encourage the evaluation and update of the basic Santa Clara County development review process to achieve greater restriction on visibility, from the valley floor and major transportation corridors, of structures in the hillside Greenbelt areas. This updated review process should result in a minimal review process for structures that are not visible from the valley floor and major transportation corridors, and an extensive review process for structures that are visible.



AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL NRE-4 A viable agricultural industry.

Policy NRE-4.1 Agriculture Retention and Transition to Urban Uses. Support programs and techniques, including conservation easements and purchase of development rights to encourage the retention of agricultural activities and to minimize conflicts in the transition from agriculture to urban uses.

- Policy NRE-4.2 Support for Agricultural Activity.** Support agricultural activity by encouraging agriculture-related industry, commercial uses, and community events within the urban area, and expanding opportunities for small-scale agriculture.
- Policy NRE-4.3 Agriculture in the Sphere of Influence.** Support significant agricultural activity within the Sphere of Influence by providing a market for agricultural products (e.g., farmers' markets) and decreasing the costs associated with agriculture by allowing such uses to occur in the Sphere of Influence.
- Policy NRE-4.4 Farming Cooperatives in Buffer Areas.** Support use of farming cooperatives within agricultural buffer areas.
- Policy NRE-4.5 Local Agricultural Products.** Purchase locally-produced agricultural products for City functions and encourage Morgan Hill Unified School District and other local agencies to do the same, whenever feasible.
- Policy NRE-4.6 Agricultural Education.** Support programs to foster agricultural education.
- Policy NRE-4.7 Long-Term Maintenance of Agriculture.** Continue to support the long-term maintenance of agricultural land uses and agriculture, including vineyards and wineries, as an economic enterprise in South County. (South County Joint Area Plan 14.00)
- Policy NRE-4.8 Policy Support for Agriculture.** Take positive action to encourage agriculture by supporting local, county, and State policies favorable to agriculture. (South County Joint Area Plan 14.01)





Policy NRE-4.9 Urban Encroachment. Require new urban development adjacent to an existing agricultural operation to create an appropriate buffer area, on land within the proposed development, between urban uses and agricultural activities.

Policy NRE-4.10 Land Use to Support Agricultural Viability. Maintain the economic viability of agriculture using a variety of methods, such as:

- Designating land outside urban areas as agricultural;
- Requiring minimum lot sizes in agricultural areas;
- Requiring land uses that support agricultural activities;
- Marketing the benefits of agricultural uses to the public. (South County Joint Area Plan 14.02)

Policy NRE-4.11 Agricultural Mitigation. Enforce the agricultural mitigation requirement of requiring the preservation of a minimum of 1 acre of agricultural land for each acre of agricultural land changed to a non-agricultural use, consistent with the City's Agricultural Lands Preservation Program.

Policy NRE-4.12 Permanent Preservation of Agriculture. Establish areas for the permanent preservation of agricultural lands and programs to accomplish that objective, such as exclusive agricultural zoning, transfer of development rights (TDR) programs, and right-to-farm legislation. (South County Joint Area Plan 14.03)

Policy NRE-4.13 Urban Growth. Wherever existing development patterns and existing and planned roads and other public facilities permit, concentrate urban development adjacent to existing developed areas in order to minimize the impact of development on agricultural land. Plan for further urban growth to occur in areas which will avoid encroachment into those agricultural lands with the greatest long-term potential to remain economically viable. (South County Joint Area Plan 14.07)

Policy NRE-4.14 **LAFCO Policies.** Support policies of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) which would guide urban development away from those agricultural areas with the greatest potential for long-term economic viability. Use policies for Urban Service Area extensions and utility extensions to guide urban growth away from long-term agricultural areas. (South County Joint Area Plan 14.09 & 14.10)

Policy NRE-4.15 Conversion to Urban Use. Convert agricultural land that has been designated for urban growth in an orderly manner to retain the stability and viability of remaining agricultural lands as long as possible. (South County Joint Area Plan 14.08)

Policy NRE-4.16 Prioritization of Agricultural Land. Prioritize protection of existing agriculture lands in the Sphere of Influence, outside the Urban Growth Boundary.

Policy NRE-4.17 Williamson Act Contracts. Support the preservation of land under Williamson Act contracts within the Morgan Hill Sphere of Influence.



Policy NRE-4.18 Agricultural Operations Disclosure. In areas where residential development is adjacent to agricultural operations, require a disclosure to residents that agricultural operations happen nearby and that they will be exposed to impacts from such operations, such as dust, noise, and odors.

Policy NRE-4.19 Agricultural Lands Preservation Program. Use a wide variety of funding sources to support the Agricultural Lands Preservation Program, including land use regulation, urban development policy, conservation easements (with matching grant funds from appropriate agencies, where possible), transfer or purchase of development rights, increased transfer fees, Residential Development Control funds, or Homeowners Association fees for new development.



Action NRE-4.A Agricultural Marketing. Participate in direct marketing of locally produced agricultural products, as appropriate.

Action NRE-4.B Buffer Area Requirements. Develop and adopt buffer area requirements that address the width, location, and allowed uses in buffer areas, and address the right to farm.

Action NRE-4.C Buffer Area Uses. Limit activities in these buffer areas to uses which are compatible with both agricultural and urban activities, such as parks, playing fields, and/or alternative energy facilities. (South County Joint Area Plan 14.11)

Action NRE-4.D **South County Agricultural Areas.** Determine the range of activities permitted in agricultural areas of South County through an intergovernmental process, where the range of allowed uses reflects the activities which are necessary to promote the continued economic viability of agriculture in South County. (South County Joint Area Plan 14.12)

Action NRE-4.E **Small-Scale Agriculture.** Explore techniques to support small-scale agricultural operations, such as amendments to the Zoning Code to reduce minimum lot sizes for agricultural uses or allow a greater range of agricultural activities in residential and other urban areas. Consider amending the Zoning Code to allow beekeeping.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

GOAL NRE-5 Preservation and reclamation of streams and riparian areas as open space.

Policy NRE-5.1 **Reclamation of Streams and Riparian Areas.** Encourage reclamation of degraded streams and riparian areas.

Policy NRE-5.2 **Other Agencies and Environmental Review.** Coordinate with jurisdictional agencies, as required, as part of the environmental review process for development projects.

Policy NRE-5.3 **Natural State of Streamside and Riparian Areas.** Retain natural streamside and riparian areas in their natural state in order to preserve their value as percolation and recharge areas, natural habitat, scenic resources, and recreation corridors, and to stabilize banks. (South County Joint Area Plan 15.08)

Policy NRE-5.4 Development Impacts in Riparian Areas. Consider development impacts upon wildlife in riparian areas and mitigate those environmental impacts.

Policy NRE-5.5 Flood Control Projects. Where flood control projects are needed to protect existing development, minimize disruption of streams and riparian systems, maintaining slow flow and stable banks through design and other appropriate mitigation measures. (South County Joint Area Plan 15.08)

Policy NRE-5.6 Stream Channel Protection. Protect existing stream channels and riparian vegetation by requiring buffering or landscaped setbacks and storm runoff interception as specified in Table NRE-1.

TABLE NRE-1 REQUIRED STREAM SETBACK DISTANCES			
Slope	Category 1 Streams (Water Present Year Round During Normal Rain Years)		Category 2 Streams (Water Present During the Wet Season Only During Normal Rain Years)
	Inside Urban Service Area	Outside Urban Service Area	Inside/Outside Urban Service Area
	0-30%	100 feet	150 feet
>30%	150 feet	200 feet	35 feet

Policy NRE-5.7 Creek Visibility. Require creek areas in new developments to be visible from the public right-of-way to ensure safety, maintenance, access, and integration into the neighborhood.

Policy NRE-5.8 **Creeks Access.** Access to creeks should be of sufficient width to accommodate trails, flood control access, and protection of riparian habitat. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.11)

Action NRE-5.A **West Little Llagas Creek.** A proposed streamside park along West Little Llagas Creek should be actively implemented and connected to the County trail system. (South County Joint Area Plan 16.10 & 16.12)

Action NRE-5.B **Design Guidelines for Riparian Features.** Develop Design Guidelines for preserving, reclaiming and incorporating riparian features into development.

Action NRE-5.C **Riparian Preservation and Reclamation Programs.** Develop programs for the preservation and reclamation of degraded riparian areas.

GOAL NRE-6 Protection of native plants, animals, and sensitive habitats.

Policy NRE-6.1 **Natural State of Habitat.** Preserve all fish and wildlife habitats in their natural state whenever possible. Consider development impacts upon wildlife and utilize actions to mitigate those environmental impacts.

Policy NRE-6.2 **Habitat Conservation Plan.** Support the implementation of the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan to protect wildlife, rare and endangered plants and animals, and sensitive habitats from loss and destruction.

Policy NRE-6.3 **Urban Expansion Impacts.** Minimize impacts upon wildlife when considering annexations, urban service area extensions, and other governmental actions that permit urban development of previously undeveloped property.

Policy NRE-6.4 **Tree Preservation and Protection.** Preserve and protect mature, healthy trees whenever feasible, particularly native trees, historically significant trees, and other trees which are of significant size or of significant aesthetic value to the immediate vicinity or to the community as a whole.

Policy NRE-6.5 **Soil and Erosion.** Require development to be designed to conserve soil and avoid erosion. (South County Joint Area Plan 13.06)

Policy NRE-6.6 **Use of Native Plants.** Encourage use of native plants, especially drought-resistant species, in landscaping.

Policy NRE-6.7 **Habitat Protection and Enhancement.** Encourage the protection, restoration, and enhancement of remaining native grasslands, oak woodlands, marshlands, and riparian habitat.



Policy NRE-6.8 **Community-Led Rewilding.** Support community-driven restoration of native ecosystems, including on underutilized city parcels, through grants and technical assistance.

Action NRE-6.A **Standard Measures for Construction Activities.** Develop a set of standard measures requiring construction activities to avoid disturbance to natural features to the extent feasible.

Action NRE-6.B Small-Scale Rewilding. Incorporate pocket parks, vacant lots, utility corridors, and roadside medians, where appropriate, into rewilding strategies that expand habitat connectivity and green infrastructure within urban areas.

Action NRE-6.C Ecological Rewilding. Encourage native vegetation, pollinator gardens, and green roofs that provide ecological benefits while improving air quality, shading, and stormwater management.

Action NRE-6.D Connected Rewilding Sites. Connect small-scale rewilded sites to larger open space and habitat corridors, ensuring that urban ecological restoration contributes to regional climate resilience and biodiversity goals.

WATER QUALITY AND CONSERVATION

GOAL NRE-7 Conservation of water resources.

Policy NRE-7.1 Water Standards for Private Development. Promote water conservation and efficient water use in all private development projects. Require development to exceed State standards for the use of water.

Policy NRE-7.2 Water Standards for Public Development. Promote water conservation and efficient water use in all public development projects. All new public buildings shall be designed to exceed State standards for water efficiency.

Policy NRE-7.3 Water Efficiency and Landscaping. Promote water conservation and efficient water use in all public and private landscaping plans.

Policy NRE-7.4 Non-Potable Water for Irrigation. Encourage use of non-potable water for landscape irrigation.



Policy NRE-7.5



Dual Plumbing. Explore installation of dual plumbing in large, new commercial and/or residential developments to enable future use of recycled non-potable water generated on- or off-site.

Action NRE-7.A

Infrastructure Maintenance. Correct known deficiencies in the City's sewer, storm drain, and water systems and work toward environmentally sustainable systems. Maintain the City's infrastructure to ensure that facilities are up to date and incorporate efficiency and conservation mechanisms.

Action NRE-7.B

Drought-Tolerant Landscaping. Develop local ordinances that require new commercial and industrial development to use only drought-tolerant landscaping and that increase the use of drought-tolerant landscaping in new residential development.

Action NRE-7.C

Water Fixture Retrofitting. Create incentives for homeowners of older residential buildings to retrofit water fixtures to improve water efficiency and conservation. Explore ways to link homeowners with incentive programs offered by other agencies or organizations. Options for creating a City-sponsored retrofit program could include using Residential Development Control Funds or creating Citywide fees for water usage. Work with utility providers and City departments to market the program owners who own older homes, are undertaking renovations, or are new owners.

Action NRE-7.D

Water Efficiency at City Facilities. Develop a comprehensive strategy for using water efficiently at all City facilities.

GOAL NRE-8 Protection of water quality from contamination associated with urbanization.

- Policy NRE-8.1 Contamination from Toxic Chemicals.** Protect water quality from contamination, and monitor it to assure that present policies and regulations are adequate. Prohibit such uses as waste facilities, septic systems, and industries using toxic chemicals where polluting substances may come in contact with groundwater, floodwaters, and creeks or reservoir waters. (South County Joint Area Plan 8.00)
- Policy NRE-8.2 Septic Systems.** Continue land use policies that limit the number of individual septic systems in areas vulnerable to groundwater contamination, because of the potential for cumulative degradation of water quality. (South County Joint Area Plan 8.01)
- Policy NRE-8.3 Water Quality Monitoring.** Continue to monitor groundwater and surface water quality conditions to determine if changes in regulations regarding septic systems and land use are needed. (South County Joint Area Plan 8.04)
- Policy NRE-8.4 Sewer Service for Future Development.** In areas where future development is expected to be served by sewers, continue large lot policies which allow minimal development and limited numbers of septic systems. (This approach increases the feasibility of designing future urban density subdivisions with smaller lots, which are more efficient for sewers in terms of service and cost.) (South County Joint Area Plan 8.02)

Policy NRE-8.5 **Hazardous Waste Facilities.** Site and operate hazardous waste disposal facilities and transfer stations so as to minimize hazards to ground and surface water quality. (South County Joint Area Plan 8.07)

Policy NRE-8.6 **Percolation Rates.** Protect properties located in areas that have soils with rapid water percolation from future development in order to ensure existing water quality. Permit development (including commercial and industrial uses) in such areas only under strict safety limitations according to the City's Hazardous Materials Storage Ordinance section specifically related to high percolation rates. (South County Joint Area Plan 8.11 & 8.12)

Policy NRE-8.7 **Aquifer Protection.** In order to provide greater protection of the aquifers which supply drinking water to the South County, give special consideration to the management of contaminants (e.g., hazardous materials, sanitary effluents) in groundwater recharge areas where no protective aquitard layer exists. (South County Joint Area Plan 8.13)



Policy NRE-8.8 **Water Quality Compliance.** Implement Best Management Practices to improve water quality, in conformance with the South Santa Clara County and City of Morgan Hill Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Monitoring Plan for the Pajaro River Watershed (2015) and findings in subsequent annual status updates, as required for compliance with community standards and applicable State and federal provisions.



GOAL NRE-9 Cooperative efforts to ensure regional water quality.

Policy NRE-9.1



Interjurisdictional Coordination. Maintain close coordination with the following agencies and organizations which share jurisdiction and interest relative to South County's water supply and water quality: the Regional Water Quality Control Boards, Santa Clara Valley Water District, Santa Clara County, City of Gilroy Planning Department, and San Martin Planning Committee. (South County Joint Area Plan 10.02)

Policy NRE-9.2



Water Board Standards. Encourage the two Regional Water Quality Control Boards which have jurisdiction in South County to agree upon compatible water quality standards and consistent approaches to implementing the State Board's nondegradation policy, so as not to confuse developers and jurisdictions which must carry out the Board's regulations. (South County Joint Area Plan 10.01)

Policy NRE-9.3



Solid Waste Facility Impacts and Benefits. Work jointly with Gilroy and Santa Clara County to achieve a balance between potential negative impacts and the benefits associated with the location of solid waste disposal sites and transfer stations. (South County Joint Area Plan 8.10)

Policy NRE-9.4



Compatibility of Regulations. Where appropriate, the Regional Water Quality Boards, Cities, County and other local agencies should adopt compatible ordinances (i.e., Hazardous Materials Storage Ordinance's HMSOs), standards (i.e., septic tank and alternative treatment and disposal methods), and enforcement procedures (i.e., implementing AB 2185, California Health and Safety Code Chapter 6.95, Division 20, Section 25500 et seq.) regarding water quality so that there is no advantage for a company to locate in an area with lower standards. (South County Joint Area Plan 10.03)

Action NRE-9.A



Intergovernmental Coordination. Consider intergovernmental coordination between the Cities, the County, and local agencies as an effective means of resolving issues of concern and investigating the feasibility of compatible standards, ordinances, and enforcement procedures. (South County Joint Area Plan 10.00)

AIR QUALITY

GOAL NRE-10 Reduced air pollution emissions.

Policy NRE-10.1



Regional and Subregional Cooperation. Cooperate with regional agencies in developing and implementing air quality management plans. Support subregional coordination with other cities, counties, and agencies in the Santa Clara Valley and adjacent areas to address land use, jobs/housing balance, and transportation planning issues as a means of improving air quality.

Policy NRE-10.2 State and Federal Regulation. Encourage effective regulation of mobile and stationary sources of air pollution and support State and federal regulations to improve automobile emission controls.

Policy NRE-10.3 Automobile Emissions. Encourage the use of and infrastructure for alternative fuel, hybrid, and electric vehicles. Encourage new and existing public and private development to include electric vehicle charging stations.

 **Policy NRE-10.4 Reduced Automobile Use.** To reduce air pollution the frequency and length of automobile trips and the amount of traffic congestion by controlling sprawl, promoting infill development, and encouraging mixed uses and higher density development near transit. Support the expansion and improvement of alternative modes of transportation. Encourage development project designs that protect and improve air quality and minimize direct and indirect air pollutant emissions by including components that reduce vehicle trips.

Action NRE-10.A Municipal Vehicle Fleet. Reduce air emission from municipal vehicles by increasing the City's alternative fuel vehicle fleet.

Action NRE-10.B Public Employees. Develop programs to reduce vehicle use by City employees.

Action NRE-10.C City Regulation. Review and evaluate ~~ion~~ the effectiveness of the City's site design measures, transit incentives, and new transportation technologies and encourage those that most successfully reduce air pollutant emissions.

GOAL NRE-11 Minimized exposure of people to toxic air contaminants such as ozone, carbon monoxide, lead, and particulate matter.

- Policy NRE-11.1 TACs and Proposed Sensitive Uses.** Require modeling for sensitive land uses, such as residential development, proposed near sources of pollution such as freeways and industrial uses. Require new residential development and projects categorized as sensitive receptors to incorporate effective mitigation measures into project designs or be located adequate distances from sources of toxic air contaminants (TACs) to avoid significant risk to health and safety.
- Policy NRE-11.2 TACs and Existing Sensitive Uses.** Encourage the installation of appropriate air filtration mechanisms at existing schools, residences, and other sensitive receptors adversely affected by existing or proposed pollution sources.
- Policy NRE-11.3 Health Risk Assessments.** For proposed development that emits toxic air contaminants, require project proponents to prepare health risk assessments in accordance with Bay Area Air Quality Management District procedures as part of environmental review and implement effective mitigation measures to reduce potential health risks to less-than-significant levels. Alternatively, require these projects to be located an adequate distance from residences and other sensitive receptors to avoid health risks. Consult with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to identify stationary and mobile toxic air contaminant sources and determine the need for and requirements of a health risk assessment for proposed developments.

Policy NRE-11.4 Truck Routes. For development projects generating significant heavy duty truck traffic, designate truck routes that minimize exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants and particulate matter.

Policy NRE-11.5 Truck Idling. For development projects generating significant truck traffic, require signage to remind drivers that the State truck idling law limits truck idling to five (5) minutes.

Policy NRE-11.6 Vegetation Buffers. Encourage the use of pollution-absorbing trees and vegetation in buffer areas between substantial sources of toxic air contaminants and sensitive receptors.

GOAL NRE-12 Minimized air pollutant emissions from demolition and construction activities.

Policy NRE-12.1 Best Practices. Requirement that development projects implement best management practices to reduce air pollutant emissions associated with construction and operation of the project.

Policy NRE-12.2 Conditions of Approvals. Include dust, particulate matter, and construction equipment exhaust control measures as conditions of approval for subdivision maps, site development and planned development permits, grading permits, and demolition permits. At a minimum, conditions shall conform to construction mitigation measures recommended in the current Bay Area Air Quality Management District CEQA Guidelines.

Policy NRE-12.3 Control Measures. Require construction and demolition projects that have the potential to disturb asbestos (from soil or building material) to comply with all the requirements of the California Air Resource Board's air toxics control measures (ATCMs) for Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations.

Policy NRE-12.4 Grading. Require subdivision designs and site planning to minimize grading and use landform grading in hillside areas.

Action NRE-12.A Standard Measures for Demolition and Grading. Adopt and periodically update dust, particulate matter, and exhaust control standard measures for demolition, grading, and construction activities to include on project plans mitigation measures as conditions of approval based Bay Area Air Quality Management District CEQA Guidelines. Include measures to prevent silt loading on roadways that generates particulate matter air pollution by prohibiting unpaved or unprotected access to public roadways from construction sites.

Action NRE-12.B Grading Ordinance. Revise the grading ordinance and condition grading permits to require that graded areas be stabilized from the completion of grading to commencement and construction.

GOAL NRE-13 Use of green building practices in new and existing development to promote a healthful indoor environment.

Policy NRE-13.1 Building Materials. Promote the use of building materials that maintain healthful indoor air quality in an effort to reduce irritation and exposure to toxins and allergens for building occupants.



Policy NRE-13.2 Construction and Pre-Occupancy Practices. Encourage construction and pre-occupancy practices to improve indoor air quality for new development upon occupancy of the structure.

Action NRE-13.A Building Materials Ordinance. Develop and implement ordinances to promote the use of building materials, furniture, and paint that maintain healthful indoor air quality and to discourage the use of materials that degrade indoor air quality.

Action NRE-13.B Construction and Pre-Occupancy Practices Ordinance. Develop and implement ordinances to promote construction and pre-occupancy practices beneficial to indoor air quality, such as sealing of the HVAC system during construction, air flush outs prior to occupancy, and/or air quality testing and corrections prior to occupancy.

GOAL NRE-14 Minimum exposure of residents to objectionable odors.

Policy NRE-14.1 New Odor Sources. For new, expanded, or modified facilities that are potential sources of objectionable odors-require an analysis of possible odor impacts and the provision of odor minimization and control measures as mitigation.

Policy NRE-14.2 Odors and Proposed Sensitive Uses. Require new residential development projects and projects categorized as sensitive receptors to be located an adequate distance from facilities that are existing or potential sources of odor. Determine the adequate separation distance based on the type, size, and operations of the facility.

CLIMATE CHANGE

GOAL NRE-15 An adaptive and resilient community that responds to climate change.

- Policy NRE-15.1 Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Targets.** Maintain a greenhouse gas reduction trajectory that is consistent with the greenhouse gas reduction targets of Executive Orders B-30-15 (40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030) and S-03-05 (80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050) to ensure the City is consistent with statewide efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Policy NRE-15.2 Linking Land Use and Transportation.** Encourage land use and transportation patterns that reduce dependence on automobiles.
- Policy NRE-15.3 Climate Action Plan.** Utilize policies in this General Plan denoted with the green leaf symbol as the City's greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategy.
- Policy NRE-15.4 Sustainable Land Use.** Promote land use patterns that reduce the number and length of motor vehicle trips.
- Policy NRE-15.5 Jobs Housing Balance.** To the extent feasible, encourage a balance and match between jobs and housing.
- Policy NRE-15.6 Residential Near Transit.** Encourage higher density residential and mixed-use development adjacent to commercial centers and *transit corridors* – the land along or within walking distance of a street served by transit.



Policy NRE-15.7 Mix of Uses in Employment Centers. Encourage employment areas to include a mix of support services to minimize the number of employee trips.

Policy NRE-15.8 Walkable City. Encourage retail and office areas to be located within walking and biking distance of existing and proposed residential developments.

Policy NRE-15.9 Urban Forest. Support development and maintenance of a healthy, vibrant urban forest through outreach, incentives, and strategic leadership.

Policy NRE-15.10 VMT Reduction. Continue to work with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority on regional transportation solutions that will reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions.

Policy NRE-15.11 Green Building. Promote green building practices in new development.

Policy NRE-15.12 Municipal Fleet Alternative Fuel Vehicles. Shift municipal vehicle fleet from gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles to alternative fueled vehicles, to the extent possible.

Policy NRE-15.13 Climate-Responsive Open Space Planning. Integrate urban greening, native landscaping, and natural buffers into open space planning to mitigate heat, support biodiversity, and reduce wildfire risk.

Policy NRE-15.14 Urban Heat. Use parks and open spaces as tools to reduce the urban heat island effect, especially in Opportunity Neighborhoods and heat-vulnerable communities.

Action NRE-15.A Long-term GHG Reduction Monitoring.



Regularly monitor progress made towards the City's 2035 and additional future targets through inventory updates and review of implementation success related to statewide actions.

Action NRE-15.B Green Infrastructure. Integrate green infrastructure at larger and small scales in urban areas, such as tree canopy, bioswales, and native habitats, improving air quality, stormwater management, and mental health.

Action NRE-15.C Multi-Benefit Ecosystems. Integrate rewilding into green infrastructure plans, leveraging native vegetation to provide shade, cooling, carbon sinks, and erosion control.

Action NRE-15.D Climate Resilience. Restore degraded ecosystems with high potential for rewilding, prioritizing lands that can support biodiversity, aquifer recharge, and long-term ecosystem recovery, thereby combating climate change.

Action NRE-15.E Climate Education. Support environmental education and youth engagement programs that connect Opportunity Neighborhoods with nature and green careers.

Action NRE-15.F Urban Heat Mitigation. Increase urban tree canopy, shaded areas, and open space within heat-vulnerable communities, especially in Opportunity Neighborhoods, to mitigate extreme heat and improve health outcomes, prioritizing heat exposed sidewalks, transit stops, parks, and multi-family housing.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

GOAL NRE-16 Conservation of energy resources.

Policy NRE-16.1 Energy Standards for New Development. New development, including public buildings, should be designed to exceed State standards for the use of energy.

Policy NRE-16.2 Energy Conservation. Promote energy conservation techniques and energy efficiency in building design, orientation, and construction.

Policy NRE-16.3 Energy Use Data and Analysis. Provide information to increase building owner, tenant, and operator knowledge about how, when, and where building energy is used.



Policy NRE-16.4 Retrofit Financing. Promote existing and support development of new private financing options for building retrofits and renewable energy development.



Policy NRE-16.5 Energy Efficiency. Encourage development project designs that protect and improve air quality and minimize direct and indirect air pollutant emissions by including components that promote energy efficiency.

Policy NRE-16.6 Landscaping for Energy Conservation. Encourage landscaping plans for new development to address the planting of trees and shrubs that will provide shade to reduce the need for cooling systems and allow for winter daylighting.



Policy NRE-16.7 Renewable Energy. Encourage new and existing development to incorporate renewable energy generating features, like solar panels and solar hot water heaters.





Policy NRE-16.8 Residential Development Code. Emphasize energy conservation building techniques for new residential construction through the implementation of Chapter 18.78 of the Municipal Code.



Policy NRE-16.9 Subdivision Design. In compliance with Section 66473.1 of the State Subdivision Map Act, promote subdivision design that provides for passive solar heating and natural cooling through the Development Review Committee subdivision review procedures.

Action NRE-16.A Community Choice Aggregation. Partner with other Santa Clara County jurisdictions to determine the feasibility for development of a regional CCA program, including identification of the geographic scope, potential costs to participating jurisdictions and residents, and potential liabilities.



Action NRE-16.B Municipal Energy Audit. In cooperation with PG&E, subject all municipal buildings to an energy audit and perform practicable energy conservation alterations on municipal buildings. Such alterations can include modifying automatic heating, cooling, and lighting systems, and installing natural ventilation methods and solar hot water systems, etc.

Action NRE-16.C Local Energy Ordinances. Develop local ordinances that promote energy conservation and efficiency. Examples of such ordinances include: energy audits, solar access, solar swimming pool heating, insulation and solar retrofit, and solar water heating.



Action NRE-16.D Energy Efficiency Plan. Develop a comprehensive strategy for using energy efficiently at all City facilities.

Climate Action Pathways for Schools - Morgan Hill Unified School District

Morgan Hill Open Space Element Recommendations

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15 October 2025

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Report Summary

In response to the increasing environmental pressures of climate change, recent updates to California's Senate Bill 1425 requires all cities in the State of California to update their open space plans by the start of 2026 to address environmental justice, climate resilience and the preservation of natural ecosystems. This bill aims to specifically target large-scale climate effects in highly urbanized areas like the urban heat island effect, which causes dramatic temperature spikes in cities due to heat-absorbing infrastructure like pavements and buildings. The goal is to mitigate these reactions through the increase of green spaces throughout cities. In doing so, lawmakers hope to also provide more equitable access to recreational spaces to historically neglected areas.

Central issues identified within the city of Morgan Hill include inequitable access to parks in low-income communities and the lack of green spaces and tree canopy to offset air pollution. Programs suggested and implemented in the cities of Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Rosa, and Los Angeles give examples of promising solutions addressing equitable access to public open spaces, sustainable environmental infrastructure, and community representation. Taking inspiration from cities with innovative open space projects will allow the City of Morgan Hill to develop an effective strategy targeted at the city's unique characteristics.

Recommendations to Morgan Hill's Open Space Element include increasing park developments in underserved areas, promoting climate education, and improving city cooling systems. Park development specifically in the West Cochrane Neighborhood would connect residents living in the difficult mountainous terrain with recreational spaces currently only accessible over a mile away. Encouraging climate education through schools and community events will help low-income residents, the demographic most affected by climate change, to be conscious of climate effects and seek more sustainable practices. Lastly, improving existing city cooling systems by increasing overall greenery and native vegetation will reduce city temperatures and moderate extreme weather patterns associated with climate change.

Overall, these initiatives will target demographics with disproportionately low access to open spaces and areas most threatened by environmental pollution as they are in the most dire need for improvements. By updating open space elements in these regions, not only will the environmental quality improve, but so will public health, economic opportunities, and community unity.

I. Morgan Hill's Open Space Needs: Recommendation for SB 1425 Adoption

As climate change continues to accelerate faster, the gap between scientific forecasts and the capabilities of current policies widens. In recent years, communities with scarce green amenities and poor environmental health conditions, encapsulating a staggering 3.6 million people worldwide, were found to be 15 times more susceptible to climate change (UNCA, 2025). Climate change threats are exacerbated by a lack of open green spaces in developed areas through the urban heat island effect. This effect leads to cities often reaching up to 15 degrees Fahrenheit hotter than outlying rural areas, increasing pollution burden, and deteriorating community health. This phenomenon is caused by the increased heat-absorbing capacity of pavement and buildings compared to that of green spaces, disproportionately affecting communities without open spaces. As carbon and greenhouse gas emissions rise, these negative effects are expected to increase correspondingly, further threatening communities that lack open spaces with escalated risks of heatwaves, wildfires, floods, etc.

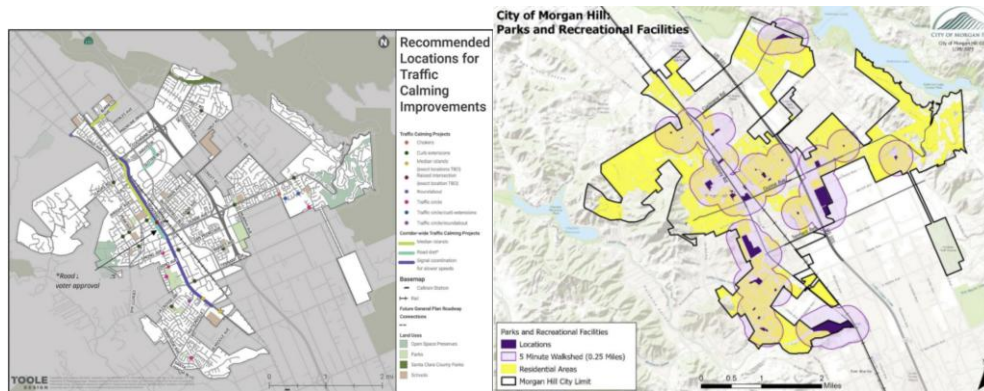
In response to recent climate change hazards, California's Senate Bill 1425 requires all cities to update their Open Space Elements by 2026 to address environmental justice, climate resilience, preservation issues, and execute rewilding practices through equity planning in underserved communities to adapt to environmental shifts. This legislation represents a significant shift towards climate action by incorporating climate science into practical actions that addresses both equity concerns and environmental challenges in California communities. In order to effectively address this issue, areas most vulnerable to climate change must be assessed to identify opportunities for improvement in consideration to climate resilience, community equity, and rewilding practices.

The bill requires cities to incorporate concrete, actionable steps into their updated open space plans to guarantee effective implementation. These can include conducting community-led vulnerability and equity assessments through surveys and health mappings, establishing green infrastructure investments to increase access to disadvantaged communities, connecting natural corridors through integrated water systems, and community engagement opportunities that promote climate education as well as community bonding through environmental sustainability projects.

Among disproportionately affected communities lies a pattern of weak open space planning and inadequate green infrastructure. Nationwide, approximately 100 million people across the United States, in low-income and predominantly non-white communities, do not have access to a park within a 10 minute walk of home. These populations have also been found to have 4 times smaller park acreage in comparison to higher-income neighborhoods (TPL, 2024). This pattern heavily reflects the historical injustices of redlining and inequitable land use resulting in inadequate funding for recreational facilities, more heat-absorbing surfaces, and other environmental inequities in minority communities. These disadvantages emphasize the critical importance of equitable green space access which SB 1425 directly addresses. Understanding

both the scope of this challenge and the comprehensive nature of SB 1425 requirements is essential for effective implementation of Morgan Hill Open Space Element's goal of ensuring sustainability in the city's under-sourced neighborhoods.

II. City of Morgan Hill: Current Open Space



City of Morgan Hill & Elevate Morgan Hill. (March, 2025). **Healthy Neighborhoods for All: Background Review Report**. Morgan Hill, CA.

In Morgan Hill, most middle and high-income residents live in neighborhoods on the outskirts, while lower-income residents generally reside in the city center. The overall population make up is predominantly white, with a significant Hispanic community between Monterey Road and Tennant Avenue.

To gather input on community priorities, the City of Morgan Hill’s Long Range Planning Division conducted a survey from March to May 2025. The survey received approximately 414 responses from a diverse group of participants, including community members, city departments, local organizations, businesses, and the general public. Key topics addressed in the survey included housing needs, transportation, sustainability, economic development, and quality of life issues. The survey identified flooding, poor tap water quality, and extreme heat as the primary environmental concerns affecting daily life and community well-being in Morgan Hill. Additional challenges include limited community events, restricted public transportation, and inadequate infrastructure, such as sidewalks and bike lanes, which make walking and cycling unsafe. Another issue found from the survey is limited access to parks and open spaces in some neighborhoods, reducing opportunities for recreational activities. This survey highlights the need for more affordable, healthy food options, as many residents struggle to access nutritious food within their budget.

Some solutions to the concerns raised in the survey are to provide more recreational areas for communities to enjoy, such as parks and community gardens. To prevent food deserts, there should be more supermarkets built in areas with lower public transportation or low-income areas that don’t have any healthy food stores nearby. To promote air filtration, more public transportation should be built to reduce the usage of fossil fuels and help minimize traffic congestion on main roads or highways. One way to improve flooding is by improving stormwater management practices and infrastructure to avoid flooding in communities. One solution is permeable pavements that allow water to pass through their underlying layers, where it can then be absorbed by the soil, which helps prevent stormwater runoff from falling into streams and polluting the water.

There are clear environmental access disparities in Morgan Hill, especially regarding the minority populations. Reports show that only 57% of Morgan Hill's community lives within a ten-minute walking distance from parks, meaning low-income areas are deprived from access to recreational facilities and supermarkets. The Hispanic communities in Morgan Hill are especially affected by these challenges, specifically through less access to housing, jobs, and higher food insecurity. Transportation barriers in Morgan Hill include limited public bus service and heavy downtown traffic, both of which restrict pedestrian movement. Additionally, residents living across Highway 101 face significant inconvenience as they must drive to access essential services, including supermarkets, recreational facilities, and restaurants. These transportation challenges limit options for many community members and can impact quality of life, especially for those without access to cars or with mobility impairments, such as the elderly. Addressing these barriers through improved public transportation, safer pedestrian pathways, and more accessible local services could enhance connectivity and well-being in Morgan Hill.

III. Best Practices: Taking Inspiration

Following updates to SB 1425, many cities throughout California have begun to enact plans to improve open space within their city. Programs suggested and implemented in the cities of Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Rosa, and Los Angeles give examples of promising solutions addressing equitable access to public open spaces, sustainable environmental infrastructure, and community representation. These examples can provide inspiration to improve the open spaces in Morgan Hill.

A. Ways to Create Fair Access

Fair access is one of the biggest challenges to open space programs. Some solutions to this problem from across California include: Mobile recreation programs that travel to underserved areas, converting vacant lots into pocket parks, free transportation to existing parks and the creation of community gardens in apartment complexes. The city of Morgan Hill can potentially use these examples to create fair access to open space areas for everyone.

In the City of San Diego, pocket parks (Garske), as well as gathering spaces and recreational activities, have been created by converting vacant lots across the city. The goal of these projects is to reduce the distance people need to travel to access an open space park. Examples include the creation of a small park (2,500ft²) in the East Village in a previously empty area between two buildings (San Diego Foundation). The park offers a place for children and families to exercise and have fun in the center of the city, where parks are few. The park also has natural elements such as a small garden and recreational elements like word search games. Because it isn't feasible to turn all vacant lots into pocket parks, the city has instead created temporary interventions to at least provide more park access to surrounding populations. These interventions include small games or temporary community areas that may eventually lead to permanent pocket parks (San Diego Foundation).

In the City of San Francisco, mobile recreation programs have been enacted. The Mobile Rec program, run by the city's parks and recreation department, transports recreational equipment to various parks around the city. This program is run on Saturdays across various parks and open space areas, providing said areas with equipment like skateboard, bmx ramps as well as disc golf and lawn games. The goal of this program is to increase the access and volume of recreational activities available for all areas and groups of people. It is also important to note that the City of San Francisco has also implemented a street park program, creating gardens and gathering spaces to provide greater access to open space areas in densely populated urban areas.

Similarly, Santa Rosa has established a series of community gardens (specifically in and around apartment structures). Contrary to traditional city-run community gardens available in and around public spaces like parks and historic sites, community gardens in Santa Rosa are implemented into apartment buildings. For example, the Chelsea Garden apartment complex has

created open space elements such as a community garden and children play areas. These open space elements are very easily replicable in Morgan Hill's apartment complexes and could go a long way in creating fair access. Another program that Santa Rosa has created is the Southeast Greenway project which seeks to link existing open spaces, such as trails, together to form an urban greenway that would lead to Spring Lake Park, allowing for better access to open spaces.

Finally, the City of Los Angeles implemented an amalgamation of the previously mentioned topics. Like San Francisco, Los Angeles has implemented a mobile recreation program known as Park on the Move. This program provides underserved areas with a low number of parks per capita with sports, crafts, and games. Secondly, just like Santa Rosa, Los Angeles has integrated open space areas into apartment complexes. The GreenSpacesLA organization and Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust (LANLT) have both contributed to creating and revitalizing community gardens and parks in traditionally underserved areas. Finally, similar to San Diego, Los Angeles has also made efforts to construct pocket parks, with the GreenSpacesLA organization creating projects aiming to develop vacant lots across the city into usable green spaces or community areas.

Overall, Morgan Hill can learn a lot from already implemented programs from other cities across California to foster fair access to open space areas to all. Programs such as increasing community gardens or revitalizing vacant lots into recreational or community areas, while inexpensive, can drastically increase recreational and open space opportunities for all residents.

B. Climate-Smart Open Space Ideas

One aspect of open space cities in California are actively working to improve is their climate friendliness and sustainability. Some promising climate-smart open space initiatives are Sacramento's implementation of green infrastructure to reduce urban heat, San Francisco's usage of green stormwater infrastructure, and San Diego's goal to cultivate more native plants and develop new hiking trails to educate the public. All of these different ideas have their own benefits and potential to help improve Morgan Hill's open spaces.

The City of Sacramento's 2040 General Plan introduces their program to install cooling systems or other infrastructure to reduce the urban heat island effect throughout the city. Mentioned earlier, the urban heat island effect is a phenomenon where urban areas become significantly hotter than the surrounding rural areas. This is caused by urban infrastructure such as sidewalks and buildings' lower albedo, the measure of a surface's effectiveness at reflecting solar radiation, compared to that of rural dirt roads or vegetation. Sacramento's Plan reports a wide variety of options for green infrastructure to implement, ranging from trees to reflective surfaces, all which have their own benefits. Trees are a great option because they provide shade, have higher albedo, and will help reduce carbon dioxide in the air. Because a lower albedo means less reflective surfaces, another way to counteract this is by installing more reflective surfaces into cities. This could be incorporated on roofs or pavement to deflect sunlight and reduce heat absorption. One

other possible cooling system that could be implemented are vertical gardens. Vertical gardens allow for plants to be grown upwards instead of requiring the traditional flat sprawl of land. The increased usage of vertical gardens would improve air quality, thermal insulation, enhance biodiversity, while also maximizing land use. An additional factor that could help to reduce the urban heat island effect is the integration of solar panels in park infrastructure. Although solar panels are not cooling systems, they help absorb sunlight, which may in turn reduce temperatures. Solar panels would also provide parks with sustainable energy, cutting back on electricity needs. Sacramento's plans to create cooling systems to reduce the urban heat island effect has the potential to produce many benefits, but comes with uncertainty as there have not yet been successful examples of its implementations as Sacramento is still in the process of executing their plans.

A prominent program proposed by the City of San Francisco's Open Space Element involves updating stormwater infrastructure to mitigate effects of stormwater in urban areas. Similarly with cooling systems, there are a wide variety of eco-conscious stormwater management systems that could be used to reduce the effects of stormwater. A common stormwater management solution is permeable pavements. These pavements use surfaces such as, porous asphalt, pervious concrete, or interlocking pavers, to allow water to pass through them. This reduces stormwater runoff, which in turn helps control flooding, reduces erosion, and decreases water pollution. Another effective green stormwater infrastructure is rain gardens, bowl-like areas that temporarily capture, store, and stop stormwater runoff on-site. The captured water eventually soaks into the ground, reducing pollutants and preventing damage from storms. These are typically used in yards, parking lots, and other urban areas. Rain gardens are very similar to bioswales, but there is one key difference: rain gardens are meant for capturing and temporarily storing stormwater runoff, while bioswales filter stormwater runoff from one location to another. Bioswales are green alternatives to traditional storm drains, as they include sloped and vegetated channels, like a dry creek bed. Within buildings, green roofs could be implemented to help reduce stormwater runoff. Green roofs are a sustainable roofing system where vegetation is planted over a waterproof membrane with many layers. Their purpose is to absorb heat and pollutants, release moisture, and provide cooling. Regardless of the method, the usage of green stormwater infrastructure is sure to benefit Morgan Hill, even if it has yet to be fully implemented in San Francisco.

The Open Space program in San Diego aims to cultivate more local plants, while also paving new scenic trails to educate the public. Growing more native plants will reduce the water usage and the necessity of pesticides, prevent soil erosion, and create necessary habitats and food sources for local fauna. This program encourages the reestablishment of the native ecosystems, further distinguishing the city's unique history and characteristics. In addition, San Diego has also developed new hiking trails to provide more educational opportunities for their community, while improving public health. When paired with increased native vegetation, San Diego's open space preservations will leave lasting impacts on both the environment and future generations.

By educating people in the area, especially young kids or teenagers, these initiatives will create a foundation for future generations to become more eco-conscious. This is incredibly important because without the future carrying on the work of the present, there will be no long-term effect.

The climate-smart open space ideas of other cities hold immense potential to help the city's community and environment and should be used to inspire changes within Morgan Hill. These plans targeted at improving the environment in Morgan Hill will not only help wildlife, but also improve the quality of life of Morgan Hill's residents. By bettering open spaces, they will be more enjoyable for the public and will allow them to connect to nature more easily. This will hopefully lead people to care more about nature and lead to more policies that benefit the environment.

C. Getting Community Input

When working on changes within a city it is important to get input from the community. Because the community are the people living with these changes, they deserve a voice in what is decided. There are many ways to get community input, with some being more effective than others.

In Los Angeles, a method used to gain community input is hosting pop-up information booths at community events or spaces. This is achieved by working with community organizations to allow for simplified engagement with city residents. By making these stands easily accessible by the public, they reach more people, increasing the amount of feedback collected. These in-person displays make staying informed on community initiatives accessible to all regardless of internet access. The addition of one-on-one communication with an educated expert encourages the public to get further involved. This helps to inform the community about their decisions and also promotes changes that directly benefit the community. These stands provide information about the city's plans and allow citizens to give their feedback and opinions. Los Angeles' pop-up stands are a simple way to educate the community.

Another method to obtain community input can be seen in the City of Santa Rosa. Taking a progressive approach, Santa Rosa gets feedback from its community through social media. By utilizing social media, the city can reach a wider range of people faster. They share information using easy to understand phrasing and in multiple languages. This allows more people to stay informed on current city goals and initiatives. Santa Rosa also plans to offer surveys in multiple languages to get input from its diverse community. These surveys will assist in learning what the community wants, allowing city planners to make decisions that are supported by the community. Both social media and surveys are great ways to receive community feedback and inform citizens.

In recent years, the City of San Diego adopted a new point system, the Recreational Value-Based Park Standard, to rate how beneficial their parks were to residents. The system evaluates a park's overall recreational value based on features such as park size, recreation opportunities, access,

amenities, and total visitors. For every 1,000 visitors, a park is awarded 100 points. This program serves as indirect community input by providing quantitative data indicating community engagement and overall community priorities regarding parks. The point system allows for better informed decisions when allocating budgets for park investments, whilst targeting communities most in need of additional resources. San Diego's system serves as a great example of a simple yet effective program to collect the general community's input regarding parks.

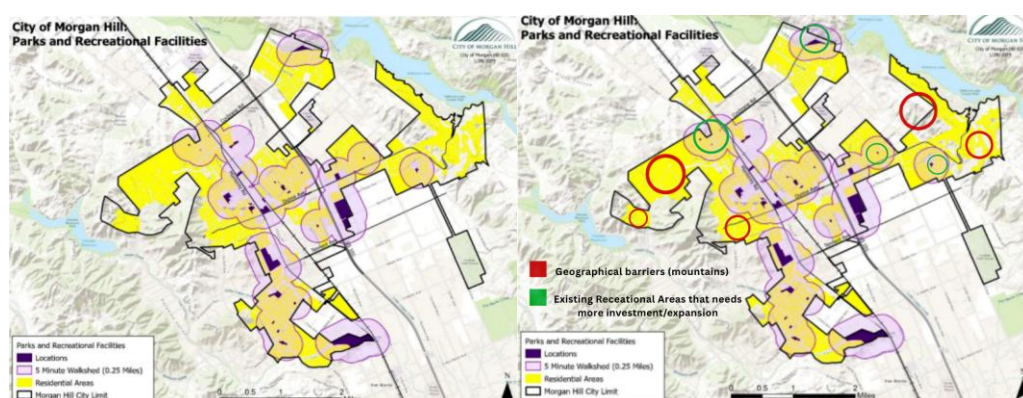
Taking inspiration from other cities' plans and successes on collecting community input is extremely important to developing Morgan Hill's own unique strategy. By adopting aspects of other effective ideas, the City of Morgan Hill will be able to effectively gain input from its community.

IV. Recommendations

Given the significant effect of climate change in marginalized communities documented in various researches and analysis, Morgan Hill should prioritize the following implementations in order to effectively combat climate change and ensure public safety.

Recommendation 1: Increase Park Developments in Underserved Areas

Current data across the City of Morgan Hill shows significant disparities in park access across different communities within the city. To address these inequities, the city should invest in developing new parks and recreational facilities in areas that currently lack adequate green space, while simultaneously expanding or upgrading existing locations where new developments are constrained by land availability or geographical barriers. Specifically, this includes residential areas bordering mountains that limit any recreational efforts. In these constrained neighborhoods, expanding and enhancing existing spaces along with implementing hillside initiatives—such as hill slope restoration and farming are the most viable strategies to improve resident access and maximize urban green space. This approach would enhance both recreational access to diverse communities and environmental resilience in constrained neighborhoods while adding to Morgan Hill’s landscape quality.



City of Morgan Hill & Elevate Morgan Hill. (March, 2025). **Healthy Neighborhoods for All: Background Review Report**. Morgan Hill, CA.

Priority Project: West Cochrane Neighborhood Hillside Restoration

The West Cochrane neighborhood currently represents one of Morgan Hill’s most critical green space deficiencies, with residents lacking access to parks and adequate green space, requiring necessary enhancements to address climate vulnerability (MH Background Review Report 2025). Despite serving a somewhat dense population, this residential neighborhood lacks access to nearby recreation facilities and experiences elevated urban heat levels due to limited tree canopy coverage. Residents in this area must travel over one mile to reach the closest park, creating significant barriers to residents recreational access, especially for those without reliable transportation.

Given the area's proximity to mountainous terrain barriers that limit traditional park developments, the city should optimize spatial resources by establishing hillside restoration programs in the area that include rewilding natural vegetation, introducing terrace farming practices, and investing in existing park expansions. These approaches, when implemented to the West Cochrane neighborhoods, would transform the neighborhood's landscape, replacing desolating slopes into a green, lively scenery with terrace gardens. In reference to SB 1425, this greening would not only reduce urban heat levels but would also create a visually comforting view that enhances community pride. In addition, residents would also gain access to nature trails and green corridors within a walking distance that fosters community engagement and satisfaction with the city's effort to ensure equitability, climate resilience, and rewilding practices, even in communities that lack areas for large-scale conversions.

Recommendation 2: Promote Climate Education

Promoting climate education empowers our communities to better support the environment. Increasing access to accurate, current climate information can provide individuals with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions that benefit local ecosystems. This can be further advanced by raising awareness and integrating climate topics throughout the school curriculum, ensuring that students of all ages understand the impacts of climate change and the importance of sustainable practices. Additionally, collaborating with local organizations and hosting community events can extend the reach of climate education to the entire community of Morgan Hill. Climate education can be enhanced in schools by developing lessons that use visual aids, such as climate-focused videos and textbooks. This approach helps students understand climate systems and their effects on people, ecosystems, and wildlife. Students can then apply this knowledge by engaging in activities like recycling, using public transportation, and planting vegetation to support ecosystems, improve air quality, and reduce stormwater runoff.

Priority Project: Bring Climate Education to Low Income Communities

Low-income communities, like the Nob Hill Trail Park Neighborhood often struggle to get enough information about climate change and how it affects their lives. This lack of education can lead to lower recycling rates, less gardening, and a greater reliance on fossil fuels for energy. Without proper information, people in these neighborhoods may overlook the value of recycling. These areas may also miss out on the advantages of gardening, which can produce fresh food and help the environment. Many low-income households rely on cheaper energy sources that rely on fossil fuels, as switching to renewable energy may be too costly or complicated. We can support communities like the Nob Hill Trail Park Neighborhood by addressing climate change through educational and sustainable projects, such as gardening, recycling, and energy-saving initiatives. Gardening boosts local food production and improves air quality, while recycling helps reduce waste and pollution, protecting ecosystems. Energy-saving programs, like solar panel installations, cut fossil fuel use and lower energy costs. By providing information on energy

efficiency we can inspire low income communities to get involved and make a positive impact on the environment.

There are several ways to effectively engage low income communities in climate action. A key method to spreading climate education is through in-person workshops and events. These programs allow for community members to make personal connections with climate action initiatives, making them more invested and likely to adopt eco-conscious changes. To make these events accessible to the low income community of Nob Hill Trail Park Neighborhood, they must be located in close proximity and preferably reachable by foot. Located at the center of this area, Nob Hill Trail Park, would be an ideal location for climate education. By reducing transportation barriers, the city can strengthen participation and trust. As of 2023, 36.7% of Morgan Hill's low income population identified as Hispanic, many of whom with limited English fluency ("Morgan Hill, ca | Data USA"). To ensure all members of the community have equitable access to climate education programs despite language barriers, the City of Morgan Hill should make continuous efforts to provide Spanish translations to community flyers and surveys. When holding workshops, having in-person translators or bilingual presenters would also create tremendous impact by ensuring that all participants can fully engage and contribute.

Recommendation 3: Infrastructure in Local Parks that Reduce Urban Heat Island Effect.

Throughout Morgan Hill, the urban heat island effect is extremely prominent. High urban heat can cause issues from increased health risks to increased pollution (Tong, et. al.). These issues have adverse effects on the people of Morgan Hill and contribute to climate change. To address this, the city should focus on increasing green cover. In doing so, the city will not only boost the quality of living for its residents but also help reduce the city's carbon footprint. By implementing strategies to reduce urban heat through existing or new infrastructure, the city will be able to decrease temperatures throughout the city. The large variety of cooling systems available allows for versatile and effective solutions that can be catered to each area's specific needs.

Priority Project: Lawrence Oak Shopping Center Area

The Lawrence Oak Shopping Center Area is located off Highway 101. The bustling highway and high traffic nature of the region makes travel on bike or foot difficult, leading the residents to lack access to parks within a five minute walking distance. Because this area houses a commercial center, the region tends to be hotter than others due to its volume of heat trapping roads and buildings and lack of greenery (Wesly, et al.). This could be improved by adding small parks, or by simply growing more native vegetation in the area. The inclusion of green infrastructure, like green roofs or vertical gardens, will improve the quality of life for people in the area and create a cooler environment. A simple park could also help, as it would provide more opportunities for community engagement to people of the area, where Highway 101 makes it hard to access existing parks. Including green features within the park's structure will allow for

the space to be more effective at preventing unnecessary heat storage. A specific project that could be applied is planting more native trees, a simple way to reduce urban heat, or using vertical gardens which can also serve as decoration for shops. Examples of native trees include valley oaks, coast live oaks, western redbuds, and California buckeyes. As the Lawrence Oak Shopping Center Area by nature has relatively higher urban heat with difficult walkability, it would greatly benefit from the inclusion of new green infrastructure or more open space. More specifically, implementing more greenery—such as valley oaks, and coastal live oaks, shrubs, and flowers—along the sidewalks of the shopping center would not only help cool the environment but also enhance the area’s aesthetic appeal. The space is also notably filled with an excessive amount of unused parking lots. Thus, pockets of the shopping center’s parking lots that are unused could be replaced with green space would be a contributing factor to preventing the area’s heat trapping. Finally, creating additional sidewalks that connect nearby neighborhoods and Downtown to the Lawrence Oak Shopping Center would improve walkable access for the community, thereby reducing car-related CO₂ emissions.

Recommendation 4: Increase Access to Open Space Areas

Fair community access to open space and recreational areas is one of the biggest challenges of their implementation. Oftentimes, unpredictable circumstances will result in large areas of cities lacking access to open space. While Morgan Hill has a large number of open spaces and recreational parks for residents, there still exist parts of the city living further than a walkable distance away from a park. A recommended solution to address this issue is the development of new parks in lacking areas, specifically pocket parks similar to those made in San Diego. This increase in access to open spaces would benefit both the city and its citizens. By revitalizing old abandoned lots and turning them into community and recreational areas such as pocket parks, the overall image of the city of Morgan Hill would be improved. More importantly, the greater amount of open space elements would positively impact the community as a whole. With open space areas within walking distance of all residents, communities would be able to form closer connections, while also promoting healthy and fun activities, simultaneously ensuring fair access.

Priority project: Cochrane Shopping Center Vacant Lot/Other Vacant Lots

The Cochrane Shopping Center is located beside Highway 101, near a large residential area with no access to open spaces within walking distance. In this shopping center, most notably to the north of the Target, there is a large vacant undeveloped lot. This would be an ideal area to develop a pocket park/community area. This space would serve the surrounding underserved community that is currently without a local open space area. The creation of some base level park or community area infrastructure could allow for the surrounding community to come together and have a fun place to play and meet. For instance, the development of pocket parks could include shade to block the sun during the summer months, recreational elements such as

slides and games like Jenga or chess for people to play, as well as seating areas or benches where visitors rest and spend time. Another possibility could be establishing planting greens, or even creating a community garden with educational elements. These additions would make the park usable for all community members since they include elements for every kind of person. This pocket park would also be easily accessible for both people in the underserved neighborhood and people visiting the shopping center. A significant advantage of pocket parks is its ease of implementation. This same idea could be easily replicated in other underserved communities with an available open lot. This change to an otherwise abandoned area can create major impacts to a community. The establishment of pocket parks would provide residents a shared and welcoming space where they can gather, socialize, and build relationships, thus strengthening community cohesion. The creation of such parks also can help promote social equity by ensuring that all residents, regardless of income or background, have access to the benefits of the green public spaces. Another major benefit of this change includes a contribution to improved air quality, reduced urban heat island effects, and enhanced local biodiversity. Finally, these enhancements would optimize land use by converting vacant areas into functional public spaces, thereby both beautifying and improving the character of the community.

V. Conclusion: Why This Matters

A. Benefits for Morgan Hill's Community

Overall, the recommendations mentioned in this report aim to improve both the environment and the lives of Morgan Hill's residents. The adoption of these projects will yield lasting benefits in public health, environmental quality, social life and economic opportunities, increasing the general quality of life in Morgan Hill.

Increased access to public parks and recreational activities removes major barriers such as, cost, accessibility, and convenience from exercising. With opportunities to exercise widely available, citizens are more likely to partake in physical activities. Research recommends at least 150 minutes of exercise a week for adults. Without adequate amounts of exercise, individuals are at significantly higher risks of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease (Qiu, Yan et al.). By promoting and increasing opportunities for park usage, Morgan Hill can target areas most affected by these health conditions, allowing for longer lifespans across the entire community.

Increasing Morgan Hill's open spaces by cultivating more native vegetation will bring a whole range of improvements to the city's overall environmental quality. One such improvement is cleaner air. With more native drought-tolerant plants and ground cover, soil erosion and wildfires will be minimized, decreasing air particulate matter in the city. Plants can also capture carbon dioxide, offsetting greenhouse emissions (Davitt). These features will inevitably also reduce asthma rates in Morgan Hill.

The creation of new open space programs will also bring new economic opportunities to the city of Morgan Hill. As community amenities increase, Morgan Hill becomes a more attractive sought after location, boosting property values across the city (Scisco). This will increase tax revenues for the city, further funding future improvements for open space elements and other pressing issues. New city construction of open space projects will also provide jobs for city locals, helping individuals in the community.

Finally, parks are the core of communities as they provide gathering spaces. By investing in parks, the City of Morgan Hill brings people together for recreation, promoting a sense of community within their diverse city. This social aspect of parks dramatically improves residents' well-being and life satisfaction as it creates a dedicated space to meet and interact with community members. Parks are also often community event venues, supporting local traditions, promoting cultural exchanges, and overall fostering happier communities.

B. Call to Action

Recognizing open space projects as essential infrastructure is key to improving Morgan Hill. To achieve this, all parts of the community must get involved.

Students of all ages can contribute in various ways. An example is by participating in community events like park clean ups. These events require no age requirement to ensure that Morgan Hill's parks and open spaces can function optimally and bring benefits to its community. Another opportunity to create change in the city is to join youth groups like Morgan Hill's Youth Climate Action Team, an organization reaching across Silicon Valley dedicated to empowering young adults to fight against climate change through project-based learning on climate policies.

The next step for Morgan Hill's city government is to determine their main priorities for Morgan Hill's Open Space Element based on public recommendations. This will allow for the prioritization of programs best suited for Morgan Hill's needs and develop a long-term, actionable plan for future open space developments. This will not be a simple process as there are many considerations and factors that contribute to city projects to ensure maximum community benefit.

Lastly, everyone can create change and promote open space elements by simply utilizing Morgan Hill's existing parks to demonstrate appreciation and demand for open spaces. By using these public facilities, residents are able to show the city government the importance and value the parks carry, encouraging continued support and future development of new open spaces programs.



Natural Resources & Environment Element Update

Planning Commission
November 11, 2025



Why are we doing this?

Senate Bill 1425 (Advancing Climate Resilience through Open Space Updates)

- Equitable access to open space, considering social, economic, and racial equity.
- Climate resilience and other co-benefits of open space.
- Rewilding opportunities to preserve and enhance natural ecosystems.
 - To preserve, enhance, and expand an integrated network of open space to support beneficial uses, such as habitat, recreation, natural resources, historic and tribal resources, water management, and aesthetics, and establishing a natural communities conservation plan to provide for coordinated mitigation of the impacts of new development.
- Update Open Space Element by January 1, 2026.

Senate Bill 1425 (Advancing Climate Resilience through Open Space Updates)

Equity

- SB 1425 mandates equitable planning for open spaces.
- Coordination of policies with draft Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element.
- Improve opportunities for physical activity for Opportunity Neighborhoods.
- Detailed data analysis and inclusive and innovative outreach to best meet the community's needs and desires.
 - Achieved jointly through Healthy Neighborhoods for All.

Senate Bill 1425 (Advancing Climate Resilience through Open Space Updates)

Climate Resilience

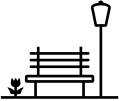
- Support the management of open space to provide nature-based solutions to the climate crisis.
- Reduction of short- and long-term risks from climate hazards such as extreme heat, wildfire, flooding.
- Coordination of policies with Safety, Services, and Infrastructure Element.
- Reduce heat locally, improve health outcomes, manage wildfire and landslide threats.

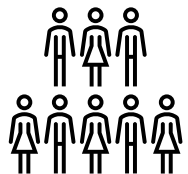
Senate Bill 1425 (Advancing Climate Resilience through Open Space Updates)

Rewilding

- Ensure habitat connectivity that may span multiple jurisdictions, regions, or even states.
- Protecting or restoring large areas of connected habitat.
- Coordination of policies with City and Neighborhood Form Element.
- While rewilding necessarily occurs at very large scales, city- and county-scale planning can address important portions of large-scale rewilding goals.

Summary of Engagement

	# of events		# of people engaged
	6	Pop-Up Events	176
	23	Community Events	577
	27	Visioning Workshops	749
	3	iMorgan Hill Prospera!	27



**59 events reaching a total of 1,529
community members**



Community Engagement

Key Issues

- Concerns about traffic-related pollution and the need for more green space.
- Need for affordable recreation and expanded park access.
- More trees and green spaces are needed to improve air quality and overall environmental health.
- Community members expressed the need to have closer parks, parks for all abilities, and ages.
- Public park facilities in Opportunity Neighborhoods are limited.
- Trails to schools.

Open Space, Hillsides, and Scenic Features

GOAL NRE-1 Preserve, enhance, and equitably expand open space areas and natural features in Morgan Hill to support ecological health, climate resilience, cultural identity, and access for all residents ~~Preservation of open space areas and natural features.~~

- **Policy NRE-1.1 Natural Features.** Preserve and restore outstanding natural features, such as the skyline of a prominent ~~hill~~ ridgelines and rock outcroppings, by integrating them into ecological corridors and climate-resilient landscapes.
- **Policy NRE-1.2 Large Open Space Areas.** Work with the County, the Open Space Authority, appropriate conservancy organizations and land trusts, and property owners to preserve large open space areas, such as agricultural lands and outdoor recreation areas, to conserve natural resources and retain the City's unique identity. Prioritize partnerships in areas that provide floodplain resilience, urban heat mitigation, or biodiversity co-benefits.

Open Space, Hillsides, and Scenic Features

- **Policy NRE-1.3** **Designated Open Space.** ~~Maintain land~~ Connect designated as “Open Space” lands on the Morgan Hill General Plan Land Use Map (Figure CNF-3), ~~in accordance with Measure C, through fiscal year 2019/20~~ through expanded trail networks and pedestrian infrastructure to improve connections between homes, schools, parks and public services, with attention to safety and accessibility.
- **Policy NRE-1.4** **South County Open Space.** Preserve and maintain the wide variety of open spaces in the South County; including greenbelt areas, parks, and agricultural uses (South County Joint Area Plan 16.00). Promote interjurisdictional efforts to address equitable park access and rewilding opportunities in South County open spaces.
- **Policy NRE-1.6** **Open Space Preservation Tools.** Use a variety of open space preservation tools to protect open space, including public acquisition, land use regulation, urban development policy, economic incentives to landowners, open space easements, transfer of development rights, planned cluster development, assessment districts, and dedication of additional lands upon development (South County Joint Area Plan 16.17). Incorporate equity-based prioritization tools and incentives to support open space preservation in Opportunity Neighborhoods identified in the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element.

Open Space, Hillsides, and Scenic Features

- **Policy NRE-1.10 Wetland Delineation and Mitigation.** Require wetland delineation, ~~and~~ mitigation, and long-term enhancement measures—including native species planting, flood storage functions, and community access—during as part of the environmental review of future land development applications.
- ~~**Policy NRE-1.11 Wetlands Enhancement.** Encourage enhancement of sensitive wetlands as part of future development.~~
- **Policy NRE-1.11 Prioritize Open Space within Opportunity Neighborhoods.** Prioritize the siting of open space, new parks, and recreation facilities within Opportunity Neighborhoods that support physical health.
- **Action NRE-1.E Inclusive Parks and Open Space.** Design new parks and open space to be inclusive, equitable, and accessible for all ages, abilities, and cultural needs, while transforming existing parks to accommodate the recreational needs of all users.

Open Space, Hillsides, and Scenic Features

- **Action NRE-1.F** **Equitable Open Space Access.** Ensure an equal distribution of parks and park amenities within the City; strive to achieve a goal that all homes within Opportunity Neighborhoods – as identified in the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element – are within one-quarter mile walking distance of at least one usable park and/or open space with amenities.
- **Action NRE-1.G** **Equitable Access to Healthy Food.** Support community gardens, cultural easements, and urban farms in open space plans, especially in food deserts and Opportunity Neighborhoods, to improve food access and community cohesion.
- **Action NRE-1.H** **Culturally Significant Landscapes.** Incorporate art, signage and programming that reflect the languages, traditions and identities of local communities, and protect culturally significant landscapes in open space planning.
- **Action NRE-1.I** **Rewilding and Open Space.** Incorporate rewilded areas into open space networks that provide passive recreation, nature interpretation, and educational opportunities, while preserving ecological integrity.
- **Action NRE-1.J** **Indigenous Ecological Knowledge Integration.** Collaborate with Indigenous communities to incorporate traditional stewardship practices and cultural interpretation into open space management.

Greenbelts

GOAL NRE-3 A stable, long-term City boundary reinforced by a greenbelt.

- **Policy NRE-3.1** **Greenbelt as a Community Separator.** Maintain a greenbelt to separate the northern and southern boundaries of the City from surrounding rural lands and the urbanized areas of San Jose and San Martin, using rewilded landscapes to define urban edges, prevent leapfrog development, and reduce infrastructure strain.
- **Action NRE-3.K** **Habitat Connectivity and Landscape Resilience.** Connect fragmented open spaces using greenways, easements, and habitat corridors, focusing on key linkages for wildlife movement across jurisdictional boundaries.

Biological Resources

GOAL NRE-6 Protection of native plants, animals, and sensitive habitats.

- **Policy NRE-6.8** **Community-Led Rewilding.** Support community-driven restoration of native ecosystems, including on underutilized city parcels, through grants and technical assistance.
- **Action NRE-6.B** **Small-Scale Rewilding.** Incorporate pocket parks, vacant lots, utility corridors, and roadside medians, where appropriate, into rewilding strategies that expand habitat connectivity and green infrastructure within urban areas.
- **Action NRE-6.C** **Ecological Rewilding.** Encourage native vegetation, pollinator gardens, and green roofs that provide ecological benefits while improving air quality, shading, and stormwater management.
- **Action NRE-6.D** **Connected Rewilding Sites.** Connect small-scale rewilded sites to larger open space and habitat corridors, ensuring that urban ecological restoration contributes to regional climate resilience and biodiversity goals.

Climate Change

GOAL NRE-15 An adaptive and resilient community that responds to climate change.

- **Policy NRE-15.13** **Climate-Responsive Open Space Planning.** Integrate urban greening, native landscaping, and natural buffers into open space planning to mitigate heat, support biodiversity, and reduce wildfire risk.
- **Policy NRE-15.14** **Urban Heat.** Use parks and open spaces as tools to reduce the urban heat island effect, especially in Opportunity Neighborhoods and heat-vulnerable communities.
- **Action NRE-15.B** **Green Infrastructure.** Integrate green infrastructure at larger and small scales in urban areas, such as tree canopy, bioswales, and native habitats, improving air quality, stormwater management, and mental health.
- **Action NRE-15.C** **Multi-Benefit Ecosystems.** Integrate rewilding into green infrastructure plans, leveraging native vegetation to provide shade, cooling, carbon sinks, and erosion control.

Climate Change

GOAL NRE-15 An adaptive and resilient community that responds to climate change.

- **Action NRE-15.D** **Climate Resilience.** Restore degraded ecosystems with high potential for rewilding, prioritizing lands that can support biodiversity, aquifer recharge, and long-term ecosystem recovery, thereby combating climate change.
- **Action NRE-15.E** **Climate Education.** Support environmental education and youth engagement programs that connect Opportunity Neighborhoods with nature and green careers.
- **Action NRE-15.F** **Urban Heat Mitigation.** Increase urban tree canopy, shaded areas, and open space within heat-vulnerable communities, especially in Opportunity Neighborhoods, to mitigate extreme heat and improve health outcomes, prioritizing heat exposed sidewalks, transit stops, parks, and multi-family housing.

Natural Resources & Environment Element Update

Recommendation

1. Open/Close Public Hearing; and
2. Adopt Resolution recommending City Council approval of an amendment to the Natural Resources and Environment Element of the Morgan Hill 2035 General Plan.

Questions?



Actualización del elemento de Recursos Naturales y Medio Ambiente

Planning Commission
11 de noviembre de 2025



¿Por qué hacemos esto?

Proyecto de Ley del Senado 1425 (Promoción de la resiliencia climática a través de actualizaciones de espacios abiertos)

- Acceso equitativo a los espacios abiertos, considerando la equidad social, económica y racial.
- Resiliencia climática y otros beneficios colaterales de los espacios abiertos.
- Oportunidades de restauración de ecosistemas para preservar y mejorar los ecosistemas naturales.
 - Preservar, mejorar y ampliar una red integrada de espacios abiertos para apoyar usos beneficiosos, como hábitat, recreación, recursos naturales, recursos históricos y tribales, gestión del agua y estética, y establecer un plan de conservación de comunidades naturales para proporcionar una mitigación coordinada de los impactos de los nuevos desarrollos.
- Actualizar el elemento Espacio Abierto antes del 1 de enero de 2026.

Proyecto de Ley del Senado 1425 (Promoción de la resiliencia climática a través de actualizaciones de espacios abiertos)

Equidad

- El proyecto de ley SB 1425 exige una planificación equitativa de los espacios abiertos.
- Coordinación de políticas con el borrador del elemento de Barrios Saludables para Todos.
- Mejorar las oportunidades para la actividad física en los barrios con oportunidades.
- Análisis detallado de datos y un enfoque inclusivo e innovador para satisfacer mejor las necesidades y deseos de la comunidad.
 - Logrado conjuntamente a través de Barrios Saludables para Todos.

Proyecto de Ley del Senado 1425 (Promoción de la resiliencia climática a través de actualizaciones de espacios abiertos)

Resiliencia climática

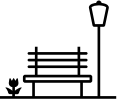
- Apoyar la gestión de espacios abiertos para proporcionar soluciones basadas en la naturaleza a la crisis climática.
- Reducción de los riesgos a corto y largo plazo derivados de peligros climáticos como el calor extremo, los incendios forestales y las inundaciones.
- Coordinación de políticas con el elemento de Seguridad, Servicios e Infraestructura.
- Reducir el calor localmente, mejorar los resultados de salud, gestionar las amenazas de incendios forestales y deslizamientos de tierra.

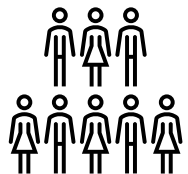
Proyecto de Ley del Senado 1425 (Promoción de la resiliencia climática a través de actualizaciones de espacios abiertos)

Reconstrucción

- Garantizar la conectividad del hábitat que puede abarcar múltiples jurisdicciones, regiones o incluso estados.
- Proteger o restaurar grandes áreas de hábitat conectado.
- Coordinación de políticas con el elemento de formulario de la ciudad y el vecindario.
- Si bien la restauración de ecosistemas ocurre necesariamente a gran escala, la planificación a nivel de ciudad y condado puede abordar aspectos importantes de los objetivos de restauración de ecosistemas a gran escala.

Resumen del compromiso

	# de eventos		# de personas comprometidas
	6	Eventos emergentes	176
	23	Eventos comunitarios	577
	27	Talleres de visión	749
	3	¡Morgan Hill Prospera!	27



59 eventos que alcanzaron un total de 1,529 miembros de la comunidad



Participación comunitaria

Cuestiones clave

- Preocupación por la contaminación relacionada con el tráfico y la necesidad de más espacios verdes.
- Necesidad de recreación asequible y mayor acceso a los parques.
- Se necesitan más árboles y espacios verdes para mejorar la calidad del aire y la salud ambiental en general.
- Los miembros de la comunidad expresaron la necesidad de tener parques más cercanos, parques para todas las capacidades y edades.
- Las instalaciones de parques públicos en los barrios de oportunidades son limitadas.
- Senderos hacia las escuelas.

Espacios abiertos, laderas y elementos paisajísticos

OBJETIVO NRE-1 Preservar, mejorar y ampliar equitativamente las áreas de espacios abiertos y los elementos naturales en Morgan Hill para apoyar la salud ecológica, la resiliencia climática, la identidad cultural y el acceso para todos los residentes ~~Preservación de espacios abiertos y elementos naturales.~~

- **Política NRE-1.1** **Características naturales.** Preservar y restaurar rasgos naturales excepcionales, como el horizonte de un prominente ~~colina~~ crestas and rock y afloramientos rocosos, integrándolos en corredores ecológicos y paisajes resilientes al clima.
- **Política NRE-1.2** **Grandes áreas de espacios abiertos.** Colaborar con el Condado, la Autoridad de Espacios Abiertos, las organizaciones de conservación y los fideicomisos de tierras pertinentes, y los propietarios para preservar grandes áreas de espacios abiertos, como tierras agrícolas y áreas de recreación al aire libre, para conservar los recursos naturales y mantener la identidad única de la Ciudad Priorizar las alianzas en áreas que proporcionen resiliencia a las llanuras aluviales, mitigación del calor urbano o beneficios colaterales para la biodiversidad.

Espacios abiertos, laderas y elementos paisajísticos

- **Política NRE-1.3** **Espacio abierto designado.** ~~Mantener la tierra~~ Conectar designado como “Espacio abierto” tierras en el Mapa de Uso de Suelo del Plan General de Morgan Hill (Figura CNF-3) ~~, de conformidad con la Medida C, hasta el año fiscal 2019/20 mediante la ampliación de las redes de senderos y la infraestructura peatonal, se mejorarán las conexiones entre viviendas, escuelas, parques y servicios públicos, prestando atención a la seguridad y la accesibilidad.~~
- **Política NRE-1.4** **Espacio abierto del sur del condado.** Preservar y mantener la amplia variedad de espacios abiertos en el sur del condado; incluyendo áreas de cinturón verde, parques y usos agrícolas (Plan Conjunto del Área del Sur del Condado 16.00). Promover los esfuerzos interjurisdiccionales para abordar el acceso equitativo a los parques y las oportunidades de restauración de ecosistemas en los espacios abiertos del sur del condado.
- **Política NRE-1.6** **Herramientas para la preservación de espacios abiertos.** Utilizar una variedad de herramientas de preservación de espacios abiertos para proteger los espacios abiertos, incluyendo la adquisición pública, la regulación del uso del suelo, la política de desarrollo urbano, los incentivos económicos para los propietarios de tierras, las servidumbres de espacios abiertos, la transferencia de derechos de desarrollo, el desarrollo planificado en grupos, los distritos de evaluación y la dedicación de tierras adicionales al momento del desarrollo (Plan Conjunto del Área del Condado Sur 16.17). Incorporar herramientas e incentivos de priorización basados en la equidad para apoyar la preservación de espacios abiertos en los Barrios de Oportunidad identificados en el Elemento de Barrios Saludables para Todos.

Espacios abiertos, laderas y elementos paisajísticos

- **Política NRE-1.10** **Delimitación y mitigación de humedales.** Requiere delimitación de humedales, y mitigación, y medidas de mejora a largo plazo —incluida la plantación de especies autóctonas, las funciones de almacenamiento de agua en caso de inundación y el acceso de la comunidad— durante como parte del revisión ambiental del futuro tierra desarrollo aplicaciones.
- ~~**Política NRE-1.11** **Mejora de los humedales.** Fomentar la mejora de los humedales sensibles como parte del desarrollo futuro.~~
- **Política NRE-1.11** **Priorizar los espacios abiertos en los barrios con oportunidades.** Priorizar la ubicación de espacios abiertos, nuevos parques e instalaciones recreativas en los barrios con oportunidades que fomenten la salud física.
- **Acción NRE-1.E** **Parques y espacios abiertos inclusivos.** Diseñar nuevos parques y espacios abiertos que sean inclusivos, equitativos y accesibles para todas las edades, capacidades y necesidades culturales, transformando a la vez los parques existentes para que satisfagan las necesidades recreativas de todos los usuarios.

Open Space, Hillsides, and Scenic Features

- **Acción NRE-1.F** **Acceso equitativo a espacios abiertos.** Garantizar una distribución equitativa de parques y sus servicios dentro de la ciudad; esforzarse por lograr que todas las viviendas en los Barrios de Oportunidad —identificados en el Elemento de Barrios Saludables para Todos— se encuentren a menos de 400 metros a pie de al menos un parque o espacio abierto utilizable con servicios.
- **Acción NRE-1.G** **Acceso equitativo a alimentos saludables.** Apoyar los huertos comunitarios, las servidumbres culturales y las granjas urbanas en los planes de espacios abiertos, especialmente en los desiertos alimentarios y los barrios de oportunidades, para mejorar el acceso a los alimentos y la cohesión comunitaria.
- **Acción NRE-1.H** **Paisajes de importancia cultural.** Incorporar arte, señalización y programación que reflejen las lenguas, tradiciones e identidades de las comunidades locales, y proteger los paisajes de importancia cultural en la planificación de espacios abiertos.
- **Acción NRE-1.I** **Restauración de la naturaleza y espacios abiertos.** Incorporar las áreas restauradas a la naturaleza en redes de espacios abiertos que ofrezcan recreación pasiva, interpretación de la naturaleza y oportunidades educativas, preservando al mismo tiempo la integridad ecológica.
- **Acción NRE-1.J** **Integración del conocimiento ecológico indígena.** Colaborar con las comunidades indígenas para incorporar prácticas de gestión tradicionales e interpretación cultural en la gestión de espacios abiertos.

Cinturones verdes

OBJETIVO NRE-3 **Un límite de ciudad estable a largo plazo reforzado por un cinturón verde.**

- **Política NRE-3.1** **Cinturón verde como separador comunitario.** Mantener un cinturón verde para separar los límites norte y sur de la ciudad de las tierras rurales circundantes y las zonas urbanizadas de San José y San Martín, utilizar paisajes renaturalizados para definir los límites urbanos, prevenir el desarrollo descontrolado y reducir la presión sobre las infraestructuras.
- **Acción NRE-3.K** **Conectividad del hábitat y resiliencia del paisaje.** Conectar espacios abiertos fragmentados mediante vías verdes, servidumbres y corredores ecológicos, centrándose en las conexiones clave para el movimiento de la fauna silvestre a través de los límites jurisdiccionales.

Recursos biológicos

OBJETIVO NRE-6 Protección de plantas, animales y hábitats sensibles autóctonos.

- **Política NRE-6.8** **Restauración de ecosistemas liderada por la comunidad.** Apoyar la restauración de ecosistemas nativos impulsada por la comunidad, incluso en parcelas urbanas subutilizadas, mediante subvenciones y asistencia técnica.
- **Acción NRE-6.B** **Renaturalización a pequeña escala.** Incorporar, cuando corresponda, parques de bolsillo, solares baldíos, corredores de servicios públicos y medianas de carreteras en estrategias de renaturalización que amplíen la conectividad del hábitat y la infraestructura verde dentro de las áreas urbanas.
- **Acción NRE-6.C** **Restauración Ecológica de la Naturaleza.** Fomentar la vegetación autóctona, los jardines para polinizadores y los techos verdes que proporcionan beneficios ecológicos al tiempo que mejoran la calidad del aire, la sombra y la gestión de aguas pluviales.
- **Acción NRE-6.D** **Conexión de Sitios de Restauración Ecológica.** Conectar sitios restaurados a pequeña escala con espacios abiertos y corredores de hábitat más amplios, garantizando que la restauración ecológica urbana contribuya a la resiliencia climática regional y a los objetivos de biodiversidad.

Cambio Climático

OBJETIVO NRE-15 **Una comunidad adaptable y resiliente que responde al cambio climático.**

- **Política NRE-15.13** **Planificación de Espacios Abiertos Adaptada al Clima.** Integrar la vegetación urbana, el paisajismo con especies autóctonas y las zonas de amortiguamiento naturales en la planificación de espacios abiertos para mitigar el calor, fomentar la biodiversidad y reducir el riesgo de incendios forestales.
- **Política NRE-15.14** **Calor Urbano.** Utilizar parques y espacios abiertos como herramientas para reducir el efecto isla de calor urbana, especialmente en barrios de oportunidades y comunidades vulnerables al calor.
- **Acción NRE-15.B** **Infraestructura Verde.** Integrar la infraestructura verde a gran y pequeña escala en áreas urbanas, como la cubierta arbórea, los sistemas de drenaje sostenible y los hábitats nativos, mejorando la calidad del aire, la gestión de aguas pluviales y la salud mental.
- **Acción NRE-15.C** **Ecosistemas de múltiples beneficios.** Integrar la restauración de ecosistemas en los planes de infraestructura verde, aprovechando la vegetación nativa para proporcionar sombra, refrigeración, sumideros de carbono y control de la erosión.

Cambio Climático

OBJETIVO NRE-15 **Una comunidad adaptable y resiliente que responde al cambio climático.**

- **Acción NRE-15.D Resiliencia Climática.** Restaurar ecosistemas degradados con alto potencial de renaturalización, priorizando tierras que puedan sustentar la biodiversidad, la recarga de acuíferos y la recuperación ecosistémica a largo plazo, combatiendo así el cambio climático.
- **Acción NRE-15.E Educación Climática.** Apoyar programas de educación ambiental y participación juvenil que conecten a los barrios de oportunidades con la naturaleza y las carreras verdes.
- **Acción NRE-15.F Mitigación del Calor Urbano.** Aumentar la cobertura arbórea urbana, las zonas de sombra y los espacios abiertos en comunidades vulnerables al calor, especialmente en barrios con oportunidades, para mitigar el calor extremo y mejorar la salud, priorizando las aceras expuestas al calor, las paradas de transporte público, los parques y las viviendas multifamiliares.

Actualización del elemento de Recursos Naturales y Medio Ambiente

Recomendación

1. Audiencia pública abierta/cerrada; y
2. Aprobar la Resolución que recomienda al Ayuntamiento la aprobación de una enmienda al Elemento de Recursos Naturales y Medio Ambiente del Plan General de Morgan Hill 2035.

¿Preguntas?