

NATURAL RESOURCES

PALO ALTO LAND USE AND PLANNING (revised 1993, 2007, 2017)

Support of continued efforts toward effective general planning in Palo Alto

OBJECTIVES

Support of:

1. Inclusion of social planning and environmental planning in the comprehensive plan. Social planning should include, but not be limited to: housing, jobs, mixed uses, transportation. Environmental planning should include, but not be limited to: conservation and sustainability (including water resources, air quality, energy,) open space, and geological conditions.
2. Evaluation of physical planning decisions in terms of their effects on people
3. Zoning decisions that include consideration of social, environmental, and economic effects
4. Evaluation of local planning decisions in a regional context
5. Basing major planning decisions on analysis of development alternatives. These alternatives and their probable consequences should be publicized and presented to the public at appropriate stages before final decisions are made.
6. Requiring the effects of allowable build-out to be clearly identified when considering land use and zoning designations
7. Use of interim zoning and moratoriums as mechanisms to restrict development in areas under special planning studies or zoning change consideration
8. State-mandated building codes for energy use and conservation that currently exist for new buildings. City measures to improve codes if they are cost effective. Performance, not specification, should be the criterion for building codes and for performance rating.

TRANSPORTATION (revised 1993, 2007, 2017)

Support of transportation planning measures and actions by the City of Palo Alto that promote efficient flow of traffic, that minimize the use of single occupant vehicles (SOVs), that are designed to provide safe and convenient transportation for motorized vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians, and that reduce greenhouse gases (GHG). The overall transit system should address the needs of mobility for all, be designed to reach employment, educational and shopping locations, and be effectively and efficiently coordinated.

OBJECTIVES

Support of:

1. Measures which will reduce public dependence on automobiles, especially SOVs
2. Public transportation that supports mobility for all, including public and private subsidies, as well as other alternatives to the automobile, with readily available route information.
3. Measures to mitigate local and regional traffic impacts, including, but not limited to, bicycles, ride sharing, Transportation Demand Management (TDM), improved road design, and public transit and public and private shuttles that are integrated with employment, housing and land use
4. Cooperation with other cities and counties in regional and sub-regional efforts to create integrated solutions to land use, transportation, and housing/employment concerns; promotion of a universal fare system and coordinated schedules
5. Design of roads to accommodate all travel modes (motorized and non-motorized)

FOOTHILLS (revised 1993, 2004, 2017)

Support of measures to retain the maximum possible undeveloped land in the Palo Alto foothills with efforts to preserve, protect, and restore landscape resilience, characterized by healthy functioning ecosystems. By foothills, we mean lands between Foothill Expressway and Skyline Boulevard within the City of Palo Alto and the Palo Alto sphere of influence.

OBJECTIVES

Support of:

1. Continued maintenance and enhancement of city parks and open space preserves in the foothills, with retention of their natural characteristics
2. Acquisition of additional public open space as opportunities arise
3. For any public or private project, careful consideration by city planners of the natural hazards of the foothills, such as earthquake, earth movement and fire, and also careful consideration and protection of wildlife and native vegetation
4. Planning and authorization by the city of safe and esthetic road circulation before allowing any development in the foothills
5. Imposition of strict safeguards, such as:
 - a) Mechanisms to insure open space in perpetuity
 - b) Support of cluster development only if it increases contiguous open space
6. Interjurisdictional coordination for foothill planning and management

Opposition to:

1. Industrial parks or extensive commercial development in the Palo Alto foothills and foothill lands within the Palo Alto sphere of influence

BAYLANDS (1976, 1977, 1978; revised 1993, 2004, 2017)

Support of measures to retain the maximum possible undeveloped land in the Palo Alto Baylands with safeguards to preserve and protect the natural quality of the land and with particular emphasis on the impacts of climate change (especially sea-level rise). By Baylands, we mean lands between Bayshore Freeway and the Bay within the City of Palo Alto and the Palo Alto sphere of influence.

OBJECTIVES

Support of:

1. Considering the following factors when planning for the Baylands:
 - a. An understanding of the total ecology of the Baylands
 - b. Impact of sea-level rise
 - c. Effects on the environment
 - d. Geological and other natural hazards
 - e. Possible city liabilities
 - f. Services the city would be required to provide
 - g. The role of the Palo Alto Baylands in the total San Francisco Bay Community
 - h. Economic, environmental, and ecological implications of dredging and recreational development
 - i. Cooperation with relevant regional agencies
2. Preservation of Byxbee Park for passive recreational use
3. Preservation of marshlands as healthy functioning ecosystems, retaining their designation as park-dedicated land
4. Preservation of the flood basin for flood management with secondary uses for habitat preservation and education
5. Use of antenna farm site to serve maximum community benefit

Opposition to: (1977, 2004, 2017)

1. Deposit of dredging spoils on park-dedicated lands
2. Future use of Byxbee Park for commercial recreational facilities or intensive recreational activity

WATERSHED (1968, 2004, 2017)

Support of measures to protect the watershed from sedimentation, erosion, pollution, and flooding.

OBJECTIVES

Support of:

1. Continuation of the city's philosophy which regards our creek beds as a natural asset and the moisture which falls on the hills as a valuable water resource instead of as a drainage problem to be carried as quickly as possible to the Bay, and finds it desirable to maintain our stream channels without excessive erosion and scarring as positive natural open spaces

2. Measures to implement this philosophy and to prevent sedimentation and erosion
3. Assumption of responsibility by the city for ecological and esthetic considerations in erosion and flooding using flood plain zoning, exploration of a linear park concept, and consultation with hydrologists and/or ecologists
4. Flood management projects which approach the 100-year flood level if ecologically and economically feasible
5. Flood management costs borne by the entire watershed
6. Willingness to bear some additional flood management costs to provide for recreational uses, keeping creek beds in a natural state, and beautifying flood management structures, with public access where possible
7. Storm water and runoff measures that minimize pollutants and debris to the Bay

WASTEWATER TREATMENT (2004 - previously part of Watershed Position; 2017)

Support of:

1. Planning for implementation of more advanced sewage treatment which would consider environment, need, economic feasibility, and technological advances
2. Encouraging reclamation and reuse of wastewater
3. Assumption by industry of the responsibility for its special wastes

STANFORD LAND USE (Joint position with LWV South San Mateo County 1974, revised 1997)

The Leagues of Women Voters of South San Mateo County and Palo Alto support area-wide planning to assure uses of Stanford lands that will have a beneficial impact on housing, open space, transportation, and the housing/job ratio.

- I. Support of a range of housing opportunities for University students, faculty, and staff, and those employed on Stanford lands, in relation to the range of income levels.**

OBJECTIVES

Support of:

1. Encouraging Stanford, because of the area-wide shortage of low and moderate income housing units, to:
 - a. meet student demand for on-campus housing
 - b. make additional land available for low and moderate income housing for faculty, staff and employees
2. Careful evaluation of the housing impact of new development (commercial, industrial, and professional), to insure that planning for housing needs accompanies future development. Housing/job ratio should be a primary consideration of rezoning or annexation decisions

- II. Support of adequate open space and recreation facilities in the mid-peninsula.**

OBJECTIVES

Support of these statements:

1. Stanford should be encouraged to maintain open space on a long term basis by a wide variety of measures, such as scenic/open space easements, open space contracts, etc.
2. Lands receiving such tax benefits should be used in ways consistent with preserving open space.
3. Outdoor recreation facilities should be evaluated in terms of regional needs with existing facilities open to the public for recreation as presently designated in the San Mateo County Master Plan.

- III. Support of an interjurisdictional planning mechanism to assure timely and adequate information regarding proposals, public involvement at all stages, and coordinated decision making.**

OBJECTIVES

Support of:

1. An organization with representation by decision makers from mid-peninsula cities, San Mateo County, Santa Clara County, and Stanford
2. An opportunity for public information, public participation and input regarding Stanford's proposals

3. Regular exchange of agendas among government agencies and early notice of proposals to all affected jurisdictions

IV. Support of transportation facilities which minimize the use of private automobiles and encourage a closer relationship between housing and employment.

OBJECTIVES

Support of these statements:

1. Public transportation and other alternatives to the automobile should be encouraged and, where justified, subsidized:
 - a. Coordination of bus scheduling and access across county lines
 - b. Emphasis on transportation facilities serving large groups of people
 - i. feeder lines to north-south transportation routes
 - ii. jitneys in industrial and commercial areas, especially at noontime
 - iii. carpool encouragement
 - iv. bike paths with additional creek crossings.
2. Any changes in the existing transportation network should be reviewed in terms of the following factors:
 - a. Improved safety with priority given to measures other than road expansion
 - b. No expansion or realignment which would have a serious adverse effect on the environment.
3. New developments outside the campus core generating substantial employment should be evaluated in terms of:
 - a. Carrying capacity of existing roads and assurance of availability of public transportation
 - b. Alternative solutions to anticipated traffic, with priority given to solutions not dependent on the private automobile
 - c. Regional impacts.