



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

R-11-114  
Meeting 11-32  
December 13, 2011

## **AGENDA ITEM 1**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

FY2012-13 Strategic Plan/Action Plan Prioritization

### **AD HOC COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Approve the proposed District Action Plan screening and prioritization criteria contained in this report; and
2. Direct staff to utilize these criteria to develop the District's FY2012-13 Action Plan.

### **SUMMARY**

On September 14, 2011, the Board adopted the District 2011 Strategic Plan and directed to staff to start incorporating the Strategic Plan strategies into the FY2012-13 Action Plan and Budget. In order to prioritize the competing workload demands and create staff capacity to implement the Strategic Plan direction, staff identified the District's core functions and prioritization criteria for its activities. Board approval of these items will enable staff to more effectively develop the District's FY2012-13 Action Plan.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Background**

On September 14, 2011, the Board adopted the District 2011 Strategic Plan (R-11-96) which formalized the District's long-term goal of implementing its entire mission well by ensuring balance between the three components: regional open space greenbelt preservation, protect and restore the natural environment, and public access and education. The Strategic Plan includes the following three goals and associated strategies to move towards balanced implementation of the mission:

- Goal #1: Enhance Regional Collaboration – Coordinate our activities with other regional conservation organizations to leverage resources; provide a unified, consistent approach; and maximize our effectiveness on the peninsula.
- Goal #2: Build Public Support – Increase outreach to our constituents to build their support for a regional vision of land conservation and develop a more comprehensive program to communicate with the public.

- Goal #3: Enhance Financial and Staffing Resources – Increase our revenues, diversify our funding sources, and increase staffing in order to be successful in creating greater balance between the three parts of our mission.

At the September 14, 2011 Regular Board meeting, the Board directed staff to start incorporating the Strategic Plan strategies into the FY2012-13 Action Plan and Budget. The first step in this direction is reflected in the FY2011-12 Midyear Action Plan (Report R-11-103) which incorporates the initial planning stages required to begin implementation of the Strategic Plan.

### **FY2012-13 District Action Plan**

Since the Board's approval of the Strategic Plan on September 14<sup>th</sup>, staff has been meeting bi-weekly to identify the activities needed to implement the Strategic Plan and incorporate them into the FY2012-13 Action Plan. Staff has also met regularly with the Strategic Plan Ad Hoc Committee to receive Board input and direction. The challenge has been to determine what activities and Key Projects to defer in order to create the staff capacity needed to begin implementing high priority strategic initiatives consistent with the Strategic Plan. After much discussion, staff distilled the District's activities into three categories:

1. Core Functions – activities that directly or indirectly support delivery of the District's mission.
2. Key Projects – projects that are one-time in nature, lasting one or several years. For FY2012-13, staff has broken projects into two categories:
  - a. Existing Projects – projects that are already underway or have been planned for implementation during the next few years;
  - b. Strategic Plan Projects – activities that relate directly to implementation of the Strategic Plan goals listed above.
3. Unplanned/Unexpected Activities – unanticipated opportunities or issues that require immediate attention.

As staff has communicated in previous Board reports and meetings that in order to implement the Strategic Plan, some other projects and activities will need to be deferred or reduced in scope due to current limitations in staff capacity. Given the many competing priorities, staff discussed the criteria used by departments to determine the relative priority of projects and activities and concluded that the core functions are essentially the reason the District exists and, therefore, take priority over other activities, with the exception of legal requirements and health and safety issues. Attachment A presents the District's core functions by department and Attachment B lists the screening and prioritization criteria used to determine the relative priority of Key Projects and activities, and includes the Strategic Plan as a criterion.

Further information on core responsibilities and prioritization criteria will be presented at the December 13, 2011 Board Study Session.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Approval of the Committee's recommendation is not expected to impact to the District's FY2011-12 Budget. Impacts to the FY2012-13 Budget will be incorporated in the FY2012-13 Initial District Budget Review in February 2012.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. No additional notice is required.

**CEQA COMPLIANCE**

The proposed actions are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and no environmental review is required.

**NEXT STEPS**

Once the Board approves the proposed core responsibilities and prioritization criteria contained in this report, staff will utilize these tools to finalize development of the FY2012-13 Proposed Action Plan and Budget. The proposed preliminary FY2012-13 Action Plan will be presented to the Administration and Budget Committee in January and February 2012 and then to the full Board on February 22, 2012.

Attachments:

1. Attachment A: District Core Functions
2. Attachment B: Screening/Prioritization Criteria

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## **ATTACHMENT A: DISTRICT CORE FUNCTIONS**

### **Core Functions by Department**

This document presents the core functions of the District, by Department. Core functions are defined as the most important actions on which an agency or organization focuses its energies and resources to be most effective and efficient. For the District, this means carrying out those activities that are most critical and necessary to further the District's overarching mission. Well-defined core functions ensure that Departments work cohesively, efficiently, and most effectively to further the District's mission and its priority programs.

By identifying and focusing the Action Plan on core functions, the District ensures that actions critical to the mission are carried out to maximize efficiency and productivity. Also, by identifying core functions, the District establishes a basis for assessing and improving the quality of District services. The delivery of core functions is one of the measures that will be assessed as part of performance standards and to establish and implement best working practices.

#### Administration Department

- A. Provide financial management and accounting services
- B. Administer Human Resources Programs and coordinate employee relations activities
- C. Provide Information Technology services
- D. Provide District Clerk support to the District Board and staff
- E. Provide legal review and advice to the District Board and staff, represent the District in litigation and legal matters with outside agencies, and provide risk management services
- F. Provide office management and public reception/customer service for the Administrative Office

#### Real Property Department

- A. Provide comprehensive land conservation planning and strategic analysis to guide the land purchase program.
- B. Monitor and protect District's property interests (including fee and easement interests)
- C. Manage revenue-producing properties
- D. Create and take advantage of opportunities to conserve the greenbelt, foothills, and baylands
- E. Maintain neighbor, conservation partner and agency relationships

### Planning Department

- A. Plan, design, and implement projects for public access, resource management and staff facilities
- B. Develop and maintain current and long-range use and management plans, policies, and procedures for Preserves
- C. Manage the District Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- D. Comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and all permitting, code, and regulation requirements
- E. Work with other agencies to obtain funding, plan for and protect District and Regional greenbelt use and resources
- F. Engage public and partner agency involvement in planning activities

### Operations Department

- A. Provide in-the-field services to protect and restore the natural resources
- B. Protect public health and safety through enforcement, fire protection, and safe access
- C. Provide visitor services as the frontline “Face of the District”
- D. Maintain and, where appropriate, construct new District trails and facilities
- E. Foster neighbor, partner, and jurisdictional-oversight agency relationships and engage in multi-stakeholder efforts to further District goals

### Public Affairs

- A. Maximize public awareness and understanding of the District
- B. Generate constituent support for District activities
- C. Influence and propose legislation that affects and/or benefits the District’s ability to carry out its mission
- D. Engage the public through programs that educate and involve the community
- E. Collect constituent feedback

# **ATTACHMENT B: SCREENING AND PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA**

## **Project Screening and Prioritization Process**

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) has developed a process that will be used to determine which new potential projects will be considered for implementation and if so, how these potential new projects rank against other projects that are competing for the same available staff and funding resources. This process has been designed to guide the development of the District's yearly Action Plan by focusing the District's limited staffing and financial resources on those efforts that are of most importance to the District and that align with the District's mission, core values, and Strategic Plan.

How it works:

### **STEP 1: Initial Screening**

Each new potential project will first need to be reviewed against Initial Screening to determine whether the potential project is a candidate for further District consideration. The Initial Screening is comprised of following three requirements:

- The project is consistent with the District's mission.
- The project is consistent with District Board policies.
- The project is feasible, affordable and sustainable. If the project contains infeasible elements, can these elements be changed or eliminated.

If the potential project meets all of these requirements, then it moves on to Step 2 to determine how the potential project ranks compared to other competing projects. If the potential project does not meet one or more of the Initial Screening requirements, it is not a candidate for further District consideration.

### **STEP 2: Prioritization Criteria**

The following Prioritization Criteria have been developed to gain an understanding of the relative importance of each potential District Key Project. The Prioritization Criteria provides a tool to help distinguish higher priority projects from lower priority projects. Projects that meet the Mandatory criteria are guaranteed to be added to the final project list. Projects that only meet Level 1 and/or Level 2 criteria are considered and will be ranked based on the results of this process and on other pertinent information and discussions amongst Department Managers, the General Manager, and Board of Directors.

Aside from the Mandatory criteria, this tool is not meant to be absolute, but rather for making decisions on Action Plan projects. For example, projects that are heavily weighted with Level 1 Priority items do not automatically rank higher to projects that carry more Level 2 Priority items since there may be other information not represented here that is of equal or greater importance and also needs to be considered.

### Project Prioritization Criteria

Mandatory	Level 1 Priority	Level 2 Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate opportunity to protect, or threat to regional biodiversity</li> <li>• Immediate regulatory/legal mandate</li> <li>• Immediate threat to public health/safety or the District</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes regional collaboration with a direct public benefit</li> <li>• Opportunity to enhance or address threats to regional trail connectivity in partnership with other agencies</li> <li>• Increases public benefit/support</li> <li>• Increases District financial/staffing resources</li> <li>• Prior formal commitment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future regulatory/legal risk</li> <li>• Opportunity to enhance or address threats to regional trail connectivity using only District resources.</li> <li>• Solely led and implemented by District</li> <li>• Opportunity/leverage (what is gained vs. lost)</li> <li>• Provides internal benefit/support</li> <li>• Future opportunity to protect, or threat to regional biodiversity</li> <li>• Addresses long-term public health/safety</li> <li>• Informal commitment</li> </ul>