



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-15-157
Meeting 15-30
November 18, 2015

AGENDA ITEM 4

AGENDA ITEM

Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis Report and Goals of Staff Facility Planning

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. Receive the Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis Report describing the existing conditions of four main staff facilities and recommended actions.
2. Confirm the Planning and Natural Resources Committee's proposed goals of staff facility planning.
3. Provide input and confirm the short-term, medium-term, and long-term staff facilities recommendations and priority projects.

SUMMARY

With the successful passage of Measure AA in June 2014, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) anticipates increased staff growth agency-wide to effectively deliver Measure AA projects while fulfilling other core functions. Existing staff facilities cannot accommodate the additional staff growth. These staff facilities come with a legacy of deferred capital improvements and retrofits that would require major investments even if they could house the increased staff growth. If left unchanged, the existing configuration and space limitation of staff facilities would significantly impede the District's ability to effectively pursue project timelines. Staff has: (1) evaluated the capacity, constraints, and issues of each facility, (2) evaluated potential alternative sites, and (3) prepared key findings. The Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis Report contains the proposed project goals and an analysis conducted by staff on the District's four main facilities and recommendations on the priority projects that should be the focus on the next phase of work. The Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-16 Budget includes sufficient funds to conduct the tasks associated with this research and retain consultant services.

BACKGROUND

Each of the four District staff facilities has its own history and unique site opportunities and challenges, and they share a central theme—each has been gradually expanded, remodeled, and used more intensely than originally intended and originally designed. This increased intensity of use has been managed over the years, but there are now fundamental constraints at each facility

that would ultimately impede the District's ability to ramp up the staff capacity needed to implement the expanded work program brought on by Measure AA.

Facility	Year Built	Desks and Spaces Available	Estimated number of Desks and Spaces Needed in 2020	Estimated number of Desks and Spaces Needed in 2045	Limitations
Administrative Office	1973	5	34	49	Outdated energy infrastructure (HVAC), class C office space, remodel not effective.
Foothills Field Office*	1993	1	3	3	Located in the middle of the busiest preserve, limited parking and conference room meeting space
Skyline Field Office*	1996	0	8	27	Limited water and parking for staff, need space for equipment maintenance and storage
South Area Outpost*	1930s	0	6	25	Remodeled 1930s house, inadequate septic capacity, locker space, and showers, end of functional life.

*Field staff have different space requirements; the spaces available reflect parking, locker room space, and other constraints. The actual distribution of staff between offices and areas is to be determined. The estimations above illustrate the scale of the challenge.

Proposed goals and an approach for conducting the District-wide Long-term Staff Facilities Study were presented to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) on March 10, 2015 to kick-off the project and ensure that the proposed approach was supported by the PNR before staff proceeded with next steps. The ensuing analysis built upon and updated the existing baseline information that was assembled in 2009 and 2010 during prior facilities analysis work. The Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis Report was presented to the PNR Committee on October 20, 2015 for preliminary feedback prior to a presentation to the full Board.

DISCUSSION

The Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis Report (Facilities Report) is provided as Attachment 1. The November 18 presentation will summarize the report's findings and final recommendations, organized as follows:

I. Goals and Context for Staff Facility Planning

Review and confirm the PNR Committee's goals (page 6 of the attached report); review past facility work and anticipated staff growth to inform the context of planning for long-term staff facilities.

II. Existing and Potential Facilities Analysis

Review each existing staff facility, opportunities and constraints, and possible alternatives to address capacity issues.

a. Administrative Office Area (AO)

i. Administrative Office Complex and Alternatives Analysis

1. Demolish Existing Building and Rebuild On Site
2. Purchase and Remodel a New Existing Building
3. Establish Multiple AO Offices (requires further evaluation of work place policies and organizational structure)
4. Other Alternatives Considered But Not Recommended

b. Skyline Area

- i. Skyline Field Office
- ii. Coastal Field Office (CFO) Alternatives Analysis - Location
 1. Skyline Blvd/ Highway 35 Area
 2. Highway 84 Corridor
 3. Half Moon Bay/Highway 1 Corridor (Preferred)

c. Foothills Area

- i. Foothills Field Office
- ii. South Area Outpost
 1. South Area Office Potential new site off lower Pheasant Road

III. Key Recommendations and Next Steps (end of page 6 of the attached report)

Review and confirm key recommendations informed by the analysis and next steps.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Planning Department's FY2015-16 Budget includes sufficient funds (\$169,000) for tasks associated with the District-wide Long-term Staff Facilities Study. In November 2014, the Board adopted a \$15M reserve for new facilities. The Controller's financial model assumes that the District will spend \$20M on facilities over the next 3 to 4 years, half of which will come out of the reserve and the other half from uncommitted general funds. These expenditures are consistent with the District's 30-year Financial model and considered financially sustainable.

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

This item was presented to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee on October 20, 2015. The Committee provided preliminary feedback on the information provided, requested additional

data, suggested that staff keep all options open, and supported the next step recommendations for each staff facility site and their recommended priority order.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

No compliance is required as this action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Future actions to implement staff facility improvements would be subject to CEQA review.

NEXT STEPS

Following Board confirmation, the General Manager would direct staff to proceed with the recommended next steps for each staff facility site.

Attachments

1. Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis Report
2. Memorandum Re: Greenhouse Gases Modeling and Staff Facilities
3. Memorandum Re: Lessons Learned from Touring Partner Agency Staff Facilities

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Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Date: October 20, 2015

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Executive Summary

Introduction

In 2009, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) began a systematic evaluation of its staff facilities in response to ongoing operational, maintenance, and energy infrastructure challenges. This effort led to the remodeling of space in the Administrative Office and the Skyline Field Office, but deferred major expenditures, such as new buildings, until a later date. Modest growth in staff resulted in additional lease space near the administrative office and a temporary field facility, the South Area Outpost. Since 2009, the District has increased the intensity of use at all of its aging staff facilities while maintaining these facilities in their current condition.

In response to the successful passage of Measure AA in June 2014, the District embarked on a District-wide Financial and Operational Sustainability Model (FOSM) Study that evaluated existing District workflow processes, staff capacity, and organizational structure to identify options for accelerating the completion of high priority projects, including Measure AA projects. Aligned with the FOSM recommendations, which were accepted by the Board in May 2015, the District has and will continue to experience a considerable increase in staff to provide the needed capacity to accelerate project delivery, expand service delivery, and properly manage and maintain new public access facilities and open space properties. The general trend of FOSM implementation will be an immediate and substantial increase in administrative staff to support the implementation of Measure AA projects, an immediate and moderate increase in field staff to support newly opened preserves, and long-term growth in field staff as the focus of the organization shifts from capital project construction into maintenance and land management. All of these increases are projected to be financially sustainable.

Existing District staff facilities are at capacity and can accommodate only minimal staff growth, and if left unchanged, the constraints will significantly impede the District's ability to maintain desired Measure AA project timelines. Each facility has its own history and unique site opportunities and challenges, but they share a central theme—each has been gradually expanded, remodeled, and used more intensely over time. This increased intensity of use has been managed over the years, but there are now fundamental constraints at each facility that will ultimately impede the District's ability to add staff. The age and condition of the Administrative Office and South Area Outpost, in particular, requires major and costly remodeling regardless of the anticipated staff growth. Addressing the infrastructure challenges and limitations in the District's existing staff facilities at the same time as providing space for staff growth represents a significant opportunity for the District.

The District currently operates out of four (4) staff facilities:

1. **Skyline Field Office (SFO)** – Santa Clara County
Includes office, shop, and assorted outbuildings
2. **Foothills Field Office (FFO)** – Cupertino
Includes office, shop, and assorted outbuildings
3. **South Area Outpost (SAO)** – Santa Clara County
Repurposes existing residence into an office

4. **Administrative Office** complex (AO) – Los Altos
Includes a main administrative office in a building owned by the District and two leased office spaces adjacent to main office

The purpose of this opportunity and constraints analysis is to provide a high level overview of the current state and capacity of staff facilities, anticipated staffing growth and functional reorganization, potential concept solutions to accommodate future facility needs, and recommendations as to which facilities to prioritize over the next two to three years. This report includes high-level conceptual alternatives for each facility and analyzes each alternative in light of the proposed project goals, which have been reviewed and revised by the Board Committee, and are now being forwarded to the full Board for confirmation.

Proposed Goals of Staff Facility Planning

The goals of long-term staff facility planning should reflect the Board’s policy decisions and guide staff in reviewing the consistency of a proposal with the Board’s intent. Any particular facilities project will meet each goal at different levels. During an earlier strategic staff facility planning effort in 2012, a number of goals were discussed with the former Ad Hoc Facilities Committee and these goals were reviewed and updated by the Planning and Natural Resource Committee in March 2015 (updates are shown in bold below). These goals provide an understanding of how existing and new facilities should successfully manifest District culture and core values, and create an achievable and cost-effective plan that translates District goals into appropriate staff facilities.

Ranking the importance of individual goals will help provide staff and the Board with a clear framework and understanding to evaluate and implement the facility solutions contained in this report.

Proposed Staff Facility Planning Goals

1. Utilize forward looking and **imaginative** approaches for evaluating and designing each facility.
2. Build in sufficient capacity for the duration of a facility’s expected lifetime (**30 years**).
3. Optimize staff deployment **per FOSM recommendations and how departments and staff will work in the future.**
4. Strive to locate within proximity to public transportation or major thoroughfares.
5. Seek flexible and adaptable options to meet evolving needs.
6. Pursue sustainable design and construction options that are cost-effective.
7. **Consider how new facilities could minimize cost-of-living impacts by their location, especially if they were near transportation corridors.**
8. **Improve the outward facing or public side of facilities, so visitors have a more welcoming experience when entering District facilities.**
9. **Minimize relocation disruption to staff by thoughtful transition planning.**

Key Recommendations

Based on the current and projected rates of staff growth and the lack of capacity at District facilities to accommodate the growth, staff recommends the District pursue and complete two focused facilities projects, the Administrative Office and the permanent South Area Field Office, concurrently within the next three years. Staff also recommends that further evaluation and planning for a new coastal field office begin as well. In addition, staff recommends obtaining the services of a futurist so that external trends (housing, transportation, job growth, etc.) affecting how the District will function in the future may be considered in light of our facilities planning. These recommendations include short-term and medium-term measures to both address immediate needs over the next three years and make progress on longer term solutions that require additional analysis and study. The recommendations below assume that the Committee will provide input and the Board will consider and approve specific project milestones. These recommended next steps are further spelled out into more detailed actions in the following table.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Facility	Immediate High Priority Actions	Medium Priority Actions	Low Priority Actions
Administrative Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FUTURIST – Work with a futurist to understand external trends that may affect the manner in which the District will deliver its mission and how it will develop its facilities. • BENCHMARK STUDY – With a consultant team, complete a quick benchmark assessment on the existing AO property to assess maximum building envelope possible and develop benchmark cost estimate for demolishing the existing AO and constructing a multi-story, minimum 30,000+ square foot building with underground parking. • REAL ESTATE MARKET – Explore real estate market to assess range of cost and site locations for purchasing another existing building as a comparison to building on the existing AO site. • ADDITIONAL LEASE SPACE –Temporarily lease an additional 2,880 square feet of office adjacent to AO2 to accommodate expected administrative staff growth over the next two years – until new office is available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REBUILD ON SITE – If building on the AO site is determined to be feasible, issue an RFP for consultant services to begin design work. • REAL ESTATE MARKET – If building on the AO site is determined to be infeasible, define the operating parameters for a commercial broker to identify suitable lands or buildings in the target real estate market and request Board authorization up to a certain dollar amount for the General Manager to promptly act when real estate opportunities arise. 	-
South Area Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS – With a consultant team, evaluate the programming and feasibility of constructing a new South Area Field Office at the flat open space area near Hicks and Pheasant Roads (Rancho de Guadalupe Area of Sierra Azul). 	-	-

Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

Future Coastal Field Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EXPLORE OPTIONS – Explore options for a Coastal Field Office. Consult with potential partners on the San Mateo County Coast on the suitability and interest for a multi-agency field office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IMPLEMENT – Identify and select a option/office location and proceed with implementation. 	-
Skyline Field Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAINTENANCE/REPAIR – Implement necessary maintenance projects (pave driveway, automate gate, paint water tank). 	-	Pursue building and site modification projects at SFO.
Coastal Area Outpost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MODULARS/TRAILERS – Secure permits to purchase and install modular buildings and trailers to provide temporary staff facilities establish a temporary field office at the Driscoll Event Center site (La Honda Creek). 	-	-
South Area Outpost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MODULARS/TRAILERS – Secure permits to purchase and install modular buildings and trailers to provide temporary staff facilities for the South Area Outpost. 	-	-
Foothills Field Office	-	-	Pursue building and site modification projects at FFO.

Context for Current Facilities Planning

2009 - 2012 Staff Facility Strategic Plan

During an effort between 2009 and 2012 to plan for long-term staff facilities, staff analyzed a range of issues related to strategic facility planning and discussed them with the former Facilities Ad Hoc Committee (whose charge is now performed by the Planning and Natural Resources Committee). Many of the same issues that were discussed during this process apply to current facilities planning. The Committee recognized that staff's productivity and performance depend in part on the right facilities and tools to achieve the District's mission. As the District continues to purchase additional property, more emphasis will need to be placed on having adequate staff capacity to manage and restore the land, and to provide the facilities to support public access. Future land purchases and preserve growth will likely continue to occur predominantly on the coast, a remote area currently without staff facilities. Overall visitor use will likely increase throughout the District's lands given that new public access areas are opening across many different preserves in the north, south, and central areas, e.g. Mt Umunhum Summit area at Sierra Azul OSP, Bear Creek Redwoods OSP, and La Honda Creek OSP on the coast. Moreover, the desire to have "green" District facilities will need to be balanced with achievable and affordable solutions that are creative and achieve the greatest return on investment.

The Committee acknowledged that staff facility planning is influenced by a number of external factors and constraints such as organizational restructuring and growth, a changing socio-economic environment of the Bay Area, cost and availability of new land acquisitions, emerging technology, and new work practices and operational requirements. Unfortunately between 2010 and 2012 and prior to Measure AA, the District was forecasting a long-term and drastic reduction in funding for new land purchases and budget constraints for operating expenses. With these looming forecasts and shifting priorities, the staff facilities work was on put on hold.

Board Committee Goals of Staff Facility Planning

Just a few years later, the District environment has changed significantly with a burgeoning Bay Area economy; housing supply issues (see **Appendices 3 and 4**); a booming commercial and residential real estate market and construction environment; the successful passage of Measure AA and increased District revenues; and implementation of FOSM. Yet, at the same time, many of the assumptions, expectations, and considerations of the prior planning exercise still hold true. The importance of realizing the ideal combination of staff facilities cannot be understated, yet the planning around such efforts cannot miss the critical milestones the District must meet in order to staff up, as recommended by FOSM, for the implementation of Measure AA.

The recent focus on implementing FOSM, expanding staff facilities, and streamlining work processes provides the District with the opportunity to consider new ways of working in a more mobile and technologically-enabled work environment that can facilitate the ability of staff to operate remotely from the field or conduct web-based meetings instead of driving to them. Work area and storage needs will change as the District shifts increasingly towards digital/electronic or online ways of conducting business. The District's Information Systems and

Technology Strategic Plan incorporates these elements, and work space planning will in turn need to accommodate them as part of a functional, workplace setting.

More than ever, facility locations and the competitive housing market are affecting the District’s business model and ability to recruit and retain high-quality staff. The locations of District offices can influence staff’s ability to rent or buy housing, impact staff’s commute time to reach project construction sites, meetings, etc., impact the feasibility of staff to take transit to work, and affect the District’s integration into local communities and ability to leverage collaborative opportunities with other regional agencies, partner agencies and organizations.

While more centralized facilities can create more uniform culture and work practices, distributed facilities can facilitate different processes and ways of deployment that better fit specific regional needs. Distributed facilities can have the potential added benefits of allowing staff to deploy efficiently to work sites, reducing driving time for staff, and broadening housing options. For more discussion and comparison of other agencies’ facilities, **see Appendix 1: Park Agency Facility Comparisons.**

Other forces that will affect the District’s ability to realize its ideal facility plan is the surrounding economy dominated by tech start-ups and tech giants such as Google that are buying properties up and down the Peninsula, reducing commercial real estate inventory, and driving up costs. Real estate negotiations in the current market are challenging and fleeting, and if the District ultimately seeks to relocate any of its facilities, it will be important for the Board to confirm specific parameters and authorize the General Manager to take action quickly.

Projected Staff Growth and Facility Capacity

FOSM recommends significant staff growth ranging between 84 and 104+ positions over the next 30 years. By 2020, FOSM calls for roughly 51 additional positions (34 administrative positions and 17 field positions). By 2045, FOSM recommends an additional 53 positions (15 administrative and 38 field positions). The following table shows the estimated distribution of growth identified as part of the FOSM.

ESTIMATED STAFF GROWTH

Year	Administrative Office Staff	Skyline Area Field Staff	Foothills Area Field Staff	Total Staff Count
2015 Current	70	34	33	137
2020 Projected	104	42	42	188
2045 Projected	119	61	61	241

In addition to accommodating staff growth, staff facilities must incorporate sufficient staff and visitor parking, a larger Board room at the AO, multi-purpose meeting room space, visitor services areas, storage areas, drop-in or temporary work stations, equipment and

infrastructure at field offices, and adequate expansion area for unanticipated growth. To address the uncertainty of staff growth, the FOSM report recommends periodic reassessment of the staffing projections to guide the District. Further, FOSM Recommendation 16 in the report suggests the District evaluate how new projects and acquisitions may affect staffing (both administrative and field) so the Board may consider these impacts before approving a new capital project, opening a closed preserve, and/or approving an acquisition. For the purposes of facilities planning, staff is incorporating a 10% contingency on top of the FOSM-recommended staff levels to allow for potential unanticipated, added growth.

Staff projections become more uncertain the farther into the future the District looks. This is especially true for the Visitor Services and Land and Facilities Departments, whose staffing level is tied to the number of structures, miles of trail, acres of preserves (open or closed), and levels of public visitation. For this reason, this report projects an additional contingency in field staff facilities in accordance with the general trend of long-term growth in operations and maintenance.

Facilities Analysis

General Overview

The AO is the hub for many of the District's centralized functions and infrastructure, and has managed to accommodate changes in technology and staff growth for 20 years. Various remodels have extended the life of the facility and allowed it to adapt to the changing environment over the years. The building has reached its capacity to house the rising number of staff and adequately provide the offices, work stations, and shared common spaces that allow the agency to function, leading to the leasing of additional office space nearby. Other constraints at the current facility include an aging building infrastructure, such as the HVAC system, lack of sufficient Board room space for large meetings, severe lack of storage, lack of meeting room space (including one to hold All Staff meetings), and limited parking for visitors and field staff attending meetings at the AO.

Two lease spaces have relieved some of the pressure, but resulted in departments being further away from one another and affecting the ease of communication and coordination. In less than a year, without additional lease space, the AO complex will be at full capacity. The need to solve the space issues at the AO is at a critical juncture.

Field offices have a different combination of constraints. Desks and offices are needed by administrative staff, supervising rangers, maintenance supervisors, patrol superintendents, and maintenance managers. The growth of field staff requires additional supervisory capacity and associated office space. There are currently no additional desks or office spaces available at the field offices although minor remodeling at FFO can accommodate the supervising ranger anticipated to be hired by the end of the fiscal year. Staff is proposing to buy modular trailers that will provide a necessary bridge for the next few years while lasting solutions are pursued. These moveable buildings may be reused as construction management trailers through the 30 year implementation of Measure AA. Non-supervisory field staff require shared workstations, locker rooms, showers, and storage for equipment and supplies.

Parking is also a significant constraint at the field offices. Over the last 20 years, the District has increased the number of work vehicles and equipment for field staff in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. The District has also increased the number of field staff. The remote nature of these sites requires parking for personal vehicles. Limited flat accessible land is a constraint in many of the District's properties. Another important constraint on new development or increased utilization is the availability of water. A certain amount of water is necessary for using the site but a much greater portion is required by CALFIRE for fire protection. Water and potential other services are limiting factors at a number of potential field sites and at SFO currently.

The split of Operations into two new departments, Land and Facilities and Visitor Services, combined with the growth of the field staff over the next 30 years, from 67 to 122, requires the District to consider new models and deployment of staff. The District is also opening several preserves for the first time and will require increased field staff presence to effectively manage these preserves. The optimal deployment of field staff is an important consideration in where and how much to build for.

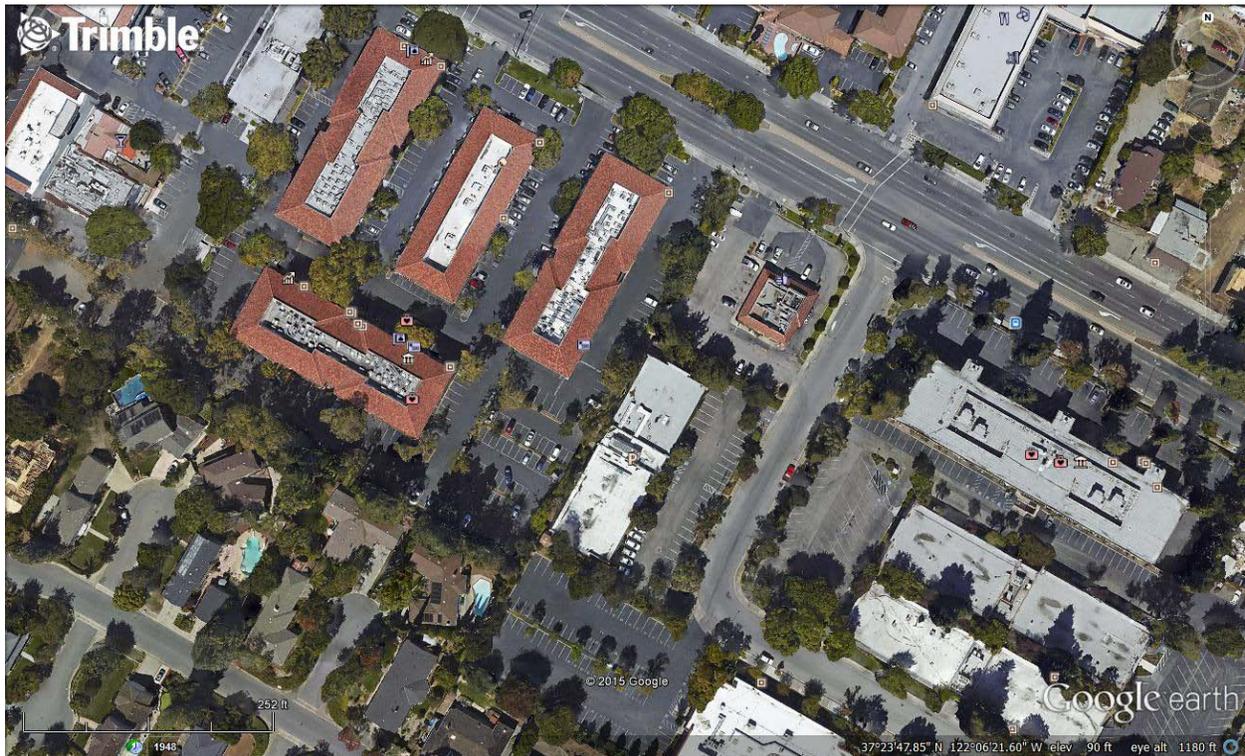
Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

Visitor Services now includes docent and volunteer staff and Land and Facilities will include lease and tenant management. One of the Board's goals in designing new field facilities is to improve the visitor experience. A facility that fully incorporates staff and visitor functions would be a first for the District, but there are examples of similar facilities in other parks agencies. Maintenance and patrol in those cases are often separate from public access to avoid conflicts between emergency response, heavy equipment, and visitors strolling around the park. Interpretation staff, visitor services aides, or even volunteers/docents tend to serve as points of contact for the public at these facilities. **See Appendix 1: Park Agency Facility Comparisons.**



Administrative Office

Administrative Office Complex – Existing Conditions



Fact and Figures	
Location and Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO: 330 Distel Circle, Los Altos – City of Los Altos • AO2: 4984 El Camino Real, Suite 115, Los Altos • AO3: 4984 El Camino Real, Suite 100, Los Altos
Current Staffing	80 FTEs, 5 PTEs, 89 work stations (AO: 63, AO2: 17, AO3: 9)
Site Footprint	AO: 0.83 acres
Existing Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO: 12,000 sq ft • AO2: 3520 sq ft – leased • AO3: 1564 sq ft – leased
Existing Parking Capacity	AO: 44 (8 District vehicles, 34 employee vehicles, 2 ADA)
Construction	AO: 1973
Upgrades Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successive interior remodels of AO since 1992 • 2008-2009 kitchen, Planning Department wing, and server room

AO Discussion

The District houses its administrative staff in three locations. Despite the addition of two leased office spaces, work station space at the AO complex is nearing capacity with only five (5) stations remaining. At the current rate of hiring and recruiting to implement FOSM recommendations and deliver MAA projects, the District will be unable to hire new administrative positions by the end of 2016, a little more than a year from now. Space remodeling of the main work area could add several desks, but would be costly and disruptive and would not accommodate all the administrative positions projected to be hired by 2020. By 2045, the District will need an administrative office that can accommodate almost 119 staff, about twice as many people as the District AO roster in 2009.

A variety of alternatives are available to address the AO capacity issue and a more detailed discussion of each is contained in this report. In summary, they include:

1. Demolish existing AO and rebuild a larger building on site (two floors above ground, two floors of parking below) while temporarily leasing elsewhere for at least two years.
2. Purchase and remodel an office building in the Palo Alto/East Palo Alto-Sunnyvale area to accommodate all of the administrative staff.
3. Continue to lease additional office space (not recommended).
4. De-centralize administrative functions and relocate some AO staff to field offices (not recommended).

AO Recommendations

- Complete a benchmark feasibility analysis to establish the maximum development potential of the current AO site and associated benchmark level cost.
- Simultaneously research real estate market conditions for existing buildings to purchase and remodel. Seek comparable buildings recently sold in the area.
- Compare potential costs, goals achieved, and return on investment of both options and decide which option to pursue.

AO Alternatives Analysis

AO Alternative 1: Demolish Existing Building and Rebuild On Site

Constraints	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary disruption to staff and business continuity (including IT disruption to <u>all</u> District facilities) • Limited lot size and height restriction • Costly underground parking • Temporary rent of office space for two to three years (potentially \$1M+ per year) while new building is under construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoids uncertainty of real estate market • Custom design new building to fit needs • More effectively accommodate green strategies and infrastructure • Known location that works for current staff, partner agencies, and for access to other District facilities • Better serve the public with a larger Board meeting room that can accommodate most large public meetings

Discussion

Rebuilding at the current location is a reasonable option given that the District already owns the property, which is located conveniently near major thoroughfares and relatively close to the San Antonio Caltrain station. Housing the projected number of staff would require a multi-story building, which would be fully customizable to the District’s needs, and likely several levels of underground parking. A benchmarking feasibility study currently being prepared by a consultant team will quickly determine the maximum square footage allowed by City of Los Altos zoning, the number of parking spaces required, building height limits, and benchmark level costs. This information is typical for developers (the District, in this case) to determine the feasibility of a project on a particular site.

Preliminary findings from the draft benchmark study show that the site can accommodate a three- to four-story building with two to three stories of underground parking. The study will provide more detail and benchmark level costs to inform the District about the feasibility of rebuilding on site. Initial research based solely on rough, order of magnitude, square footage pricing suggest that a new 30,000 sq ft building could cost over \$25M (2015 dollars) including soft costs (consultant fees) and hard costs (construction). The benchmark study will provide more detail that will better define costs and help the District determine the feasibility of rebuilding on site.

The costs of underground parking (\$40,000 to \$50,000 per space), the temporary disruption to staff and business continuity, and the cost of renting another facility to house staff and office equipment/files during construction are considerations. Note that staff is researching the possibility of leasing space nearby at an existing, mostly vacant Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) building across Distel Circle, a more modest move that would minimize impact to staff. The costs and issues of rebuilding on the current site could be offset by the

opportunity to custom build a facility that best meets the needs of the District. In addition, purchasing and remodeling another building elsewhere could result in comparable cost.

Thus, staff recommends that the feasibility and cost of this alternative be evaluated against the opportunities and constraints of navigating the real estate market and buying a suitable building elsewhere that will require additional funds and time to remodel to meet the organization's needs.

Alignment of Alternative 1 with Committee Goals

This option allows the District to custom design a building that suits its needs and goals: a new building can be designed to improve the visitor experience at the AO, utilize a forward looking and creative design, pursue sustainable and cost effective designs, and provide enough capacity for staff through the next 30 years. This option will have no net effect with respect to mass transit options, access to major thoroughfares, travel to and from field offices, commute times, or the cost of living. The parcel appears to be adequate for the number of staff projected to work at the AO in 2045 plus other uses yet to be considered. It is a discrete commitment to a particular building but can be thoughtfully designed to be flexible enough to accommodate how the District's way of doing business may evolve in the future. This option is disruptive to staff, as it will require the temporary relocation of staff, IT server and infrastructure, office equipment and files to another facility or facilities for at least two years and a second move into the completed facility.

AO Alternative 2: Purchase and Remodel an Existing Building

Constraints	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown location and availability (affecting commutes) • Unknown permitting requirements and site restrictions • High property cost and remodel cost • Property cost near transit is known to be high • Need to work with existing building to effectively accommodate green strategies and infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less disruption to staff and business continuity (IT disruption) • Potentially faster implementation that eliminates need to move staff • No temporary rental • Potential to move location nearer to transit or highway • Sell AO site to offset property and remodel cost

Discussion

Buying an existing building with the purpose of remodeling it into a new AO would require navigating and responding rapidly to the volatile and highly competitive commercial real estate market of Silicon Valley. This option is inherently opportunistic in nature and will only be effective and feasible if the Board approves the parameters within which the General Manager and a commercial real estate broker may be authorized to act quickly and bring a specific property forward for consideration.

The District would need to seek a particular size building, which narrows down the inventory of suitable properties, so purchasing a new building will likely result in moving the AO from Los Altos. However, relocating the AO too far from its current location could affect its central access to District preserves and staff retention, particularly if it increases already long commutes. Ideally, this alternative would explore the real estate market in the general vicinity of Los Altos between Palo Alto and Sunnyvale, and would need to improve on the qualities already inherent in the current site, e.g. proximity to existing and future field offices, major thoroughfares, mass transit, public services, etc. In addition, when these properties might become available is uncertain and will likely require a quick response, so staff recommends that the Board provide the General Manager and commercial broker a set of parameters within which to operate, such as:

- Stay in the general vicinity of the current location
- Seek a 30,000+ sq feet office and associated parking
- Focus on buildings that can be easily retrofitted to sustainable design standards and would not require complete demolition and rebuild

Alignment of Alternative 2 with Committee Goals

It cannot be determined yet how this alternative will align with the Committee’s goals, as this depends greatly on the type and design of buildings that come on the market, how easily they can be remodeled to fit the District’s needs, and where they are located with respect to mass transit options, access to highways, and travel to and from field offices. Locating the AO

anywhere within the District's boundary, particularly the Palo Alto to Sunnyvale corridor, is unlikely to have a significant effect on the cost of living due to the high housing prices in the general Bay area. There is an opportunity with this alternative to purposefully seek properties that are closer to the Caltrain corridor, particularly with the 2020 electrification of the Caltrain. If the office were located nearer to transit, staff may find it easier to live further away in areas with a lower cost of living and use mass transit to get to work. However, there is great demand to be near Caltrain, so the costs of buying near transit are considerably higher. In addition, locations near Caltrain tend to have more compact land uses and increased densification of uses, have more traffic and less parking, and can be far from highways, making access to and from field offices challenging. However, if the District desires to manage its carbon footprint and budget, the cost premium of relocating the AO near Caltrain may be worthwhile in light of reduced carbon emissions from reduced commuting.

This alternative has a wide range of cost implications with a recent, preliminary search on comparables revealing ranges such as \$15M to \$30M depending on building age, size, condition and location. After remodeling, the cost could be equivalent or more to rebuilding on the existing AO site. This option is also vulnerable to the whims of the real estate market and what space is available at that time, but it could also have a chance at meeting many of the committee's goals. It is also less disruptive to staff by requiring them to move only once. Maximizing transit options could increase the attractiveness of working for the District and broaden housing options for staff. If a suitable building is found, it could be remodeled and designed to meet District needs.

AO Alternative 3: AO Satellite Offices

Constraints	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown location and availability (affecting commutes) • Challenge to existing business model • Requires changing organizational structure • Cost of long term lease or purchase of additional office space elsewhere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased local presence • Expanded housing opportunities – reduced cost of living • If located with new field offices, geographic work focus

Discussion

A third alternative that will require additional study is leasing or purchasing small, satellite AO offices that may be located in urban centers within the District’s jurisdictional boundary, along transit corridors, or combined with new field offices (see discussion below on the new Coastal Field Office and South Area Office). These satellite offices would allow small groups of AO staff to permanently or temporarily report to a location other than the main AO, relieving the capacity pressure on the main AO and lessening the need for a large, centralized office. Depending how much AO staff they could accommodate, satellite offices could potentially allow the District to remodel the existing AO to improve efficiency and capacity of current work space areas rather than rebuild or move it. However, a remodel of the existing AO might also result in significant disruption to staff particularly if aging, system-wide infrastructure such as the HVAC system or the energy inefficient window system were to be addressed. In addition, since the District would have to lease or purchase AO satellite space, there could be significant costs to long term leasing or purchasing new office space in a competitive real estate market. In contrast, building capacity for work stations into new field offices would be an efficient way to accommodate temporary or permanent AO staff.

This alternative also requires an evaluation of the organizational structure and business model and how they would need to change to accommodate departments or portions of departments reporting to different AO locations. This option may serve the District’s business interests if the location of these offices increases the connection with local communities, government, better integrates field and administrative work cultures, and attracts new employees that might not otherwise be willing or able to work in Los Altos.

Recommendations

This alternative could be a creative solution to solving the capacity issues at the existing AO but because it requires additional thought and analysis, may not be able to remedy immediate space needs at the AO. The services of a futurist would be needed to study trends that may influence the District’s delivery of services in the decades to come and how that may affect the need for a centralized or decentralized AO.

AO Alternatives Considered but Not Recommended

Long Term Leasing

Leasing would be the simplest and easiest measure to provide immediate space for new staff, but it would not provide a lasting solution and would cost the District more over time. More importantly, because the District depends and thrives on the synergistic and networked approach where its departments are continually communicating and coordinating with one another on projects and issues, continuing to maintain separate lease spaces can impede departmental relationships and streamlined project delivery.

Any new lease requires retrofitting the space with new furniture and IT infrastructure as well as moving departments and their staff into a new space. Smaller facilities projects often require much of the same planning and project management that a larger project requires.

Leasing is a pragmatic solution to an immediate capacity problem but it cannot achieve any of the Committee's goals for long term staff facilities in terms of staffing levels in 2045, optimizing staff deployment, encouraging sustainability, improving the visitor experience at the AO, being near public transportation or major thoroughfares, reducing cost of living, being creative and flexible, or minimizing ongoing disruption to staff.

For these reasons, staff is not recommending this option except as a temporary measure if necessary to provide for staff growth while a new office is bought or constructed. Leasing an entire building was not considered due to the inherent impermanence of a rental situation and the high long term cost to rent a space large enough to accommodate the entire AO staff.

Co-location of Administrative and Field Staff

The number of AO staff who could feasibly report out of the existing field offices is currently a small percentage of the entire organization and would likely have little effect on relieving space pressures on the AO. However, staff recommends building capacity for as many drop-in work stations in new field offices as possible for AO staff who may be working in the field on discrete projects, so that future deployments of small numbers of AO staff to those field offices on a temporary or permanent basis remain a possibility. Permanently moving AO staff to field offices will take further evaluation in terms of reporting structures and work policies, and is recommended for future new field offices that can be designed to accommodate a small number of temporary or permanent AO staff.



Skyline Area

Skyline Field Office– Existing Conditions



Fact and Figures

Location and Jurisdiction	21150 Skyline Blvd., La Honda, CA – Santa Clara County, San Mateo County (for septic system only)
Current Staffing	34 FTEs (includes seasonal employees) – maxed out
Site Footprint	1.5 acres
Existing Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Office: 2500 sq ft • Shop: 1100 sq ft • Equipment and Tool Storage: 4300 sq ft
Existing Parking Capacity	45 (25 District vehicles, 20 employee vehicles)
Construction	1996 office, 1930s shop and other auxiliary buildings
Upgrades Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited expansion to parking and driveway resurfacing • Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) unit replacement • Floor replacement

Constraints	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited land to accommodate new facilities or structures • Limited parking with no expansion possibilities • Limited storage space • Limited locker room space for line staff • Limited office expansion for new supervisors • Issues with access road • Requires use permit update and associated costs • Historic structures to work around 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could make minor remodel improvements to improve employee and workplace efficiency • Could add new standalone locker room building • Could add new standalone shop • Could add new equipment shelters • Could revisit use permit conditions

Discussion of Issues

Prior to 1996, SFO temporarily housed field staff in existing ranch buildings. In 1996, a permanent office and yard were constructed to provide for staff growth in the future. Staff also continues to use existing ranch buildings for storage, washer/dryer, and extra locker and shower space. Improvements to SFO were the subject of considerable analysis and discussion by the Board from 2009 to 2012. The original scope of work was limited to a new mud room, replacement and relocation of the heating ventilation and cooling (HVAC) unit off the roof where cold temperatures would cause it to malfunction during the winter, and a new meeting room. Additional facility needs were discovered during the programming phase of the project and expanded the scope of work, but high costs to remodel the 1996 residential style office building led to the consideration of two new buildings instead, a standalone locker room building and a new shop building. Consultation with the County of Santa Clara resulted in a requirement to make substantial and costly infrastructure improvements to the access road and water system. Due to other competing priority projects, the SFO improvements were deferred. In 2014, the District replaced the HVAC system to provide reliable heat to staff during the winter.

Pressure on SFO staff will increase with the passage of Measure AA, implementation of FOSM, ongoing purchases on the San Mateo County coast, and the commitment to provide public access to currently closed preserves like La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve. The programming and use of SFO need to be evaluated in light of these developments and the build out of a new Coastal Field Office.

SFO has enough land to build the new shop, convert the tennis courts into a heavy equipment shelter, and provide the new, detached locker room building in order to maximize site utilization. However, limited parking and a low producing existing well are primary constraints to adding additional staff at SFO. In addition, although the site provides easy access to preserves along Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard), it is far from coastal San Mateo County, where future land acquisition is expected to occur, and La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve, which is due to open in a couple years with its associated patrol and maintenance requirements. A coastal field office will become necessary to manage the land.

Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

Any major improvements to SFO will first need to take into account for what role a coastal field office will play to accommodate staff growth and what each facility will need to contribute to the overall Skyline and coastal area. As such, staff recommends that long term plans for SFO be folded into that process and coupled with the development of a coastal field office, so that they may complement one another.

Discrete maintenance and repair projects, such as repairing the driveway, painting the water tank, and automating the entrance gate, should be undertaken in the short term, as none of these projects would be made redundant by future long term improvements. In addition, a locker room/shower trailer could also be placed on site to temporarily accommodate a small increase in staff while long term plans are developed for SFO and the coastal field office.

Recommendations

- Focus on short term repair and maintenance work at SFO.
- Pursue a temporary field office at the Driscoll Event Center to allow for modest staff growth.
- Consider long term options for the coastal field office first, but also evaluate with SFO to maximize field staff deployment and organization for both offices.

Temporary Coastal Area Outpost Site – Driscoll Event Center

Fact and Figures	
Location and Jurisdiction	5460 La Honda Road (Hwy 84) La Honda – San Mateo County
Site Footprint	7 acres
Parcel Size	12 acres
Zoning	Resource Management – Scenic Corridor – Not Coastal Zone
Special Considerations	San Mateo County Coastal Annexation Area

Constraints	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring-fed water system needs to be improved • Other existing and as yet undetermined future uses (equestrian, ranch, agriculture) • Limited housing or services nearby • Future site planning process to be undertaken to address long-term public uses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large area of flat land • Near increased public visitation (La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve) • On-site presence • Potential for multiple site uses (patrol, maintenance, public, events).

Discussion

In 2013, the District entered in a Lease and Management Agreement with POST for the Driscoll Event Center property, including the use for livestock, equestrian, rodeo, and other similar agricultural and environmental uses. The District purchased the property in July, 2015 and continued the “Event Center Facilities Use Agreement” until “long term uses” are identified through a future site planning process (R-15-101). The Board report described the long term and master plan considerations for the property:

“Event Center: Concurrent to studying new use patterns, the District will compile information on the type and frequency of events at the Event Center and determine if any changes are warranted. The District will also consider other possible uses for the Event Center such as public staging to access Preserve trails, a satellite field office to better serve the Coastside area, and additional natural resource protection of San Gregorio Creek.”

An existing office in poor condition and a staging area (roughly 0.33 acres), located on the eastern end of the property, could serve as the site of a temporary satellite office for the Skyline area while a permanent solution for a coastal field office is explored. Another unused area includes the barn and and butler building that would have same benefits. The use of these areas would not interfere with the two events planned for 2015 and five to six events currently planned for 2016 (maximum is eight). Long term planning would need to evaluate the site’s continued use as agricultural event space and potential use for public parking area. A full build out of the site for a field office and corporation yard may be incompatible with the use as event space. Staff’s initial analysis suggests this site should be studied as potential, permanent location for a coastal field office. In the mean time, a modular office with locker room, shower, and restrooms could provide enough space for a contingent of patrol staff.

Alignment of Alternative with Committee Goals

This project will help optimize the deployment of field staff and provide the time needed to site and plan for the District’s first permanent coastal staff facility. This site is located along Highway 84, a major rural thoroughfare and is not accessible by public transportation.

Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

Accommodating public facilities at this site would require study of and reconciliation with other site uses.

This short term solution is creative in that it utilizes existing disturbed areas to temporarily increase staffing capacity in order to manage the expected opening of and growth in visitation at La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve within the next 3-5 years.

Recommendations

- Utilize trailers at the Driscoll Event Center site as a temporary Coastal Area Outpost.
- Pursue a location for a new Coastal Field Office in an area along coastal San Mateo County (possible site location options include the Event Center).

New Coastal Field Office – Coastal San Mateo County



Fact and Figures

Location and Jurisdiction	San Mateo County and City of Half Moon Bay
Site Footprint	TBD
Parcel Size	TBD
Zoning	TBD
Special Considerations	Partly in the Coastal Zone and Coastal Annexation Area

Discussion

The need for a new coastal field office stems from the long-term growth of the District’s lands along the San Mateo coast, including the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, Cloverdale Ranch, and the opening of La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve, that will shift the focus of Skyline area field staff to west of Skyline Blvd. The coast has much of the District’s grazing operations, row crop operations, special status species, and is the furthest from urban development. Preserve land in the coastal area in general requires more maintenance, coordination with the agricultural community, and natural resource management. Public visitation is limited by comparison to the

Foothills area, but, where constructed, public access has proved quite popular. The Cowell-Purisima Trail, the lower Purisima Creek Open Space Preserve's parking lot, and all of the beaches near Half Moon Bay receive heavy use on the weekends. Increased public visitation will require increased patrol and site presence. The construction of new trails, bathrooms, etc., requires dedicated maintenance staff and capital project management staff. The Coastal Field Office will need to accommodate the majority of field staff growth expected to serve the Skyline area.

A site within the area bounded by Highways 35, 84, 1, and 92 would provide more superior and efficient access to the District's coastal properties than SFO. A staff facility that combines patrol, maintenance, volunteer, and docent programs requires more acreage than the District has at any of its existing field offices. Further, incorporating a public parking lot and visitor center adds to that challenge in addition to the conflict that emergency response and heavy equipment could have with public use if not properly designed. However, the benefits of such an integrated facility, where space permits, likely outweigh the design challenges.

The District could evaluate the feasibility of sharing a facility with another park agency, since the San Mateo County coast also lacks government and parks facilities in general. San Mateo County Parks, California State Parks, Peninsula Open Space Trust, or other organizations may be potential partners in developing a shared facility. A partnership represents a significant opportunity and yet also introduces a complicated planning and coordination element to the project. Examples of such facilities exist in the Bay Area, including the Presidio Trust/Golden Gate National Recreation (GGNRA), Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy\GGNRA, the Peninsula Conservation Center, and the Multi-Agency Facility in Big Sur (State Parks, US Forest Service, Caltrans). Staff is recommending the District begin a consultation process with potential partners and revisit this opportunity once the potential of this option is evaluated.

Staff recommends further guidance and direction from the Committee and/or Board on the development of the Coastal Field Office based on discussion of alternatives following this section.

New Coastal Field Office Alternatives Analysis

Coastal Field Office Alternative 1: Northern Highway 35 (Skyline Blvd) Area

Constraints	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located too close to SFO to provide effective coverage of coastal areas • Does not change deployment and distribution of field staff • Steep topography along Highway 35 – few potential developable sites • Less desirable for partnership opportunity • Limited housing and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low use during the work week • Permitting not affected by the coastal zone/annexation area restrictions • No potential impact on agriculture

Discussion

There are only few developed and disturbed sites along Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard) that could provide what the District requires but none of them are on District land. In addition, the topography of Highway 35 constrains the buildable footprint of any project, so that it may not be able to accommodate uses beyond patrol and maintenance. A site along Hwy 35 would also not increase the District’s presence in the coastal area and may cause future deployment issues as the District takes on greater coastal management. Housing in the northern portions of Highway 35 is also limited and expensive. Because this project will be challenged to meet the majority of committee goals, staff is not recommending a focused search in the Highway 35 area for a new Coastal Field Office.

Coastal Field Office Alternative 2: Highway 84 Area

Constraints	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of sites are in the coastal zone/annexation area • Limited potential developable sites • Limited water availability in San Gregorio watershed • Remote location • Limited housing and services • Potential conflicts with agriculture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low use during the work week • Improves deployment and geography of field staff

Discussion

The Highway 84 area from “Skyline to the Sea” may contain a number of potential sites on District and privately owned lands. Several properties in the area, including the event center, have a prior history of disturbance and development that can provide adequate buildable areas for patrol, maintenance, volunteer and docent programs, public parking areas and a visitor center. However, limited housing will likely create longer commutes for most staff assigned there barring those who live in relatively nearby District housing. If the Coastal Field Office were built in this area, housing an additional 30 staff in the La Honda area will be difficult. Half Moon Bay is at least half hour west and north of the Town of La Honda. The remoteness of the location from services will make certain aspects of building and managing the facility a challenge, similar to those faced by SFO (supply procurement, building maintenance and contracts, etc.). Water may also be the limiting factor in the area. The growth of public visitation to La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve after it opens is unknown at this time. Planning for a permanent field office that features a visitor center in this area may not be appropriate until some level of use can be estimated. Highway 84 area presents a number of potential opportunities, but appears unlikely to meet majority of Committee goals and is not considered the preferred alternative.

Coastal Field Office Alternative 3: Half Moon Bay and Highway 1 (Preferred)

Constraints	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the coastal zone/annexation area • Heavy commute and weekend traffic • Potential conflicts with agriculture • Limited commercial space • Potential restrictions on development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located near San Mateo coast population • Housing and cost of living • Greatest partnership opportunity • Public and staff meeting space on coast – better presence for District • Improves deployment and geography of field staff

Discussion

The majority of Highway 1 on the coast between Highways 92 and 84 is undeveloped open space, farmland, and rural homes. While some development for the purposes of facilitating recreation is part of San Mateo County's local coastal program, waterfront development is a difficult regulatory challenge to overcome, if permissible at all at some locations. Yet the lack of a coastal visitor center, public parking, and District field staff represents a significant opportunity to fill that need. Few existing facilities appear suitable for District purposes on the Highway 1 coast, but a more in depth review of real estate opportunities needs to be further evaluated and considered. Further research needs to be conducted on the Local Coastal Program in San Mateo County to consider the feasibility of such a Coastal Field Office in this area.

The City of Half Moon Bay could be another potential location and provide other advantages than development along or off Highway 1. The lack of park facilities in this general region, make this location ideal for the partnership opportunity described above. For staff who currently live in Half Moon Bay, Santa Cruz, and San Francisco, this would be an attractive temporary or permanent reporting location. Housing is limited in Half Moon Bay area but more available than the La Honda and Skyline area. Weekend tourist traffic and weekday commute traffic are significant. However, limited commercial space is available in Half Moon Bay, so this alternative would need an in depth review of commercial real estate facilities. A project of this scale on in the coastal zone is not a simple undertaking, but the overall benefits to the District's business model, District staff and the public are significant. An integrated facility that includes a public facing visitor center on the coast would be an attractive public amenity.

Preferred Project Alternative Review with Committee Goals

Further planning is required before a specific approach is recommended to the Board. Of the three general New Coastal Field Office alternatives, the Half Moon Bay and Highway 1 area appears to meet the majority of Committee goals and is analyzed here. This option is creative in that it could create a visitor center that would attract the diverse users of Highway 1, looks into the future of District growth in the coastal area, and may provide space for all of the District functions and potential partners throughout the facility's lifetime, but only once a more discrete project is identified can this goal be fully evaluated. Highway 92 and 1 are relatively accessible

thoroughfares, but there are only limited bus lines that provide public transportation. This alternative will be challenged to be flexible into the future if, as anticipated, the availability of commercial real estate and coastal regulations constrain the scale of buildings. An existing building will be challenging to be retrofit for sustainable design in a cost-effective manner, but a new facility could provide that opportunity. This option creates a field office where staff could live on the coast, which is similar to the cost of living in the Boulder Creek area, but is significantly less than the Peninsula. This facility would likely include some visitor center component and improve District's brand association with communities along the coast. This option will require planning and political support effort by staff and the Board to implement, but will minimize disruption to current staff. The challenge for staff on this project is to balance the operational needs for a new facility with the more ambitious opportunities for a visitor center and potential partnership project.



Foothills Area

Foothills Field Office – Existing Conditions



Fact and Figures	
Location and Jurisdiction	22500 Cristo Rey Dr., Cupertino – City of Cupertino
Current Staffing	27 FTEs (includes seasonal employees)
Site Footprint	<u>2</u> acres (including 0.5 acres for Annex building)
Existing Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Office: 2200 sq ft • Shop: 5500 sq ft • Equipment and Tool Storage: 3400 sq ft • Annex: 3000 sq ft
Existing Parking Capacity	40 (25 District vehicles, 20 employee vehicles)
Existing Outdoor Use Area	Outdoor patio area adjacent to office
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1993 office • 2004 shop
Upgrades Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shop and equipment shelters

Constraints	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited parking • No additional offices for supervisors • Limited locker room space for line staff • Limited land to expand • Access through District’s busiest preserve on roadway shared with public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build locker room expansion • Install additional equipment shelters • Create new meeting space at Annex

Discussion of Issues

FFO functions generally well and includes an office, shop, equipment storage shelters, corporation yard, and the Annex (repurposed house). The main office is in fair condition and does not require major upgrades in the foreseeable future, but it cannot accommodate more than a few additional positions due to locker room space limitations. The shop was constructed in 2004 and also does not require major upgrades in the foreseeable future. Few improvements are necessary to FFO as long as the anticipated staff growth is located at another field office location. Reconfiguration of the copy room to accommodate another desk, increased locker space, and a few other minor improvements would improve the functionality of the facility. The chief constraint at FFO is the heavy public use of the main access road to the office and Annex.

The Annex is frequently used by FFO, SFO and AO staff for trainings of less than 30 people, and provides overflow storage for AO and FFO. It is not available for public use. The HVAC system and building foundation are nearing the end of their functional lives, and the Annex is only expected to be usable for a number of years into the future. Replacing it is questionable due to inadequate parking and the building’s location in the middle of the preserve. The cost of retrofitting the building should be weighed against building a new conference space.

Recommendations

- Prioritize other, more pressing facilities planning and improvement projects before FFO.
- Evaluate the long-term use of the Annex when other facility projects are complete or an imminent infrastructure issue occurs.

South Area Outpost



Fact and Figures	
Location and Jurisdiction	18171 Pheasant Rd., Los Gatos – Santa Clara County
Current Staffing	6 FTEs (Patrol staff)
Site Footprint	1.5 acres
Existing Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Office: 2000 sq ft • District Residence: 2000 sq ft
Existing Parking Capacity	12 (10 District vehicles, 2 employee vehicles)
Existing Outdoor Use Areas	N/A
Construction	1930s
Upgrades Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outbuilding and barn demolitions • Parking area and septic system improvements

Constraints	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow and windy road constrains access • Existing septic system is near capacity • No additional offices for supervisors • Limited locker room space for line staff • Limited land to expand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of temporary trailers/modular buildings to accommodate minimal staff growth • Potential use of site as extra office, storage area, or staff housing if lower area on Pheasant Road is developed into a new, permanent South Area Office

Discussion

The SAO is a 1930s home repurposed into an office containing one walled office, four open work stations, a shower and locker area, and two small bathrooms. One supervising ranger and five rangers work out of this facility. One equipment mechanic operator and one open space technician have also temporarily reported to the SAO during the construction of the Mt. Umunhum Trail. The septic system is at capacity. Water to the SAO is provided by the Guadalupe pond and water system, and has been steady and productive through the current drought and prior droughts. The SAO also contains an employee residence of the same vintage and condition, a water tank storage shed, tool shed, and space for roughly 10 gravel parking spaces. Four outbuildings and barns on site were demolished in 2014.

Access to the site is from Pheasant Road, a narrow, winding road that gains in elevation quickly from Hicks Road and is maintained by the County of Santa Clara. The limited line of sight, steep slope, and narrow width fundamentally constrain the ability to the District to substantially increase use of the SAO site, particularly for staging and storage of large equipment and materials. Although Pheasant Road serves only District-owned properties, significantly increasing vehicle and equipment traffic beyond the lower stretches of the road may create an unsafe condition.

The District could maintain the existing number of rangers (6) reporting to SAO and add a small group of maintenance staff if a modular office and locker room were added. Another long-term conceptual alternative for the site is to buy and install several modular houses for staff housing, which could facilitate coverage for Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve, particularly with the future opening of the Mount Umunhum summit area in Fall of 2016. All of the above concepts would require consultation with the County of Santa Clara. It is anticipated that the existing SAO building will remain an asset into the future under almost any long term facility alternative.

Recommendations

Evaluate the long-term use of the existing SAO site and building in conjunction with planning for a permanent location for the South Area Office, potentially in the lower Pheasant Road area. Ultimate use of the existing SAO site will be depend on where the permanent office will be located and how and what staff will be deployed out of that site.

South Area Office Potential Site – Lower Pheasant Road Area



Fact and Figures

Location and Jurisdiction	Hicks and Pheasant Rd., Los Gatos -- Santa Clara County
Site Footprint	2.5 acres
Parcel Size	22 acres
Zoning	Agriculture – Hillside Design Review – Scenic Road

Constraints	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited flat area (grading and setbacks) • Zoning • Developing new land • Visible from road and neighbors • Too many uses, not enough space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New uses and programmed space • Parking lot and visitor center • Known reporting location • Adds staff where visitation grows

Discussion

The District owns a 22-acre parcel at the intersection of Hicks and Pheasant Roads with a moderately sloping and potential building area of 2.5 acres. This site is one of three relatively flat suitable spots along Hicks Road and the Rancho de Guadalupe area. In 2011, the draft (not yet adopted) master plan for Sierra Azul identified a potential parking area at this location. Both potential uses (field office and parking area) at the 22-acre site need to be evaluated simultaneously, as well as alternative options if the site cannot support both uses. Because SAO has proved to be a satisfactory and functional reporting location for Sierra Azul patrol and maintenance staff, the 22-acre parcel would provide the same advantages in a larger footprint that could theoretically incorporate visitor services (including interpretive staff), land and facilities, a public parking lot, and, if cost-effective, a visitor center. The grassy area is highly disturbed and appears to have adequate line of sight from Hicks Road. This site is within the ‘scenic corridor’ of Hicks Road and would require Santa Clara County review. This site also marks the transition between a number of single-family luxury homes and the relatively undeveloped Sierra Azul OSP.

The South Area Field Office would be the first field office constructed since SFO and FFO in the 1990s. A new facility provides the District with the opportunity to incorporate new functions into field operations, including increased hotelling space for AO staff, dedicated space for the volunteer and docent programs, and possibly a visitor center. The District may consider permanently posting a limited number of AO staff to this office if the space permits. The design and function of the new field office needs to accommodate nearly all of the long-term staffing growth for the South Foothills Area. It must also consider its function relative to FFO. Rancho San Antonio OSP receives the highest visitation of any preserve and requires a proportionate number of patrol staff. The management agreement between the District and Santa Clara County Parks necessitates greater operations and management responsibilities at this preserve. Heavy equipment is rarely used within Rancho and yet mobilizing the equipment in and out of the preserve requires going 5 mph through the main hiking and biking route. Staff’s initial analysis suggests programming more patrol in FFO and more maintenance in the South Area Office.

Project Review with Proposed Goals

The option is creative in that it would blend multiple functions into a single project. It can potentially provide all of the needed growth in the South Foothills area for its anticipated lifetime (30 years). This option will significantly alter the deployment of field staff, but only doing so towards the area where the District anticipates increased public visitation. Hotelling work stations for AO and work space for docent/volunteer staff would provide the opportunity for

flexible work environments in the future. If cost limits the ability of the District to construct a facility to accommodate all of the South Foothills' area growth over the next 30 years, the District should consider modular buildings that can be added to accommodate new staff. This site is located close to Highway 85 and is nearer to where a number of field staff currently reside. This area has a slightly lower cost of living than Cupertino. Transit to the site is very limited. The nearest bus line is 1 mile away. This option can consider a number of sustainable design elements and minimize its environmental footprint through careful planning. The option can improve the visitor experience by providing a gateway to Sierra Azul and Mt. Umunhum. This option minimizes disruption to Foothills area staff by constructing on a separate site and is in response to the anticipated public visitation in Sierra Azul and Bear Creek OSP.

For these reasons, staff is recommending the consultant team conduct a rigorous evaluation of the 22-acre site for constructing a parking lot, field office, and visitor center, and other parking areas if needed, consult with the County of Santa Clara and return to the Board with conceptual design alternatives and cost-estimates for the project.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Per the FOSM report, the District's workload is poised to more than double over the next 30 years through Measure AA funding. It is an exciting and dynamic time for the District, and it will be critical to provide staff with the necessary tools and facilities to implement this work into the decades beyond.

With confirmation and approval from the Board, staff will begin implementing the recommendations to meet the long term facility needs of the entire District, so that the agency can be better positioned to meet its mission.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Park Agency Facility Comparisons

The District is one of many governmental parks agencies that operate on the San Francisco Peninsula and the Santa Cruz Mountain bioregion (Figure 1). Other agencies include California State Parks, National Park Service (Golden Gate National Recreation Area), Bureau of Land Management, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, San Mateo County Parks, Santa Clara County Parks, and municipal parks. Each organization has a blend of administrative functions common to all governmental agencies and field operations tailored to the nature of the organization's mission and reflective of its organizational and budgetary constraints.

In the summer of 2015, District staff toured several of these facilities, including East Bay Regional Parks District, California State Parks, Santa Clara County Parks, East Bay Municipal Utilities District, and the National Park Service (Golden Gate National Recreation Area), as well as several privately-owned buildings. While organizational structures vary, all of the facilities were put together on an ad-hoc basis in response to evolving institutional and public need. Unlike a university where the campus buildings directly facilitate the mission, parks organizations' facilities master planning is not a central part of their missions and cultures. New buildings are considered in response to staffing increases or reductions, changes to the geographic distribution of field staff, or as real estate or partnership opportunities arise.

All of the organizations divide their service areas into geographic units for the purposes of managing the parks. Certain field positions are replicated for each area and scaled to fit the number of visitors or size of the area: patrol, maintenance, and sometimes interpretative staff. Other specialized field positions, like mechanics, equipment operators, or natural resource management positions tend to be more centralized, as their work is not area specific. For example, vehicle and equipments shops and their mechanics tend service larger areas, whereas rangers or maintenance crews might only service one park or trail. Administrative staff tend to be housed in a central facility, though a minimum of administrative support in larger field offices is common.

Administrative Offices

Distribution of administrative functions varies among park agencies. Generally, administrative staff is centralized in one location, sometimes in a standalone building or as part of a larger complex of trailers. In some cases, interpretive staff are folded into the field operations of a particular park rather than housed in the main administrative office. Challenges with administrative spaces include insufficient number of meeting rooms, inadequate storage areas for materials and documents, dated and inefficient cubicle work station layouts, ADA accessibility, and a slow conversion to electronic filing.

Field Offices

A typical field office has a number of elements: light to medium duty equipment storage ("tool sheds"); heavy equipment and materials storage ("a corporation yard"); equipment maintenance shops and circulation areas; large parking areas for personal and fleet vehicles; locker rooms, showers, break room with kitchenette; and offices for supervisors and administrative staff. This combination of space and function reflects the intent of organizations

to maximize efficiency and the time field staff spend in the field. These facilities reflect a function-first approach. For example, one 10,000 square foot shop housed mechanics and a road/trail crew. At first, the shop appeared too sparse for the road/trail crew supervisor, but he grew to appreciate the functionality of the large space to their operations. Tools were well organized, work vehicles could be parked inside the shop, and it was quick to mobilize and demobilize each day.

Other Field Facilities

Staff toured a number of field facilities not currently found in the District: dedicated large equipment shops, stand alone corporation yards, visitor centers staffed by interpretive staff and/or volunteers/donors, shops and stores run by ‘friends of’ organizations or concessionaires, centralized supply warehouses, and conference and training centers. Findings from these visits are provided below:

- Equipment shops with mechanics on staff are worth considering if there are no local alternatives, the fleet becomes large enough to justify in-house services, and space is available on site.
- Corporation yards isolate heavy equipment use from other operations and the public.
- Visitor centers are family-friendly, may generate modest revenues, emphasize interpretation, and provide a central destination and gateway for the public. Stores and shops can also attract families, add a visitor-serving element, and include amenities like restrooms, interpretive elements, food and drink in remote locations. Shops and visitor centers also provide a place for ‘friends of’ organizations and volunteers to work from without interfering with other field functions. As such, shops and visitor centers tend to be separated from other park facilities.
- Supply warehouses centralize procurement and storage, reduce per unit costs, and require formalized business systems around supply management.
- Large, multi-purpose conference spaces provide organizations with space for staff trainings, large public meetings, and ‘all staff’ meetings. They also allow for outside agencies or non-profits to rent the space. In more remote areas, they can be the only such meeting and assembly space and can serve as critical infrastructure in disaster service management (e.g. Emergency Operations Center).

Staff Facilities Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

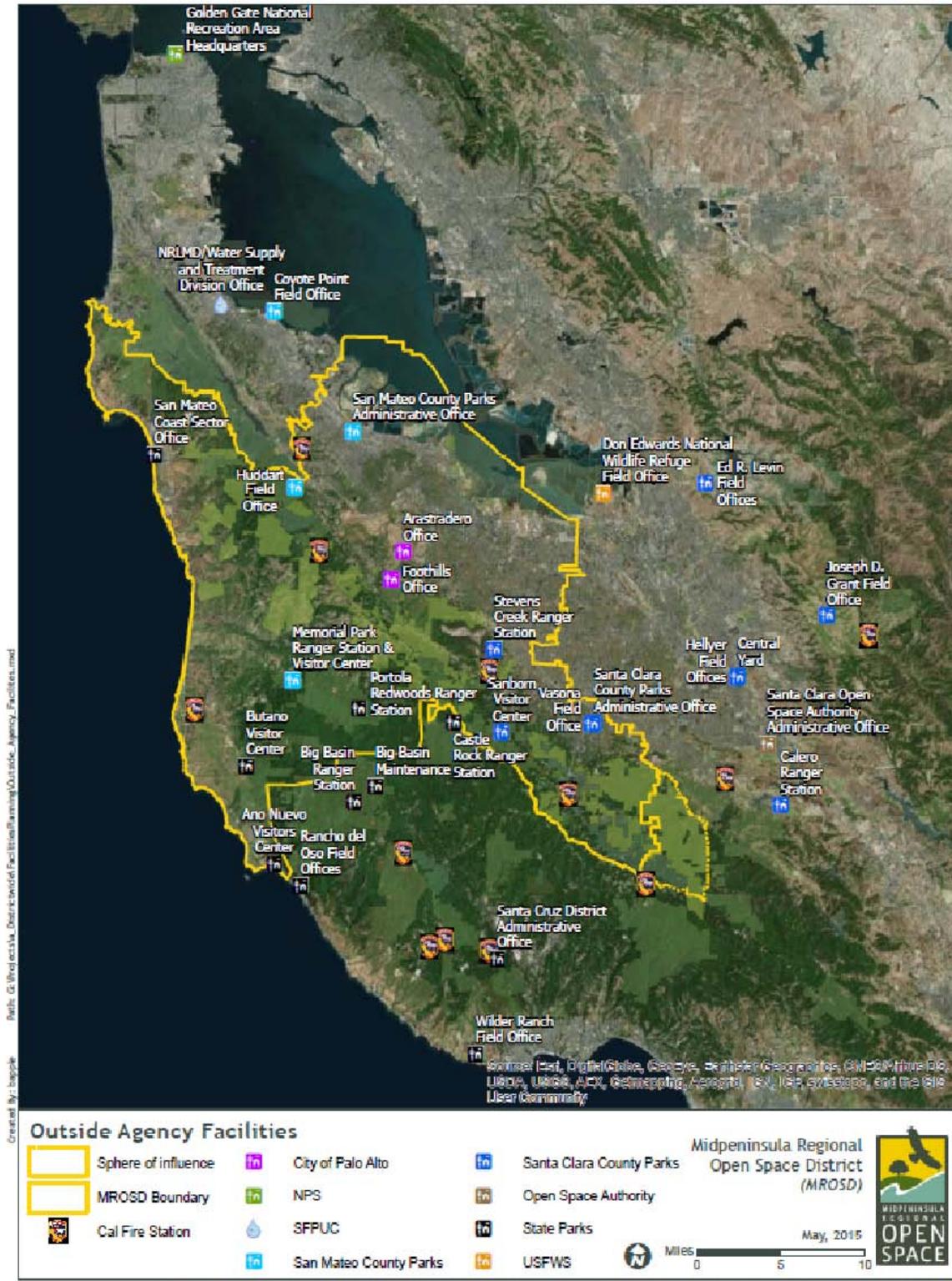


Figure 1. Regional Parks Staff Facilities

Appendix 2: Housing Data Maps

Midpen Employee Locations



Employee Location



District AO



Midpen Open Space Preserves



Midpen Boundary

Santa Rosa

Rohnert Park

Petaluma

Novato

San Rafael

Richmond

San Francisco

Half Moon Bay

Berkeley

Oakland

San Bruno

Hayward

Newark

Redwood City

San Jose

Santa Cruz

Napa

Fairfield

Pittsburg

Concord

Walnut Creek

Danville

San Ramon

Castro Valley

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Newark

Redwood City

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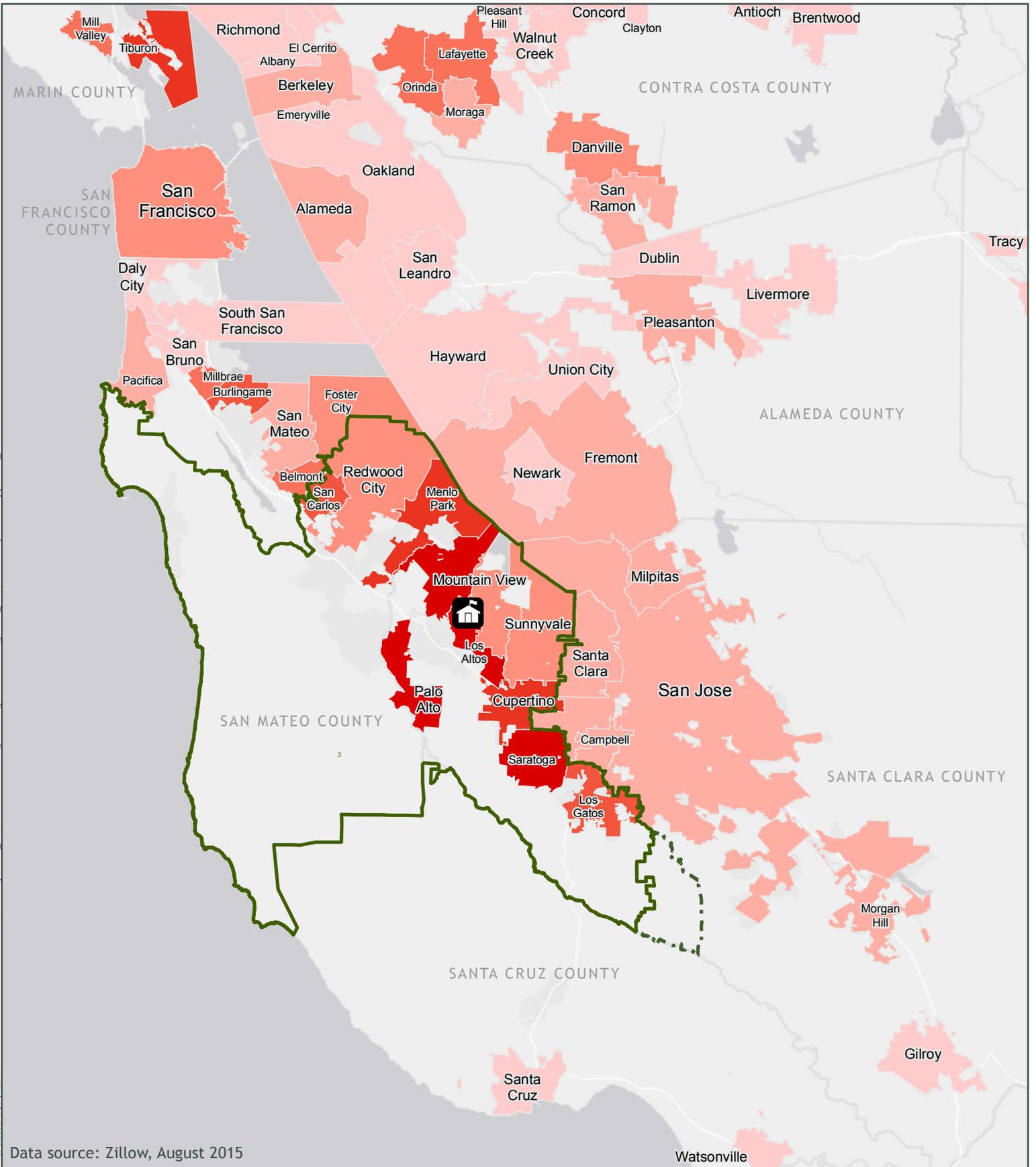
Santa Cruz

Pittsburg

Antioch

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Created By: jhawk



Data source: Zillow, August 2015

Median Home Sale Prices: Bay Area Cities



MROSD Administrative Office

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD)

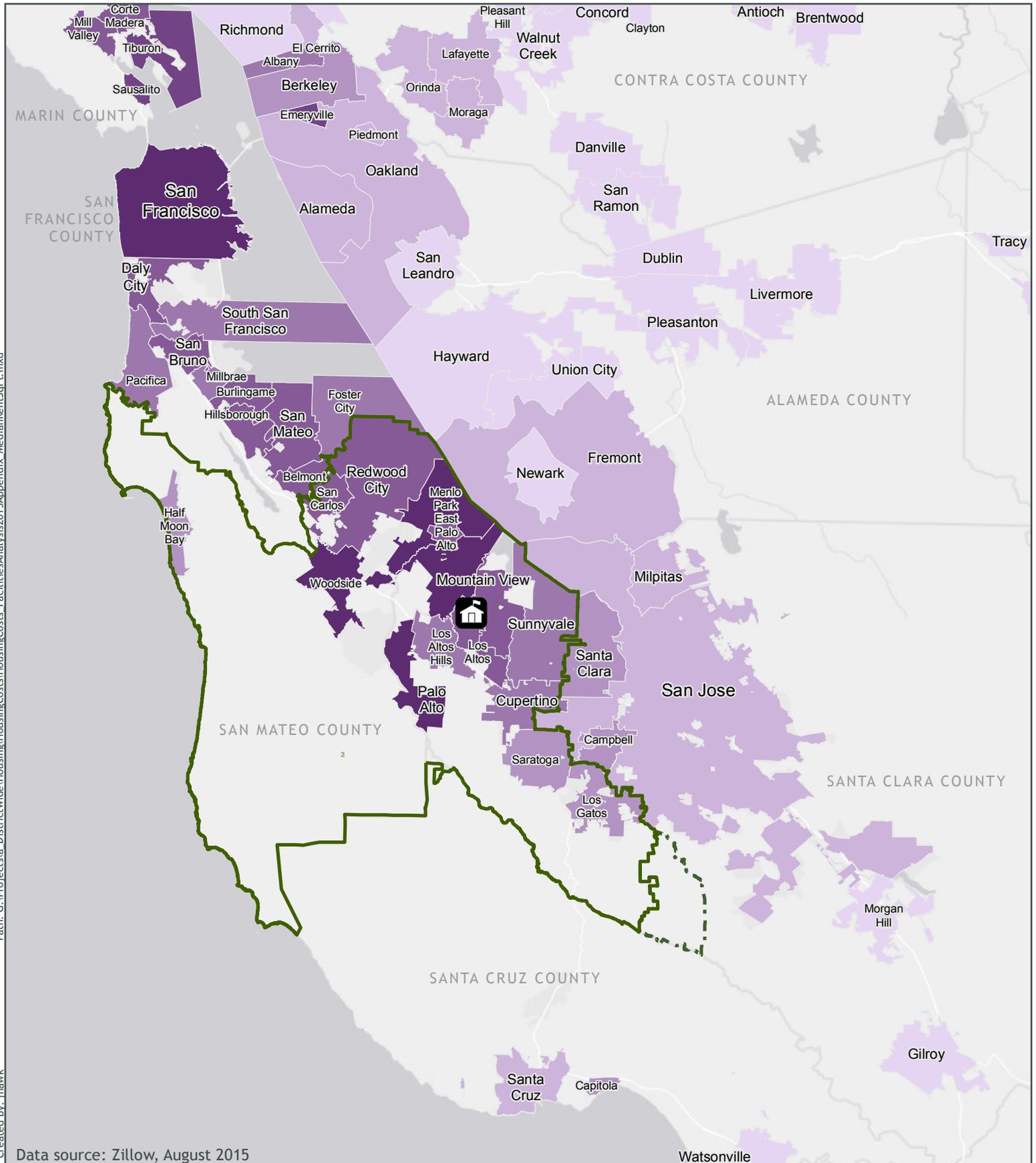


October, 2015

While the District strives to use the best available digital data, this data does not represent a legal survey and is merely a graphic illustration of geographic features.

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Created By: jhawkins



Data source: Zillow, August 2015

Median Rental Rates per Square Foot: Bay Area Cities



MROSD Administrative Office

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD)



While the District strives to use the best available digital data, this data does not represent a legal survey and is merely a graphic illustration of geographic features.



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

Memorandum

DATE: November 18, 2015

MEMO TO: Board of Directors

THROUGH: Stephen E. Abbors, General Manager *SEA*

FROM: Tina Hugg, Senior Planner, and Aaron Hébert, Project Manager

CC: Jane Mark, Planning Manager, and Michael Newburn, Operations Manager

SUBJECT: Greenhouse Gases Modeling and Staff Facilities

To support the Board’s consideration of several conceptual alternatives for each staff facility at its November 18, 2015 meeting, staff has developed some preliminary analysis on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on the various alternatives. A complete modeling of the District’s operational GHG emissions is anticipated to begin with a consultant in Fiscal Year 2016-17 with the goal of creating a Climate Action Plan.

DISCUSSION

GHG emissions related to staff facilities are influenced by (1) their locations, which affect commutes and work driving distances, and (2) the sustainability of their construction (“green building”).

Table 1: Summary Analysis of Staff Facilities and GHG Emissions

Facility / Alternative	Commuting	Work-Related Driving	One-time Construction Emissions	Operational On-going Emissions	Notes on Alternative and GHG emissions
Administrative Office (AO) Rebuild on Site	No effect	No effect	More	Less	High amounts concrete-related CO2 for underground parking.
AO New Construction New Location	?	Likely slightly negative	More	Less	The final design and location will drive GHGs
AO Remodel New Location	?	Likely slightly negative	Less	More	Minimizing GHGs from operations depends on the building and design
South Area Field Office New Construction	Likely positive	Positive	More	Less	Will be more efficient than current field offices
Coastal Field Office New Construction	Likely positive	Positive	More	Less	Will be more efficient than current field offices

1. Properly Locating Staff Facilities

Staff's initial long term facilities analysis recommends considering new locations for three staff facilities: the South Area Field Office (SAFO), the Coastal Field Office (CFO), and potentially the Administrative Office (AO).

AO: Current administrative staff drive an average of approximately 21 miles to work each way. Actual drive times vary with traffic conditions; accidents can easily double drive times. More staff live southeast of the office than elsewhere, but there is a wide distribution in all directions, since the current office location is accessible from much of the peninsula, some sections of the East Bay, and San Francisco. Because of its current relatively centralized location, moving the AO office will decrease commute times for some while increasing times for others. Moving the office, for example, to Sunnyvale could reduce some vehicle trips by 6 miles each way for San Jose area commuters. This may not substantially reduce GHG emissions because the traffic jams that cause long commute times are located in the greater San Jose area and not between Sunnyvale and Los Altos. Because wait times in traffic increase GHG emissions on a per mile basis, reduced total commute mileage only has a partial effect on GHG emissions. Sub-25 miles per hour (mph) driving can produce 1.5 to 3 times the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per mile compared to freeway driving.¹ In addition, any potential reductions in GHG emissions by reduced commuting for San Jose area commuters will be partially negated by increased commute time for other employees.

The current set of employees (dubbed "Generation 2015") will also change over time. Retirements and attrition will gradually remake who works at the District. At the same time, the District is hiring a new set of employees commuting from unknown locations and the number of new staff will someday exceed the number who work at the District today. Staff's initial analysis suggests that by 2020, based on current retirement and attrition rates, Generation 2015 could constitute less than 50% of the total administrative staff. By 2033, almost none of the current administrative staff are likely to still work at the District.

Table 2: Administrative Staff Generation 2015

Staff Year	Total	Projected Retirements from Generation 2015	Estimated Attrition from Generation 2015	Remaining Generation 2015 staff	Generation 2015 as a percent of total
2015	70	-	-	-	-
2020	104	11	14	45	43%
2025	107	21	24	24	23%
2030	110	32	28	10	9%
2035	113	43	29	0	0%
2040	116	-	-	0	0%
2045	119	-	-	0	0%

Although existing staff would be immediately affected by the decision of where to locate the AO, in the long term, the AO's location will have greater effect on all of the employees the District has not yet hired—as soon as 2020. While the geographic distribution of staff is likely to change in the future, the current distribution does suggest the District is an attractive employer from diverse geographies, given its central location on the Peninsula. A new site may be closer to future District employees, but it also may not. In addition, future potential employees will be self

¹ http://www.uctc.net/access/35/access35_Traffic_Congestion_and_Grenhouse_Gases.pdf

selecting, choosing for themselves if the location of the office fits within their lives before applying for District positions.

Locating closer to public transit is the only alternative that will maximize the potential and likelihood of substantially reducing greenhouse gas emissions for District commuters. Currently, anywhere from two to four employees take transit to work every day (three of whom use a bike for the “last mile”). Another two employees bike to work. In total, anywhere from 3 to 10% of employees take non-driving commutes to the office. Taking public transit can be less convenient, take more time, require additional coordination with childcare arrangements and not always fit into people’s dynamic schedules and childcare drop-off and pickup. In addition, the “first” and “last” miles can also be fairly significant hurdles to taking public transit. The cost of housing and cost of living are often increased by nearby public transit. Poor public transportation infrastructure in the San Jose area and from the East Bay to Silicon Valley severely limits the use of transit for those employees that live in those areas. Locating the office near transit is less likely to induce the use of public transit by those employees. If the office is located near public transit or the “last mile” is bridged with a shuttle, for example, future District employees are more likely to take transit to work. At the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), their administrative office is located in downtown Palo Alto at a major Caltrain stop, where approximately 50% of employees take transit to work.

The current location of the AO is roughly equidistant from the District’s furthest locations: Half Moon Bay and Sierra Azul Mt. Umunhum. Work driving miles vary geographically year over year with different projects. For example, more trips occur at preserves that have active projects, such as Mt. Umunhum and Bear Creek Redwoods, which are being prepared for opening. In contrast, preserves like Long Ridge are less visited by administrative staff. Predicting where administrative staff will drive during the 30-year study period is infeasible. If the effective service area is the entire range of District preserves, maintaining a centralized location will be important. Field staff occasionally report to the administrative office for meetings, particularly supervisory staff that must meet more regularly. Any relocation of the AO away from the geographic center of District preserves can be presumed to have a negative effect on GHG emissions related to work driving miles to and from preserves as well as between some field offices and the AO. Work-related driving is a relatively low proportion of GHG emissions related to an employee’s commute driving, estimated at 900 miles/employee/year or 5-20% of driving miles depending on the commuter.

SAFO: Of the future staff facilities, only the SAFO has a particular site identified, which is very close to the existing South Area Outpost’s location. If the site is feasible for a new facility and it is constructed, it is presumed to have no net affect on the existing six (6) ranger staff that work there, but GHG emissions will change as the result of an additional 28 positions anticipated to staff the new facility. Many of the existing Foothills area field staff live in the greater San Jose area. Both the existing Foothills Field Office (FFO) and the proposed SAFO are distant from public transportation; commutes are entirely by car. The proposed SAFO is therefore likely to continue attracting San Jose area driving commuters as employees. The proposed SAFO will therefore provide for relatively short commutes from the San Jose area. The site is in an area with relatively limited traffic and is located near the perimeter of Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve. Work vehicle miles are presumed to be decreased as a result of locating the facility closer to the patrol and work areas of field staff, as current trips to Sierra Azul and Bear Creek Redwoods from the FFO are 30 miles round trip. Patrol trucks average 8,800 miles per year at an estimated 12 mpg average. The proposed SAFO will therefore reduce GHG emissions related to work driving distances.

CFO: The CFO site has not yet been identified. Currently, the Skyline Field Office (SFO) must remotely service the San Mateo County coast and the San Gregorio area. Staff's initial analysis suggest siting the CFO somewhere in the San Gregorio, Highway 1, or Half Moon Bay area to provide superior access and response time to these remote preserves. In the long-term, however, servicing coastal areas south of Highway 84 may become more important as new properties are acquired. Housing in this region is confined to La Honda, Half Moon Bay, and Skyline/Sky Londa. The relatively lower cost of living in these areas (compared to the Peninsula) means staff could likely live and work in the same area. Only a few District field staff currently live in these areas (in District housing); it is hard to predict where the approximate 27 staff anticipated for this new office will live within the region. If they are evenly distributed among the La Honda, Half Moon Bay, and Sky Londa, commutes will range from 5 to 20 minutes, which is less than almost any other office. The CFO is presumed therefore to have a positive effect on GHG emissions related to commuting. The area serviced by the CFO and associated work driving miles are anticipated to reduce current GHG emissions that are currently associated with staff deploying from SFO. Further analysis is needed to optimize the location of the CFO for work driving miles.

2. Green Building

GHG emissions associated with staff facilities are generated from the ongoing operations of the facility ("energy efficiency") and the embodied energy within the building materials themselves.² Where new facilities are planned, it is important to account for the one-time GHG emissions related to construction and construction materials and the ongoing emissions (if any) related to operation of the facility. There is a broader environmental footprint to consider outside of the buildings that include stormwater runoff, water quality, and other sustainable elements that are part of LEED and green building principles. These elements will be considered as each project and site are developed.

Two new facilities are proposed for the CFO and SAFO. They will be sited in remote, wild areas with more challenging climatic conditions. These projects can be designed to suit the District's needs, including the reduction in GHG emissions. No alternative building types are included in the preliminary analysis and will be evaluated as the individual sites are developed further.

The future AO will either involve the retrofit/remodel of an existing building or the construction of a new facility. The retrofit of an existing building utilizes existing materials and their embedded energies and therefore will likely reduce one-time GHG emissions. On the other hand, retrofits are challenged to utilize existing materials to reduce ongoing GHG emissions related to energy efficiency and can be costly relative to the value they produce. New buildings will have large one-time GHG emissions related to construction and construction materials but will offset those impacts over time. In most scenarios, operations-related emissions exceed one-time construction-related emissions by 3x to 10x, depending on the lifespan of the building. Which conceptual alternative is preferable from a GHG perspective will depend greatly on the particular requirements of the remodel and the ingenuity of the architect and design team.

² <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.453.8646&rep=rep1&type=pdf>



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

Memorandum

DATE: November 18, 2015

MEMO TO: Board of Directors

THROUGH: Stephen E. Abbors, General Manager 

FROM: Tina Hugg, Senior Planner, and Aaron Hébert, Project Manager

CC: Jane Mark, Planning Manager, and Michael Newburn, Operations Manager

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned from Touring Partner Agency Staff Facilities

This memorandum serves to respond to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee’s request for more detail regarding the staff facilities tours that District staff scheduled with outside agencies, including a ‘Lessons Learned’ summary with key takeaways.

The Best Laid Plans of Mice and Men

The majority of the staff facilities toured were purchased and built as part of a deliberative planning process, but the ‘ultimate’ project was frequently not Plan A or Plan B. Rather, the facilities responded to and reflected the political, economic, and real estate environment at the time a decision had to be made. Purchasing or constructing buildings was recognized to be an expensive proposition by the agencies we met, and as public agencies, they share a sensitivity to public perception of large amounts of money spent on staff facilities. This sentiment led initially to a thoughtful analysis of ideals, costs, programming, etc. Most project managers and planners recognized that the planning process can delay decision making, create ‘analysis paralysis’, and is sometimes set aside at the time of decision making.

Lesson 1: This lesson suggests a right-sized planning effort that is thorough (but not unnecessarily exhaustive), agile and responsive to the authorizing environment, and is transparent about the inherent uncertainties and costs that come with the real estate market.

The Stars Won’t Align

Real estate prices and the costs of business generally trend upward over time and suggest staff facilities would be a lot cheaper if built during a recession. Both revenues and the political environment rise and fall with the economy and make significant capital expenses and commitments very challenging during recessions. The years of planning, design, and permitting leading up to these types of facilities projects means the ultimate go/no-go decision may occur in a different economic and political environment than when the project began. Some projects ended up involving negotiations within upper management or leadership over what was and was not included in a project even while it was under construction.

Lesson 2: Long-term plans must accommodate some political and economic uncertainty. Conservative budgeting and cost-escalation assumptions support realistic understanding of project costs. This lesson also suggests that early identification of

elements that the organization must, should, or could have in the project is important when unexpected budget cuts necessitate altering the project's scope. It also suggests modular designs and phased build-outs should be considered.

All Facilities Are Not Alike

Across organizations, a 'make-do' attitude was found, particularly in field operations staff where it was seen in their makeshift, repurposed facilities. Whether these organizations underestimated the needs of field staff or organizational growth in the general, a pattern of over-use was evident with 'make-do' facilities. This approach minimizes short-term costs, avoids scrutiny, and focuses project staff on other capital projects. Which facilities are upgraded and when was often a complex decision involving many internal and external stakeholders. Few of the tours gave a holistic view of what makes an inadequate facility or what standards might be used to make that determination. Sometimes different facilities within an organization reflected the different cultures of those departments/divisions and could serve to unite or divide the organizational culture.

Lesson 3: Recognizing the unique space and facility needs of staff, particularly in the field, can help unify organizational culture across geographies. Organization-wide evaluation and planning for staff facilities is important, even if not all problems can be addressed in the short-term.

Every Office is an Emergency Operations Center

Every government employee is a disaster service worker and large meeting spaces often serve as emergency operations centers. Facilities in rural areas may often be the only such facility and can serve as important meeting space in general. This requires additional IT and infrastructure improvements.

Lesson 4: Incorporate Emergency Operations Center requirements into our facility planning and meeting room design, especially in remote field offices. Design separated access for off-hours use by the public.

Deploy Groups and Functions in Satellite Offices, Not Individuals

New properties often challenge existing deployment models and geographies. Our partner agencies employed different organizational models to address the challenges of decentralized administrative and field support functions between a central office and the broad landscapes that they manage. Our partners found that remote outposts and satellite field offices do not work well when staff are not supported by a supervisor. The supervision, mentorship, and integration with the main offices can be lost without the right local leadership. Police and ranger staff appear to be the most suitable job for satellite deployment while the specialized equipment and spaces required by maintenance can be a challenge to deploy remotely. Routine and on-going maintenance (trash, mowing, bathrooms, etc.) can be decentralized. Supervisory and administrative staff can work effectively in satellite offices if they serve a business need in that geography (i.e. are not specialists serving the whole geography; most main offices are geographically centralized).

Lesson 5: Use satellite deployments if the location requires multiple staff and a supervisor, particularly patrol staff. Satellite offices need to serve a geographic purpose to function effectively.

Visitor Centers Mirror the Organization

The mission to serve the public was often reflected in visitor centers that are generally higher quality, more inviting, and more sustainably designed than staff facilities. Visitor centers often educate the public about the natural and built environment. Some offer meeting spaces that can be reserved and used by other agencies for regional meetings or trainings. Well-designed facilities that also incorporated staff offices provided separate public interface experience from the business functions of the organizations.

Lesson 6: Public-facing facilities provide an opportunity to present sustainable design concepts to the public, build institutional knowledge about these concepts, and provide better-than-average staff facilities. They can also provide much needed regional training and meeting space for other organizations to use.

Park Buildings Attract Families

Visitor centers often have a welcome area with park brochures, maps and exhibits. In addition, they provide a retail function that sell miscellaneous items like sunscreen, beverages, nature guides, keepsakes, and even toys. These visitor centers are often staffed by volunteer organizations (“Friends of” groups), are used to raise funds for local stewardship efforts, and generally attract families. These built environments often serve as the gateway to the regional open space and surrounding natural environments for first-time visitors and families. These buildings provide welcoming information and familiar amenities (e.g. public restrooms, water fountains, etc.) to acquaint visitors with what to do after they get out of their vehicle.

Lesson 7: Understanding the current and future demographics of visitors can help planners and decision-makers evaluate the function, costs and benefits of visitor centers.

Every Job Classification Needs a Different Space

Large institutions like the University of California school system have guidelines about what job classifications require in terms of work space (large office, medium office, cubicle, etc.). Our site tours highlighted how small to medium size organizations tend not to conduct proper space planning and make do with existing buildings as their office needs grow. Like us, space remodeling for our partner agencies is often triggered by staff growth and generally shared recognition that private offices are necessary for management staff. Partner agencies also recognized that remodeling is highly disruptive and generally solicits a fair amount of complaining from staff. It was clear from the tours that different types of jobs require different space needs. Equipment, construction documents, large format printing, legal, personnel and financial records all require special consideration in space planning.

Lesson 8: When designing a new facility, cluster jobs with similar work space requirements near each other, especially for positions that collaborate. Understanding how current work space requirements might change in the future will help with future designs.

If You Build Storage, They Will Come and Fill It

Storage was an issue shared by most of our partner agencies in some way, whether they dealt with uniforms, brochures, cleaning supplies or documents. On-site storage can provide for the efficient use of resources (buying vs. renting supplies/equipment), but can also take the place of highly valuable work space. The pre-digital era of office work required extensive paper storage. The transition away from those practices challenges the IT infrastructure and work culture. A

survey of staff asking whether they have ‘sufficient’ storage is likely to produce a wide array of results.

Lesson 9: When designing a new building, define a process for what needs to be stored and, if not, what the alternative solution is. Appoint a ‘storage czar’ to prevent essential storage space from being misappropriated. Explore the additional engineering costs of attic storage where feasible.