



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-21-41
Meeting 21-10
March 24, 2021

AGENDA ITEM 3

AGENDA ITEM

Consideration of a Letter of Support for the Vida Verde Education Center Barn Project in San Mateo County

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION *den*

Authorize the Board President to sign a letter on behalf of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors in support of the Vida Verde (Vida Verde) Education Center Barn Project located in San Gregorio on the San Mateo County Coast for submittal to the San Mateo County Planning Commission.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

On March 2, 2021, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) staff received a request for a letter of support from Vida Verde in advance of the organization's Education Center Barn Project being reviewed by the San Mateo County Planning Commission (Attachment 1). A draft letter of support is being provided to the Board of Directors (Board) for consideration (Attachment 2).

District Legislative Program Consistency:

Staff has evaluated the request for consistency with the District's Legislative Program (Attachment 3). The primary focus of the Legislative Program is to support the District's mission and forward annual Board-adopted goals. The Board-adopted Legislative Program includes goals, priorities, and policy positions as specified below:

- **Goal 3: Connect people to open space and a regional environmental protection vision**
 - **Priority #1** Equitable Access: Expanded access to and enhanced funding eligibility for new and improved greenspace opportunities for underserved communities.
 - **Position #1:** Helps expand educational opportunities for underserved and non-English speaking communities about natural resources and the benefits of open space.
 - **Position #3:** Engages children and parents in the enjoyment and appreciation of outdoor open spaces to inspire the next generation of conservation champions.
 - **Position #6:** Promotes awareness and access to programs and activities that increase outdoor physical activity.

Vida Verde is a nonprofit organization with a mission to promote educational equity by providing free, overnight environmental learning experiences for students who do not otherwise have such an opportunity. Located on property owned by the nonprofit in San Gregorio, Vida Verde serves children from school districts within District boundaries, including those in Redwood City and East Palo Alto. Vida Verde is a grantee of the District's Grantmaking Program and has provided online nature-based education to schools during the pandemic period, to continue supporting shared goals consistent with the District's mission. The Education Center Barn will enhance Vida Verde's ability to provide educational opportunities for underserved communities and engage children in the enjoyment and appreciation of the outdoors. Through this work Vida Verde also introduces children to experiences in protected public open space on the coast and in the redwoods, furthering the District's mission.

Based on the analysis above, the Board may wish to submit letter of support focused on the policy positions adopted as part of the annual Legislative Program. Please see Attachment 2 for a copy of the proposed Letter of Support.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommendation.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

Due to the time-sensitive nature of the item, this item is being brought directly to the full Board.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

NEXT STEPS

If approved, staff will submit the letter of support signed by the Board President.

Attachments:

1. Vida Verde Brochure 2020
2. Draft Letter of Support for Board Consideration
3. Adopted District Legislative Program

Responsible Department Head:
Ana Ruiz, General Manager

Prepared by/Contact person:
Deborah Hirst, Grants Program Manager

VIDA VERDE *at Hidden Creek*

A HOME FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY



THE LAND & STEWARDSHIP FUND

In a secluded and fertile valley bordered by San Gregorio Creek.



VIDA VERDE AT HIDDEN CREEK IS A HOME FOR



NATURE

With riparian and forest habitats, Hidden Creek is home to a wide variety of native plants and animals. A few miles from the Pacific Ocean and an old growth redwood forest, the wonders of our coastal habitats are never far from a child's fingertips.



OUR EDUCATIONAL FARM

Complete with an organic garden, goats, chickens, and a llama, our farm plants seeds of knowledge in young minds. On the farm, students gain a deeper appreciation for healthy eating and grow more connected to the source of their food.



STAFF & OPERATIONS

Hidden Creek is home to administrative, facility, and instructor staff, who tend the farm and teach the students.

Vida Verde's office is also located on site.

Thanks to our donor community, we purchased Hidden Creek in 2015 and established a Stewardship Fund that provides the resources to support the ongoing maintenance and improvements of the property!

WE'RE PUTTING DOWN OUR ROOTS

Vida Verde has a long history of achieving remarkable results with inner-city students through our high-quality, mission-driven outdoor education program. After 19 years of building and improving our three-day education program and operating on several different leased properties, Vida Verde is putting down roots in its own land.

& CREATING A HOME FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO THRIVE

Close to old growth redwood trees and ocean tide pools, as well as home to a bountiful education garden, Hidden Creek is the perfect place for Vida Verde and its students to expand their horizons and realize their full potential. We are excited to create a long-term home for future generations of youth — a home whose centerpiece, our education barn, will be a model of sustainability for the students we serve as well as the community at large.

OUR VISION

To secure Vida Verde's permanence, making it possible for programs to grow and thrive long into the future.

To enable Vida Verde to become a Landmark Bay Area institution, which will include the training of others to replicate the successful Vida Verde model.

OUR PROGRESS

FULLY FUNDED

FULLY FUNDED

FULLY FUNDED

.5 M TO GO

THE LAND
\$1.3M

THE FUND
\$1.5M

THE PEOPLE
\$1.8M

THE BARN
\$2.1M funded

Purchase of
Hidden Creek
location

The
Stewardship
Fund

Purchase of
Adjoining Lands
for Staff Dwellings

Custom Built
Education
Barn

THE EDUCATION BARN

How do we inspire future generations to think creatively and dream big?

By showing them real-life examples that expand their worldviews. The Education Barn, a model of beautiful and practical green design, will spark innovative thinking and serve as the critical center for the camp's activities.

BARN FEATURES

- Net Zero Energy
- Commercial Teaching Kitchen
- Indoor/Outdoor Classroom
- Group Restroom Facilities
- Farm Labor Housing



HELP US BUILD THE BARN

Join the final exciting phase of our momentous capital project by contributing to the building of the Education Barn. We are seeking financial and in-kind support.

Specific details are available: WWW.VVEDUCATION.ORG

FROM THE ARCHITECT

"Our team is honored to be associated with the inspiring and life-changing work that Vida Verde is engaged in, and look forward to one day soon when the Hidden Creek site is fully built and serving the students and staff."

—DAVID ARKIN, PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT AND CO-FOUNDER,
ARKIN TILT ARCHITECTS, SPECIALIZING IN ENERGY EFFICIENT DESIGN

THE PEOPLE

To recruit and retain the highest quality staff from diverse backgrounds, housing for our educators is essential.

Less than two miles from Hidden Creek, Vida Verde has purchased two five-acre parcels with homes from the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) at a reduced price.



"Vida Verde's program immerses future leaders in the joy and beauty of the natural world. It is extraordinary and programs like these are vital to engaging broad support and participation in environmental protection by the emerging majority demographics."

WALTER MOORE, PRESIDENT, POST

STUDENTS CHANGE AT VIDA VERDE



OUR MISSION

Promote educational equity by providing free, overnight environmental learning experiences for students who don't otherwise get the opportunity.

For a child who has never before explored the tidepools of the Pacific Ocean or seen a magnificent redwood tree up close, a trip to Vida Verde can be a life-changing experience. With over 18 years of experience working to connect students from low-income schools with the outdoors, Vida Verde has developed a program structure and educational philosophy to meet our students' unique needs. The program is a vehicle through which we achieve our overarching goal: to positively and powerfully impact our students' academic performance, social and emotional learning, and connection to the outdoors.

AFTER VIDA VERDE, TEACHERS REPORT IMPROVEMENT IN STUDENTS':

- AWARENESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
- SELF-CONFIDENCE & TEAMWORK
- CLASSROOM LEARNING & SCIENCE TEST SCORES



To learn more about the incredible results of Vida Verde's program, visit our website to view Vida Verde's 2018 Annual Report.



THE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A LEGACY

VISIT WWW.VVEDUCATION.ORG
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CAPITAL PROJECT
AND MAKE AN ONLINE DONATION
TO HELP BUILD THE EDUCATION BARN.

Contact our Development Director at Jessica@Vveducation.org
with any questions or to schedule a site visit.



3540 LA HONDA ROAD, SAN GREGORIO, CA 94074 | 650-747-9288
WWW.VVEDUCATION.ORG

OPPORTUNITIES TO CLOSE OUR MOMENTUS PROJECT

WHAT WE NEED TO COMPLETE THE VIDA VERDE EDUCATION BARN

(GOAL : \$500K)

- ☐ FARMER'S 2ND FLOOR APARTMENT HOME FINISHING
INSULATION, ELECTRICAL, SHEETROCK, WINDOWS,
HEATING, PLUMBING, LIGHTING, FURNISHINGS: \$100K
- ☐ SOLAR PANELS AND MOUNTING RACKS: \$100K
- ☐ SOLAR PANEL INSTALLATION: \$75K
- ☐ EXTERIOR SIDING: RECLAIMED HISTORIC REDWOOD,
MATERIAL & INSTALLATION: \$80K
- ☐ METAL ROOFING AND INSTALL: \$60K
- ☐ KITCHEN CABINETRY (MATERIALS ONLY): \$40K
- ☐ TEACHING KITCHEN: DESIGN WORK: \$25K
- ☐ TEACHING KITCHEN: REFRIGERATION: \$12K
- ☐ TEACHING KITCHEN: COUNTERS (MATERIALS ONLY): \$10K
- ☐ ICE MACHINE, LAUNDRY: \$10K

WHAT WE NEED TO COMPLETE THE STAFF HOME (ON THE ADJOINING POST PARCEL)

(GOAL : \$100K)

- ☐ HOME FOUNDATION WORK: \$30K
- ☐ ALL NEW ENERGY STAR WINDOWS: \$25K
- ☐ KITCHEN CABINETRY: \$20K
- ☐ KITCHEN COUNTERS: \$5K
- ☐ TWO GAS FIREPLACES: \$10K
- ☐ WOOD FLOORING: \$5K PER ROOM – 4 LOTS AVAILABLE



GENERAL MANAGER
Ana M. Ruiz

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Jed Cyr
Larry Hassett
Karen Holman
Zoe Kersteen-Tucker
Yoriko Kishimoto
Curt Riffle
Pete Siemens

San Mateo County Planning Commission
c/o Vida Verde
Attn: Let's Build a Barn
3540 La Honda Road
San Gregorio, CA 94074

March 5, 2021

Re: Support for the Vida Verde Education Center Barn Project

Dear Commissioners Santacruz, Ramirez Jr., Gupta, Ketcham, and Hansson,

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) Board of Directors (Board) for the Vida Verde Education Center Barn Project and Vida Verde's mission to promote educational equity by providing free, overnight environmental learning experiences for students who do not otherwise have such an opportunity.

On the San Mateo County Coast, Midpen's mission is *to acquire and preserve in perpetuity open space land and agricultural land of regional significance, protect and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character, encourage viable agricultural use of land resources, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education*. Midpen values partnerships and recognizes Vida Verde as a proven nonprofit that offers children direct and life-changing exposure to nature-based, experiential learning.

From walking on Vida Verde's trail along the steelhead salmon-bearing San Gregorio Creek, to picking and preparing fruits and vegetables from the garden, and milking goats on site at Vida Verde, children learn how farmers, agricultural lands and natural resources help sustain and feed our communities. Further, Vida Verde is making outdoor experiences accessible to children from school district who struggle with insufficient resources and enrichment programs. Midpen shares the goals of providing all residents, including our future generation of land and natural resource stewards, opportunities to ensure equitable access to nature and environmental education.

In close proximity to Midpen's Tunitas Creek and La Honda Creek Open Space Preserves, as well as San Mateo County's new Tunitas Creek Beach County Park, Vida Verde is well situated to promote awareness of public open space to countless children and families who participate in Vida Verde's educational programming. Fostering a sense of belonging in nature and sharing the experience of being welcomed in parks and open spaces is essential to Vida Verde's approach to youth engagement and education.

Vida Verde is also a successful grantee participating in Midpen's Grantmaking Program. Vida Verde's leadership and staff have shown flexibility and resourcefulness during the pandemic and continue to provide nature-focused education online through strong relationships with local schools. Midpen has great confidence that Vida Verde, with support of their proposed new Education Center Barn, will continue to foster new ideas and perspectives, a sense of belonging and community building, and connections with nature and public lands for many children who come from our highest need communities. Thank you for your consideration of Vida Verde's Educational Barn project.

Sincerely,

Curt Riffle, Midpen Board President

cc: Midpen Board of Directors

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Legislative Program 2020

Adopted February 12, 2020



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Introduction

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Mission:

To acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

As part of the Coastsides Protection Area Service Plan, a Coastsides mission was adopted:

To acquire and preserve in perpetuity open space land and agricultural land of regional significance, protect and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character, encourage viable agricultural use of land resources, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

To further these missions, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) annually reviews opportunities and challenges and establishes legislative program priorities and policy statements to guide its advocacy activities at the regional, state and federal levels.

Advocacy of the District's Interests

While this document attempts to cover a wide variety of legislative issues that may impact the District, it is not comprehensive, complete or final. Throughout the state and federal legislative sessions, the District will review and take positions on various proposed policies and state or federal budget items.

Per Section 2.0 of Board Policy 1.11, legislative advocacy is considered in the following manner:

Section 2.0: Local, State, and Federal Legislative Advocacy

- a. The Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC) receives periodic updates throughout the year regarding the District's legislative program. When LFPAC determines that proposed legislation may affect District business, it may direct the General Manager to prepare a recommendation for consideration by the full Board or may direct the General Manager to take action to support or oppose the legislation without full Board approval when there is not adequate time to convene the full Board. In such cases, the General Manager or designee shall report to the Board any actions taken to support or oppose legislation at or before the next Board meeting.
- b. When time is so short that neither the full Board nor LFPAC can be convened to consider positions to support or oppose local, state or federal legislation, the General Manager is authorized to take a position on behalf of the District if the legislation:
 - i. Is related to the District's mission; AND
 - ii. Would directly impact the District's business, such as project delivery, operations, finances, legal authority, or other District responsibilities; AND
 - iii. The position being taken is consistent/inconsistent with existing District policy, past action, or the District's annual [Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives](#); OR

- iv. The legislation carries other considerations that make it contrary to the District's interests.

In such instances, the General Manager or designee shall report to the Board any actions taken to support or oppose the legislation at or before the next Board meeting.

- c. Full Board action is required regarding legislation that is not clearly within the criteria listed above under Section 2.b. or guided by direction previously given by LFPAC.

All legislation on which the District takes a position will be closely tracked by the General Manager's Office (GMO) and reported to the Board of Directors. Public Affairs staff will be responsible for reporting similar information to key departments. Contracted state advocacy teams will represent District interests based upon the policies contained in the Legislative Session Program. In addition to District position letters, Board members and District staff may be asked to testify before or meet with relevant legislators or members of the executive branch to discuss issues requiring heightened advocacy. If this is the case, District staff must first notify and/or confirm approval of the GMO to ensure that positions taken are consistent with the Board-approved Legislative Session Program.

District Legislative Priorities

The following are the legislative priorities for the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District during the 2020 State Legislative Session. Annual priority-setting considers a combination of issues that relate directly to important District-led projects or initiatives, opportunities to support or oppose state legislative initiatives sponsored by others that affect the District's mission, and any issues that are identified by the Board as particularly significant. Funding measures are the most common of these priorities and are generally tied to the creation of new funding sources or the processes that prescribe the allocation of existing funding sources. The 2020 legislative priorities are listed and grouped below consistent with the Board's annual Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives (See Appendix A) to provide a clear connection to agency priorities:

Goal 1: Promote, establish, and implement a common environmental protection vision with partners

1. **Wildlife Corridors:** Greater funding opportunities and permit streamlining to preserve and enhance wildlife corridors; promote wildlife permeability in the built environment.
2. **Anticoagulant Rodenticides:** Eliminate the use of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides to protect raptors, large mammals and other nontarget native wildlife.

Goal 2: Protect the positive environmental values of open space lands

1. **Responsible Wildland Fire Vegetation Management:** Effective guidelines for wildland fire fuel reduction efforts that minimize potential impacts to rare and endangered species and the risk of exacerbating the spread of invasive species.

Goal 3: Connect people to open space and a regional environmental protection vision

1. **Equitable Access:** Expanded access to and enhanced funding eligibility for new and improved greenspace opportunities for underserved communities.
2. **Trail Corridors:** Linking of preserve trails to regional trails and ultimately to the places where people live and work.

Goal 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission

1. **Climate Change Bond:** Climate change funding that benefits a wide range of open space priorities and promotes landscape climate resilience, particularly in the Bay Area.
2. **Proposition 68 Implementation:** Efforts to ensure that parks bond funds are allocated in a timely, equitable, and responsible manner, and that the resulting grant programs support District opens space and public access projects.
3. **Cap and Trade/Climate-Related Funding:** Funding that supports the climate resiliency

benefits of open space and working lands, including carbon sequestration.

4. **Green Bonds:** Efforts to allow the California Natural Resources Agency to work with the State Treasurer's Office to develop standards for green bond projects, in which California can invest.
5. **Public Safety Power Shutoffs:** State efforts to ease the burden of PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs on local agency operations.

District Legislative Policy Positions

The ability of the District to deliver its mission and remain a sustainable organization can be impacted by legislation proposed on the local, state or federal level. To this end, proactive, Board-approved policy positions taken by the District on a variety of relevant issue areas help to ensure consistency in advocacy. District policy positions are then grouped by strategic plan goals.

Goal 1: Promote, establish, and implement a common environmental protection vision with partners

1. Enhances the purchase or acquisition of regional and strategic open space lands and connects District lands to federal, state, county, city and other protected open space, parklands, bay lands, watershed lands, wildlife corridors and agricultural lands.
2. Protects public open space, property rights, interests and easements.
3. Enhances and funds regional collaboration and coordination of conservation efforts.
4. Promotes the use of urban infill and urban growth boundaries to avoid sprawl and prevent pressure on developing open spaces and further encroachment into the wildland-urban interface and open space buffer areas.
5. Expands and restores protected open space lands to enhance biodiversity, climate change resilience, and scenic, rural character.
6. Ensures that the zoning of permanently protected lands supports activities that further the District's mission (preservation, natural resource protection, public access and education, agriculture).
7. Enhances the District's ability to create and pursue opportunities to acquire an integrated greenbelt of protected open space, trails and habitat corridors.
8. Protects natural and working lands from future development threats.

Goal 2: Protect the positive environmental values of open space lands

1. Ensures reasonable setback requirements that allow minimum defensible space clearances to be met by private property owners to prevent catastrophic fires that damage habitats and pose a high public safety hazard.

2. Furthers implementation of Senate Bill 32 (2016), the Global Warming Solutions Act that establishes a greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target for the state of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.
3. Recognizes and incentivizes the use of natural and working lands for the purpose of carbon sequestration.
4. Supports effective and comprehensive Districtwide, regional and statewide measures that respond to sea level rise and other effects of climate change and enhance ecological and community resilience.
5. Enhances or streamlines the integration of wildlife corridors into transportation infrastructure and promotes its ongoing maintenance within District lands and adjacent entities, which may extend to statewide and international linkages.
6. Promotes advance mitigation programs to enhance wildlife corridor networks.
7. Connects habitats that support a diverse array of native plants and animals.
8. Encourages public road management agencies to control invasive plant populations and incorporate safe pedestrian and wildlife crossings across roadways and highways.
9. Eliminates the use of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides.
10. Supports increased knowledge, management and ultimately the eradication of Sudden Oak Death disease.
11. Provides permit exemptions for natural resources protection and restoration projects from regulations aimed to protect the natural environment from typical development projects.
12. Supports maintaining state and federal lists of endangered species justified through conclusive biological evidence.
13. Helps efforts to protect, conserve, restore and enhance the natural resources of the District, its coast, and adjacent waters for environmentally sustainable and prudent use by current and future generations.
14. Enables Native American communities' involvement in cultural and land management practices to restore and protect natural resources and enhance landscape resilience.
15. Protects and restores watersheds, water quality, natural water courses, wetlands and hydrologic processes consistent with the District's Resource Management Plan.
16. Promotes expedited removal of select trees and brush by public agencies for fire protection, public safety and enhanced climate resilience, while minimizing potential impacts to rare and endangered species and the risk of exacerbating the spread of invasive species.
17. Supports wildland fire management to become a more natural component of the ecosystem and minimizes its negative effects on the community and environment.
18. Supports working farms and ranches on public open space land that further conservation and climate resilience goals.
19. Supports the creation of and repairs to farm labor housing to foster farm operation sustainability that ultimately furthers conservation and climate resilience goals.

20. Incentivizes agricultural operations to invest in energy-efficient and water-efficient irrigation technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and water use.
21. Aids enforcement of marijuana laws related to the implementation of Prop 64 (2016) to protect natural lands from the destruction caused by illegal marijuana grows.
22. Protects natural lands from the destruction caused by illegal marijuana grows, prohibits marijuana grows on public lands, and restores damaged habitats.

Goal 3: Connect people to open space and a regional environmental protection vision

1. Helps expand educational opportunities for underserved and non-English speaking communities about natural resources and the benefits of open space.
2. Promotes volunteer involvement and engagement of diverse communities in ongoing conservation, restoration, enhancement and interpretation of the District's natural resources.
3. Engages children and parents in the enjoyment and appreciation of outdoor open spaces to inspire the next generation of conservation champions.
4. Funds and enables programs that hire youth to work in parks and open space and encourages them to consider careers in conservation.
5. Keeps preserves safe, clean, accessible and inviting for healthy exercise and enjoyment.
6. Promotes awareness and access to programs and activities that increase outdoor physical activity.
7. Protects and helps fund the protection and public interpretation of cultural and historic resources located on natural open space and working lands.
8. Helps fund and streamline emergency repairs to District infrastructure, including trails and public access amenities.
9. Increases public access to preserved land regionwide.
10. Helps link preserve trails to other regional trails and ultimately to the places where people live and work.
11. Improves local transportation to enable better connectivity between communities and open space preserves.
12. Limits public use of drones (unmanned aerial vehicles) consistent with Board policies to preserve the tranquility of outdoor experiences, natural activities, and minimize risk of wildfire.

Goal 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission

1. Preserves existing tax revenues and tax authority.
2. Lowers the vote threshold for locally imposed special taxes from two-thirds to 55 percent.

3. Preserves tax-exempt status for municipal bonds on a state and federal level.
4. Expands state and federal incentives that promote the issuance of green bonds.
5. Preserves and promotes managerial discretion in effective and productive recruiting, hiring, firing and day-to-day oversight of staff at all levels.
6. Preserves and promotes open, transparent, accountable government administrative practices that promote the efficient and timely delivery of public services, facilitate public involvement, and support effective and timely decision-making.
7. Maintains prevailing wage exemptions for volunteers.
8. Enables statewide efforts to increase broadband connectivity to public agency infrastructure in remote areas.
9. Preserves and promotes cost-effective, fair, and efficient contracting practices that give taxpayers the best value for their dollar.
10. Enables streamlining of contracting and bidding processes and attracts greater contractor and vendor competition.
11. Provides funding and funding flexibility to achieve mission-related goals including, but not limited to:
 - a. District operations and infrastructure
 - b. Integrated Pest Management
 - c. Programs that hire youth to work in parks and open space and encourages them to consider careers in conservation
 - d. Partnership approaches to environmental education and public outreach efforts at local and state levels.
 - e. Implementation of improvements that meet the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and other accessibility standards in District preserves.
 - f. The protection of prime and sustainable agricultural lands, including investments in agricultural-support infrastructure.
 - g. Funding for local partners to receive technical support for agriculture and natural resources enhancement.
12. Promotes closer collaboration and coordination between regulatory agencies to enhance permit processing efficiency and reduces overall project costs.
13. Improves and streamlines permitting, CEQA review and compliance processes for emergency repairs, routine maintenance, habitat restoration, and public access projects.
14. Provides open space districts the authority to utilize a variety of contracting methods to construct projects, including design-build methodologies.
15. Promotes implementation of and education about sustainable design and construction, including but not limited to LEED buildings, stormwater treatment and runoff reduction, local (within 150-mile radius of project) contractor/consultant hiring, construction material reuse/recycling, and use of green/energy efficient materials and equipment.

2020 Regional/Local Priorities

Though there is a growing recognition of the importance of regional planning and coordination, local land use authority dominates California planning processes in both the built and natural environments.

In 2020, the District supports:

Plan Bay Area 2050

Ratification of the final preferred scenario of the Plan Bay Area 2050 that curbs urban boundary expansion, more tightly integrates open space preservation and stewardship, and funds District priorities in adopted Priority Conservation Areas (PCA).

San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Measure AA Implementation

Grant program guidelines for SFBRA's Measure AA funds that enable implementation of District priority projects.

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Measure B Implementation

Advance mitigation allocation guidelines for VTA's recently passed Measure B funds that enable implementation of District priority projects.

San Mateo County Transit District Measure W Implementation

Allocation guidelines that enable regional bicycle/pedestrian network connectivity with District projects and regional trail plans.

Regional Collaboration

Efforts to enhance and fund regional collaboration and coordination of conservation plans.

2020 Federal Legislative Priorities

Given the outcomes of the 2016 federal elections, active advocacy at the federal level may be most effectively directed toward protecting existing environmental priorities and regulations.

In 2020, the District will focus on the following:

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Fully funding the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Infrastructure Investment

Inclusion of active transportation and parks-related projects in federal funding allocations for infrastructure.

National Monument Preservation

Policies that protect and designate national monuments within our region that are important to fulfilling the District's mission.

Wildlife Corridors

Policies that enhance habitat connectivity on nonfederal lands through wildlife crossings and other habitat connectivity projects.

Appendix A:

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space Strategic Plan for FY2020-21

Online at: https://www.openspace.org/sites/default/files/StrategicPlan_2021.pdf

Goal 1 – Promote, establish, and implement a regional environmental protection vision with partners

- Objective 1 – Continue implementation of the District’s Vision Plan and communicate progress on projects through reporting results and building partner relationships
- Objective 2 – Build and strengthen diverse partnerships to implement a collaborative and science-based approach to regional environmental protection
- Objective 3 – Build and strengthen relationships with legislators to advocate environmental protection goals
- Objective 4 – Preserve open space lands of local and regional significance

Goal 2 – Protect the positive environmental values of open space lands

- Objective 1 – Take a regional leadership role in promoting the benefits of open space
- Objective 2 – Protect and restore the natural environment in a manner that expands regional resiliency and climate change adaptation to preserve healthy natural systems
- Objective 3 – Work with fire agencies and surrounding communities to strengthen the prevention of, preparation for and response to wildland fires for enhanced ecosystem resiliency and public safety
- Objective 4 – Support the viability of sustainable agriculture and character of rural communities

Goal 3 – Connect people to open space and a regional environmental protection vision

- Objective 1 – Communicate the benefits of a regional environmental protection vision
- Objective 2 – Refine and implement a comprehensive public engagement strategy, including the outreach to diverse communities and enhanced public education programs
- Objective 3 – Expand opportunities to connect people to their public open space preserves consistent with an environmental protection vision
- Objective 4 – Reflect the diverse communities we serve in the District’s, staff, volunteers, and partners

Goal 4 – Strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission

- Objective 1 – Provide the necessary resources, tools, training, and infrastructure, including technology upgrades and capacity building

- Objective 2 – Continuously evaluate and improve processes and business model to effectively and efficiently deliver Vision Plan projects and the District’s ongoing functions
- Objective 3 - Build state of readiness for potential disruptions by completing a risk assessment and creating a business continuity plan
- Objective 4 – Continue to engage constituents for bond sales and via the work of the Bond Oversight Committee – “Promises made, promises kept.”
- Objective 5 – Remain financially sustainable by pursuing and ensuring discretionary funding opportunities and partnerships to augment operating, capital, and bond funding sources, and ensure that large capital expenses and land acquisitions, including associated public access and land management costs, are evaluated within the long-term financial model and remain financially sustainable
- Objective 6 – Continue to recruit, develop and retain talented staff to implement the District's mission and strengthen our organizational capacity