



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

R-15-107
July 14, 2015

AGENDA ITEM 2

AGENDA ITEM

Presentation on Vacant Structures

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "JMQ", is written next to the "GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION" heading.

Receive a presentation on existing Vacant Structures and provide input to guide the development of a Capital Improvement Plan for Vacant Structures.

SUMMARY

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District ("District") manages 29 properties with approximately 55 vacant and unused structures, which include houses, barns, and outbuildings built prior to District ownership and in various conditions of disrepair. These structures were originally evaluated as part of the original land purchase and some were approved by the Board of Directors (Board) for demolition as part of the Preliminary Use and Management Plan for the property, while a long term use and management decision for other structures was deferred pending further staff evaluation. Although the District has more recently removed undesirable structures prior to or immediately after property acquisition, a considerable number of structures still remain and are increasingly raising liability, health and safety, and fire concerns. The General Manager recommends the application of existing Board policy to develop recommended disposition actions for these structures as part of a Capital Improvement Plan for Vacant Structures. The goal of this Committee meeting is to provide staff with initial guidance to develop this plan.

DISCUSSION

The District has undertaken more than \$2.75 million in demolitions over the last three years and aims to complete an estimated \$500,000 of additional demolitions in Fiscal Year 2015-16. Removing these structures restores the open space values of the landscape, reduces liability by abating potentially dangerous conditions, reduces the burden on patrol and maintenance staff, and redirects operational maintenance and management capacity to other higher priorities, including implementation and management of Measure AA projects. Staff recently inventoried the District's vacant structures. The District currently manages approximately 55 vacant structures, which includes 10 houses, 6 of which have been previously approved by the Board for demolition and are included in the FY2015-16 Action Plan.

In the past, the Board has approved two policies to assess a structure's suitability for District use and long-term disposition: *Factors to Consider for Structures Disposition* (Board Policy 4.09) and *Improvements on District Lands* (Board Policy 4.02). The General Manager recommends evaluating all of the vacant structures using the criteria and rubric laid out in the two Board policies to (1) assess which vacant structures should remain and their potential uses (2)

recommend a timeline and sequence for demolishing the remaining vacant structures. To avoid duplicate effort, the General Manager recommends excluding structures that are being evaluated through a separate preserve or site planning process (for example, Alma College and the Bear Creek Redwoods Master Plan) as part of this analysis.

Each structure will require a different level of analysis depending on the condition, context, and usability of the structure. A collapsed barn will not warrant the same level of analysis as a house that could be remodeled and re-inhabited. Houses and farm infrastructure should be given greater consideration. Based on prior field visits and an initial evaluation, most structures are in great disrepair and would require a significant investment to reuse them and maintain them in the long-term. Biological, historical, and hazardous materials assessments will be required for most sites.

The Capital Improvement Plan for Vacant Structures will include a recommended sequence for structures improvements/reuse and demolitions. The recommended sequencing would be based on a number of criteria with input from several District departments, including: Board-approved Preserve Plans that include timing for the opening of new areas to public access, public safety concerns, environmental impacts, and operational impacts.

FISCAL IMPACT

Review of this presentation will have no fiscal impact. If demolitions are approved at a later date, most will not be eligible for Measure AA funding unless the demolition is required for the installation of a new capital improvement (i.e. a new Measure AA-funded trail will travel through the remains of an old vacant structure that needs to first be removed).

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The purpose of this meeting is for the Committee to provide input to guide the dispositions process for vacant structures. CEQA review will be required as part of a future recommendation to demolish, remodel, or physically change the condition of District structures.

NEXT STEPS

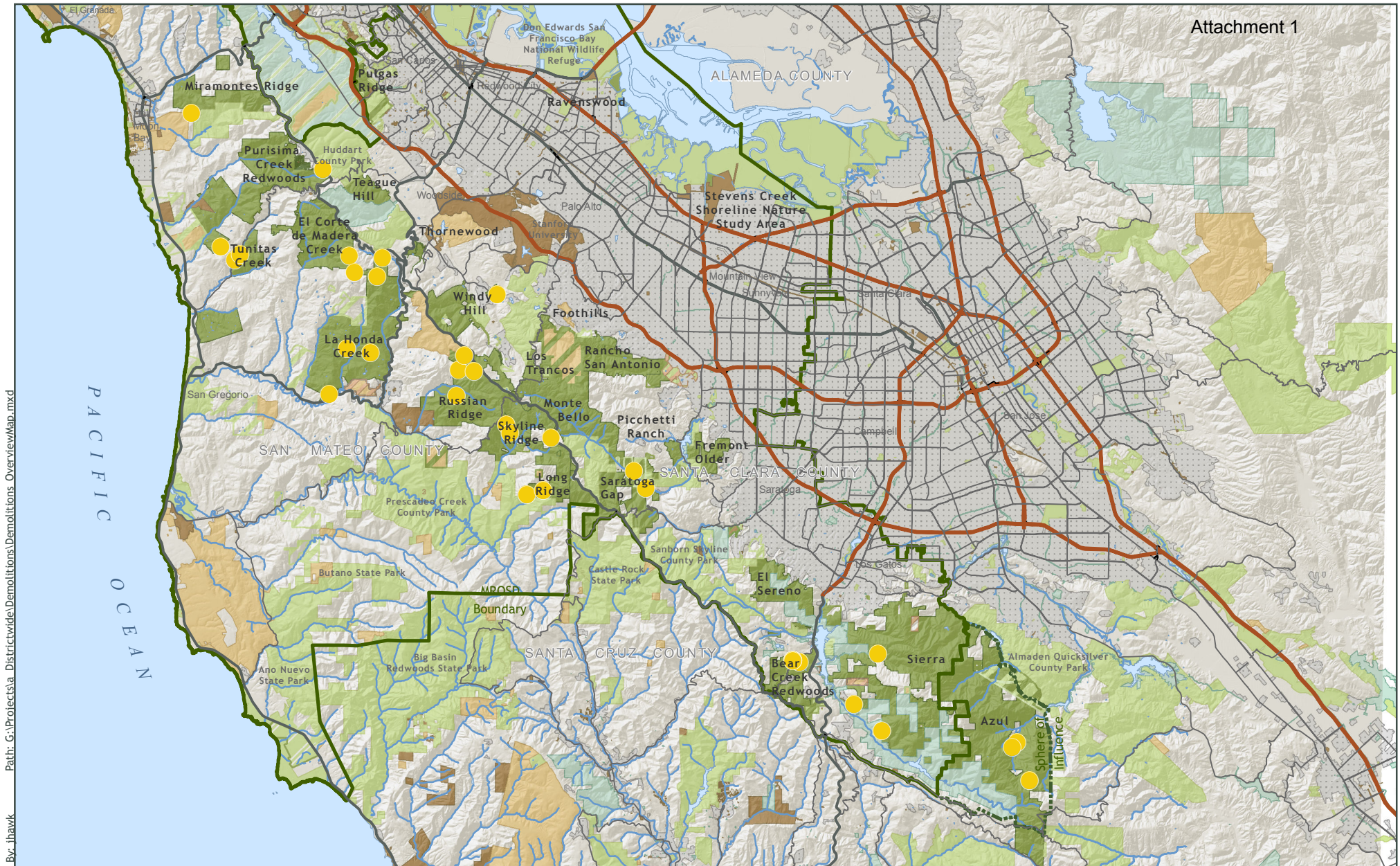
Staff will analyze all of the properties and develop a capital improvement plan for vacant structures based on Committee input. Staff will return to the Committee with a draft plan in the late fall. At this meeting, staff will seek the Committee's concurrence on the draft plan approach and next steps prior to bringing the plan to the Board of Directors for approval. This plan will guide staff in developing the Action Plan in the following years and help staff balance the implementation of Measure AA projects with other capital projects.

Attachment

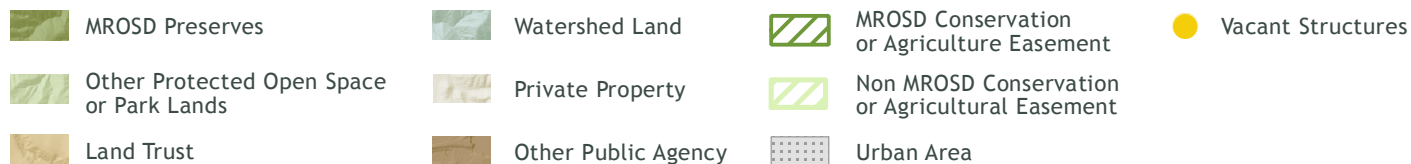
1. Map of Vacant Structures in the District

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Vacant Structures Map



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(MROSD)



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