

# PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

**Scope Proposal RFP Open Space Meeting**

June 16, 2021



# AGENDA

## Purpose of Meeting:

The purpose of meeting is to **clarify the objectives and scope for the RFP** to assess the existing open space and **define management parameters** for wildfire mitigation, vegetation and habitat management, and recreational use.

1. Introductions
2. Efforts to Date
3. Existing Resources
4. Open Space RFP Objectives

# INTRODUCTIONS

## Advisory Committee

- Lynn Bell
- Caroline Pyrz

## Biking Representatives

- Jonathan Carter
- Erick Burton

## Hiking / Environmental Representatives

- Deniz Bolbol
- Kristin Mercer

## City Representatives

- Daniel Ourtiague
- Brigitte Shearer

## Gates + Associates

- Linda Gates
- Grant Hudson

# OVERVIEW

belmontprosplan.com

## BELMONT PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

OUR PLAN | EVENTS | RESOURCES | CONTACT



Open Space



School Districts



Inclusivity



Youth



Seniors

## PROS Master Plan, Survey, Inventory, Focus Groups



### Belmont Parks, Outdoor Recreation Programs and Open Space Community Survey

Thank you for your time and input to shape the future of Belmont

Welcome to the first round of our PROS (Parks, Recreation, and Open Space) Plan outreach! Your input will help guide the **development of our 15+ year vision** for improvements to these spaces and the activities that can occur in our backyard. Thank you in advance for your feedback on all three components of this Master Plan:

#### Parks, Outdoor Recreation Programs, and Open Space

- As we move through this process the Master Plan will reflect the following Guiding Principles:
- Provide **equitable access** to resources and activities across the entire city
  - Promote **inclusion** to people of all backgrounds, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic position or physical/cognitive ability
  - Make all users feel **welcome and safe**
  - Offer services and activities across a range of **interests, abilities, and ages**
  - Reflect our commitment to **environmental resilience** and sustainability
  - Respect the beauty and importance of our **natural resources**

#### PARKS INVENTORY



**ALEXANDER PARK**  
400 Block of Voltaire  
Type: Group C  
Size: 1.2 Acre  
Constructed:

#### PARK OVERVIEW

Alexander Park is a high use park within a residential neighborhood adjacent to Voltaire Way. The park entrance is served by a multi-trail which establishes a parkway within the surrounding neighborhood connected to a concrete walkway. The park area includes a large lawn area, basketball court, a handball court, a large lawn area, half-court basketball, picnic area, new portable restroom, and new accessible site. Parking is limited.

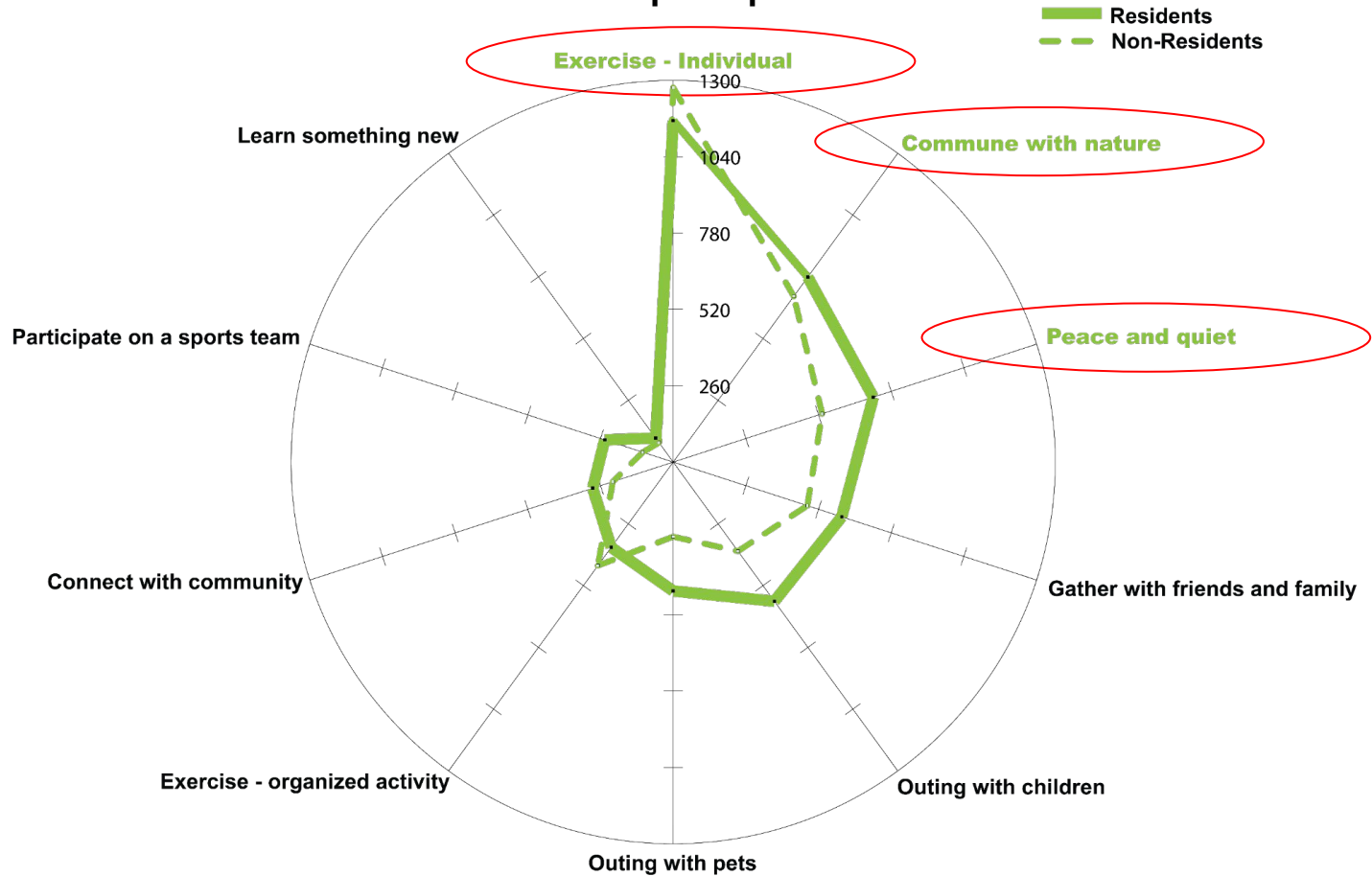
#### EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



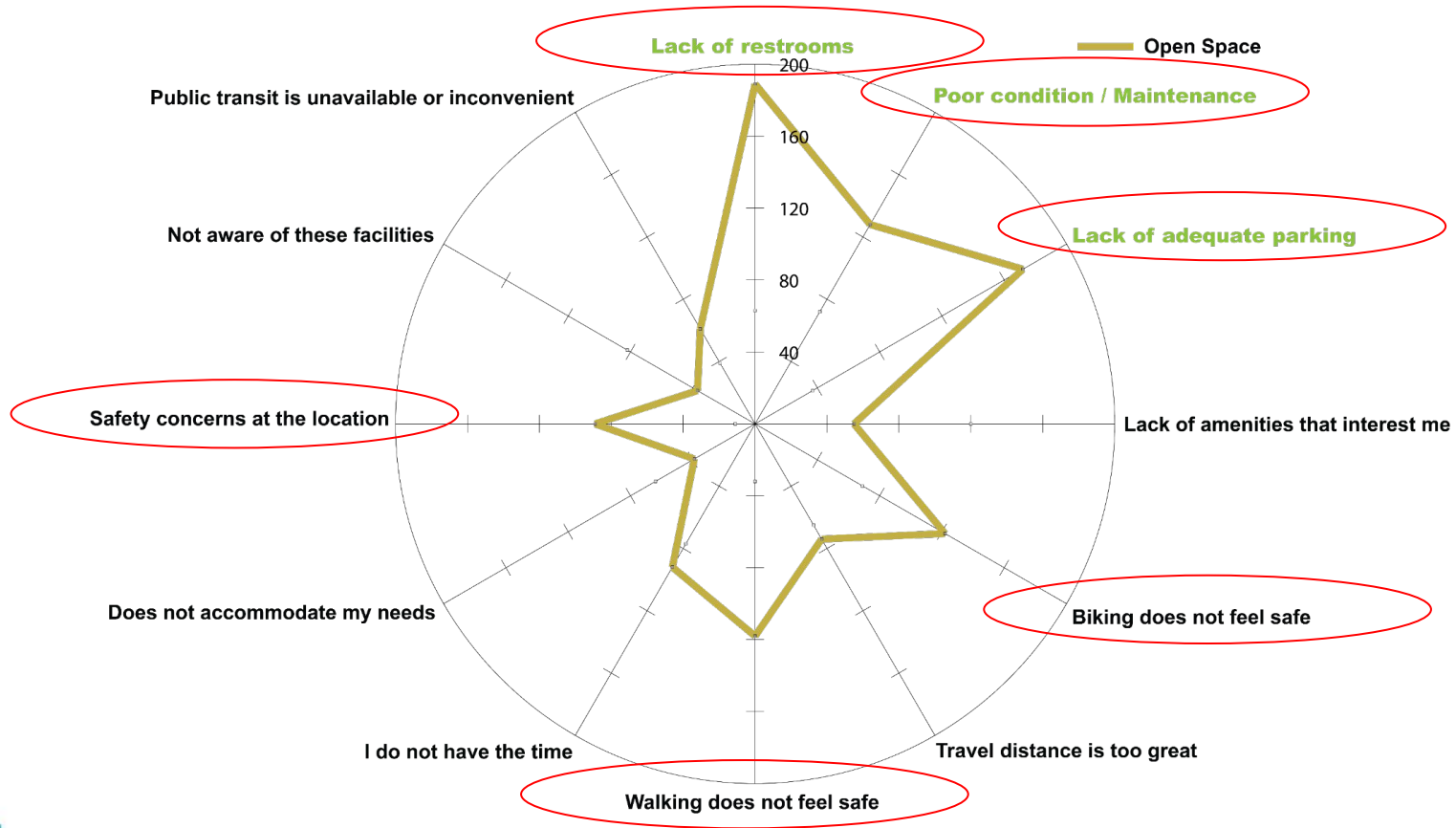
# PROCESS



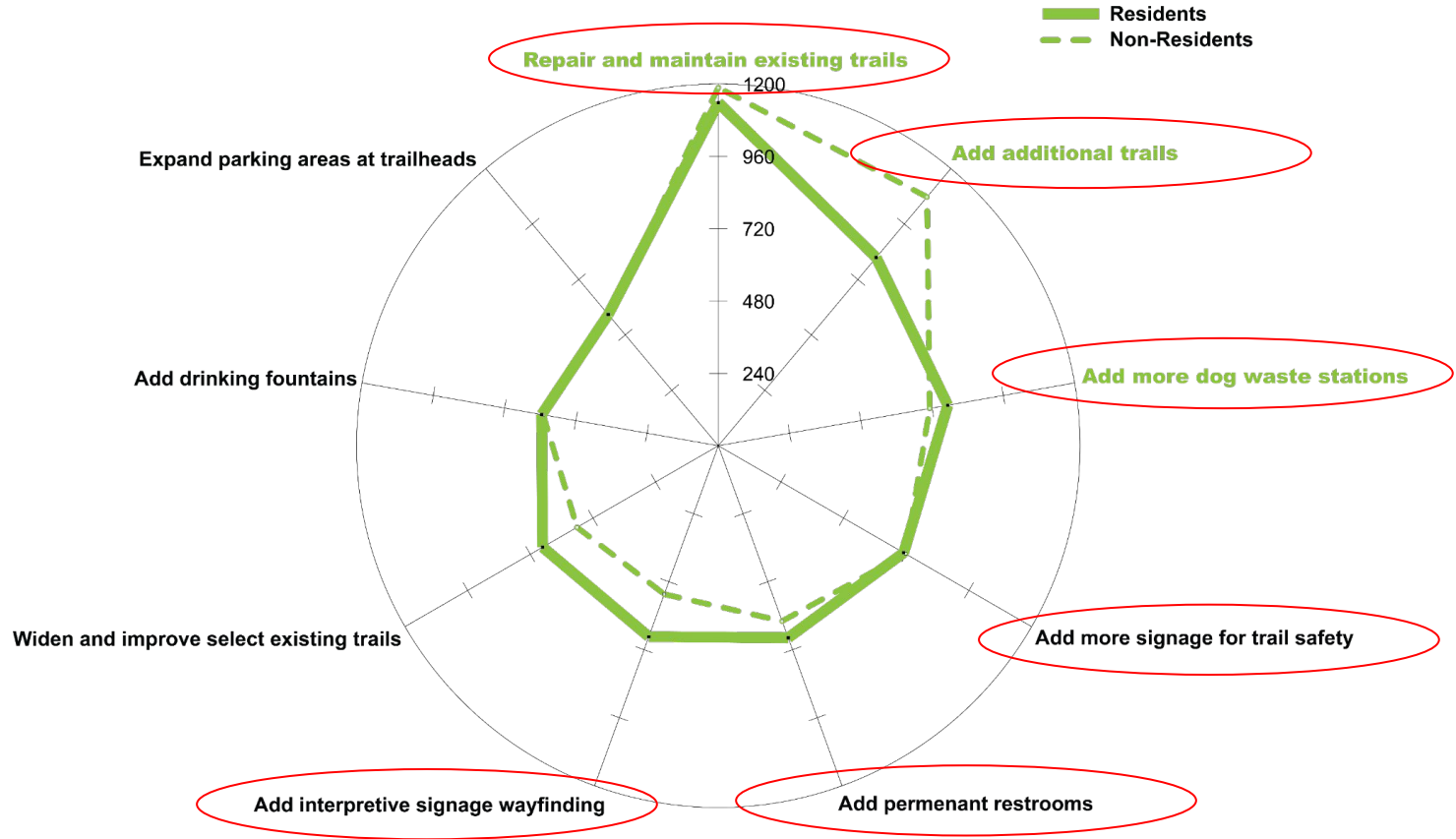
# Use of Open Spaces



# Factors Limiting Use of Open Spaces

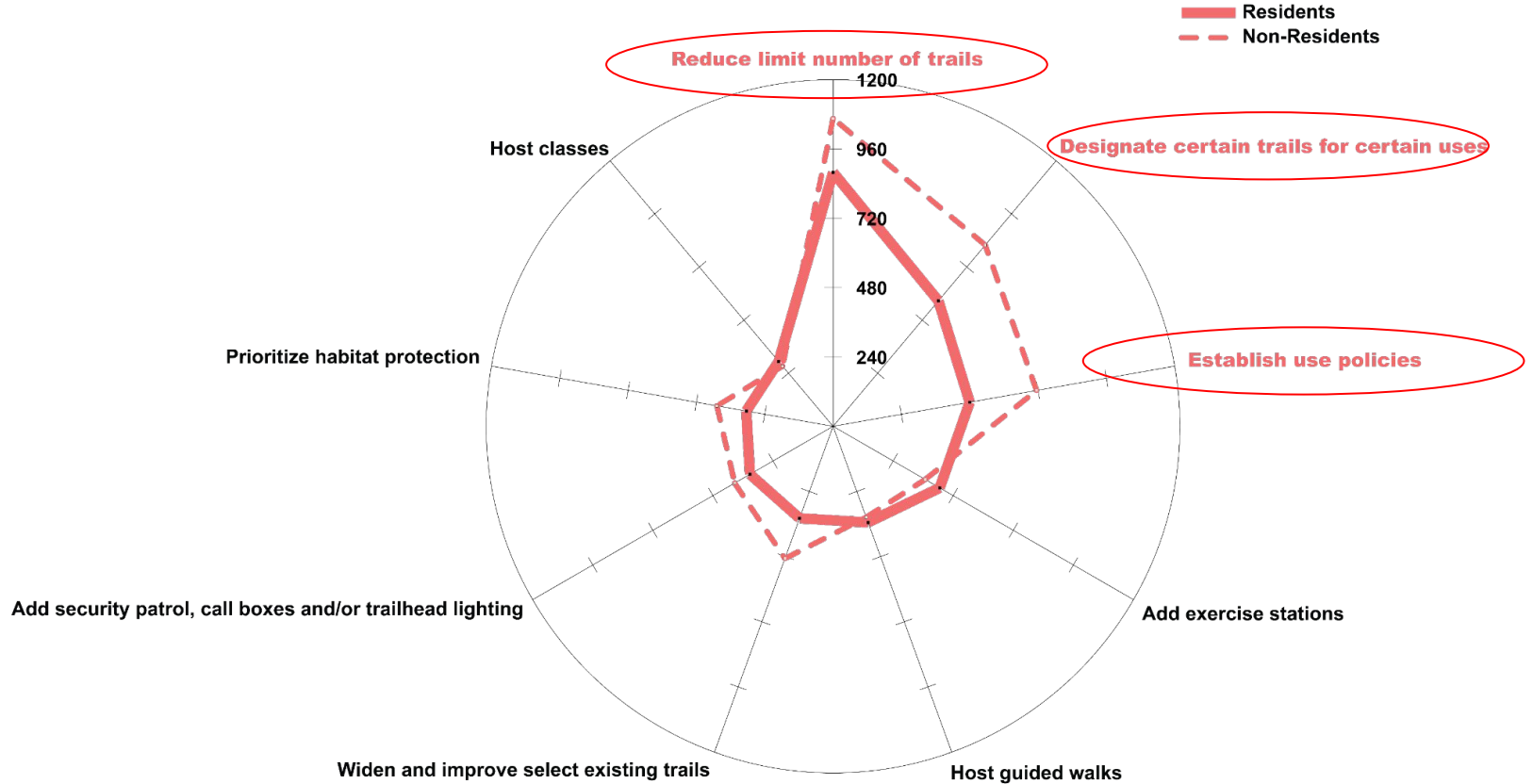


# Ideas Supported





# Ideas Not Supported



# EMAIL COMMENTS

## Common Themes:

- 1. User Capacity of Open Spaces Between Bikers and Hikers**
  - Single-use, Wide Trails, How to Address?
- 2. Preserving Habitat, Mitigating Further Degradation of Trails**
  - Erosion, Dangerous Trails, Sensitive Habitat Areas
  - Creating Volunteer Opportunities
  - Best Management Practices for Open Spaces
- 3. Preserve Areas Delineated for Preservation**
  - John Brook's Open Space

*“Waterdog used to be a wonderful place to take peaceful nature hikes. However lately the mountain bikes are taking over the trails. Some of them are considerate. But many tear up the trails, go off trail, or ride at inappropriate times like after a rainfall when the trails are soft and vulnerable to erosion. Senior citizens (like myself) especially are starting to feel less comfortable hiking there because of the trail damage hazards and because of the fear of being hit by a bike. We can't jump out of the way of an oncoming bike as quickly as we did when we were younger.” - Carol Wilhelmy*

*“With as few as 1,000 remaining, this beauty below is the rare and endangered San Francisco garter snake, christened “the most beautiful serpent in North America.” It is found ONLY in SF and the peninsula, and needs a riparian (pond/wetland) habitat for survival. I have seen one in Waterdog, and they are documented on the General Plan Conservation Element as present in Waterdog, but they are very rare and are protected under the Endangered Species Act (U.S Fish and Wildlife Service).” - Kristen Mercer*

*“I often hike the trails at Waterdog Lake and would like to remind the Parks and Recreation Commissioners that this area is also known as the John Brooks Memorial Open Space. Isn't this because the land was donated by John Brooks? As I understand it, the land was donated with the expressed purpose of preserving a natural space. Please bear this in mind when considering any trail developments that might put recreational biking (trail biking and in particular extreme mountain biking, which is really a sport) above the preservation the natural landscape and habitat.” - Connie Tettenborn*

# DOCUMENTS

- 1992 Master Plan
- 1998 Trail Master Plan
- Trail maps
- Parcel Maps and Historical Documents
- City's 2035 General Plan

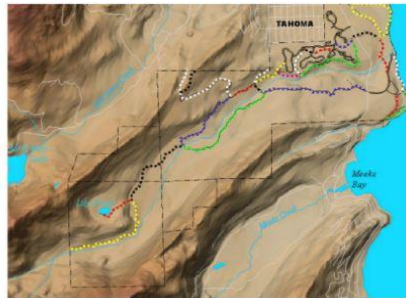
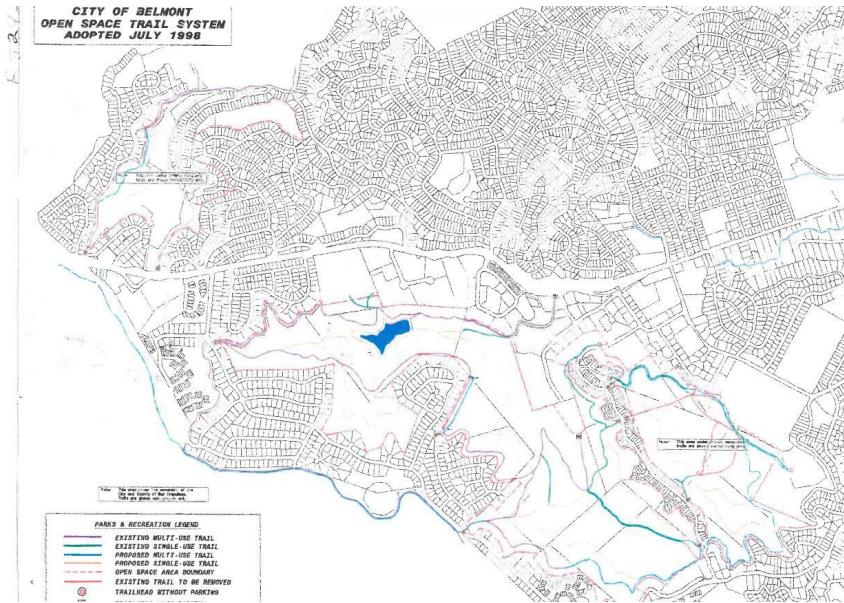


Figure 2.2 – Map of a Segmented Trail System

## Best Management Practices

For Road Rehabilitation

### Road-To-Trail Conversion



# 4 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element



- City's 2035 General Plan
  - “to ensure that it accurately reflects the community’s priorities and available resources” (policy 4.1-1a)
  - Section 5.2 Conservation

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

### HAZARD AND RECREATION

**GOAL 4.1** Provide an expanded, high quality, and diversified park system that serves the entire Belmont community, enhances community identity, and is conveniently located for community use.

#### Policy 4.1.1

Use the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan to define the vision, goals, and strategies for maintenance and expansion. Belmont's park system and to guide implementation efforts.

#### Policy 4.1.2

Ensure an effective and maintain a cycle of at least 10-15 years to ensure that a community's recreation system can be maintained and that all available resources. The update should include:

- Assessment of the park and recreation needs of existing and future residents.
- Evaluation to a cycle of evaluation of the parkland assets, evaluation of parkland assets on an individual level, determine what neighborhood are currently underserved.
- Appropriate uses of parks and recreational facilities based on needs assessment.
- Opportunities and policies for expanding and enhancing the park system and

recreational facilities, especially in underserved areas that would benefit from additional investments in neighborhood parks.

• Enhance the use of development for the open space. Belmont's Cultural High School District's recommendation to create public parks, facilities, and neighborhood recreation opportunities for scientific, artistic, and historic exploration and discovery within Belmont's parks and recreational facilities.

- Promote strategic and funding priorities for parks and recreation facilities.

**Action 4.1.1a** Update the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan to include more than 10-15 years to ensure that a community's recreation system can be maintained and that all available resources. The update should include:

- Assessment of the park and recreation needs of existing and future residents.

**Action 4.1.2a** Establish priorities for use of park space for use and include how to achieve and maintain the city's parkland resources, based on needs and priorities identified in the updated Parks and Open Space Master Plan.

**Action 4.1.2b** Support acquisition or development of parkland in underserved neighborhoods that are currently underserved, to meet the City's population demand.

**Action 4.1.2c** These opportunities to re-evaluate underserved parks into vital parks or community spaces are available, providing them in areas that are currently underserved.

**Action 4.1.2d** Develop a plan program for "parklets" or "pop-up parks" to create small but functional public open spaces in areas parking spaces or other underserved places in the public rights-of-way. RPO in the Belmont PD, but they're they're parked adjacent to areas in the PD zone.

**Action 4.1.2e** Encourage the installation of recreation amenity and amenity development public space in new developments and redevelopment including areas to off-street bike racing, tennis, and tennis.

**Action 4.1.2g** Consider park use in the Historic Center and Belmont Ranch Park based on recreation use.

**RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW**

California State Law (Government Code sections 65020 and 65040-65070) requires California cities to adopt an Open Space Element as part of their General Plan. Open space land is defined in the California Government Code as any parcel or area of land or water that is normally unimproved and devoted to open space use, and that is designated on a local, regional or State open space plan, including open space for the preservation of natural resources and open space for outdoor recreation. Along with the



Photo from Belmont City Department and recreational facilities using Belmont Recreation.

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This element presents the goals, policies, and actions for parks, recreation, and natural open space in Belmont. The City of Belmont's parks and recreation system is integral to the well-being of the community and quality of life. The city has excellent open space resources and great number many thousands of the year, encouraging people to be outdoors. Maintenance, improvements, and open space resources are provided by the Department of Parks and Recreation. Maintaining existing facilities, and developing additional facilities to meet future needs, and providing programming for parks and recreation areas in the city's population groups are important components of this element.

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## 5.2 OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

**NATURAL RESOURCES OPEN SPACE**

Belmont's outdoor open space are part of the regional open space network as the San Francisco Peninsula. Scenic habitats in the city include San Juan Hills, Western Hills, Silver Dog Lake, and Belmont Creek. The watershed for the San Francisco Bay Area is located to the west of Belmont, and significant mountains located in the north. These outdoor open spaces are valuable because they provide natural habitats for wildlife and increase wildlife population diversity. They also play important roles in ecosystem management, ecological functions, and other environmental conservation efforts.

With the extensive natural open space resources provides numerous benefits for the Belmont community, it also brings challenges. Human activity and recreation opportunities must be balanced with maintaining the proper functioning of natural systems. For instance, the City has to manage natural systems, including fire hazards, and maintain such as part of its effort to preserve and sustain the open spaces. The habitats of the natural resources open space found in Belmont are highly valued both and should be made clear in the General Plan EIR.

## NATURAL OPEN SPACE HABITATS IN BELMONT

Shown in Figure 5-1, the natural open space habitats in Belmont vary widely, from wooded and forested habitats to the western hills to herbaceous-dominated habitats and aquatic habitats in eastern Belmont. The riparian-dominated habitats include Valley Oak Woodland, Valley Foothill Riparian, Coastal Oak Woodland, Montane Hardwood, and Blue Oak Woodland. Herbaceous-dominated habitats are found mostly in the southwestern area of Belmont and include Chamaecypariss, Redbank, Chamaecypariss and Coastal Scrub. Herbaceous-dominated habitats include Salix, Eriogonum, and Coastal Scrub. Riparian-dominated habitats include Salix, Eriogonum, and Coastal Scrub. The vegetation classification for these areas are shown in Figure 5-2.

Wildlife habitats are found in a few areas in eastern Belmont, as shown in Figure 5-3. The O'Neil Slough is an extensive and diverse wetland, and there are also riparian and marine-dependent wetlands in eastern Belmont, including near the US 101 river. Habitat fragmentation also occurs around the wetlands. Wetlands are considered natural communities by several resource agencies and are given special considerations.



FIGURE 5-1: HABITAT TYPES



Source: City of Belmont, 2016, Vegetation Classification & Inventory, 2016. Modified from Vegetation & Land Use, 2016. Photo: Getty Images, 2016. Photo: Getty Images, 2016.

# OPEN SPACES

## Waterdog Open Space



- User Capacity / Safety Concerns
- Trail Condition
  - Erosion in high slope areas, general trail conditions
- Fire Safety
- Vegetation and Habitat Protection



# OPEN SPACES

## San Juan Canyon Open Space



- Trail Delineation
- Trail Condition
  - Erosion in high slope areas, general trail conditions
- Fire Safety
- Vegetation and Habitat Protection



# OPEN SPACE RFP OBJECTIVES

Assess existing conditions to define recreation capacity while protecting natural resources.

Define parameters for:

- Fire protection and emergency access
- Preserving habitat
- Protecting natural systems
- Developing best practices/guidelines for trail maintenance
- Optimizing recreational capacity



Water Dog Lake  
Open Space Trail Map  
BELMONT, CA



San Juan Canyon  
Open Space Trail Map  
BELMONT, CA