

# PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

## Advisory Committee #4

April 5, 2022



*PROS Plan purpose:*

*Set the **framework for decision makers** in the planning, maintenance, development, and/or rehabilitation of Belmont's Parks and open space system for a **15 year horizon**.*



***Purpose** To discuss the Open Space Management Plan*

## **PROS Plan Efforts to Date**

### **Open Space Management Plan**

- Overview of planning process and tasks
- Management alternatives input

### **Schedule + Next Steps**



[BelmontPROSplan.com](http://BelmontPROSplan.com)

[Info@belmontprosplan.com](mailto:Info@belmontprosplan.com)



# EFFORTS TO DATE

- **Existing Conditions Assessments**
- **Community Engagement**
- **Benchmarking + Trends**
- **Park Typologies**
- **Park-specific Recommendations**
  - Park-specific Focus Groups: Hidden Canyon 10/18, Ralston Ranch 10/20
  - In-depth review at January, February, and March 2022 Parks & Recreation Commission
- **Goals and Strategies**
- **Recommendation Prioritization + Action Plan**
- **Continuing Community Engagement**
- **Open Space Management Plan**

# BIG IDEAS + GOALS



**The City  
as Your  
Backyard**



**Outdoor  
Recreation  
for All**



**Celebrate  
the Outdoors**

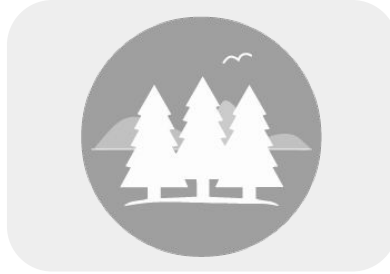


**Prioritize  
Environmental  
+ Financial  
Sustainability**

## 12 Goals

# BIG IDEAS + GOALS

## The City as Your Backyard

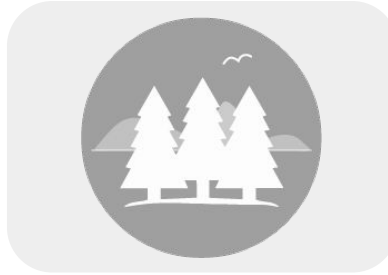


- Goal 1.** Support a **connected Belmont** by encouraging a **robust pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit network** unifying PROS sites across the City.
- Goal 2.** Foster a **healthy community** through spaces, amenities, programs, and public art to encourage **physical activity, social interaction,** and highlight Belmont's **culture and history.**
- Goal 3.** Expand and enhance the existing PROS system to **meet evolving community needs** by establishing **new uses, improved spaces,** and recreation amenities that **highlight the natural environment.**

# BIG IDEAS + GOALS

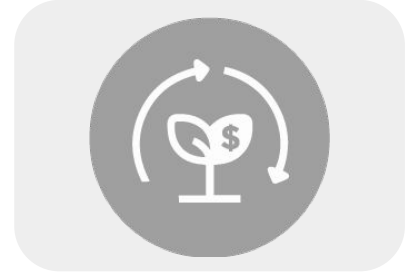


## Outdoor Recreation for All



- Goal 4.** Leverage assets of the PROS system to **support community health** providing **diverse, equitable, and inclusive** spaces and amenities with **accessible routes**.
- Goal 5.** Revitalize the PROS system to be **adaptable, flexible**, and supportive of **many uses and users** now and into the future.
- Goal 6.** **Partner** with a variety of agencies, departments, volunteer groups, other entities, and the community to **actualize PROS Plan goals** and policies.

# BIG IDEAS + GOALS

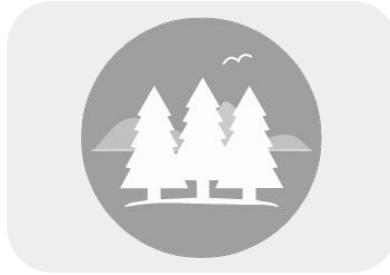


- Goal 7.** Develop and implement an **Open Space Management Plan**.
- Goal 8.** **Expand educational opportunities** in parks and open spaces to highlight the local ecosystems.
- Goal 9.** Continue to **enrich Belmont's outdoor recreation opportunities** with trail improvements, volunteer collaborations, and wayfinding features.





# BIG IDEAS + GOALS



**Prioritize  
Environmental  
+ Financial  
Sustainability**

**Goal 10.** Nurture the **ecological strength** of the City's natural resources through **resource-efficient landscapes** and operations.

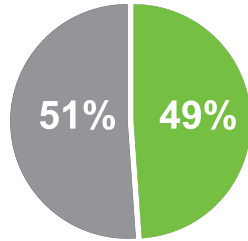
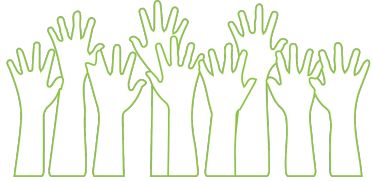
**Goal 11.** Provide **high-quality, actively-managed,** and **well-maintained** PROS assets supported by a range of funding sources.

**Goal 12.** Prioritize **sustainable, resilient,** and **responsible management and maintenance** practices, improvements, and projects at PROS sites.

# AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY

## Community Survey

2800+ Responses



■ Non-Residents  
■ Residents

## Emails + Comments

Over **730**

(2020 to February 2022)

*Emails to [Info@BelmontPROSplan.com](mailto:Info@BelmontPROSplan.com) and/or P&R Commission, and Comments via project website*

## Focus Groups

**11** in 2021

## PROS Advisory Committee

**4** meetings in 2021 + 2022

## Parks and Recreation Commission

*Updates at **every** P&R Commission meeting*

*Recommendations reviewed in-depth at **Jan/Feb/March 2022***

## Pop-up participation at City events

*Concerts in the Park, Movie Night in the Park, etc.*

\* April 16th  
*Egg Hunt*

\* April 24th  
*Celebrate the Music*

## City Council presentations

**3** in 2021 + 2022

# OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The purpose of the Open Space Management Plan is to guide City decision-making for:

- Managing sensitive resources
- Balancing recreation uses
- Mitigating hazards



# OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN



# OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN

## Plan process includes 8 tasks:

1. Project startup and orientation
2. Review of existing information
3. Develop goals and policies
4. Describe existing environmental conditions
5. Describe current and potential future recreational activities
6. Develop Management Alternatives and recommendations
7. Prepare Open Space Management Plan
8. Meetings for public input and Plan adoption



# OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN

## Current Tasks

1. Task 3: Develop Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions
2. Task 4: Describe existing environmental conditions
3. Task 5: Describe current and potential recreational activities
4. Task 6: Development Management Alternatives



# Task 3: Goals and Policies

1. Reviewed goals and policies from existing City planning documents.
2. Identified those goals and policies relevant to the OSMP.
3. Reviewed and adapted goals, policies, and implementation actions from regional open space management plans.



# Task 3: Goals and Policies

**Goal**=A general statement that articulates a desired outcome.

**Policy**=A more specific statement that states what steps the City will take to achieve a desired outcome.

**Implementation Action**=A measurable action that specifies how a desired outcome is achieved.

Developing definitions for key terms (e.g., riparian resources, sensitive resources)



# Task 3: Goals and Policies

1. Existing planning documents include goals, policies, and implementation actions in the following categories:
  - a. Protection of sensitive resources
  - b. Trail maintenance
  - c. Visitor Demand and Management
  - d. Visitor Safety and Hazard Management



# Task 3: Goals and Policies

1. Identified **new** categories to address management issues and public comments:
  - a. New unauthorized trails
  - b. Trail closures - redundant trails
  - c. Protection of riparian resources
  - d. Adaptive Management
  - e. Use of e-bikes
  - f. Wildfire hazards



# Task 4: Environmental Assessment

## Desktop Review of Environmental Conditions

1. CNDDDB records
2. USFWS Information for Planning and Conservation Species
3. CNPS Inventory records
4. California Bird Species of Special Concern
5. USFWS Critical Habitat Mapper



# Task 4: Environmental Assessment

## Field Assessment of Environmental Conditions Waterdog and San Juan Canyon open spaces

1. “Ground-truth” vegetation communities obtained from the San Mateo County vegetation mapping.
2. Assess conditions of 9.6 miles of trails.
3. Determine if existing conditions provide suitable habitat for any special-status plant or wildlife species.
4. Assess baseline conditions of vegetation as observed from trails.

# Task 4: Environmental Assessment

Potentially suitable habitat for:

1. Western leatherwood
2. San Francisco Dusky Footed Woodrat

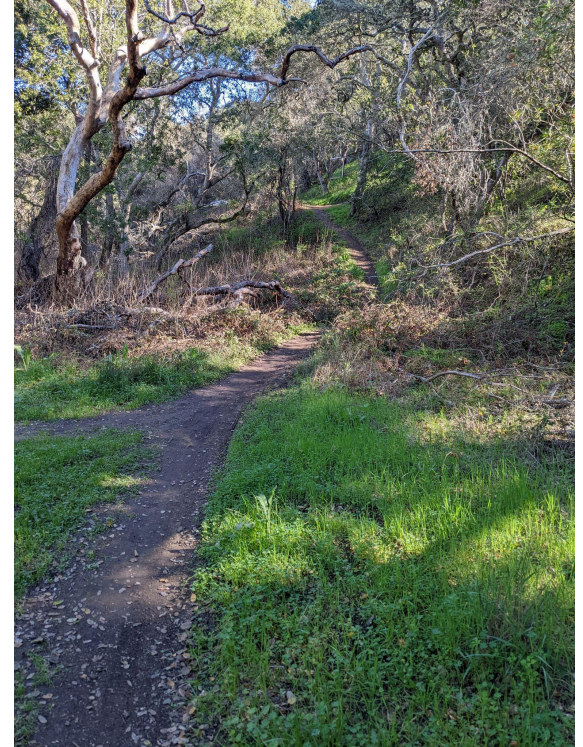


Image source: National Park Service

# Task 4: Environmental Assessment

Trail Assessment reviewed the following:

1. Trail erosion
2. Presence of multiple trails (social trails) in a single area
3. Presence of legacy trails
4. Stream crossings



# Task 4: Environmental Assessment



Low Erosion Example

# Task 4: Environmental Assessment



Medium Erosion Example



# Task 4: Environmental Assessment

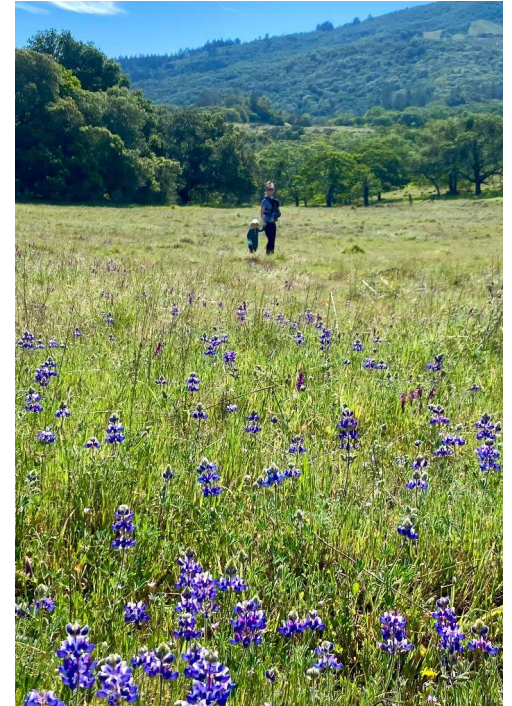


High Erosion Example

# Task 5: Recreational Use Assessment

## Examine current and future recreation uses

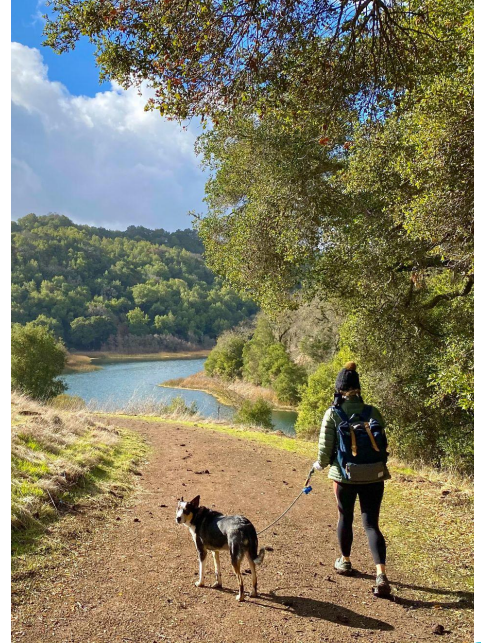
1. Both current and future use in Belmont open space areas are influenced by local population size.
2. Belmont's population grew at 10% during the last decade.
3. Other factors, such as the pandemic and new technology, also influence use in more significant ways than population size.
4. Results of regional park surveys show trail use and wildlife and scenery viewing most frequently engaged activities for open space areas.



# Task 5: Recreational Use Assessment

## Managing the open space trail system

1. Trail system design and maintenance can accommodate varying levels of use while avoiding environmental degradation
2. Legacy trails were not always built or maintained with current Best Management Practices for trail design and maintenance
3. Management options for legacy trails:
  - a. Re-construct in the current, exact location
  - b. Construct new segment along the same general route
  - c. Re-route
  - d. Seasonal closures
  - e. Permanent closures



# Task 6: Management Alternatives

1. Developing two management alternatives for the OSMP.
2. Each alternative represents a mix of goals, policies, and implementation actions to address management concerns and public comments.
3. Choice between alternatives is typically not “All or None.”

# Task 6: Management Alternatives

**Management Alternatives must address all goal/policy categories:**

1. Protection of sensitive resources
2. Trail maintenance
3. Visitor Demand and Management
4. Visitor Safety and Hazard Management
5. New unauthorized trails
6. Trail closures
7. Protection of riparian resources
8. Adaptive Management
9. Use of e-bikes
10. Wildfire hazards



# Task 6: Management Alternatives

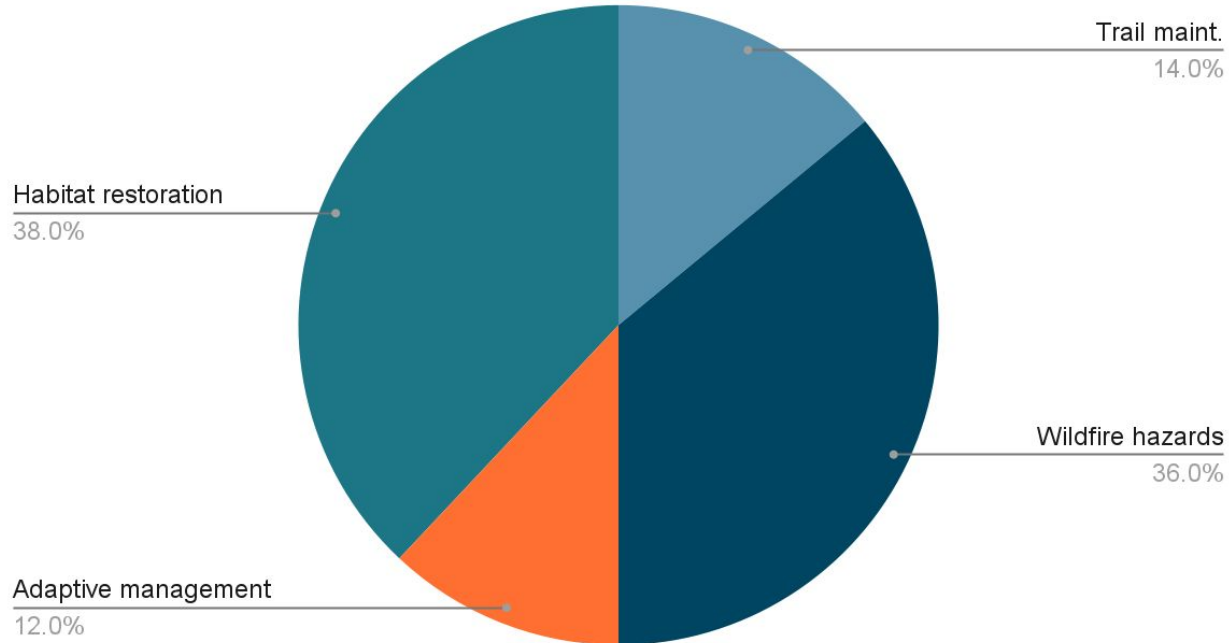
## Defining management actions:

1. Trail maintenance: periodic, regular actions to clean or repair drainage structures (Water bars, rolling dips).
2. Habitat restoration: identifying areas where native plants could be successfully restored, then designing and implementing restoration plans.
3. Adaptive Management: periodically collecting information on resources conditions and determining any follow-up actions to meet restoration or protection goals.
4. Wildfire hazards: periodically reducing excessive fuels through grazing, manual labor and equipment.

# Task 6: Management Alternatives

How should the city and its partners allocate effort to the OSMP?

Hypothetical Effort/Dollars



# Preliminary conclusions

1. Existing plans focused on protection sensitive resources, trail maintenance, visitor demand and management, and visitor safety/hazard management.
2. New policies are needed to address: adaptive management, trail management, protecting riparian resources, e-bikes, and wildfire hazards.
3. Multiple trail sections are in poor condition and need immediate attention.
4. Habitat conditions show minimal degradation.
5. Western leatherwood (plant) and SF Dusky-footed woodrat were found.
6. There are some opportunities for habitat restoration.
7. There are multiple opportunities for periodic wildfire hazard reduction.

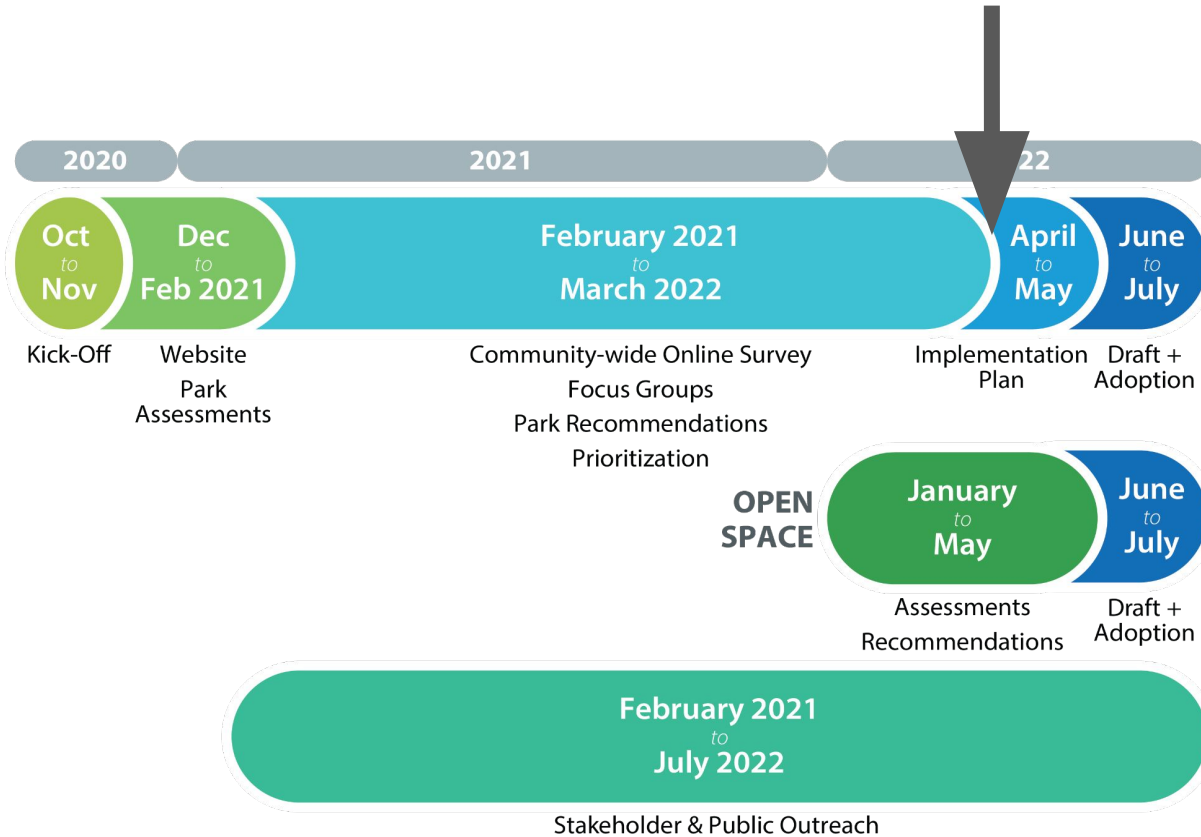


# Next Steps

1. Finish Environmental Use Assessment.
2. Finish Recreation Use Assessment.
3. Finish Management Alternatives.
4. Prepare Draft Open Space Management Plan.
5. Solicit Public Feedback.



# SCHEDULE



- **Continuing Community Input Opportunities**
  - April 16: *Egg Hunt*
  - April 24: *Celebrate the Music*
  - Email to [info@belmontprosplan.com](mailto:info@belmontprosplan.com)
  - Parks & Recreation Commission
- **Open Space Management Plan**
  - July
- **PROS Plan: Implementation**
  - Prioritization
  - Action Plan

# THANK YOU!



# ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Q + A

# **PUBLIC** **COMMENTS**

*2 minutes per speaker*

# ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

[BelmontPROSplan.com](http://BelmontPROSplan.com)

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