

Fourth Overview of Other Agency Practices

Planning Commission Meeting

December 16, 2021

Ridgeline Phase I Meetings

- Mtg #1) Review of City Documentation August 16, 2018
- Mtg #2) Mapping and View line Exercises June 18, 2020
- Mtg #3) Review of Other Agency Practices July 9, 2020
- **Mtg #4) Second Review, Other Agency Practices, Next Steps Discussion** December 17, 2021
- Mtg #5) Recommendation for Council Consideration
- Mtg #6) Public Workshop

Review of Other Agency Practices

- Additional Planning Commission Requests
 - Local Cities: Westlake Village, City of Agoura Hills
 - Fairfax and Northern CA Cities
- Focus Areas:
 - Definition of a Ridgeline
 - Mapping Style
 - Tools
 - View lines

Review of Other Agency Practices

- Additional Planning Commission requests:
 - Expanded Scenic Corridor Areas
 - Private View Protection
 - Developed Ridgeline Best Practices

City of Westlake Village

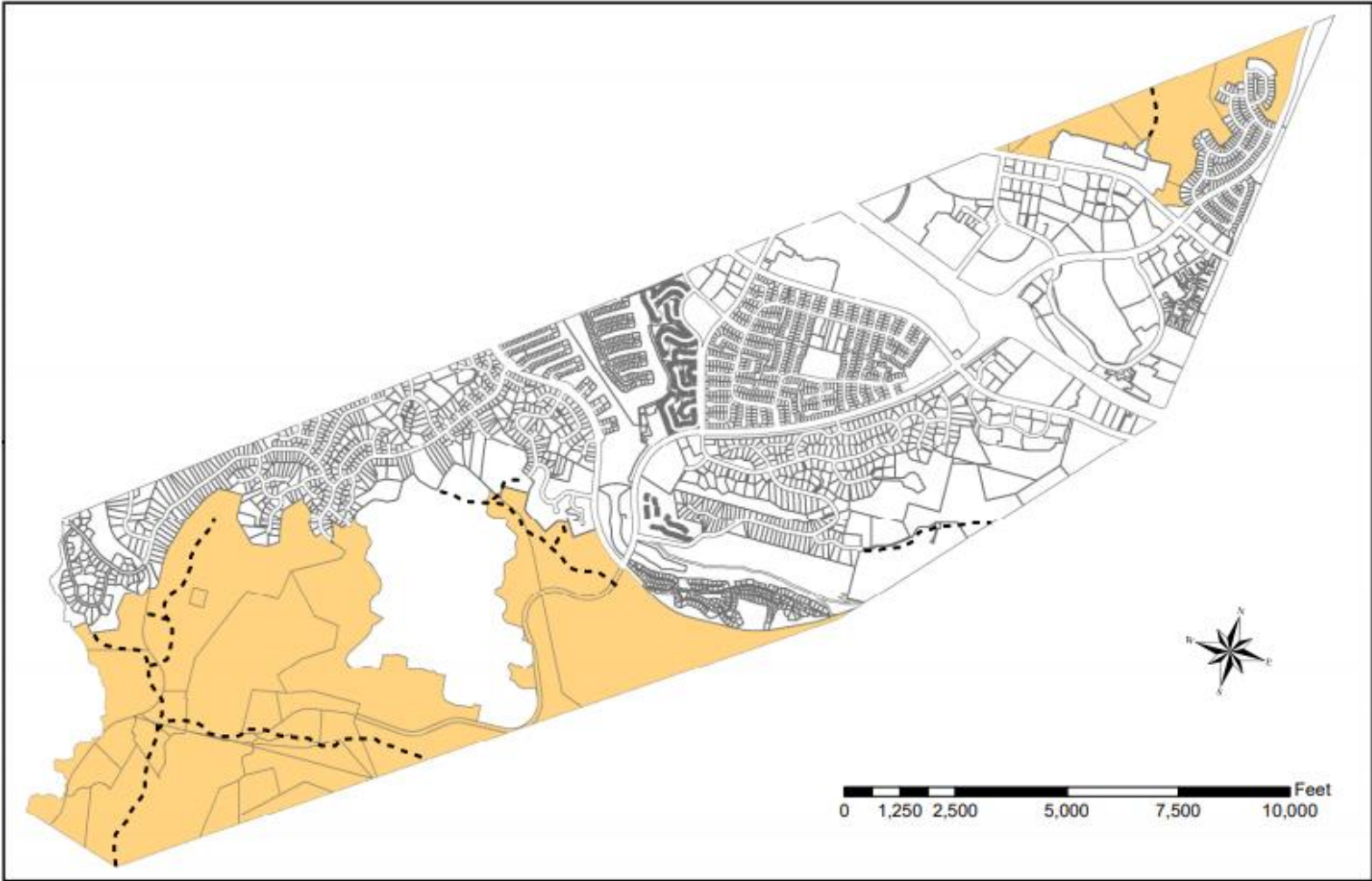


City of Westlake Village

- “Prominent Ridgelines” are those designated in the General Plan and which form a part of the skyline visible from any City arterial.
- General Plan identifies Ridgelines in the Hillside Management Area of the Code.
- The areas identified as Hillside Management Areas are also classified as Open Space, and as such, will not be developed in the future.
- Broken lines are used to map ridgelines.

Figure 9.

Hillside Management Area and Prominent Ridgelines

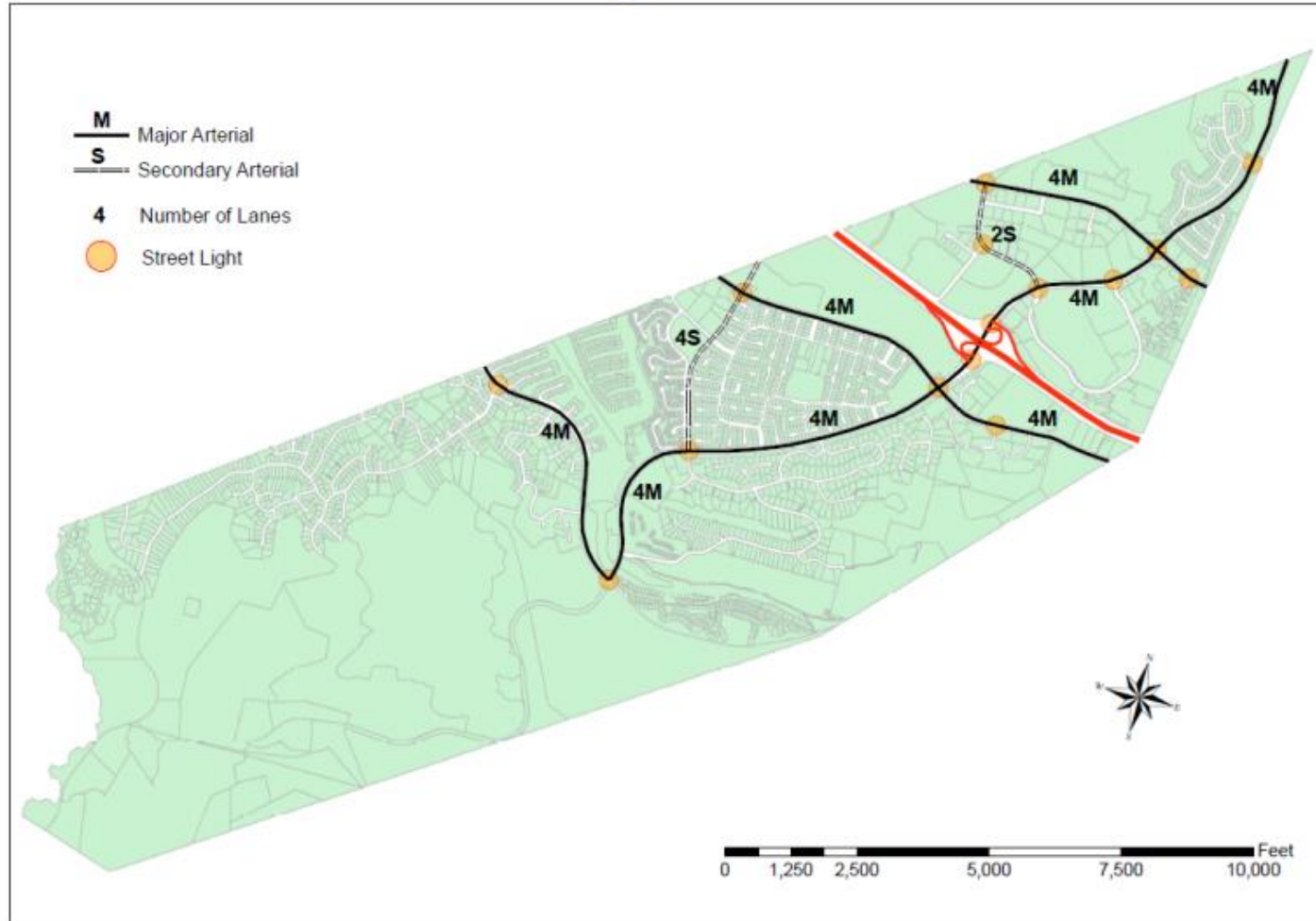


City of Westlake Village

- Chapter 9.17 Hillside Development Standards
 - The Code's purpose is to preserve and maintain the natural character and visual amenities of hillsides as a scenic resource to the City.
- Visual protection tools include:
 - Minimize grading
 - Integration of natural landscaping to minimize view impacts
- View lines are taken from the City's arterial streets (mapped in the General Plan)

Figure 13.

Existing Arterials



City of Agoura Hills

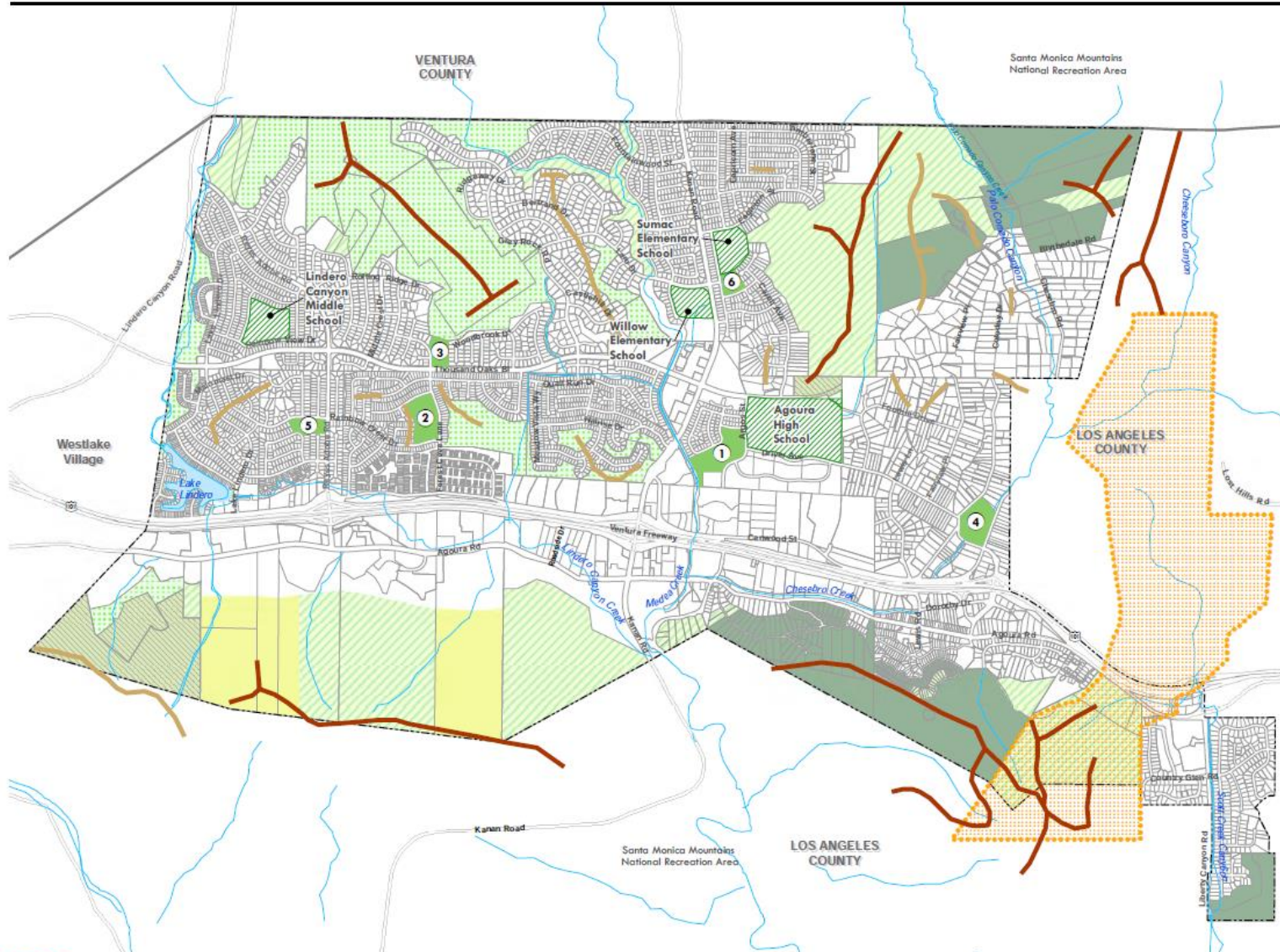


City of Agoura Hills

- Ridgelines are not “defined” in Muni Code
- The Agoura Hills General Plan identifies six Significant Ridgelines
- Secondary Ridgelines are identified as topographic features which are developed or improved, or where views are partially blocked
- Broken lines are used to map ridgelines

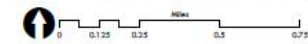
CITY of AGOURA HILLS General Plan Update

OPEN SPACE RESOURCES



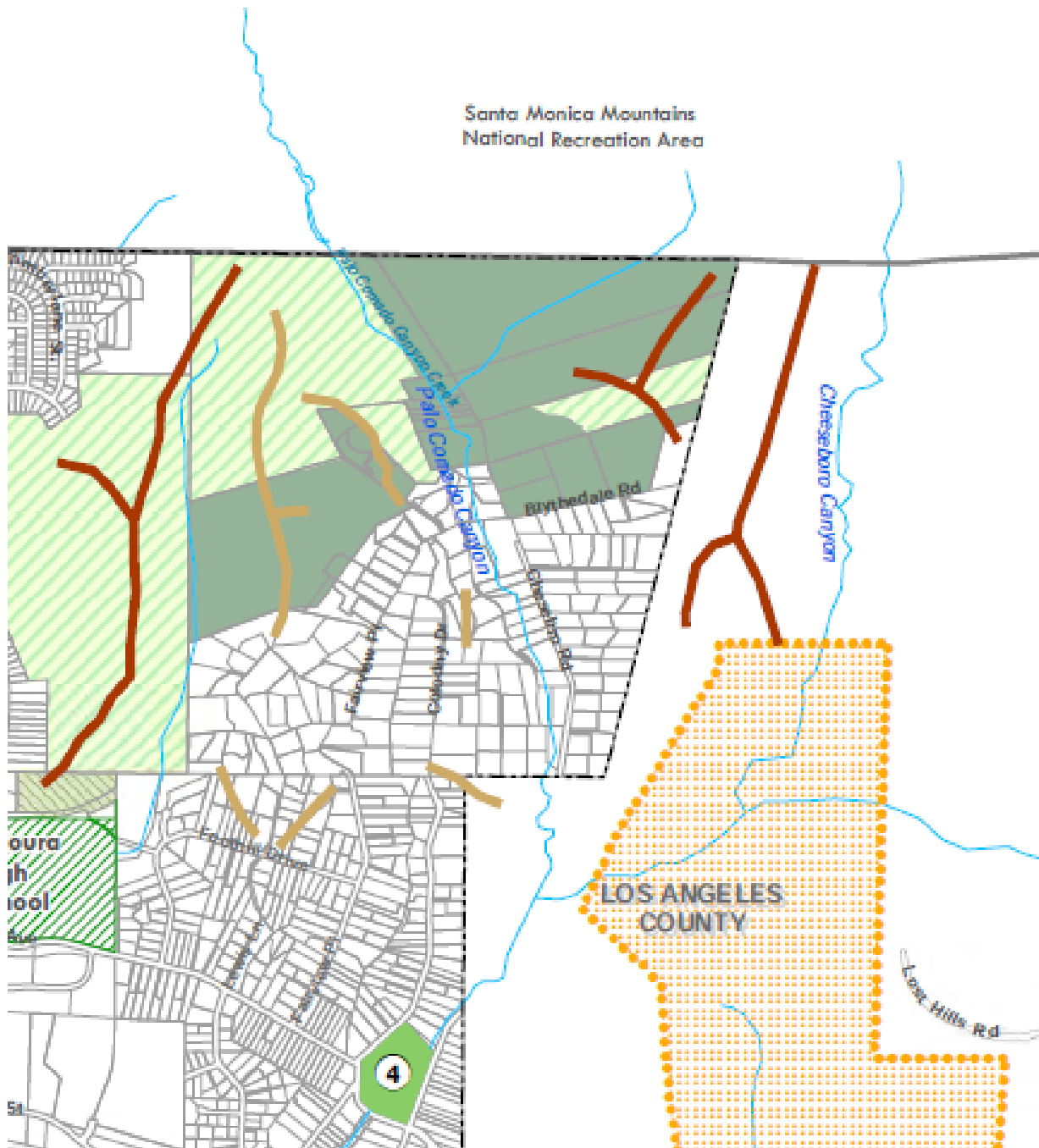
- Legend**
- Wildlife Corridor
 - Open Space**
 - HOA Owned and Preserved
 - Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan Open Space
 - Possible Future Open Space
 - Private Open Space
 - Publicly Owned or Preserved Open Space
 - City Parks**
 - 1. Chumash Park
 - 2. Forest Cove Park
 - 3. Morrison Park
 - 4. Old Agoura Park
 - 5. Reyes Adobe Park
 - 6. Sumac Park
 - School Playgrounds
 - City Limits
 - County Boundary
 - Primary Ridgeline
 - Secondary Ridgeline
 - Creeks/Drainage Corridors

Source: City of Agoura Hills, 2009
D21377_Agoura_Hills\open_space_framework.mxd



CITY of AGOURA HILLS General Plan Update

OPEN SPACE RESOURCES



Legend

Wildlife Corridor

Open Space

HOA Owned and Preserved

Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan Open Space

Possible Future Open Space

Private Open Space

Publicly Owned or Preserved Open Space

City Parks

1. Chumash Park

2. Forest Cove Park

3. Morrison Park

4. Old Agoura Park

5. Reyes Adobe Park

6. Sumac Park

School Playgrounds

City Limits

County Boundary

Primary Ridgeline

Secondary Ridgeline

Creeks/Drainage Corridors

City of Agoura Hills

- Ridgeline protections are combined into a broader code category of “Hillside and Significant Ecological Area” management
- Visual protection tools include:
 - Minimizing grading and land feature alterations
 - Sliding scale of required open space and maximum site area to site grade
 - Integration of natural landscaping and features

City of Agoura Hills

- The General Plan identifies four sections of arterial roadways which are designated as “Scenic Corridors:
 - Reyes Adobe Rd. from Thousand Oaks Blvd. to Agoura Rd.
 - Thousand Oaks Blvd. from westerly to easterly City limits
 - Agoura Road from westerly to easterly City limits
 - Kanan Road from Agoura Road south to City limits

City of Agoura Hills

- Agoura Hills has two areas of view protections:
 - From the Freeway Corridor Overlay Zone, defined as an area 660 ft. from the freeway ROW. Views of significant landmarks and distant vistas are protected.
 - From Designated “Scenic Roadways” (unmapped)
 1. Reyes Adobe Road from Thousand Oaks Blvd. to Agoura Road
 2. Thousand Oaks Blvd. from westerly to easterly City limits
 3. Agoura Road from westerly to easterly City limits
 4. Kanan Road from Agoura Road south to the City limits

Town of Fairfax, CA



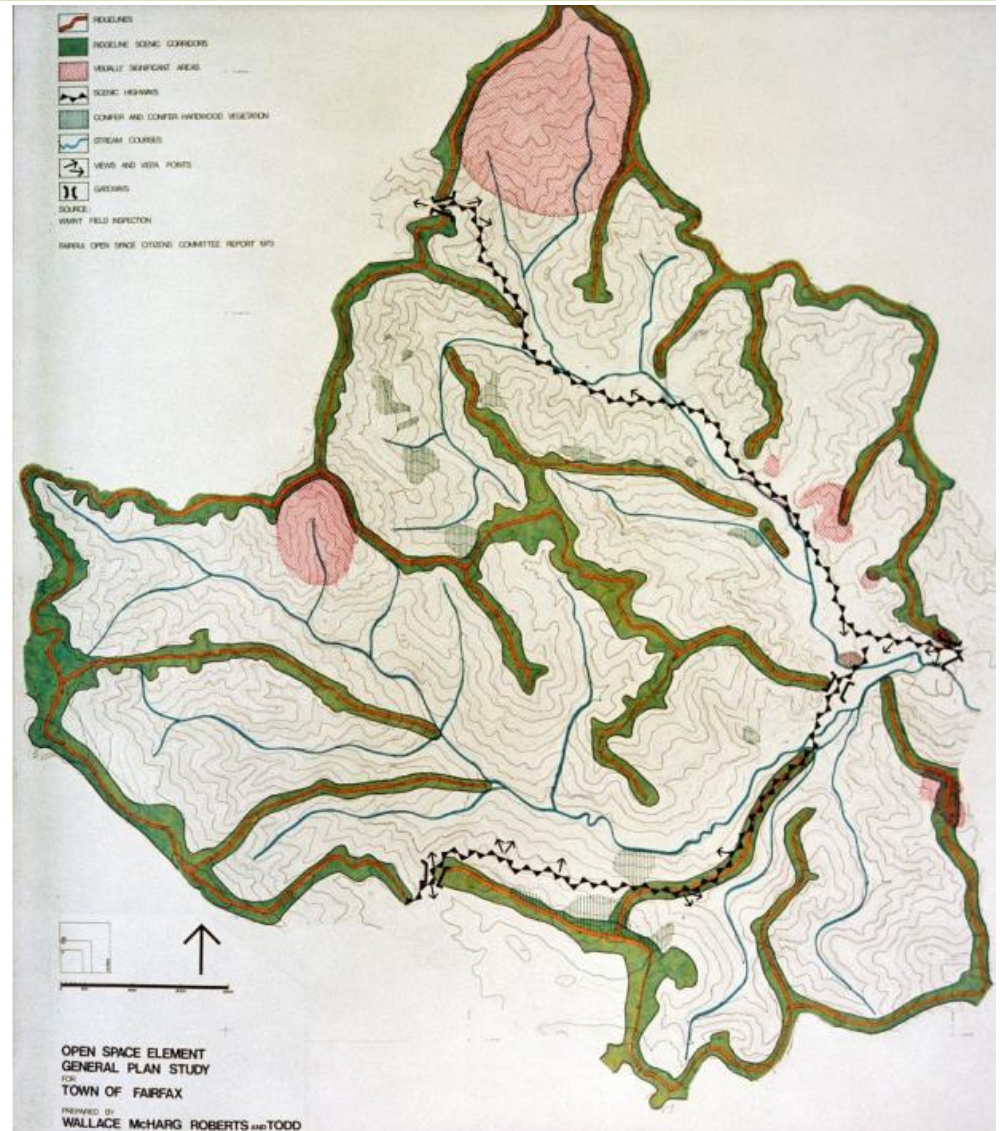
Town of Fairfax, CA

- Chapter 17.060 Ridgeline Development
 - The code’s purpose is to conserve scenic resources and the sense of local community afforded by the presence of unorganized open space on the ridgetops above town
- Definitions:
 - Ridgeline: *“The upper most line in elevation traversing a major ridge (chain of hills)”*

Town of Fairfax, CA

- Mapping Style
 - Ridgelines are included in a comprehensive “Scenic Resources Corridor Map” of Fairfax
 - The Scenic corridor map includes
 - Ridgelines and Ridgeline scenic corridors
 - Scenic Corridors
 - Visually significant Town areas
 - Conifer forests
 - Creeks
 - Views and Vista Points
 - Gateways

Town of Fairfax, CA



Town of Fairfax



Town of Fairfax

- Tools:
 - Prohibition on buildings, modifications or accessory structures within mapped ridgeline corridors unless determined to have no visual impacts
 - Extensive use of natural landscape screening
 - Undergrounding of utilities
 - No roads over ridgelines
 - Low level exterior lighting
 - Screening of large, unnatural surfaces

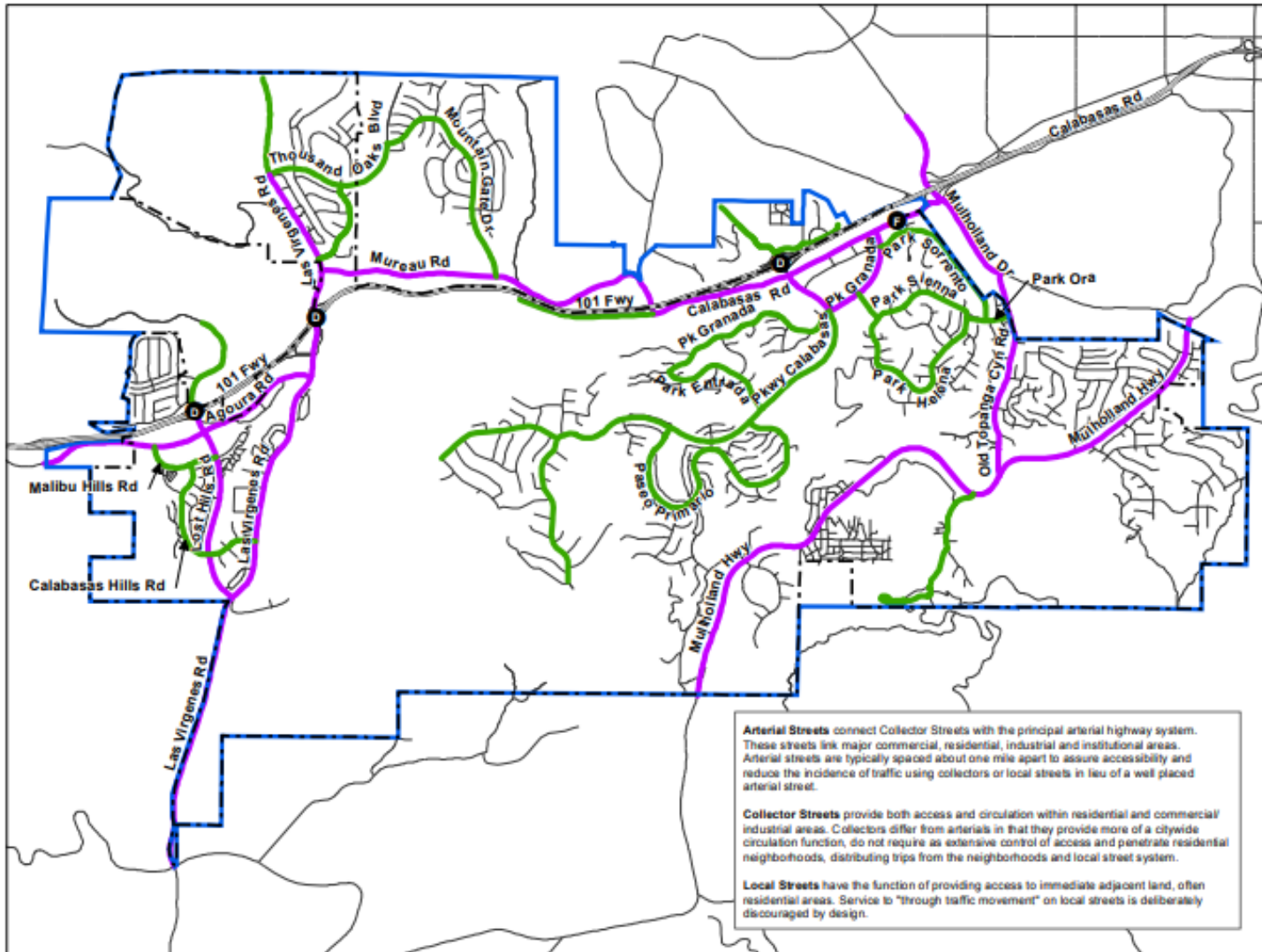
Town of Fairfax

- View lines:
 - Establishment of significant view corridors for projects in Restricted Areas are made by the Planning Commission through application review
 - Applications to include photographs and/or illustrations from:
 - Public gathering areas
 - Neighboring properties and roadways
 - Critical points within the subject property

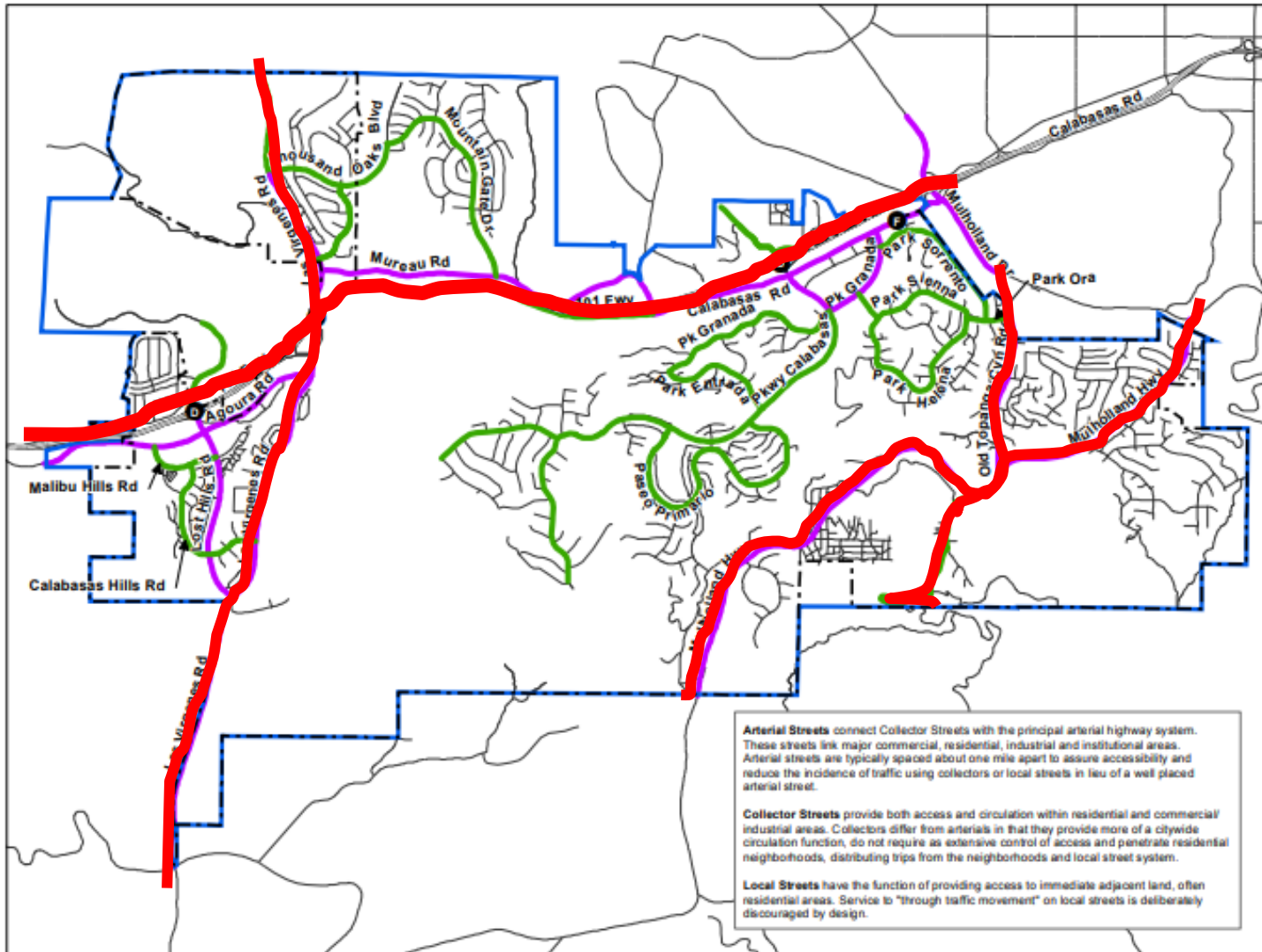
Additional PC Requests

- Expanded Scenic Corridor Areas
- Private View Protection
- Developed Ridgeline Best Practices

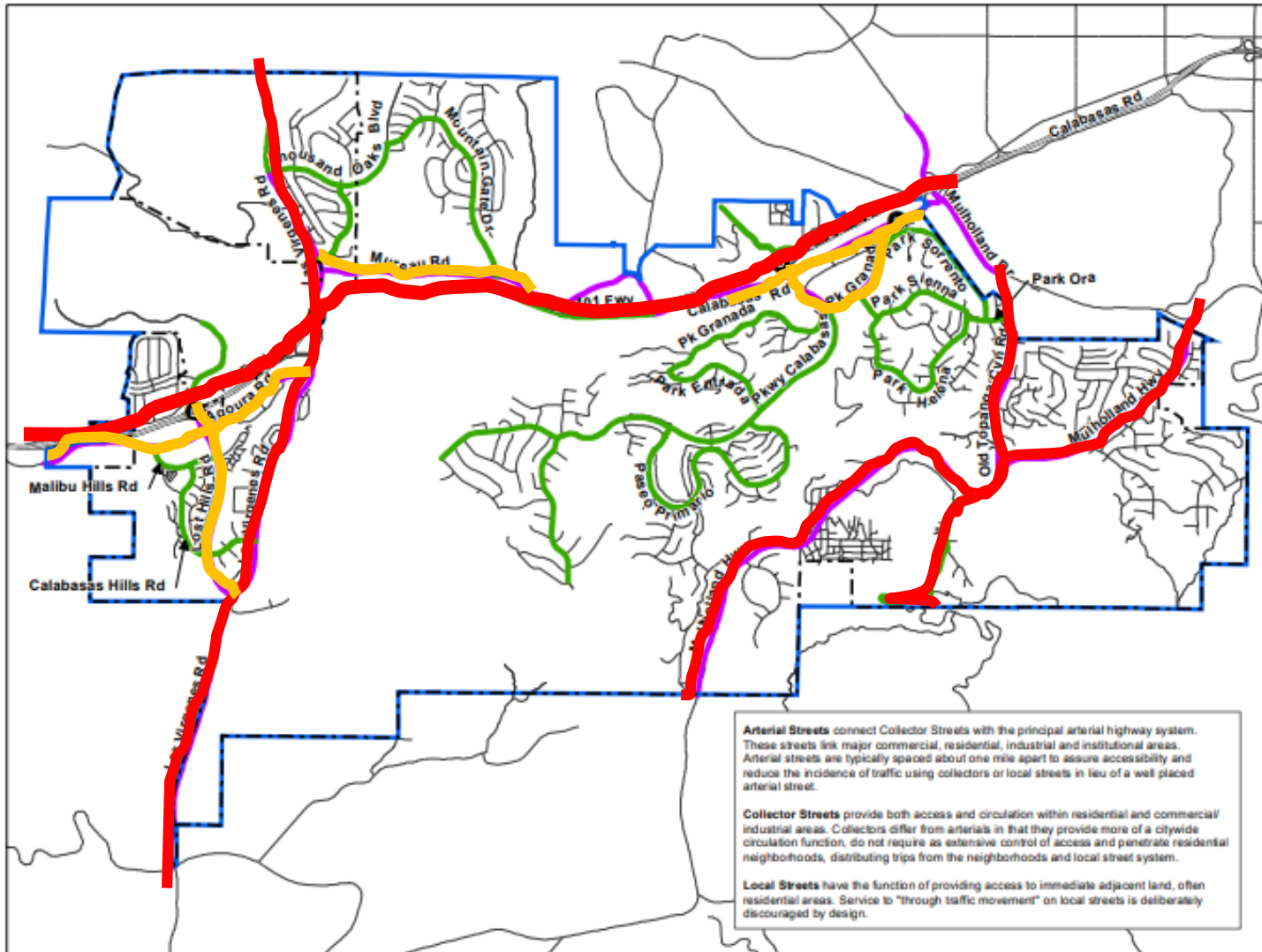
Expanded Scenic Corridor Areas



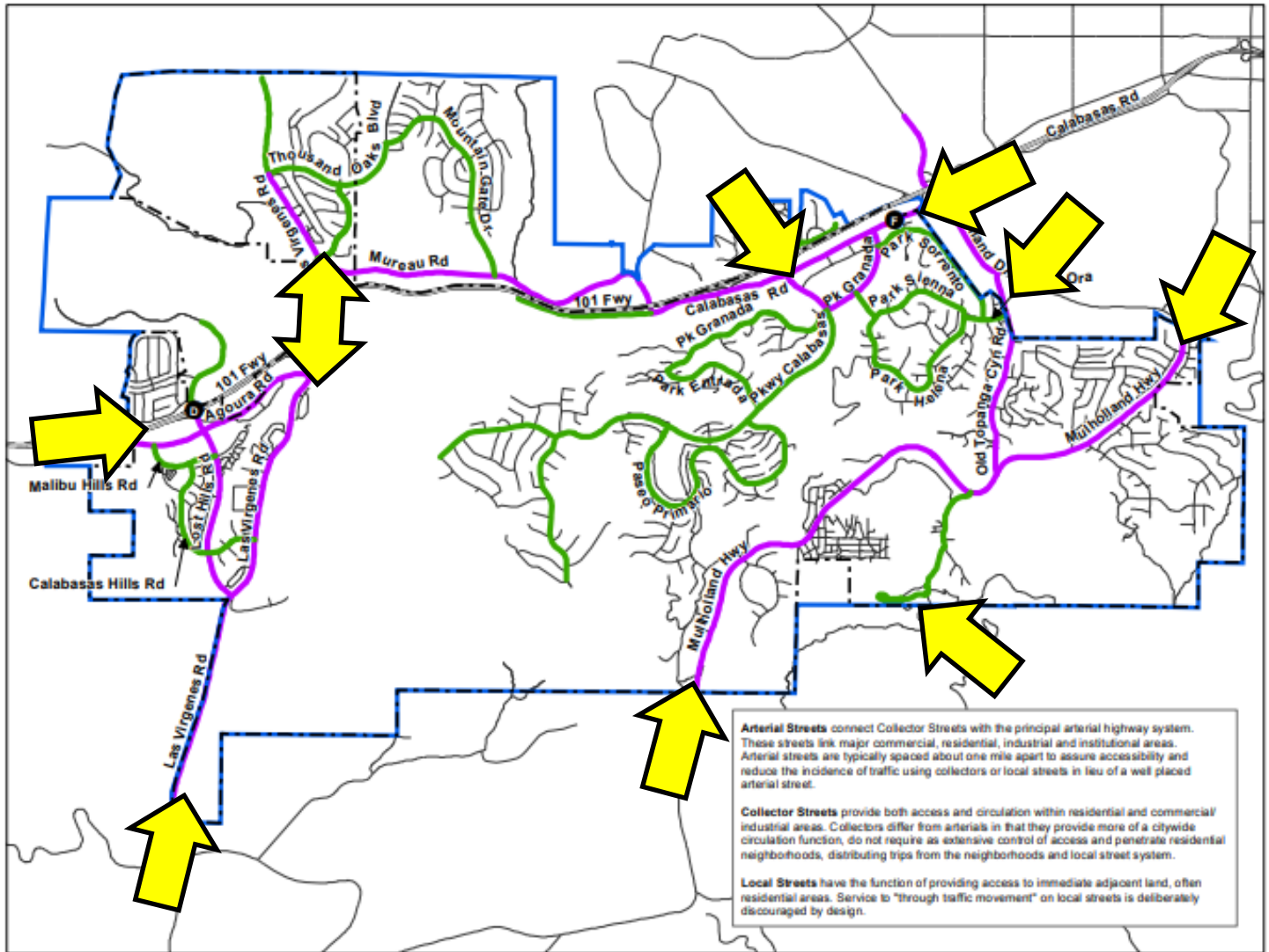
Expanded Scenic Corridor Areas



Expanded Scenic Corridor Areas



Gateway View Point Opportunities



Source: City of Calabasas, 2007, and Rincon Consultants, 2008. Updated March 2014.

Gateway View Point Opportunities



Gateway View Point Opportunities



Gateway View Point Opportunities



Gateway View Point Opportunities



Private View Protection

- Two primary categories:
 - Protection of views to a “feature”, such as a prominent vista, mountain or water body;
 - Protection or restoration of any private view impacted by landscaping.



Private View Protection

- View line protections address methods to avoid blockage of an “established” view, either full or partially.
- Views must be documented by staff using established methods, and can be registered by owners to provide a baseline for future evaluation.

Private View Protection

- The baseline methodology used by Staff to evaluate views varies, and can include:
 - The baseline date of evaluation (e.g. ordinance adoption, homes purchase, etc.);
 - Documents, such as old photographs;
 - Establishment of fixed point locations for view evaluation (e.g. single vs multiple points).

Private View Protection

- Challenges:
 - Many view protection ordinances contain mediation clauses to address “neighbor to neighbor “disputes;
 - Staff efforts are often intensive, and require additional staffing to log and maintain a database;
 - The City has approximately 6,920 single family homes which would fall under such protections.

City of Malibu View Protection

- View Preservation/Restoration Ordinance
Definitions:

- Primary View means visually impressive scenes of the Pacific Ocean, offshore islands, the Santa Monica Mountains, canyons, valleys or ravines, within a primary view corridor;
- Primary view corridor means a 180 degree review assessed by the planning director or designee or from a single fixed location and direction within the mean viewing area, at an elevation of five feet as measured from the room floor or on an abutting outdoor deck or patio at any one point within 10 feet of the nearest outside wall of the structure as selected by the affected property owner and the City;
- Primary living area means the living room, family room, kitchen or a combination thereof (Primary Residence)

City of Malibu View Protection

- Owners can establish a primary view, and/or petition to restore a view lost to foliage by:
 - By paying a fee and requesting a primary view determination request by City staff;
 - By submitting evidence to staff, such as photographs, film, slides, etc.
- Fees for the View Protection Ordinance:
 - Primary View Determination \$351
 - View Permit/Planning Director \$351
 - View Permit/Planning Commission \$1,500

Staff Summary

- Within the data presented, Staff summarizes best practices to date:
- Definition of Ridgeline

While the City has a “watershed” definition, the practices of other Cities include:

- 1) The use of an all encompassing “hillside” area;
- 2) A visual feature, such as prominence;
- 3) Disturbed/undisturbed, primary/secondary ridgeline;
- 4) Definitions based on height above sea level
- 5) A defined line of sight from valley floor to mountaintop

Staff Summary

- Mapping Style

While the City maps ridgelines as a continuous line, the practices of other cities include:

- 1) A broken line, determined by elevation above sea level;
- 2) A mapped line integrated into a protected hillside zone, either mapped or measured at a distance from the ridgeline;
- 3) Integration of the ridgeline into cumulative mapping of larger resources (parks, open space, visual features, creeks, view locations, open space corridors, etc.);

Staff Summary

- Tools:

Numerous ideas are found in other cities, including:

- 1) Comprehensive Hillside overlay zoning;
- 2) Limits on development height and size by lot size;
- 3) Specific and expanded hillside and ridgeline guidelines;
- 4) Additional pre-application efforts:
 - a) Site constraint analysis meetings
 - b) Neighbor consultations
 - c) View Line simulations
- 5) Expansion of protection areas surrounding ridgelines

Staff Summary

- View Lines:

The Commission may consider other methods to evaluating views, such as :

- 1) Expanding City views beyond that of scenic corridors;
- 2) Establishing specific locations for view evaluations;
- 3) Flexibility in siting using a “view percentage” evaluation technique;
- 4) Expanded use of digital images and renderings.

Overview of Agency Best Practices

- Staff requests that the Planning Commission consider these materials and practices of other agencies, and provides feedback to staff.
- A future meeting will be scheduled to develop a preliminary recommendation to the City Council on the Planning Commission's recommended approach to strengthening ridgeline and hillside protections.