



DATE: PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF MAY 22, 2019

TO: THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: STEPHANIE DAVIS, AICP, SENIOR PLANNER

SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN UPDATE – REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL ON THE INITIAL STUDY/NEGATIVE DECLARATION, MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM AND THE 2019 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS – PLEASE BRING YOUR HARD COPY OF THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE PROJECT IS/MND AND ADMINISTRATIVE DRAFT 2019 GENERAL PLAN TO THE MEETING

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission conduct the public hearing and adopt a Resolution recommending that the City Council determine that the General Plan Update Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND), which includes the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), is adequate and certify that the IS/MND complies with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

2019 General Plan

Staff further recommends that the Planning Commission conduct the public hearing and adopt a Resolution recommending that the City Council adopt the 2019 General Plan.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

The Planning Commission is required by the Atherton Municipal Code and California Government Code to hold a public hearing for consideration of amendments to the General Plan. Per state land use law, the Planning Commission is the official recommending body to the City Council on the 2019 General Plan Update. At tonight's meeting, the Planning Commission will conduct a Public Hearing on the 2019 General Plan, and the associated, prepared environmental document (IS/MND) and consider adoption of a resolution recommending that the City Council adopt both prepared documents.

In June 2015, as part of the Town Budget review process, the City Council approved budget for an update the Town’s General’s Plan (less the Housing Element). The direction was for the update to make basic, non-comprehensive revisions to text, graphics, images, clarify and/or enhance various Town policy directives, incorporation of other Town adopted Master Plans, and not a “full ground-up” update of the General Plan.

From December 2017 to December 2018, Planning Staff presented administrative draft updates to each of the five General Plan Elements being updated to the Planning Commission in a study session format at public meetings. The intent was to obtain preliminary feedback from the Commission and the community. No formal action was taken, nor was any decision made by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission and community gave Planning staff direction on suggested further enhancements/refinements to consider. Subsequent to these study sessions, a final comprehensive draft 2019 General Plan Update was prepared, that integrated received direction by the Planning Commission, and other, document formatting edits.

On February 13, 2019 the Town held a community wide workshop to present the Administrative Draft of the 2019 General Plan Update, answered questions, and received further comments and feedback.

On April 24, 2019 the Planning Commission held a study session to review and discuss the prepared IS/MND and 2019 General Plan update, had questions and provided direction to staff. No public comment was received.

ANALYSIS:

Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND)

The 2019 General Plan Update itself is the defined “Project” studied under CEQA. The purpose of the IS/MND was to evaluate any potential environmental impacts the Project may have and identify any associated mitigation measures that could reduce identified impacts to a level of insignificance. Further, the prepared IS/MND is a program-level environmental document and includes analysis that provides a foundation for subsequent environmental review. No specific development projects are proposed at this time or analyzed herein. Future projects within the Town would be subject to the appropriate project-level environmental review and permitting by the Town.

Impacts to the topics of Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, and Utilities/Service Systems were identified, however, associated mitigation measures were identified to reduce the potential impacts to a less than significant level. As noted above, given the nature of the Project as a comprehensive long-range planning document, the identified mitigation measures would be implemented through any future new development. These mitigation measure have been incorporated into a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) which is part of the IS/MND and was formulated to summarize the mitigation measures and identify associated monitoring and timing requirements (Attachment 3).

The conclusion of the prepared IS/MND was that the Project would not have a significant effect on the environment, with incorporation of specified mitigation.

The prepared IS/MND associated with the 2019 General Plan Update was circulated for public review in accordance with CEQA for a minimum of 20 days (from April 4 – April 24, 2019). No public comment was received during this required public review process.

2019 General Plan

General Plan Overview

The General Plan is the long-term, comprehensive document that covers many aspects of the Town including development, preservation and safety, and is intended to guide the growth of the Town for the future. The Town’s General Plan is divided into six elements. Each element contains background information that has been collected and analyzed to establish goals and policies that are intended to guide development and Town action in a particular manner working to achieve the Town’s long term vision.

The intent of the 2019 General Plan Update is to comply with the minimum guidelines prescribed by the State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) adopted 2017 General Plan Guidelines, as well as to update some existing policies, data references, and maps within the 2002 General Plan to reflect current conditions and Town policies, for all elements except the Housing Element, which is updated more frequently under state legislation. The 2019 General Plan does not authorize any specific development project, other form of land use approval of any kind, public facilities, or capital facilities expenditures or improvements to be developed. Although the 2019 General Plan Update includes changes and additions to the goals, objectives, and policies to achieve consistency with current state and local regulations and address the current practices of the Town, the majority of the General Plan continues the goals, objectives, policies, implementation measures, and standards in the current General Plan. It is important to note that no changes to any land uses are being proposed as part of the Update.

Following the April 24, 2019 Planning Commission staff has made additional revisions to the Land Use, Open Space and Conservation, Circulation, and Community Safety in response to further direction from the Planning Commission, comments from the Town’s consultants preparing the Town’s mandated Green Infrastructure (GI) Workplan, and other revisions noted. Revisions proposed are noted in tracked changes within Exhibits A-D of Attachment 1, with sources cited and/or comments inserted for reference and highlighted in **yellow** to help locate the changes. These revisions are discussed in further detail below.

1. Planning Commission Discussion and Direction – April 24, 2019

Staff has integrated the comments directed by the Planning Commission at the April 24, 2019 meeting and made subsequent revisions to the Draft 2019 General Plan in tracked changes (Exhibits A-D of Attachment 1). These subsequent revisions are summarized below. Where the Commission had directed staff to evaluate matters and revisions, were not made, staff has provided a response.

- Circulation Element -Citation of the Town’s commitment and support to the Grand Boulevard Initiative per adopted City Council Resolution 2008-40 was added. A new supporting policy

was also added to address Planning Commission discussion on identified traffic issues within Town and sources of such traffic issues predominantly generated outside of Town boundaries:

Policy CIR-5.4: The Town shall support identified short-term and long-term strategies and physical improvements addressing traffic concerns originating both outside and within the Town boundaries in order to improve circulation, smooth progression, improved operations, mobility and safety for all modes of transportation, as feasible.

- Community Safety – ***The changes within Exhibit D of Attachment 1 were a result of Planning Commission direction received at the June 18, 2018 Commission study session, as it was noted that the final, distributed version of the draft 2019 General Plan Update did not include these revisions, thus are included now.* New text was added regarding Dam Inundation upon conference with Cal Water Staff to address emergency gate entrance at the end of Reservoir Road through the Cal Water property adjacent to Bear Gulch Reservoir connecting to Moore Road, noting that Cal Water maintains a 24/7 presence at the Bear Gulch site and that emergency contact to Cal Water is provided.

Additional text was also added under discussion of the “Emergency Operations Plan” to include discussion on the Town’s Hazard Mitigation Strategies (HMS) (the Town’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan), the Town’s current policy regarding its “Evacuation Plan & Emergency Siren” that provides information about the Walsh Road emergency siren and evacuation routes in the event of a fire or flood, increased public outreach, and discussion on the Atherton Disaster and Preparedness Team (ADAPT) a Police Department sponsored emergency preparedness and action program as well as other preparedness resources for the community. New supporting policy was added as well:

Policy CS-3.2: Support the hazard reduction policies and mitigation measures included in the Atherton Emergency Operation Plan and its companion document; the Atherton Hazard Mitigation Strategies, as well as the adopted San Mateo County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Some Commission comments were related to the adopted 2014-2022 Housing Element, a copy of which was integrated into the draft 2019 General Plan Update in order to present a complete, comprehensive document, however updates to it were not considered under the 2019 General Plan Update project itself. State law requires provides for periodic updates of the housing element. The Housing Element is will be updated again in 2022.

All private schools were contacted directly per Commission direction to highlight the 2019 General Plan Update projects. No comments from any of the private schools have been received to date.

2. *Green Infrastructure (GI) Workplan Revisions*

During the Planning Commission study sessions, the Town’s Public Works Department undertook a separate project of preparing a Green Infrastructure (GI) Workplan. The GI Workplan addresses the Town’s requirement, based on state legislation, to address pollutants in stormwater runoff

from its municipal storm drains and will outline how the Town will shift from traditional “gray” storm drain infrastructure – which channels runoff directly into receiving waters without treatment – to a more resilient and sustainable “green” storm water system that captures, stores and treats stormwater before channeling it to receiving waters. A technical consulting firm was retained by the Town to prepare the GI Work plan which is required to be adopted by June 2019. The firm recently reviewed the draft 2019 General Plan and has provided a series of comments / questions related to the purpose, intent, and implementation of the GI Work Plan. Updates to background text and policies related to green infrastructure and stormwater management, for internal consistency with the draft GI Work Plan have been integrated into Exhibits A-D of Attachment 1.

3. *Other Revisions*

Staff has made a series of additional revisions to some elements for updates and clerical errors.

- Land Use and Open Space and Conservation Element- The maps and text within the 2019 General Plan were prepared prior to the final, detailed construction plans were approved for the Civic Center Project. As a result, staff has updated the text and diagram in the Land Use Element and Open Space and Conservation Elements describing what was previously called “Library Park” to “Civic Center Park” and update the acreage of the Park to reflect the final, approved construction plans. It is noted that the Park acreage increased from 0.38 acres to 0.98 acres.
- Circulation Element - Description of Caltrans bikeway standards, current scope of the potential High Speed Rail project, latest Transportation Committee recommendation on minimum pavement width for minor arterial streets was updated in the Circulation Element for internal consistency.
- Community Safety – Removal of policy related to floodplains and flood control districts as there are none within Town.

CONCLUSION:

To recommend certification of the IS/MND and MMRP, the Planning Commission should that, pursuant to CEQA the prepared IS/MND has adequately evaluated any environmental impacts from the 2019 General Plan Update Project and identified that any potential significant effects on the environment related to the topics of Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, and Utilities/Service Systems can be mitigated. As detailed above, as well as detailed within the IS/MND, any identified impacts as a result of the Project are found to be reduced to a level of less than significant upon implementation of identified mitigation measures.

To recommend adoption of the 2019 General Plan Update, the Planning Commission should consider that the amendments to the General Plan were consistent with direction given by the City Council in June 2015 upon which amendments to the General Plan were initiated. As noted above, the amendments included within the 2019 General Plan Update do not change any existing land uses, provide updated text and graphics consistent with other Town adopted plans, and the meet the minimum requirements of the State.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Planning Commission could recommend that the City Council do not adopt the Resolution or continue consideration for a recommendation to the City Council and provide staff with alternative direction.

FISCAL IMPACT:

In Fiscal Year 2015/2016 the approved Town Operations Budget included \$88,000 with City Council direction for pro-forma, basic updates to the General Plan including updates to various policy directives, incorporation of other Town adopted plans and documents, and minimum compliance with State Law. Preparation of the 2019 General Plan Update and the associated IS/MND is covered under this approved budget line item.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

An IS/MND associated with the General Plan Update Project was circulated for public review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act. The Planning Commission is required to consider the IS/MND as part of its deliberations on this Project.

The IS/MND was circulated for public review for 20 days from April 4 through April 24, 2019 as required by CEQA. Notice of the document’s availability was posted in the Almanac newspaper, on the Town’s Website and at the San Mateo County Recorder’s office. The IS/MND was made available to the public at Town Hall, the Library, Post Office Permit Center, and on the Town’s website. As of the date of this staff report distribution, April 18, 2019, Staff has received no public comments on the environmental document. It is Planning Staff’s professional opinion that the IS/MND is adequate, complete and prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

FORMAL MOTION:

I move that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution recommending to the City Council certification of the prepared Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND), which includes a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and adoption of the 2019 General Plan Update.

/s/ Stephanie Davis

Stephanie Davis, AICP, Senior Planner

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution 2019-01 Planning Commission Recommendation to City Council
Exhibit A. Amended Land Use Element (tracked changes) and Land Use Diagram

Exhibit B. Amended Circulation Element (tracked changes)

Exhibit C. Amended Open Space and Conservation Element (tracked changes) and Open Space and Conservation Diagram

Exhibit D. Amended Community Safety Element (tracked changes)

2. 2019 General Plan Update Project, Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration – *hard copies distributed to the Planning Commission.* Available online: http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/6354/GPU-IS_MND-Final-Draft-4419
3. 2019 General Plan Update Project, Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)
4. Administrative Draft - 2019 General Plan– *hard copies distributed to the Planning Commission.* Available online: <http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/6238/MASTER-ADMIN-DRAFT-GP>

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-01

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF ATHERTON
RECOMMENDING THE CITY COUNCIL CERTIFY THE INITIAL STUDY AND
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (IS/MND), MITIGATION MONITORING
AND REPORTING PROGRAM (MMRP) AND ADOPT
THE 2019 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

WHEREAS, Article 5 of Chapter 3 of Division 1 of Title 7 of the California Government Code, beginning with Section¹ 65300 requires each city to adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan for the physical development of the city and any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning and to periodically update its General Plan; and

WHEREAS, Section 65350 et seq. sets forth the procedure to amend city General Plans at the option of local legislative bodies when it deems such amendments to be in the public interest; and

WHEREAS, the City Council initiated the update to the City's existing General Plan, excepting the Housing Element, by approval of 2015-2016 Atherton Budget; and

WHEREAS, Atherton Planning Department Staff prepared draft updates for the Land Use, Circulation, Open Space and Conservation, Noise, and Community Safety Elements; and

WHEREAS, the Atherton Planning Commission reviewed and commented on each updated draft Element at regular Planning Commission meetings from time to time during 2017 and 2018;

WHEREAS, on February 13, 2019 the City held a noticed public, community workshop to present and discuss the 2019 General Plan Update; and

WHEREAS, subsequent to the public, community workshop the Atherton Planning Department Staff incorporated the comments from the workshop and the Planning Commission review and comments into the Town of Atherton General Plan 2019 Administrative Draft (2019 General Plan Update); and

WHEREAS, the 2019 General Plan Update constitutes a "project" as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and

WHEREAS, Atherton Planning Department Staff prepared an Initial Study and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) analyzing the potential environmental effects of the 2019 General Plan Update and recommending mitigation measures to reduce potential adverse effects to less than significant; and

¹ All statutory references are to the California Government Code unless otherwise specified.

WHEREAS, a Notice of Intention to Adopt an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the 2019 General Plan Update project was published in The Almanac, a newspaper of general circulation in the Town of Atherton, posted on the Town Bulletin Boards and published on the Town of Atherton website on April 4, 2019. The public review period was April 4 through April 24, 2019; and

WHEREAS, on April 24, 2019 the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public meeting study session for the purpose of receiving testimony on the IS/MND and the MMRP and discussion of the 2019 General Plan Update; and

WHEREAS, Section 65103 provides that the Planning Commission, acting as a Planning Agency, is charged with administration of the City General Plan and with making recommendations on amendments to the City's General Plan; and

WHEREAS, on May 22, 2019 the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing for the purpose of receiving testimony on the 2019 General Plan Update; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, prior to making its recommendation to the City Council considered all testimony, both oral and written, regarding the IS/MND, MMRP and the proposed General Plan changes. After closing the public hearing on May 22, 2019, the Planning Commission thereafter adopted Resolution No. 2019-01 recommending that the City Council certify the IS/MND and MMRP and adopt the 2019 General Plan Update.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

SECTION 1. **Recitals.**

The Planning Commission hereby finds that the foregoing recitals are true and correct.

SECTION 2. **Certification of the Initial Study and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration**

An Initial Study and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the Project was completed and circulated for public review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act. A Noticed public hearing held by the Planning Commission on the IS/MND and the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration was considered by the Planning Commission prior to taking action on the 2019 General Plan Update. The Planning Commission hereby recommends that the City Council certify the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration which includes the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

SECTION 3. **Adoption of the 2019 General Plan Update.**

The Planning Commission hereby recommends that the City Council adopt the Town of Atherton General Plan 2019 Administrative Draft (2019 General Plan Update) including,

Exhibits A – D of this Resolution, and those changes directed by the Planning Commission subsequent to closing the public hearing.

SECTION 5. **Effective Date.**

This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

The foregoing resolution was read, considered, and adopted at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the Town of Atherton, State of California, on the 22nd day of May, 2019, by the following vote:

AYES: PLANNING COMMISSIONERS: _____

NOES: PLANNING COMMISSIONERS: _____

ABSENT: PLANNING COMMISSIONERS: _____

Eric Lane, Planning Commission Chair

ATTEST:
Senior Planner

By: _____
Stephanie B. Davis, AICP

Town of Atherton

Draft

LAND USE ELEMENT
of the General Plan

Revised per Planning Commission Review – April 25, 2018

For Public Workshop – February 13, 2019

Table of Contents

I. Purpose and Relation to other Elements	8
II. Background Information	8
Land Uses	8
Residential Land Uses	8
Open Space Land Uses	9
Public, Quasi-Public, and Educational Land Uses	10
Greenways	11
Infrastructure	12
Areas Subject to Flooding	12
Climate Action Plan	13
III. Goals, Objectives, Policies and Actions	13
Figure LU-1 Land Use Diagram	17

LAND USE ELEMENT

I. Purpose and Relation to Other Elements

The Land Use Element delineates in written and graphic terms Atherton's goals, objectives and policies concerning *existing and future* land uses within the Town's jurisdiction; *what to put where*. *It should reflect the Town's vision to remain a low density, rural residential community with a high quality of life.* The Element sets forth the *general* distribution, location and extent of residential, open space, public and quasi-public, and *educational* land uses. *The Element also addresses solid and liquid waste facilities, greenways, and areas subject to flooding. The Element does not include a discussion of land used for business or industry as those land uses are not permitted within the Town of Atherton. Neither does it include the topics of timberland preserve zones or military land uses as there are no timber resources or military installations in or adjacent to Atherton. (Existing Section with Proposed Additions in Italics)*

While the Land Use and Circulation Elements are the primary General Plan Policy elements, other parts of the Plan contain policies and proposals which relate to the Land Use Element. Elements of the Plan which are related to the Land Use Element include Circulation, Housing, Open Space, Conservation and Noise. *(Existing Section)*

II. Background Information

Land Uses

The Town of Atherton is unique in that it contains primarily lower density residential uses, with no commercial or industrial. The majority of the community over the years have shown interest in preserving this character through the requirement of larger lots and preservation of open space and heritage trees. Atherton contains three different land use categories; residential, open space, and public and quasi-public (which includes educational uses). *(Proposed New Section)*

Residential Land Uses

Residential areas are designed to contain housing and related facilities such as schools and churches. Residential land uses determine the level of need for schools, public facilities, roads and parks. *The Land Use Diagram differentiates residential land uses from parks, open spaces, schools and public facilities. (Existing Section with Proposed Additions in Italics)*

The **Single Family, Low Density designation** is applied to all residential lands in Atherton. This land use density is intended to minimize environmental damage to sensitive, scenic and open space areas. The conventional single family detached home is the standard structural type planned for these areas. *Additional uses that may be allowed include accessory dwelling units, home occupations, residential care facilities and other compatible uses identified in the Town's Municipal Code. (Existing Section with Proposed Additions in Italics)*

Building Intensity is expressed in dwelling units per net acre *and in floor area ratio (FAR – the ratio of a building’s floor area of all main and accessory building to that of its total site area).* **Population density** is expressed in people per acre and is derived by multiplying the average population per household by the dwelling unit density. It is estimated that the population density figures will remain relatively constant through the year 2035¹. *(Existing Section with Proposed Additions in Italics)*

The population density in Atherton is approximately 3 people per acre. Planned residential building intensities are based on the number of dwellings per net acre. Net building intensity is defined as the horizontal projection of the gross land area in acres, less the area devoted to the road rights-of-way divided into the total number of residential units. In calculating net building intensity, areas that will be dedicated to permanent open space are included in the gross land area. In the General Plan, building intensity ranges are used to define the broad land use categories. Specific building intensities are designated in the various zoning districts. Population densities were derived by multiplying the population per household by the building intensity range. Population density numbers were rounded to the nearest whole number. *(Existing Section)*

The Zoning Title of the Municipal Code limits the residential building intensity and bulk by the use of floor area ratios, setbacks, height, and other development standards. The Code specifies the maximum amount of gross floor area that can be constructed on residential lots based on lot size. Floor area is defined as the total square footage of all roofed structures on a residential lot, but not including open structures such as arbors. *(Existing Section)*

Future new residential development in Atherton is limited since the Town is primarily built out. The only other residential development possibilities within the Town may be smaller, sub-dividable areas and the few remaining vacant parcels. Any new subdivision would be subject to the minimum development standards of the Atherton Municipal Code.

Table LU-1: Residential Building Intensity and Population Density

Residential Land Use Category	Building Intensity (Units per Net Acre)	Minimum Lot Area per Dwelling (Square Feet)	Population Density	Zoning Reference
Single Family, Low Density	1	43,560	3	R-1A
	3	13,500	9	R-1B

Open Space Land Uses

Open space refers to both used and unused land. It includes developed and undeveloped park lands, visually significant open lands, water areas and wildlife habitat, and undeveloped land which is intended to be retained in an undeveloped state in the future. *(Existing Section)*

¹ ABAG Projections 2013, population per household for Atherton: 2010 = 2.80, 2020 = 2.81, 2030 = 2.84, 2035 = 2.87

Open space land use is generally intended for the following purposes:

- Outdoor Recreation
- Natural Resources
- Managed Production of Resources
- Public Health and Safety

(Existing Section)

The California Government Code also requires local general plans to address open spaces for military support and Native American tribal resources. However, there are no military facilities in or near Town and no known Native American tribal resources in or near Town. Therefore, these topics are not included in this Element. (Proposed New Section)

Lands designated for Open Space on the Land Use Diagram within the category of Outdoor Recreation include Holbrook-Palmer Park, the Civic Center Park, and the Menlo Circus Club. Lands designated for Open Space on the Land Use Diagram within the categories of Natural Resources and for Public Health and Safety include the Bear Gulch Reservoir potable water storage facility. Although no lands in Atherton are designated for Open Space on the Land Use Diagram within the category of Managed Production of Resources, the issue of groundwater use as well as concerns related to potential land subsidence, declining water levels, and saltwater intrusion are addressed in the Open Space and Conservation Element. All of these topics are addressed in greater detail in the Open Space and Conservation Element. (Proposed New Section)

Commented [SB1]: Renamed based off of most current, Civic Center plans

Lands designated for use as open space on the Land Use Diagram are zoned Parks and Open Space (POS) District and include Holbrook-Palmer Park, the Bear Gulch Reservoir property and other sites located throughout Town. In addition, some of the lands zoned Public Facilities and Schools (PFS), as well as many privately held parcels contribute to the Town's inventory of space. (Existing Section with Updates in Italics)

Public, Quasi-Public, and Educational Land Uses

The **Public, Quasi-Public, and Educational** land use category typically includes the types of activities and facilities which are generally recognized to be more conveniently provided by public or quasi-public agencies than by the private sector. Such uses include utilities such as water, sewer and power, basic facilities such as local government and schools, and services such as police and fire protection. Lands designated for public and quasi-public use on the General Plan Map are zoned PFS. *(Existing Section)*

Town administrative functions are currently located in several buildings grouped at the corner of Ashfield Road and Station Lane. The existing buildings are proposed to be replaced with a new Civic Center complex consisting of an administration building, Atherton Library, and the historic City Council Chambers. The existing Public Works Building and Corporation Yard are proposed to be retained in their current location. The administration building will house a new City Council Chambers, the Town Administrative Staff; City Manager and City Clerk; City Attorney; Finance Department; Police Department; Permit Center; Building Department, Public Works Department, Planning Department and Town Arborist. The new Atherton Library will replace the existing facility with an expanded and updated building. The Historic City Council Chambers will be attached to the new Library. Ashfield Road and Dinkelspiel (Station) Lane are proposed to be rerouted to accommodate the new Civic Center complex.

The existing Reading Park is proposed to be reconstructed as the new a-“Reading GardenCivic Center Park” and its landscaped space to serve the dual function of a stormwater retention treatment basin during wet weather. The A “Reading Garden” and quiet reading deck will be connected to the new library, as well a “Civic Court”, which will include and open space, gardens, a community porch and maker space all of which to function as a Town Greenthe new Civic Center Park.² (Proposed New Section)

Commented [SB2]: Updated per approved Civic Center Plans.

Park and Recreation offices will continue to be located in the Main Building at Holbrook-Palmer Park.

The Town of Atherton has its own police force, while fire protection is handled by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District. Public library facilities are provided by a branch of the San Mateo County Library, located on Dinkelspiel (Station) Lane. (Existing Section)

Public elementary schools in Atherton fall under the jurisdiction of three separate school districts: Redwood City, Menlo Park and Las Lomas. The number of primary school age children has increased somewhat over the past 10 years as indicated by U.S. Census Data. However, the increase has been accommodated within existing or expanded schools. Public secondary school students generally attend Menlo/Atherton High School and Woodside High School, which are administered by the Sequoia Union High School District. (Existing Section)

There are six private schools in Atherton located on three campuses. Sacred Heart Schools includes three schools on its campus on Valparaiso Avenue: the Preschool & Kindergarten, the Lower and Middle School and the Preparatory High School. Menlo School on Valparaiso Avenue has a middle school and a high school. Menlo College on El Camino Real is a four-year college with a major evening college component. Private schools in Atherton are requested to submit Campus Master Plans to the Town for public information purposes. The Master Plans are required to be reviewed annually. Conditional Use Permits for new or relocated buildings and facilities are required to be consistent with the Master Plan. (Existing Section with Updates in Italics)

Greenways (New Section taken from Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan)

Greenways are defined as pedestrian and bicycle, nonmotorized vehicle transportation, and recreational travel corridors that meets certain specific requirements including landscaping, separation and protection from shared roadways, public accessibility, and others as specified in California Civil Code 816.52(b). Atherton’s adopted Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan includes proposals for the development of two Greenways through the Town; the Grand Boulevard Greenway and the Bay-to-Ridge Greenway.

The Grand Boulevard Greenway proposal involves a major overhaul to El Camino Real by (in most cases) converting the westernmost southbound travel lane to a Class I (off-street) trail with landscaping and pedestrian crossing improvements. The Grand Boulevard Greenway project concept is to provide dedicated bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and transit access improvements, along the length of El Camino Real within Atherton by repurposing a vehicle travel lane in one or both directions. Further study is required prior to project implementation.

² Source: DPW

The **Bay-to-Ridge Greenway** proposal includes a Class I bike trail and pathway improvements to Marsh Road/Middlefield Road/Watkins Ave, plus bicycle boulevard and greenway linkages along or adjacent to the Atherton Channel across El Camino Real to Alameda de las Pulgas. West of El Camino Real, this greenway can be implemented as a bicycle boulevard and/or Safe Routes to School project via Alejandra Avenue/Park Lane/Camino al Lago or on adjacent facilities to be determined in coordination with adjacent schools and Menlo Park. Further study is required prior to project implementation.

Table LU-2: Area of Land Uses in Acres

Land Use Category	Building Intensity (Units per Net Acre)	Area in Acres	Zoning Reference
Single Family, Low Density	1	2,994	R-1A
	3	165	R-1B
Parks and Open Space	n/a	171	POS
Public Facilities and Schools	n/a	234	PFS
Total		3,564	

Infrastructure

The Town’s **water supply** comes from the City and County of San Francisco operated Hetch Hetchy System. The water supply is delivered by the California Water Service Company. **Sewage** is collected by the West Bay Sanitary District and Fair Oaks Sanitary District for transmission to treatment facilities located in the eastern portion of Redwood Peninsula in Redwood City and operated by *Silicon Valley Clean Water; a joint powers authority consisting of the cities of Belmont, Redwood City, San Carlos, and the West Bay Sanitary District. The responsibility for stormwater drainage management falls under the jurisdiction of the Atherton Channel Drainage District, the Town of Atherton, and the San Mateo County Flood Control District. Stormwater treatment measures and infrastructure falls under the jurisdiction of the Town of Atherton and other public and private land owners.*³ Pacific Gas and Electric Co. furnishes natural gas and electricity to Atherton. *(Existing Section with Updates in Italics)*

Solid Waste and recycling generated by the Town of Atherton is *collected and* handled by a contractor, which hauls the waste to the *Shoreway Environmental Center (a recycling and transfer station)* in San Carlos and then to a disposal site at the *Corinda Los Trancos “Ox Mountain” landfill* north of State Route 92 and Skyline Boulevard. *The Shoreway Facility is owned by the South Bayside Waste Management*

³ Source: CD+A

Authority, a joint powers authority with twelve member agencies. The Ox Mountain facility is licensed to accept mixed municipal solid waste, construction/demolition, agricultural, industrial, and other wastes. The facility has an estimated capacity of 60.5 million cubic yards and is estimated to reach capacity by approximately 2034. Liquid wastes are collected by the West Bay Sanitary District and Fair Oaks Sanitary District and transmitted to facilities operated by Silicon Valley Clean Water in Redwood Shores. *(Existing Section with Updates in Italics)*

Areas Subject to Flooding

There are no areas within the Town identified as flood prone according to the Federal Insurance Administration. *(Existing Section)*

Climate Action Plan *(Proposed New Section)*

Atherton's proposals and policies related to climate change are contained in its adopted⁴ **Climate Action Plan**. The Town's Climate Action Plan serves as a guiding document to identify methods that the Town and community can implement to significantly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The Plan provides a comprehensive roadmap of programs that can be implemented to reduce emissions and increase sustainability. Transportation aspects of the Action Plan are addressed in the Circulation Element. Energy, **stormwater**⁵ water and solid waste programs and policies are addressed in the Open Space and Conservation Element.

Atherton has adopted a target of reducing emissions to 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020.

Energy and water-saving measures can help reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and impacts from drought conditions. Building energy is the sector with the most immediately achievable and affordable reduction opportunities. A primary focus of the CAP is on residential energy efficiency strategies to significantly reduce existing emissions and on the voluntary implementation of new building standards which incentivize new home builders towards designing net zero energy homes.

Reducing the amount of waste deposited into the landfill through material reuse, reduction, and recycling is an important strategy to reduce GHG emissions. Waste reduction and recycling help reduce emissions and the amount of single-use materials.

III. Goals, Objectives, Policies and Actions

Goal LU-1:	To preserve the Town's character as a scenic, rural, thickly-wooded residential area with abundant open space. <i>(Existing Goal)</i>
------------	---

Objective LU-1.1: To establish a framework for determining the location and extent of land uses within the Town's area of interest. *(Existing Objective)*

⁴ Adopted October 19, 2016

⁵ Source: CD+A

- Objective LU-1.2: To limit the nature of land uses to those which are compatible with the overall land use planning goal LU-1. *(Existing Objective)*
- Objective LU-1.3: To retain the quality of life, character and existing in the Town’s residential neighborhoods. *(Existing Objective)*
- Policy LU-1.1: Future plans for residential development or redevelopment are severely limited due to the fact that the Town has been almost entirely developed. *(Existing Policy)*
- Policy LU-1.2: The development of high density and/or high rise residential structures or commercial uses of any kind would destroy the scenic, rural and open space character of the Town, and is, therefore, prohibited. *(Existing Policy)*
- Policy LU-1.3: Minimum new lot sizes in hillside areas (defined as areas with average cross slopes greater than 20 percent) shall be related to the slope and shall not be less than:

Table LU-3: Minimum Lot Sizes in Hillside Areas

Average Cross Slope	Minimum Lot Size
0 – 19%	1 Acre
20 – 34.9%	2 Acres
35% +	5 Acres

(Existing Policy)

- Policy LU-1.4: Structures higher than 34 feet shall be prohibited. *(Existing Policy)*
- Policy LU-1.5: Proposed residential subdivisions as well as proposals to replace existing homes, shall adhere to the following design criteria:
 - A. Maintenance of existing neighborhood environments shall be promoted by the design of the subdivision and subdivision improvements. Designs shall be visually harmonious and compatible with neighborhood character.
 - B. Adequate drainage and off-street parking shall be provided. Street lighting shall be kept to a minimum. Temporary or guest on-street parking areas shall be minimized.
 - C. Uniformity of lot design should be avoided by using such techniques as meandering streets.
 - D. Trees shall be preserved to the maximum extent feasible while allowing for construction within established parameters for setbacks and lot coverage in accordance with the Municipal Code chapter regulating removal of and damage to heritage trees.

- E. Residential land uses shall be designed in accordance with the density, floor area ratio, height, bulk and other standards established by the Town.
- F. All utilities installed in conjunction with new subdivisions shall be placed underground.
- G. Residential land uses shall be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Atherton General Plan Housing Element.
- H. Accessory dwelling units are permitted when consistent with adopted standards.
- I. Privacy is a factor which shall be incorporated into subdivision, subdivision improvements and home design.
- J. The Town allows minimum lot size subdivisions only where such minimum lot sizes do not significantly degrade established levels of privacy, wooded areas, and/or the open space environment.
- K. Residential improvements shall follow the model policies developed for the San Mateo Countrywide Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program and the Town's Green Infrastructure Plan⁶ to minimize the discharge of pollutants into the waterways. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy LU-1.6: The Town shall continue to preserve the open space characteristics of existing schools, churches and park facilities. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy LU-1.7: Land uses which diminish the open space character of the Town, such as commercial and high density residential uses, shall be prohibited. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy LU-1.8: Maximize preservation of heritage trees and existing trees within a development site to the greatest degree feasible. Require new development to comply with the Town's requirements for tree protection, removal, and replacement. *(Proposed Policy)*

Policy LU-1.9: Identify and implement green infrastructure opportunities for stormwater management including those recognized in the Town's Green Infrastructure Plan. Green infrastructure facilities should reflect the Town's visual rural character. *(Proposed Policy)*⁷

(The following Goals and Objectives taken from the Civic Center Project EIR)

Goal LU-2:	Build a civic center that will serve as a cohesive grouping of public buildings to meet the needs of 21 st Century governance.
------------	---

⁶ Source: CD+A

⁷ Source: CD+A

- Objective LU-2.1: Build a Civic Center that is consistent and compatible with Atherton’s rural, neighborhood residential character in massing and scale, reflecting the Town’s building types rather than an urban civic center.
- Objective LU-2.2: Provide a central pedestrian gathering space, as well as a circulation pattern that emphasizes pedestrian and bicycle activity.
- Objective LU-2.3: Maximize preservation of heritage trees and existing trees within the Project site and comply with the Town’s requirements for tree replacement where tree removals are necessary.
- Objective LU-2.4: Preserve the existing Town Hall building.

Goal LU-3:	Assure development of private schools continue to reflect the Town’s character as a scenic, rural, thickly-wooded residential area. <i>(Proposed New Goal)</i>
------------	--

Policy LU-3.1: Request private schools prepare Master Development Plans that are reviewed annually by the Planning Commission. *(Proposed New Policy)*

Goal LU-4:	Develop the Grand Boulevard Greenway and the Bay-to-Ridge Greenway as proposed in the adopted Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan. <i>(Proposed New Goal)</i>
------------	---

Policy LU-4.1: Implement the Grand Boulevard Greenway and the Bay-to-Ridge Greenway as proposed in the adopted Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan. *(Proposed New Policy)*

Goal <u>LU-5</u> :	Increase residential and commercial energy efficiency and reduce water consumption to meet AB 32 emission reduction target. <i>(Existing Goal from CAP)</i>
--------------------	---

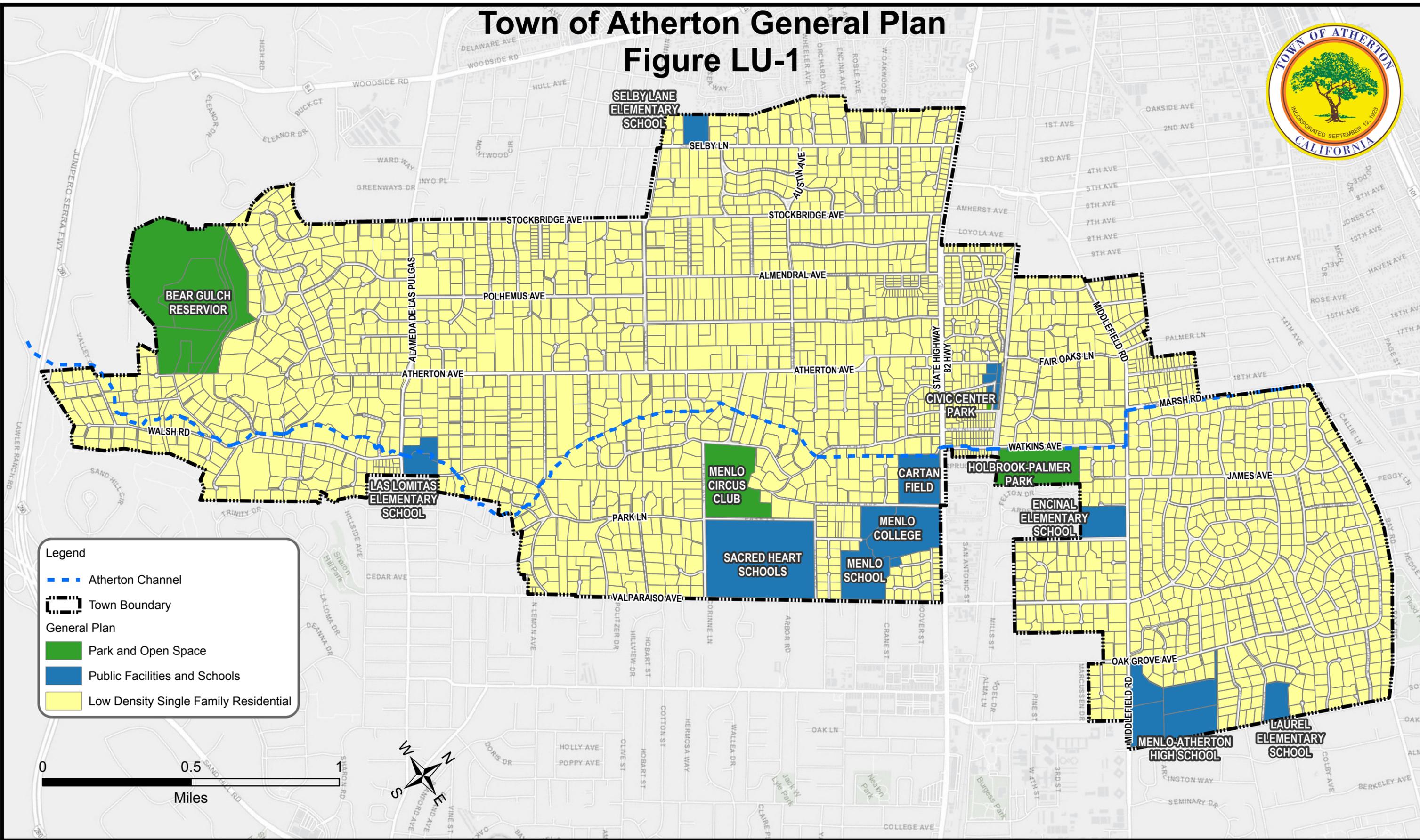
Policy LU-5.1: Implement the Greenhouse Gas programs in the Atherton Climate Action Plan related to energy efficiency and reduced water consumption. *(From Programs Existing in CAP)*

Goal <u>LU-6</u> :	Reduce the total amount of community waste generated and sent to landfills to meet AB 32 emission reduction target. <i>(Existing Goal from CAP)</i>
--------------------	---

Policy LU-6.1: Implement the Greenhouse Gas programs in the Atherton Climate Action Plan related to community waste generation. *(From Programs Existing in CAP)*

Town of Atherton General Plan

Figure LU-1



Legend

- Atherton Channel
- Town Boundary
- General Plan**
- Park and Open Space
- Public Facilities and Schools
- Low Density Single Family Residential



Town of Atherton

Administrative Draft

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

of the General Plan

~~For Public Workshop – February 13, 2019~~

~~For Planning Commission Meeting of May 22, 2019~~

Table of Contents

I. Purpose and Relation to other Elements	75
II. Background Information	75
Major Thoroughfares and the Regional Transportation System	75
Congestion Management	75
Grand Boulevard Initiative	76
Complete Streets	76
Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan	77
Safe Routes to School Program	78
Green Streets	78
Neighborhood Traffic Management Program	78
Transportation Demand Management	79
Rail Transportation	79
Bus Transportation	80
Scenic Roadways	80
Climate Action Plan	81
Traffic Counts Program	81
III. Roads and the Local Street Classification System	81
Freeways & Highways	81
Minor Arterials	82
Collector Streets	82
Local Streets	82
Street Standards	83
Level of Service	84
LOS Thresholds of Significance under CEQA	86
Vehicle Miles Traveled	86
Circulation Element Diagram and Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan Diagram	87
IV. Goals, Objectives, Policies and Actions	87
Figure C-1 Circulation Element Diagram	92
Figure C-2 Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan	93

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

I. Purpose and Relation to Other Elements

The Circulation Element describes facilities and policies for the movement of people and goods throughout the Town. It includes a plan of roadways, in addition to facilities for pedestrian, bicycle and rail transportation. *The Element plans for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, highways and rail for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the suburban context of the General Plan. Users include motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, movers of commercial goods, users of public transportation, and seniors.* Since the Town policy seeks to preserve all streets and highways as scenic routes, this Element shall also serve as the Scenic Roadways Element of the General Plan. *(Existing Section with Additions in Italics)*

The Circulation Element is most closely related to the Land Use and Housing Elements. It is particularly essential that the Circulation Element reflects and reinforces the goals and objectives set forth in the Land Use Element. Specifically, roadways and other transportation facilities must be planned and designed under the overriding principle of maintaining the Town's rural character. *(Existing Section)*

II. Background Information

Major Thoroughfares and the Regional Transportation System *(Proposed New Section)*

Atherton's circulation system has been developed within the context of the Bay Area's regional and the Peninsula's sub-regional major thoroughfare and transportation system. A system of freeways and state highways provides access to and from the Town for motorists, movers of commercial goods, cyclists, and users of public transportation. The nearby freeways of US 101 (Bayshore Freeway) and I-280 (Junipero Serra Freeway), as well as the State Highways of El Camino Real (SR 82, also known as the Grand Boulevard) and Woodside Road/Marsh Road (SR 84) provide major roadway access to Atherton. The CalTrain rail facilities provide commuter train access between San Francisco and the Santa Clara Valley as well as a thoroughfare for rail freight shipments. See "Rail Transportation" Section below for additional detail. *The San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) provides bus service throughout San Mateo County and into portions of San Francisco and Palo Alto. The District also provides commuter shuttle services and paratransit operations. See "Bus Transportation" Section below for additional detail.*

Congestion Management *(Proposed New Section)*

The City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG), as the Congestion Management Agency for San Mateo County, is required by State law to prepare and adopt a **Congestion Management Program (CMP)** on a biennial basis. The purpose of the CMP is to identify strategies to respond to future transportation needs, develop procedures to alleviate and control congestion, and promote countywide solutions. The CMP is required to be consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) planning process that includes regional goals, policies, and projects

for the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). The most current San Mateo County CMP was adopted in February 2018. It includes a roadway system consisting of freeways, state highways and principal arterials that form the basic structure of the County's vehicle transportation system. In Atherton, El Camino Real (SR 82) is the only street included in the CMP roadway system. The CMP designates 16 major intersections throughout the County to have their level of service monitored; however, none of those are within Atherton. Level of Service (LOS) Standards for segments of the CMP roadway system for future operations were established in the initial years of the program (1990/91). The LOS Standard for the El Camino Real segment through Atherton (i.e. SR 84 to Glenwood Avenue) was established at LOS E. In 2017 that segment was operating at LOS B in the AM peak hour and LOS C in the PM peak hour.

The CMP also includes a Performance Element, with measures to evaluate current and future multimodal system performance for the movement of people and goods; a Trip Reduction and Travel Demand Element, designed to promote alternative transportation methods (carpools, vanpools, transit, bicycles, park-and-ride lots, etc.), improve the balance between jobs and housing, and promote other strategies to reduce traffic congestion such as flexible work hours, telecommuting, parking management programs and, possibly parking cash-out programs; a Land Use Impact Analysis Program to determine the impacts of land use decisions upon regional transportation routes and air quality; and Deficiency Plan Guidelines as a way for the cities and the County to remain in conformance with the CMP when the level of service (LOS) for a CMP roadway segment or intersection deteriorates below the established standard. A five-year Capital Improvement Program is also included in the CMP.

Grand Boulevard Initiative (*Proposed New Section*)

The **Grand Boulevard Initiative** is a collaboration of 19 cities, counties, local and regional agencies united to improve the performance, safety and aesthetics of El Camino Real and was endorsed and supported by the Town beginning in 2008¹. Starting at the northern Daly City city limit (where it is named Mission Street) and ending near the Diridon Caltrain Station in central San Jose (where it is named The Alameda), the initiative brings together for the first time all of the agencies having responsibility for the condition, use and performance of the street under the jurisdictional umbrella of CalTrans (SR 82 is a State Highway)².

The **Grand Boulevard Greenway Concept** through Atherton is described in more detail in the Land Use Element of this General Plan and in the adopted Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan. The concept is to provide dedicated bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and transit access improvements, along the length of El Camino Real within Atherton by repurposing a vehicle travel lane in one or both directions. Further study is required prior to project implementation.

Complete Streets (*Proposed New Section*)

¹ Sources: City Council Resolution 2008-40

² Source: DPW

In 2008, the California Legislature adopted the **California Complete Streets Act** which requires cities and counties at such time as they substantially amend the circulation element of their general plans, to include plans for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan. Users of streets, roads, and highways means bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, pedestrians, users of public transportation, and seniors.

The Atherton City Council adopted³ a Complete Streets Policies. The policies adopted include a commitment to creating and maintaining Complete Streets serving all users, to maintaining a context of sensitivity to a strong sense of place and preservation of the Town's rural character, to assure that Complete Streets are routinely addressed by all Town departments, and to consider incorporating Complete Streets infrastructure in all projects and phases. The Complete Streets Policy is included in the Goals, Objectives, Policies and Actions section of this element.

A recent project that incorporated the Complete Streets concept includes the reconstruction of the Oak Grove Avenue/Middlefield Road intersection.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan

The Town's adopted⁴ **Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan** puts forward visionary yet practical recommendations for improving travel safety and encouraging greater use of active, low-impact travel modes. The Plan builds off and contributes to the region's bicycle priorities and local Safe Routes to School efforts and includes a detailed walkability assessment for 33 miles of Atherton roadways. It provides context-sensitive policy and design recommendations to retain and enhance the Town's scenic character while improving the ease at which all ages and abilities can safely walk or bicycle to key destinations.

The Town of Atherton currently utilizes Caltrans' bikeway design standards, which are organized according to a classification system within the California Highway Design Manual (HDM) defined as 'Class I' off-street trails; 'Class II' on-street, dedicated bike lanes; 'Class III' shared bikeways; *and 'Class IV' separated bikeways.*⁵

The Atherton Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan identifies four key project corridors/categories to improve active transportation safety and options. These facility recommendations consist of:

1. A major overhaul to El Camino Real by (in most cases) converting the westernmost southbound travel lane to a Class I trail with landscaping, *potential green infrastructure* and pedestrian crossing improvements, called the Grand Boulevard Greenway.
2. A new east-west Bay-to-Ridge Greenway, including Class I trail and pathway improvements to Marsh Road/Middlefield Road/Watkins Ave, plus bicycle boulevard and greenway linkages along or adjacent to the Atherton Channel across El Camino Real to Alameda de las Pulgas.

³ Resolution No. 12-33, adopted November 28, 2012

⁴ Adopted May 20, 2015

⁵ Source: CD+A

⁶ Source: CD+A

Commented [SB1]: Added b/c at time of this document prep Caltrans Highway Design Manual includes this Class bikeway. Town does not have any Class IV bikeways nor has plans to install any, but wanted internal consistency.

3. Safe Routes to School: Enhanced bike lanes along the regionally important Middlefield Road, Valparaiso Avenue, and Alameda de las Pulgas corridors, as well as new bike lanes and pedestrian improvements on Selby Lane, Glenwood Ave, and Atherton Ave serving local priority connections.
4. Shared bikeway and pedestrian greenway improvements along the Countywide North/South Bicycle Boulevard (along Elena Ave and Austin Ave/Selby Lane), as well as additional shared bikeway improvements connecting to the Town Civic Center

Safe Routes to School Program *(Proposed New Section)*

Safe Routes to School is an idea that has been implemented through State and Federal legislation. The concept is to increase the number of children who walk or bicycle to school by funding projects that remove the barriers that currently prevent them from doing so. Those barriers include lack of infrastructure, unsafe infrastructure, and lack of programs that promote walking and bicycling through education/encouragement programs aimed at children, parents, and the community.

Atherton supports the Safe Routes to School concept and has implemented several projects planned and designed to achieve the program’s goals. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Project list includes several projects that will increase safety, remove barriers and enhance accessibility to children who walk or bicycle to school.

Green Streets *(Proposed New Section)*

Green streets are a companion concept to **Green Infrastructure** described in the Open Space and Conservation Element. Green streets are streets **that include** a stormwater management **and treatment** approach that **may** incorporate vegetation (perennials, shrubs, trees), soil, and engineered systems (e.g., permeable pavements, **infiltration trenches**) to slow, filter, and cleanse stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces (e.g., streets, sidewalks). Green streets are designed to capture rainwater at its source, where rain falls. Whereas, a traditional street is designed to direct stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces into storm sewer systems (gutters, drains, pipes) that discharge directly into surface waters, rivers, and streams.

Green streets are one technique for the Town to meet its water quality goals established by the MRP and its Green Infrastructure Plan and should be considered during street and other improvement projects. The Green Infrastructure Plan identifies priority green street projects based on the San Mateo Stormwater Resource Plan. Additional green street opportunities may exist with other street improvement projects such as Safe Routes to School and those identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Neighborhood Traffic Management Program *(Proposed New Section)*

The Atherton **Neighborhood Traffic Management Program** (NTMP) is City Council adopted⁸ policy document which provides a comprehensive, thoughtful, and systematic program to address

⁷ Source: CD+A

⁸ Adopted July 20, 2016

neighborhood traffic concerns, improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, and maintain the scenic and quiet rural character of Atherton neighborhoods. It is a community-based approach to reduce vehicle speeds and improve the behaviors of drivers to “calm” traffic in residential neighborhoods.

Town staff has the authority to implement ~~necessary~~ **various** traffic control measures. The NTMP does not affect staff authority to implement necessary traffic control measures in residential neighborhoods in response to observed traffic safety concerns. The NTMP is an additional tool which provides a systematic framework to educate and encourage residents to participate in identifying and implementing equitable and effective neighborhood traffic solutions.

The process involves steps to identify the residents’ traffic concern(s), demonstrate neighborhood support for traffic calming measure(s), to determine if the traffic concerns meet the NTMP qualifying criteria, to identify (by Town staff) the most appropriate and effective improvement measure(s), and to prioritize and implement the plan.

Transportation Demand Management *(Proposed New Section)*

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs are intended to reduce vehicle trips and parking demand by promoting the use of a variety of transportation options and shifting travel mode and time of day to take advantage of available facility capacity to reduce crowding and congestion. By implementing TDM programs, municipalities and private entities can use available transportation resources more efficiently. TDM programs encourage use of carpools, vanpools, buses, public transportation and alternative transportation modes (bikes, walking) as a means of reducing single occupant vehicle trips. In Atherton, Menlo School and Sacred Heart Schools have successfully used TDM programs to substantially reduce peak hour traffic accessing their facilities.

The Town supports the C/CAG Congestion Management Program vehicle trip reduction measures for projects generating a net 100 or more peak-period trips in the Congestion Management Program network. The Town encourages other employers in Town, such as public and private schools, to incorporate TDM programs in their operations.

During the Planning Commission annual review of private school master plans, traffic congestion and flow issues should be evaluated and addressed to assure that impacts on the circulation system are not excessive.

Rail Transportation *(Proposed New Section)*

Peninsula commuter rail service originated in 1863 with construction of a single-track railroad between San Francisco and San Jose by the San Francisco and San Jose Rail Road. The facilities were purchased by the Southern Pacific Company in 1870 and a second track was constructed in 1904. Atherton was one of the earliest train stops on the rail corridor. Families, and later commuters, used the Atherton station for rail service to and from “The City” for over 100 years. Lloyd Park was developed for residents desiring easy access to public transportation provided by the train.

In 1988 the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, the City and County of San Francisco, and the San Mateo County Transit District entered into a joint powers agreement creating the Peninsula Corridor

⁹ Source: CD+A

Study Joint Powers Board (JPB) for the purposes of conducting planning studies related to the Peninsula Commute Service. The JPB bought the railroad right of way between San Francisco and San Jose from Southern Pacific in 1991. The JPB currently manages the operation of the Caltrain commute service by a private contractor.

In 2005 the JPB suspended weekday commute service at the Atherton Train Station as one measure in a multi-faceted cost-cutting effort. Weekend service at the Atherton Station continues. The Town has supported reinstatement of the weekday service since it was suspended.

Caltrain plans to “modernize” and electrify the main line between San Francisco and San Jose; replacing the diesel-electric locomotive power with fully electric rolling stock by 2022. Construction began on that project mid-2017. [The Town of Atherton has opposed the Caltrain electrification project because of its environmental impacts, high costs, and association with and facilitation of the High-Speed Rail project.](#)⁴⁰

High-Speed Rail (HSR) is a project undertaken by the State of California with the objective of constructing and operating a HSR service between Los Angeles and San Francisco/Sacramento. The plan includes using the Peninsula Commute Corridor for HSR operation from San Jose to San Francisco, and possibly the addition of one or more new tracks through Atherton to accommodate HSR. The Town of Atherton has opposed the HSR Project because of its reliance on faulty data, high costs, adverse environmental effects, and impacts to the Peninsula Commute corridor. [In early 2019 the California Governor reduced the scope of the HSR project, eliminating the Peninsula corridor route, among other major changes.](#)⁴¹

There are two at-grade road crossings of the Caltrain tracks in Atherton; one at Fair Oaks Lane and the other at Watkins Avenue. The crossing at Fair Oaks Lane is protected by a four-quadrant gate or “quad-gate”; a mechanism on both sides of the tracks that blocks automotive traffic from both directions. This is a safety device that qualifies the crossing for quiet zone status where the train horn is not sounded before the crossing. The Town seeks to have the Watkins Avenue crossing improved with additional safety measures, such as quad-gates, to improve safety at the crossing and to also [qualify allow](#)⁴² for quiet zone status.

Bus Transportation (Proposed New Section)

The San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) operates fixed bus routes through Atherton, providing public bus access throughout San Mateo County and into San Francisco and Palo Alto. The principal line runs along El Camino Real, providing connecting service to Peninsula transit stations between Palo Alto and Daly City. Other lines run on Middlefield Road and Bay Road. Service is available to local elementary and high schools on school-days.

SamTrans also operates the Menlo Park Caltrain Shuttle which provides service through Atherton between the Menlo Park Caltrain Station and the Bohannon Industrial Park east of Atherton.

Emergency Operations Plan and Evacuation Routes (Proposed New Section)

⁴⁰ Source: DPW — changed policy

⁴¹ Source: Planning Dept.

⁴² Source: DPW

As described in the Community Safety Element, the Town of Atherton Police Department and the Menlo Park Fire Protection District have jointly prepared the Town of Atherton Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) which describes how the jurisdictions will manage and coordinate resources and personnel responding to emergency situations. The EOP, along with a companion document; the Atherton Hazard Mitigation Strategies (HMS) is the Town's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan specified in the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-390).

The Town's circulation system plays a key role in emergency operations, providing access to properties and individuals as well as functioning evacuation infrastructure and routes during emergencies. Primary emergency evacuation routes are shown on the Community Safety Diagram and are listed in a Circulation Element policy in Section IV of this element.

Scenic Roadways

Scenic roads are an important resource to San Mateo County and to Atherton for both aesthetic and recreational purposes. Scenic corridors can best be defined as the visual land area outside the road right-of-way and generally described as the "view from the road". It is within this area that development standards are applied to retain and enhance scenic qualities and restrict unsightly use of the land. These standards may include ~~architectural and site review procedures and~~ regulations on building setbacks, signs, grading, tree removal, *landscaping* and underground utility lines. The Junipero Serra Freeway (Interstate 280) is the only roadway located in ~~the vicinity of Atherton~~ Atherton's Sphere of Influence which has been designated as a scenic highway pursuant to the provisions of Section 260 et seq. of the California Streets and Highways Code. However, it is Town policy to ~~designate~~ *preserve* all streets and highways *within Town* as scenic routes. (*Existing Section with Changes/Additions in Strikeovers and Italics*)

Climate Action Plan (Proposed New Section)

Atherton's proposals and policies related to climate change are contained in its adopted¹³ **Climate Action Plan**. The Town's Climate Action Plan serves as a guiding document to identify methods that the Town and community can implement to significantly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The Plan provides a comprehensive roadmap of programs that can be implemented to reduce emissions and increase sustainability. Transportation aspects of the Action Plan are addressed in the Circulation Element. Energy, water and solid waste programs and policies are addressed in the Open Space and Conservation Element.

Atherton has adopted a target of reducing emission to 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020.

In Atherton, approximately 44% percent of GHG emissions stem from transportation. Travel on local roads and state highways represent 80% and 20% of on-road transportation emissions respectively. Thus, reducing transportation emissions is a critical component of the climate action strategy. Reducing emissions from the transportation sector requires addressing three constituent components: reducing the carbon intensity of fuels, increasing vehicle efficiency, and reducing vehicle miles travelled (VMT). The Town is committed to providing transportation options that are convenient, safe, and affordable.

¹³ Adopted October 19, 2016

Local Traffic Flow/Long Range Planning Solutions Study *(Proposed New Section)*

The Town recently embarked on a study focusing on the Town's roadway network with the objective of developing short and longer term solutions and strategies for mitigating current cut through and speeding traffic [which the majority of which originates outside of the Town limits¹⁴](#). The study included collection of background data related to traffic, pedestrian and bicycle volume counts and projections, signal timing and phasing, origin-destination studies, speed studies, future land use projects, and other similar data.

Traffic Counts Program *(Proposed New Section)*

The Atherton Department of Public Works has a program where vehicular traffic is counted [periodically from time to time¹⁵](#) on minor arterial, collector and selected local streets. The count data is available to determine current roadway usage and volume growth trends. The data is posted on the Town website.

III. Roads and the Local Street Classification System

Roadways in the Town of Atherton may be divided into four classifications; highways, minor arterial streets, collector streets, and local streets. While the vast majority of Atherton's roadways fall into the last category, each of these four categories is represented by at least one road. *(Existing Section)*

Freeways & Highways: Freeways are multi-lane facilities with no fixed interruptions to traffic flow. The Town of Atherton contains no freeways; however, the Junipero Serra Freeway (Interstate 280) abuts the western edge of the incorporated Town limits. The single highway through the Town is El Camino Real (State Route 82) which provides for through traffic. *El Camino Real has also been described as the "Grand Boulevard" (see section entitled "Grand Boulevard Initiative" above. (Existing Section with Additions in Italics)*

Minor Arterials are streets with traffic signals that primarily serve through traffic and provide access to abutting properties as a secondary function. The main role of minor arterial streets is to link residential districts to other transportation facilities and to act as emergency service and evacuation routes. *(Existing Section)*

Collector Streets provide both land access and traffic circulation service within residential areas. Unlike minor arterials, their operation is not always dominated by traffic signals. While not as important as minor arterials, collector streets should still be designed to carry through traffic. Their function is to transfer traffic from local traffic generators (homes, schools, etc.) and local streets to *minor arterials and arterials. (Existing Section with Additions in Italics)*

Local Streets: aside from the roadways cited above the remainder of Atherton's roads are classified as local streets. Such roads are used to provide access to abutting property, locations for easements, open space for light and air and a fire break between buildings. Carrying traffic is a secondary function of local streets and they should be designed to discourage through traffic. *(Existing Section)*

¹⁴ Source: [Draft Local Traffic Flow/Long Range Planning Solutions Study](#)

¹⁵ Source: [DPW](#)

Table C-1 below lists Atherton’s major streets and their classification by road type.

Table C-1: Major Streets Classified by Road Type

Street	Road Type	From	To
El Camino Real	Highway	City Limits	City Limits
Alameda de las Pulgas	Minor Arterial	City Limits	City Limits
Marsh Road	Minor Arterial	Middlefield Road	City Limits
Middlefield Road	Minor Arterial	City Limits	City Limits
Ravenswood Avenue¹⁶	<i>Minor Arterial</i>	<i>City Limits</i>	<i>El Camino Real</i>
Valparaiso Avenue¹⁷	<i>Minor Arterial</i>	<i>City Limits</i>	<i>El Camino Real</i>
Atherton Avenue	Collector	Ridgeview Drive	El Camino Real
Encinal Avenue	Collector	City Limits	Middlefield Road
Fair Oaks Lane	Collector	El Camino Real	Middlefield Road
Glenwood Avenue	Collector	City Limits	El Camino Real
Oak Grove Avenue	Collector	City Limits	El Camino Real

¹⁶ Proposed change from Collector to Minor Arterial because it is designated as a Minor Arterial in the City of Menlo Park General Plan, Circulation Element and has an average daily traffic volume of 16,600 vpd or more.

¹⁷ Proposed change from Collector to Minor Arterial because it is designated as a Minor Arterial in the City of Menlo Park General Plan, Circulation Element and has an average daily traffic volume of 12,900 – 13,200 vpd.

Ringwood Avenue	Collector	Middlefield Road	Bay Road
Watkins Avenue	Collector	El Camino Real	Middlefield Road

Street Standards

The general standards for street right-of-way and improvements are listed in Table C-2 below. Local conditions may necessitate modification of these standards where topography, building location or other conditions warrant. Detailed standards for street improvements are set forth in the Atherton Municipal Code *and in this Circulation Element*.

Table C-2: Street Standards

Street Category	Recommended Pavement Width	Right-of-Way Width
Minor Arterial	24 ³² / ₁₈ feet	60 feet
Collector	24 feet	50 feet
Local	20 feet	40 feet
Cul-de-Sac	18 feet	30 feet

(Existing Section)

Level of Service *(Proposed New Section)*

Transportation engineers and planners commonly use a grading system called **Level of Service (LOS)** to measure and describe the operational status of the local roadway network. LOS is a description of the quality of a roadway facility’s operation, ranging from LOS A (indicating free flow traffic conditions with little or no delay) to LOS F (representing oversaturated conditions where traffic flows exceed design capacity, resulting in long queues and delays). Intersections, rather than roadway segments between intersections, are almost always the capacity controlling locations for any circulation system.

Separate standardized LOS criteria have been developed for signalized and unsignalized intersections. The criteria are presented in Tables C-3 and C-4 below.

¹⁸ Source: Transportation Committee

Table C-3: Signalized Intersection LOS Criteria¹⁹

Level of Service	Description	Average Control Delay (Seconds Per Vehicle)
A	Operations with very low delay occurring with favorable progression and/or short cycle lengths.	≤ 10.0
B	Operations with low delay occurring with good progression and/or short cycle lengths.	10.1 to 20.0
C	Operations with average delays resulting from fair progression and/or longer cycle lengths. Individual cycle failures begin to appear.	20.1 to 35.0
D	Operations with longer delays due to a combination of unfavorable progression, long cycle lengths, and/or high volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratios. Many vehicles stop and individual cycle failures are noticeable.	35.1 to 55.0
E	Operations with high delay values indicating poor progression, long cycle lengths and high V/C ratios. Individual cycle failures are frequent occurrences. This is considered to be the limit of acceptable delay.	55.1 to 80.0
F	Operation with delays unacceptable to most drivers occurring due to oversaturation, poor progression, or very long cycle lengths.	> 80.0

¹⁹ Source: Transportation Research Board, 2000 Highway Capacity Manual.

Table C-4: Unsignalized Intersection LOS Criteria²⁰

Level of Service	Description	Average Control Delay (Seconds Per Vehicle)
A	Little or no delays	≤ 10.0
B	Short traffic delays	10.1 to 15.0
C	Average traffic delays	15.1 to 25.0
D	Long traffic delays	25.1 to 35.0
E	Very long traffic delays	35.1 to 50.0
F	Extreme traffic delays with intersection capacity exceeded (for an all-stop), or with approach/turn movement capacity exceeded (for a side street stop-controlled intersection)	> 50.0

Atherton’s minimum acceptable intersection level of service standards are listed below.

- Highways: LOS E (C/CAG adopted standard)
- Minor Arterials and Collectors: LOS D
- Local Streets: LOS C

LOS Thresholds of Significance under CEQA (Proposed New Section)

Proposed projects are required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), to be evaluated to determine if they conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system. Such projects may be located either in Town or in another jurisdiction where the project could have an impact on Town intersections. The minimum acceptable intersection level of service standards listed above are the Town’s performance

²⁰ Source: Transportation Research Board, 2000 Highway Capacity Manual.

policy for the circulation system. The criteria for determining if a proposed project would create a significant adverse impact on Town intersections are described below.

A project is considered to have a potentially “significant” traffic impact if the addition of project traffic causes:

- Threshold “I” – An intersection on **minor arterial streets** or **local approaches to State-controlled signalized intersections** operating at LOS A through D to operate at an unacceptable level (LOS E or F) or have an increase of 23 seconds or greater in average vehicle delay, whichever comes first.
- Threshold “II” - An increase of more than 4 seconds to average delay to vehicles on all critical movements for intersections on **minor arterial streets** operating at LOS E or F.
- Threshold “III” - An increase of more than 4 seconds to average delay to vehicles on the most critical movements for intersections on **local approaches to State-controlled intersections** operating at LOS E or F.
- Threshold “IV” - An intersection on **collector streets** operating at LOS A through C to operate at an unacceptable level (LOS D, E or F) or have an increase of 23 seconds or greater in average vehicle delay, whichever comes first.
- Threshold “V” - An increase of more than 4 seconds to average delay to vehicles on all critical movements for intersections on **collector streets** operating at LOS D, E or F.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (Proposed New Section)

Another grading system called **vehicle miles traveled (VMT)** has been less commonly used to measure and describe the operational status of the local roadway network. While it is desirable to reduce vehicle miles traveled to help relieve congestion and improve air quality, there are currently no universally accepted VMT standards or thresholds of significance similar to the LOS standards.

Circulation Element Diagram and Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan Diagram (Proposed New Section)

Figure C-1 below is the Circulation Element Diagram and Figure C-2 below is the adopted Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan Diagram.

IV. Goals, Objectives, Policies and Actions

Goal CIR-1:	To develop a circulation system that is compatible with the needs of various land uses planned within the Town of Atherton. <i>(Existing Goal)</i>
Objective CIR-1.1:	To minimize the encroachment of the circulation network on the residential and open spaces uses which prevail throughout most of the community. <i>(Existing Objective)</i>
Policy CIR-1.1:	No street under the jurisdiction of the Town shall be more than two lanes in width <i>(excluding turn lanes and bike lanes)</i> . <i>(Existing Policy with Additions in Italics)</i>

Policy CIR-1.2: No new vertical curbs or sidewalks shall be constructed, as their presence would be incongruent with existing development. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy CIR-1.3: Where possible within the constraints of other policies, promote the use of **and implement²¹** Green Streets techniques and practices in order to reduce flooding, treat stormwater at its source, and to reduce stormwater pollution. *(Proposed New Policy)*

Policy CIR-1.4: Meandering street lines shall be preserved consistent with traffic safety. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy CIR-1.5: Suitable pedestrian paths along existing minor arterials shall be maintained. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy CIR-1.6: A public street shall be accepted by the Town only on the condition that it has been improved in accordance with Town standards existing at the time of acceptance. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy CIR-1.7: Use of Town streets as thoroughfares by trucks and other large vehicles shall be carefully controlled. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy CIR-1.8: Paving for temporary on-street parking within the roadway right-of-way will be prohibited. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy CIR-1.9: Valley gutters or rolled curbs may be required in all new subdivisions. *(Existing Policy)*

Objective CIR-1.2: To preserve the streets of Atherton as scenic routes. *(Existing Objective)*

Policy CIR-1.9: All streets and highways in the Town of Atherton shall be preserved as scenic routes. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy CIR-1.10: The development of arterial streets and/or highways through the Town shall be prevented to minimize disruption of its scenic features. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy CIR-1.11: The intrusion of El Camino Real on the ecology of the Town shall be minimized to the greatest extent possible by:

- A. Preserving center planting on El Camino Real;
- B. Minimizing the number of lots with access onto El Camino Real;
- C. Promoting the maintenance of walls, **green infrastructure²²**, shrubbery and trees along the sides of El Camino Real. *(Existing Policy with Updates in Italics)*

²¹ Source: CD+A

²² Source: CD+A

- Policy CIR-1.12: For reasons discussed above the Town also seeks to minimize the number of lots with access onto Alameda de las Pulgas and Middlefield Road. *(Existing Policy)*
- Policy CIR-1.13: On-street and visible off-street parking of vehicles and other means of transportation shall be carefully controlled. *(Existing Policy)*
- Policy CIR-1.14: Street lights and signs shall be kept to a minimum. *(Existing Policy)*
- Policy CIR-1.15: Trees located in the right-of-way shall be preserved to the extent consistent with traffic safety. *(Existing Policy)*
- Policy CIR-1.16: The emergency evacuation routes established in this General Plan Element are El Camino Real, Middlefield Road, Marsh Road, Alameda de las Pulgas, Atherton Avenue/Fair Oaks Lane and Valparaiso Avenue. *(Existing Policy with Proposed Additions in Italics)*

Goal CIR-2: To reduce congestion on freeways, state highways and principal arterials by participation with and support for the congestion management programs of C/CAG. *(Proposed new Goal)*

~~Objective CIR-2.1: To maintain the current operational Level of Service of LOS B in the AM peak hour and LOS C in the PM peak hour on El Camino Real between State Route 84 and Glenwood Avenue (the only CMP segment in Atherton). *(Proposed new Objective)*~~

Policy CIR-2.1: Maintain operating conditions on El Camino Real between State Route 84 and Glenwood Avenue at Service Levels ~~significantly~~ **equal to or²³** better than the C/CAG Standard of LOS E. *(Proposed new Policy)*

Goal CIR-3: To participate in the Grand Boulevard Initiative and support its efforts to improve the performance, safety and aesthetics of El Camino Real where consistent with other Atherton goals, objectives and policies. *(Proposed new Goal)*

Policy CIR-3.1: Further study and evaluate providing dedicated bicycle and pedestrian facilities, **green infrastructure²⁴** and transit access improvements, along the length of El Camino Real within Atherton by repurposing a vehicle travel lane in one or both directions. *(Proposed new Policy from Bike/Ped Master Plan)*

Goal CIR-4: To achieve a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of Atherton streets and highways for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the rural and suburban context of the general plan. *(Proposed new Goal)*

²³ Source: DPW—LOS will be reduced if Grand Boulevard Greenway Project is implemented.

²⁴ Source: CD+A

- Objective CIR-4.1: To incorporate, over time, the principles of Complete Streets in future roadway projects. *(Proposed new Objective)*
- Policy CIR-4.1: The Town commits to creating and maintaining Complete Streets serving all users. *(Proposed new Policy)*
- Policy CIR-4.2: When implementing roadway improvements, the Town will maintain a context of sensitivity to a strong sense of place and preservation of the Town's rural character. *(Proposed new Policy)*
- Policy CIR-4.3 The Town will assure that Complete Streets are routinely addressed by all Town departments. *(Proposed new Policy)*
- Policy CIR-4.4 The Town will consider incorporating Complete Streets infrastructure in all appropriate projects and phases. *(Proposed new Policy)*
- Objective CIR-4.2: To implement the concepts and proposals contained in the adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and Safe Routes to School legislation. *(Proposed new Objective)*
- Policy CIR-4.5: Standards for designation and construction of bike routes in Atherton shall be those adopted by the California Department of Transportation *and as described in the adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. (Existing Policy with Proposed Additions in Italics)*
- Policy CIR-4.6: Wherever possible suitable ~~bicycle paths~~ *bikeways* should be developed and maintained *in accordance with the adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. (Existing Policy with Additions in Italics)*
- Policy CIR-4.7: Bicycle paths separating bicycles from vehicular traffic are considered desirable. *(Existing Policy)*

Goal CIR-5:	To achieve a high quality of roadway operation on all Atherton streets. <i>(Proposed new Goal)</i>
-------------	--

- Policy CIR-5.1: Atherton's minimum acceptable intersection level of service standards are listed below.
- Highways: LOS E (C/CAG adopted standard)
 - Minor Arterials and Collectors: LOS D
 - Local Streets: LOS C *(Proposed New Policy)*

Policy CIR-5.2: Limit **cut** through **and pass through**²⁵ traffic on local streets by supporting Towns' efforts using the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program described in this Element.

Policy CIR-5.3: During the annual review of private school master plans, the Planning Commission should evaluate and address traffic congestion and flow issues to assure that impacts on the circulation system are not excessive.

Policy CIR-5.4: The Town shall support identified short-term and long-term strategies and physical improvements addressing traffic concerns originating both outside and within the Town boundaries in order to improve circulation, smooth progression, improved operations, mobility and safety for all modes of transportation, as feasible.

Goal CIR-6:	To retain the JPB Caltrain commute service in essential its existing operational status and to retain the existing two track physical configuration through Atherton. <i>(Proposed new Goal)</i>
-------------	---

Policy CIR-6.1: The Town seeks to minimize, to the greatest extent possible, the environmental impact of transit and rail facilities on the rural and open space features of the community. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy CIR-6.2: The Town shall support the continued operation and upgrading of passenger rail service **(with the exception of electrification)**²⁶ operated over the Joint Powers Board right-of-way between Gilroy and San Francisco. *(Existing Policy with Additions in Italics)*

Policy CIR-6.3: The Town desires to limit public bus service to ~~the use of El Camino Real and Middlefield Road~~ **minor arterials and State Highways.** *(Existing Policy with Additions in Italics)*

Goal CIR-7:	To halt the eventual use of the Peninsula Commute rail ²⁷ Corridor by High Speed Rail. ²⁸
-------------	--

Objective CIR-7.1: Ensure any long-term Peninsula **Commute** Corridor rail plan limits two tracks through Atherton.

Objective CIR-7.2: Implementation of a Quiet Zone within and on the Town's border areas.

Policy CIR-7.1: Seek the addition of Quad Gates at the Watkins Avenue rail crossing thereby qualifying for Quiet Zone regulations.

²⁵ Source: DPW

²⁶ Source: DPW

²⁷ Source: DPW

²⁸ The Goals, Objectives and Policies related to High Speed Rail are taken from City Council Resolution No. 13-08 adopted June 14, 2013.

Objective CIR-7.3: Restoration of weekday commuter train service to the Atherton Station.

Goal CIR-8:	Allow for changes in the traditional transportation system to reduce vehicle miles traveled and the modes of transportation types to meet AB 32 emission reduction target. <i>(Existing Goal from CAP)</i>
-------------	--

Policy CIR-8.1: Implement the Greenhouse Gas programs in the Atherton Climate Action Plan related to reduction of vehicle miles traveled and alternative modes of transportation. *(From Programs Existing in CAP)*

Town of Atherton

Administrative Draft

**OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION
ELEMENT**

of the General Plan

Revised per Planning Commission Comments – December 6, 2017

For Public Workshop – February 13, 2019

For Planning Commission Meeting – May 22, 2019

Table of Contents

Administrative Draft Open Space and Conservation May 22, 2019

I. Purpose and Relation to other Elements	107
II. Background Information	107
Open Space Land Uses	107
Inventory of Open Space Lands	108
Open Space for Natural Resources	108
Open Space for Managed Production of Resources	108
Open Space for Outdoor Recreation	110
Open Space for Public Health and Safety	111
Open Space for Military Support and Tribal Resources	111
Conservation, Development and Utilization of Natural Resources	111
Water and Its Hydraulic Force	112
Forests	112
Soils	113
Rivers, Other Waters and Floodwater Management	113
Harbors and Fisheries	115
Wildlife and Habitats	115
Minerals and Other Natural Resources	117
Cultural Resources	117
Climate Action Plan	118
III. Goals, Objectives, Policies and Actions	119
Figure OSC-1 Open Space and Conservation Diagram	122

OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION ELEMENT

I. Purpose and Relation to Other Elements

The purpose of the Open Space portion of this element is to inventory and describe existing and proposed open space lands and uses and to identify goals and policies that support open spaces in Atherton. The purpose of the Conservation portion of this element is to describe the Town's natural and man-made resources; including land, water, ecosystems, cultural and living resources. The Open Space and Conservation Element seeks to maintain the low density, residential character of the Town. (Proposed New Section)

In order to eliminate duplication, the Open Space and Conservation Elements of the Atherton General Plan have been consolidated into a single document, a procedure authorized by Government Code Sections 65301. Programs and policies outlined in the combined Element are to be coordinated with State and Regional open space and conservation policies. *(Existing Section)*

In addition to being closely related to one another, open space and conservation relate closely to the Land Use and Circulation Elements. Decisions implemented under policies contained in those Elements could significantly impact upon open space and sensitive environmental features. *(Existing Section)*

II. Background Information

Open Space Land Uses

The State-mandated Open Space Element is concerned with the management of open space resources, including cultural resources. Open space is defined as, "any parcel or area of public or private land, large or small, or water that is essentially unimproved and undeveloped." California Government Code requires local general plans to address six categories of open spaces:

- Open Space for Natural Resources
- Open Space for Managed Production of Resources
- Open Space for Outdoor Recreation
- Open Space for Public Health and Safety
- Open Space for Military Support
- Open Space for Tribal Resources

The Government Code also requires an Inventory of Open Space Lands. These topics are all addressed in the sections below.

Inventory of Open Space Lands *(Proposed New Section)*

Table OSC-1 and Figure OSC-1 present an inventory of the open space lands existing in Atherton in 2017. The Town owned Holbrook-Palmer Park and the **new Civic Center** Park are included in the category of Open Space for Outdoor Recreation. The privately-owned Menlo Circus Club Country Club equestrian center is also included in the category of Open Space for Outdoor Recreation. The California Water Service owned Bear Gulch Reservoir is included in the category of Open Space for Natural Resources and Open Space for Public Health and Safety.

Table OSC-1: Inventory of Atherton Open Space Lands

Facility	Category	Area
Holbrook-Palmer Park	Outdoor Recreation	22 acres
Reading Civic Center Park	Outdoor Recreation	0.928 acres
Menlo Circus Club	Outdoor Recreation	29.25 acres
Bear Gulch Reservoir	Natural Resources / Public Health and Safety	99.22 acres

Open Space for Natural Resources *(Proposed New Section)*

Bear Gulch Reservoir is a water storage facility located on the western border of Atherton. The reservoir is the main storage facility for the Bear Gulch District of the California Water Service. The facility holds 166 million gallons of water and serves over 55,000 people. The lands surrounding the reservoir function as a watershed for the facility. As both a potable water storage facility and a water shed area, the reservoir and surrounding lands owned by Cal Water are designated Open Space for Natural Resources.

Should the Bear Gulch Dam fail, portions of Atherton and west Menlo Park would be subject to inundation. The Safety Element of this General Plan addresses dam safety and the potential for inundation of properties below the dam.

The **large lot character of the community** including significant portions of landscaped and natural privately-owned property is also considered Open Space for Natural Resources, although not specifically identified on the Open Space Diagram.

Open Space for Managed Production of Resources *(Proposed New Section)*

Groundwater is a sub-regional resource that produces irrigation water for many properties in Atherton. The quantity and quality of groundwater has been of concern, and the subject of past studies. Atherton, along with other concerned agencies cooperate in its study and management.

The Town of Atherton is part of the **San Francisquito Creek area** (creek itself located in the City of Palo Alto) of the Mid-peninsula that overlies the **Santa Clara and San Mateo Plain Groundwater Sub-basins**.

¹ [Source: DPW](#)

Concerns about increased reliance on local groundwater resources for landscape irrigation were raised in the Town of Atherton by 1992. By then, five years of drought and the installation of more than 100 new wells raised concerns that such reliance might lead to land subsidence, declining water levels, and saltwater intrusion. A 1993-95 study² was commissioned by the U. S. Geological Survey, in cooperation with the Town of Atherton, which describes the general geohydrology of the San Francisquito Creek alluvial cone; historical groundwater development; present-day well distribution and groundwater use; the aerial and seasonal variation of groundwater levels and direction of flow-aerial variation in groundwater chemistry; and the establishment and initial measurements of a land elevation surveying network for monitoring potential land subsidence. The study findings included:

- The number of active, probably active, and unknown wells in Atherton ranged from 175 to 403 in 1994. Approximately 95% were used for private residential irrigation with the remainder used for public and private institutions.
- Groundwater levels were expressed in two ways: depth-to-water level below land surface or hydraulic head (i.e. water level expressed as an altitude above sea level). The depth-to-water level ranged from less than 20 feet below land surface nearest the San Francisco Bay to about 70 feet below land surface near Alameda de las Pulgas. The hydraulic head level ranged from less than 10 feet above sea level nearest the San Francisco Bay to about 60 feet above sea level near Alameda de las Pulgas.
- Groundwater flow was generally north or northeasterly towards San Francisco Bay.
- All measured hydraulic heads within the study area from April 1993 to September 1995 were above sea level, which indicated that saltwater intrusion was unlikely during that period.
- Water quality samples provided no evidence of saltwater intrusion from San Francisco Bay.
- The lack of land-elevation surveying network and historical data prompted the establishment of 21 surveying sites as part of the study. These sites plus one existing bench mark were surveyed in March 1994 to establish a baseline for monitoring subsidence. A determination as to whether subsidence is occurring presently or in the future will require repetitive measurements of land-surface elevation.

The Town³, along with the cities of Palo Alto, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Stanford University, San Mateo County, Santa Clara Valley Water District and several other agencies and non-governmental organizations have committed to:

- Collaborating with other agencies and organizations to better understand the hydrology and geology of the San Francisquito Creek area, and
- The sustainable management of local groundwater to protect its quality and ensure its availability during droughts and emergency situations.

While no lands are specifically designated Open Space for Managed Production of Resources, the Town's low intensity development, its support of Green Infrastructure, and policies directed toward sustainable management of local groundwater to protect its quality and future availability, act to help protect this natural resource.

² USGS Water Resources Investigations Report 97-4033

³ Resolution 14-21, September 17, 2014

Open Space for Outdoor Recreation (Proposed New Section)

The facilities described below provide open space for outdoor recreation in Atherton.

Atherton's premier public park, **Holbrook-Palmer Park**, is a 22-acre open space facility located on Watkins Avenue near Middlefield Road. The Park offers many amenities to the community, including shady, tree-lined walking paths, tennis courts, a playground, a large sports field, open space and gardens. Several historic buildings provide a glimpse of Atherton's past, and provide space for meetings and classes. The Main House and the Jennings Pavilion are also used for meetings, weddings and larger events. The park supports a variety of activities, including sports, a place to play for children, classes, public and private events, a preschool and more.

Development of the Park is governed by the adopted⁴ **Holbrook-Palmer Park Master Plan 2014**. In the Master Plan it is noted that the need for new parkland is not anticipated as the Town's population is stable. There are however, opportunities for refinement and improvements. The adopted Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan includes a link through Holbrook-Palmer Park to enhance cyclist connectivity and safety. Other recommendations include modifications to the Park Entrance, pedestrian access improvements and new path links, signage and lighting improvements. The Master Plan builds on the concept of the park as an Arboretum. It calls for an off-leash dog area, recognizes the Little League Field improvements and relocation of the Playschool. The Master Plan calls for interior restoration and upgrades for expanding public use of the historic Carriage House and relocation and redesign of the Park Maintenance Building & Corporation Yard. Finally, parking management options are offered.

Atherton's second public park, the **new Civic Center Park (previously called the Reading Park)** is located adjacent to the **new Atherton Library that will be constructed as part of the Town's Civic Center project** at the corner of Dinkelspiel (Station) Lane and Maple Street. **Landscaped open space provides a quiet area for reading and other passive activities, as well as a "Civic Court" with benches, a community porch and other landscaped areas**. The **approved construction plans for the new Town Civic Center includes** a new "Town Green" located between the new City Administration Building and the new Library. The **new Civic Center Park** would be slightly larger than the existing Reading Park. The Town Green and Library **gardens** would be the landscape focus of the new Civic Center. It would also provide for stormwater detention and function as a component of **Green Infrastructure** (see section below).

Commented [SB1]: Updated based on most recent approved construction plans for Civic Center

The **Menlo Circus Club** is a private equestrian center located on Elena Avenue at Park Lane. The Club provides almost 30 acres of open space for outdoor recreation for its members including polo, swimming, tennis and horse shows.

Open spaces for outdoor recreation are also provided at the **public and private schools** in Atherton. Access to these facilities are generally restricted to students and faculty during school hours. The schools are listed in Table OSC-2.

Table OSC-2: Inventory of Schools in Atherton

⁴ Adopted May 20, 2015

School	Grades	Public/Private
Encinal School	Elementary	Public
Las Lomas School	Elementary	Public
Laurel School	Elementary	Public
Selby Lane School	Elementary	Public
Menlo-Atherton High School	High School	Public
Menlo School	Middle & High School	Private
Sacred Heart Schools	Elementary, Middle & High School	Private
Menlo College	College	Private

Open Space for Public Health and Safety *(Proposed New Section)*

The only area in Atherton designated as Open Space for Public Health and Safety is the **Bear Gulch Reservoir** which is required for the protection of water quality and a water reservoir. Bear Gulch Reservoir is also categorized as an Open Space for Natural Resources and further described in that section.

Open Space for Military Support and Tribal Resources *(Proposed New Section)*

Atherton has no areas designated as Open Space for Military Support, as there are no military facilities in or near Town. Neither does Atherton have areas designated as Open Space for Native American Tribal Resources, as there are no known Native American Tribal Resources in or near Town.

Conservation, Development and Utilization of Natural Resources

The State-mandated Conservation Element is concerned with the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, including plants and animal wildlife, water bodies and watersheds, forests, soils, minerals and energy conservation. California Government Code requires local general plans to address seven categories of natural resources:

- Water and its Hydraulic Force
- Forests
- Soils
- Rivers and Other Waters
- Harbors and Fisheries
- Wildlife
- Minerals and other Natural Resources

Water and Its Hydraulic Force *(Proposed New Section)*

Groundwater management and recharge of the **Santa Clara and San Mateo Plain Groundwater Sub-basins** is discussed under the section entitled Open Space for Managed Production of Resources, above.

Surface stormwater runoff currently infiltrates into the open space and other pervious areas in the Town or flows on the ground surface until it is captured by the town's drainage infrastructure. See below for greater discussion of the Town's stormwater system. As mandated by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Regional Permit (MRP) Bay Area communities are to transition their "gray" or piped stormwater infrastructure to "green" infrastructure, as well as to increase the implementation of green infrastructure to aid in improving water quality. Green Infrastructure is an approach to managing and treating wet weather impacts that uses vegetation, soils, and other elements and practices to restore some of the natural processes to the management and improved quality of stormwater runoff. At the local level, Green Infrastructure is a series of natural areas or systems that provide habitat, flood protection, cleaner air, and cleaner water. At the neighborhood or site level, Green Infrastructure stormwater management systems mimic nature to soak up, infiltrate, and store water. Examples include downspout rerouting to storage or permeable areas; rainwater harvesting, storage, and later use; rain gardens and planter boxes for infiltration, evaporation, and transpiration; bioswales that facilitate conveyance, filtration, and infiltration; permeable pavements that promote infiltration and storage; green streets and alleys designed for storage, infiltration and evapotranspiration; green roofs; and tree canopies. Green infrastructure facilities and opportunities are further defined and discussed under the Town's Green Infrastructure Plan.⁵

Forests (Proposed New Section)

The entire Town of Atherton can be considered a **Coastal Oak Woodland**. Coastal Oak Woodland is defined primarily by the composition of its overstory. The Town's overstory consists of deciduous and evergreen hardwoods (mostly oaks) sometimes mixed with scattered conifers. The dominant oak species in Town are the Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and the Valley Oak (*Quercus lobata*), along with many White Oaks (*Quercus alba*), Blue Oaks (*quercus douglasii*), and Black Oaks (*Quercus kelloggii*). Species associated with Coast Live Oak on moister sites are Pacific Madrone, California Bay, Tanoak, and Canyon Live Oak, while Coast Live Oak occurs with Valley Oak, Blue Oak, and Foothill Pine on drier sites. Numerous other tree species including Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*), Incense Cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*), Ash (*Fraxinus Spp.*), Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*, Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus deodara* and Elm (*Ulmus Spp.*) are found throughout the Town.

Over the years, Town policies have supported the preservation and protection of trees in general and heritage trees (trees 48 inches or greater in diameter measured 4 feet above grade) in particular. Tree protection was included as a policy in the 2002 General Plan, Open Space and Conservation Element. The Atherton Municipal Code describes why trees are essential to the health, welfare and quality of life to the citizens of Atherton:

1. To preserve the scenic beauty of the town and to ensure the privacy of its citizens;
2. To maintain ecological balance;
3. To prevent erosion of topsoil;
4. To protect against the hazards of floods and the risk of landslides;
5. To counteract air pollutants and oxygenate the air;
6. To absorb noise;

⁵ Source of highlighted text in this paragraph: CD+A

7. To provide the opportunity as green infrastructure;⁶

7.8. To maintain the climatic and microclimatic balance; and

8.9. To decrease high wind velocities.

Specific *Tree Preservation Guidelines, Standards and Specifications* were adopted in 2004 to regulate development and protection measures during construction. Those *Tree Preservation Guidelines* are currently (2017-2019) under review to assure their effectiveness and applicability to current practices.

Soils (*Proposed New Section*)

Atherton is essentially built-out with low-density residential and supporting facilities (i.e. schools, public and quasi-public and similar uses). As such, soils supporting agricultural uses, the traditional subject of this topic, are less important. However, prevention of soil erosion and potential loss of top soil is a Town objective. Further, prevention of soil compaction near the roots of trees and heritage trees in order to support their viability, is also a Town objective, as specified in the *Tree Preservation Guidelines*.

Along with other techniques, the use of green infrastructure measures can aid in reducing soil erosion.⁷

Rivers, Other Waters and Floodwater Management (*Proposed New Section*)

The primary waterway in Atherton is the **Atherton Channel**. The headwaters of the Atherton Channel originate west of Interstate 280 in the hillside area of the Town of Woodside. Historically, the Atherton Channel, like many of the smaller creeks in the area, did not have a permanent channel extending all the way downstream to the Bay. Most years, the small flows soaked into the porous soils in the flatlands; only during floods did the flow remain on the surface all the way to the Bay. Urbanization and development created impervious surfaces, which lead to the need for controlled drainage facilities to dispose of stormwaters. Prior to 1958, drainage facilities were constructed along the historic floodways as development proceeded. Developers that originally subdivided the land from large estates installed many of the facilities. The Town formed the Atherton Channel Drainage District in 1958 to construct and maintain storm water collection facilities in areas determined to be in the local stream flood plain. The District boundaries include most of the Town south of Atherton Avenue, a portion of unincorporated University Heights, and small areas of the City of Menlo Park and Town of Woodside.

In 2001 a **Town Wide Drainage Study** was prepared with the objectives of developing an inventory of the existing drainage system for incorporation into the Town Geographic Information System (GIS) database, assessing the weaknesses of the drainage system with input from the community, and developing estimated costs and a prioritized plan for improvements to the drainage system. By 2014 the Town had implemented 26 of the 55 improvement projects identified in the 2001 Drainage Study.

In 2014, an update to the 2001 Drainage Study was requested for several reasons. Recent residential development may have impacted previously identified drainage issues. Drainage improvements are now required to comply with the Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit (R2-2015-0049) adopted in 2015.⁸ In addition, the Town adopted drainage design criteria in January 2013 aimed to reduce peak stormwater flows and improve water quality. The goals of the desired drainage study update were to:

⁶ Source: CD+A

⁷ Source: CD+A

⁸ Source: CD+A

update the inventory of the existing drainage system, assess current system weaknesses with input from the community, develop a prioritized plan for improvements to the drainage system, with itemized cost estimates, review stormwater management policies for compliance with the Green Infrastructure Plan, 2015 Municipal Stormwater Permit, and describe opportunities for regional stormwater detention. The *Town Wide Drainage Study Update* was completed in April 2015. The *Update* included recommended storm drainage improvement projects prioritized according to the tiers listed below.

Tier 1 Improvements mitigate flooding problems that can create significant life and safety issues.

Tier 2 Improvements are intended to avoid damage to private property caused by storm runoff from public areas.

Tier 3 Projects are located on public property and not influenced by downstream drainage system.

Tier 4 Projects are located on public property and influenced by under capacity downstream drainage system.

Tier 5 Projects were recommended in the 2001 Drainage Study but drainage issues in these areas have not been observed recently.

Atherton participates in the **San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program⁹** (SMCWPPP), a partnership of the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG), each incorporated city and town in the county, and the County of San Mateo, which share a common National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The Federal Clean Water Act and the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act require that large urban areas discharging stormwater into the San Francisco Bay or the Pacific Ocean have an NPDES permit to prevent harmful pollutants from being dumped or washed by stormwater runoff, into the stormwater system, then discharged into local waterbodies.

The Municipal Regional Permit outlines the State's requirements for municipal agencies in San Mateo County to address the water quality and flow-related impacts of stormwater runoff. Some of these requirements are implemented directly by municipalities while others are addressed by the SMCWPPP on behalf of all the municipalities. This is a comprehensive permit that requires activities related to construction sites, industrial sites, illegal discharges and illicit connections, new development, and municipal operations. The permit also requires a **Green Infrastructure Plan¹⁰**, public education program, implementing targeted pollutant reduction strategies, and a monitoring program to help characterize local water quality conditions and to begin evaluating the overall effectiveness of the permit's implementation.

The Town actively enforces regulations related to **erosion and sedimentation control**. Development projects, especially those involving grading, excavation and vegetation removal, require preparation of erosion and sediment control plans in compliance with local and regional regulations and subject to local review.

⁹ **STOPPP** is another acronym for the San Mateo Countywide **STO**rmwater Pollution Prevention Program.

¹⁰ [Source: CD+A](#)

Currently (2019) the Town of Atherton ~~is considering a partnership~~ **has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding¹¹** with the jurisdictions of the City of Redwood City, City of Menlo Park, and County of San Mateo to complete the planning, design and environmental permitting for the proposed **Bayfront Canal/Atherton Channel Flood Protection and Restoration Project**. The Atherton Channel and Bayfront Canal watersheds are multi-jurisdictional watersheds crossing all of the member jurisdictions. The two channels intersect in the City of Redwood City west of U.S. 101 near the Marsh Road interchange. Both watersheds have experienced decades of repetitive flooding. All of the member jurisdictions have been impacted by flooded streets, residences and businesses.

The Town is currently considering alternate locations for a **Stormwater Capture Project**: a runoff diversion, storage and **treatment** system.

This project has a number of objectives, including those listed below.

1. Capturing dry weather runoff in order to eliminate the transport of pollutants to San Francisco Bay,
2. Capturing at least the first flush of wet-weather runoff to reduce the load of pollutants transported to the Bay,
3. **Detaining** potential flood flows from the Atherton Channel,
4. **Meeting requirements of the MRP including implementing green infrastructure opportunities,¹²**
5. **Minimizing** the on-going operations and maintenance costs, and
6. **Reusing** storm water for park irrigation.

Harbors and Fisheries *(Proposed New Section)*

Atherton has no harbors or fisheries in or near Town.

Wildlife and Habitats *(Proposed New Section)*

The California Department of Fish and Game maintains the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), that inventories the status and location of rare plants, animals and natural habitats in California. A search of the database was completed for Atherton and the surrounding area, to identify rare and sensitive species and habitats with the potential to occur within the Town. Table OSC-3 lists the rare and sensitive species and communities that may occur within the Town. The Town monitors new development to ensure that it does not negatively impact sensitive species, especially those listed in the table.

Table OSC-3: Biological Resources with the Potential to Occur in Atherton

Common Name	Scientific Name	Type	Status
San Mateo thornmint	Acanthomintha duttonii	Plant	FE, 1B ¹³

¹¹ Source: DPW

¹² Source of highlighted text in this paragraph: DPW and CD+A

¹³ Status:

FE = Federally listed as endangered

Franciscan onion	<i>Allium peninsulare</i> var. <i>franciscanum</i>	Plant	1B
Bent-flowered fiddleneck	<i>Amsinckia lunaris</i>	Plant	1B
Kings Mountain manzanita	<i>Arctostaphylos</i>	Plant	1B
Congdon's tarplant	<i>Centromadia parryi</i> ssp. <i>Congdonii</i>	Plant	1B
Franciscan thistle	<i>Cirsium andrewsii</i>	Plant	1B
Fountain thistle	<i>Cirsium fontinale</i> var. <i>fontinale</i>	Plant	FE, 1B
Lost thistle	<i>Cirsium praeterens</i>	Plant	1A
San Francisco collinsia	<i>Collinsia multicolor</i>	Plant	1B
Santa Cruz Cyprus	<i>Cupressus abramsiana</i>	Plant	FE, 1B
Western leatherwood	<i>Dirca occidentalis</i>	Plant	1B
Tiburon buckwheat	<i>Eriogonum luteolum</i> var. <i>caninum</i>	Plant	1B
San Mateo woolly sunflower	<i>Eriophyllum latilobum</i>	Plant	FE, 1B
Hoover's button-celery	<i>Eryngium aristulatum</i> var. <i>hooveri</i>	Plant	1B
Hillsborough chocolate lily	<i>Fritillaria biflora</i> var. <i>ineziana</i>	Plant	1B
Fragrant fritillary	<i>Fritillaria liliacea</i>	Plant	1B
Marin dwarf-flax	<i>Hesperolinon congestum</i>	Plant	FT, ST, 1B
Kellogg's horkelia	<i>Horkelia cuneate</i> ssp. <i>Sericea</i>	Plant	1B
San Francisco lessingia	<i>Lessingia germanorum</i>	Plant	FE, 1B
Coast lily	<i>Lilium maritimum</i>	Plant	1B

FT = Federally listed as threatened

FD = Federally delisted

SE = State-listed as endangered

ST = State-listed as threatened

CSC = California Species of Special Concern

CFP = California Fully Protected Species

1A = California Rare Plant Rank List 1A (plants presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere)

1B = California Rare Plant Rank List 1B (plant species that are rare or endangered in California and elsewhere)

Davidson's bush-mallow	<i>Malacothamnus davidsonii</i>	Plant	1B
Hall's bush mallow	<i>Malacothamnus hallii</i>	Plant	1B
White-rayed pentachaeta	<i>Pentachaeta bellidiflora</i>	Plant	FE, SE, 1B
San Francisco owl's-clover	<i>Triphysaria floribunda</i>	Plant	1B
Caper-fruited tropidocarpum	<i>Tropidocarpum capparideum</i>	Plant	1A
Bay checkerspot butterfly	<i>Euphydryas editha bayensis</i>	Invertebrate	FT
California tiger salamander	<i>Ambystoma californiense</i>	Amphibian	FT, CSC
California red-legged frog	<i>Rana draytonii</i>	Amphibian	FT, CSC
Western pond turtle	<i>Actinemys marmorata</i>	Reptile	CSC
San Francisco garter snake	<i>Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia</i>	Reptile	FE, SE
White-tailed kite	<i>Elanus leucurus</i>	Bird	CFP
American peregrine falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	Bird	FD, SE, CFP
Northern harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	Bird	CSC
Burrowing owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	Bird	CSC
Vaux's swift	<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>	Bird	CSC
Olive-sided flycatcher	<i>Contopus cooperi</i>	Bird	CSC
Loggerhead shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	Bird	CSC
Pallid bat	<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	Mammal	CSC
Townsend's big-eared bat	<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	Mammal	CSC
Western mastiff bat	<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i>	Mammal	CSC
San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat	<i>Neotoma fuscipes anneciens</i>	Mammal	CSC
American badger	<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	Mammal	CSC

Riparian habitats along the Atherton Channel and other drainages are important to providing plant and wildlife habitats and controlling erosion.

The oak woodland habitat that exists throughout Atherton is an important natural resource and is described in greater detail under the Section entitled “Forests”.

Minerals and Other Natural Resources (*Proposed New Section*)

Atherton is within an urban area with no known mineral or other similar natural resources. The San Mateo County General Plan Resources Map does not identify any known mineral resources or mineral recovery sites within or adjacent to the Town.

Cultural Resources (*Proposed New Section*)

Cultural resources in Atherton take the form of historically significant buildings, structures and artifacts. Several of the historically significant buildings are privately owned; only one of which has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Table OSC-4: Atherton’s Historically Significant Buildings and Structures

Building or Structure	Year Constructed	Status
Watkins/Cartan House	1866	Privately owned, listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)
Water Tower, Holbrook-Palmer Park	Circa 1870	Publicly owned, listed in the NRHP
Gen Merrill Carriage House, Holbrook-Palmer Park	1896	Publicly owned, listed in the NRHP
Sacred Heart Schools Main Building	1898 and 1915	Privately owned, appears eligible for listing as a historic structure
Menlo School, Stent Family Hall (Douglass Hall aka Payne-Douglass House)	1913	Privately owned, listed in California Point of Historical Interest Log ¹⁴ and Historic American Buildings Survey ¹⁵ , potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP
Perry Stable (Associated with Australian Racehorse Phar Lap)	Circa 1920	Privately owned, eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR)

¹⁴ California Department of Parks and Recreation

¹⁵ San Mateo County’s Inventory of Historic Resources

Caltrain Station, Civic Center	Mid-1920's	Publicly owned, appears eligible for listing in NRHP
Town Hall (Council Chambers building) Civic Center	1928	Publicly owned, appears eligible for inclusion in CRHR

The Town also has a policy of protecting and preserving historical artifacts. The term historical artifact is defined as a structure or object that meets the criteria for listing on the national, state or local level. A 2006 survey of potential historical artifacts resulted in compilation of the official catalog known as the Atherton Historical Artifact Inventory. The policy specifically excludes buildings designed for human occupation and objects housed in the interiors of buildings.

Climate Action Plan *(Proposed New Section)*

Atherton's proposals and policies related to climate change are contained in its adopted¹⁶ **Climate Action Plan**. The Climate Action Plan (CAP) is summarized in the Land Use Element of this General Plan. Transportation aspects of the Action Plan are addressed in the Circulation Element. Energy, water and solid waste programs and policies are addressed in this Open Space and Conservation Element.

Energy and water-saving measures can help reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and impacts from drought conditions. Building energy is the sector with the most immediately achievable and affordable reduction opportunities. A primary focus of the CAP is on residential energy efficiency strategies to significantly reduce existing emissions and on the voluntary implementation of new building standards which incentivize new home builders towards designing net zero energy homes.

Reducing the amount of waste deposited into the landfill through material reuse, reduction, and recycling is an important strategy to reduce GHG emissions. Waste reduction and recycling help reduce emissions and the amount of single-use materials.

III. Goals, Objectives, Policies and Actions

Goal OSC-1:	Protect both publicly and privately held <i>open space</i> lands from deterioration of their rural charm, scenic value and environmental equilibrium. <i>(Existing Goal)</i>
-------------	--

Objective OSC 1.1: Preserve presently existing open space, wildlife and vegetation. *(Existing Objective)*

Objective OSC 1.2: Prevent developmental encroachment on open space and sensitive environmental resources. *(Existing Objective)*

Objective OSC 1.3: Endeavor to prevent soil erosion and the potential loss of top soil through the development review process. *(Proposed New Objective)*

¹⁶ Adopted October 19, 2016

- Policy OSC-1.1: The Town shall endeavor to protect scenic resources, significant stands of natural vegetation, wildlife habitat, public safety and significant archaeological resources, both publicly and privately held. *(Existing Policy)*
- Policy OSC-1.2: The Town seeks to preserve the open space characteristics of existing public and private schools, churches, the Menlo Circus Club, the *Bear Gulch Reservoir* property and the public parks. *(Existing Policy)*
- Policy OSC-1.3: Holbrook-Palmer Park shall serve as the Town’s primary outdoor recreational facility subject to the following conditions:
- A. The property shall not be used, occupied or operated for commercial or housing purposes except those which are strictly incidental and appropriate to its use as a public recreational park.
 - B. The Park is to be used for the benefit of the citizens of Atherton.
 - C. The Park may not be used for political purposes except those which involve the public affairs of the Town of Atherton as a whole.
 - D. The Park may be rented for use by others in accordance with the standards established by the Parks and Recreation Commission. *(Existing Policy)*
- Policy OSC-1.4: Implement the recommendations and projects adopted in the *Holbrook-Palmer Park Master Plan 2014*. *(Proposed New Policy)*
- Policy OSC-1.5: In addition to Holbrook-Palmer Park and the **Civic Center** Park, public elementary and high school properties should also be considered for recreational purposes. *(Existing Policy, Revised per new Town Civic Center)*
- Action OSC-1.1: Minimum lot sizes, setback restrictions, height limitations, tree protection and preservation, and sign regulations shall be employed to accomplish open space and conservation objectives. *(Existing Action)*
- Action OSC-1.2: The Town shall evaluate the potential for cooperative recreational use of existing school sites. *(Existing Action)*

Goal OSC-2:	Protect and enhance the existing Oak Woodland character of the Town. <i>(Proposed New Goal)</i>
-------------	---

- Policy OSC-2.1: Trees shall be preserved wherever possible. This policy shall be explicitly considered during the *development and* subdivision process. *(Existing Action)*
- Policy OSC-2.2: Wherever possible, **drought tolerant** native species trees shall be used for new and replacement planting **and be tolerant of seasonal water inundation where used in or adjacent to green infrastructure facilities.**¹⁷ *(Proposed New Policy)*

¹⁷ Source: CD+A

Policy OSC-2.3: Enforce the Heritage Tree Ordinance and Tree Preservation Guidelines and Standards, or equal document. *(Proposed New Policy)*

Goal OSC-3:	Minimize the impacts of flooding on health, safety and property damage. <i>(Proposed New Goal)</i>
-------------	--

Policy OSC-3.1: Implement the recommendations and projects adopted in the 2015 *Town Wide Drainage Study Update*. *(Proposed New Policy)*

Policy OSC-3.2: New development shall provide detention volume to attenuate any increase in stormwater runoff caused by increased imperviousness created by the proposed development. *(Existing Policy from 2001)*

Policy OSC-3.3: Promote the use of Green Infrastructure techniques and practices in order to reduce flooding, treat stormwater at its source, and to reduce stormwater pollution. *(Proposed New Policy)*

Policy OSC-3.4: Establish and enforce grading, erosion, and sedimentation ordinances by requiring, under certain conditions, grading permits and plans to control erosion and sedimentation prior to development approval. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy OSC-3.5: Establish and enforce provisions under the creek protection, storm water management, and discharge control ordinances designed to control erosion and sedimentation. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy OSC-3.6: The Town will assure that opportunities for green infrastructure are routinely considered by all Town departments. *(Proposed new Policy)¹⁸*

Action OSC-3.1: As co-permittee, the Town will continue to participate in the San Mateo Countywide Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (SMCWPPP) or equal program. New development and Town activities will be reviewed for compliance with SMCWPPP and the Town's Green Infrastructure Plan¹⁹ as part of project approval. The Town will also monitor construction to ensure compliance with any required mitigation.

Action OSC-3.2: The Town will continue to seek and coordinate partnering opportunities for shared green infrastructure projects with other public and private entities and property owners. *(Proposed New Action)²⁰*

Action OSC-3.3: The Town will encourage property owners to incorporate water conservation techniques into their landscaping to reduce water usage and use green

¹⁸ Source: CD+A

¹⁹ Source: CD+A

²⁰ Source: CD+A

infrastructure techniques to capture and/or treat rainfall and stormwater runoff at its source²¹

Goal OSC-4: Protect both publicly and privately held cultural resources from deterioration and/or destruction. *(Proposed New Goal)*

Policy OSC-4.1: Encourage the preservation of both private and public historical resources and artifacts for the benefit of future generations. *(Proposed New Policy)*

Policy OSC-4.2: The Town will require construction projects to stop if archaeological or paleontological resources are uncovered during grading or other on-site excavation activities. Once the resources are assessed for importance, appropriate mitigation compliant with State law will be determined.

Goal OSC-5: Increase residential and commercial energy efficiency and reduce water consumption to meet AB 32 emission reduction target. *(Existing Goal from CAP)*

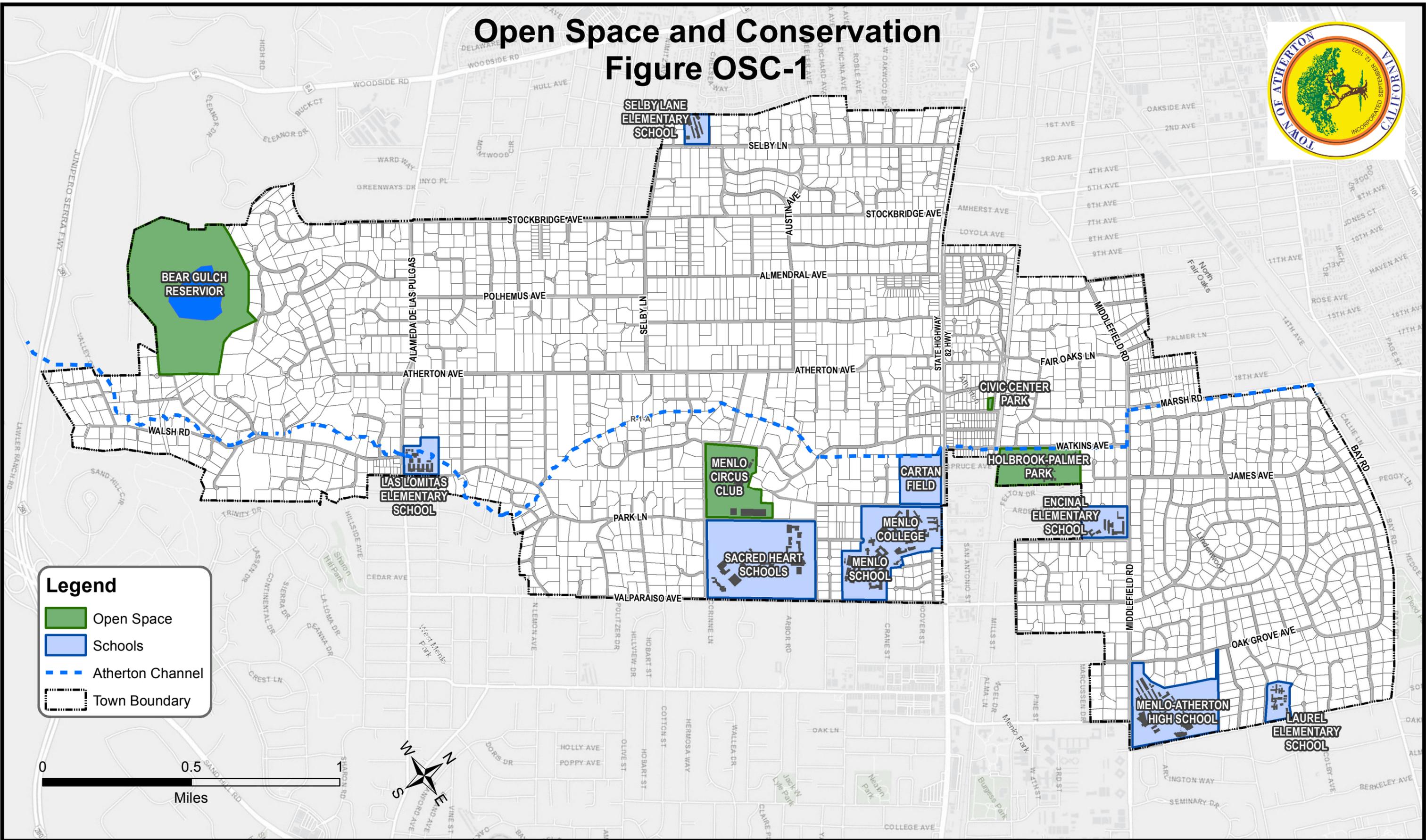
Policy OSC-5.1: Implement the Greenhouse Gas programs in the Atherton Climate Action Plan related to energy efficiency and reduced water consumption. *(From Programs Existing in CAP)*

Goal OSC-6: Reduce the total amount of community waste generated and sent to landfills to meet AB 32 emission reduction target. *(Existing Goal from CAP)*

Policy OSC-6.1: Implement the Greenhouse Gas programs in the Atherton Climate Action Plan related to community waste generation. *(From Programs Existing in CAP)*

²¹ Source: CD+A

Open Space and Conservation Figure OSC-1



Legend

- Open Space
- Schools
- Atherton Channel
- Town Boundary



Town of Atherton

Administrative Draft

COMMUNITY SAFETY ELEMENT
of the General Plan

Revised Per Planning Commission Comments – July 27, 2018

For Public Workshop – February 13, 2019

For Planning Commission Meeting – May 22, 2019

Table of Contents

I. Purpose and Relation to other Elements	3
II. Background Information	
Seismic Hazards	3
Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones	3
Surface Rupture	4
Ground Shaking	4
Ground Failure	4
Tsunami	4
Seiche	5
Dam Failure	5
Slope Instability	5
Land Subsidence	6
Liquefaction	6
Flooding	7
Urban and Wildland Fires	7
Emergency Operation Plan	8
Climate Change	9
Evacuation Routes and Peak Load Water Supply Requirements	9
III. Goals, Objectives and Policies	9
Community Safety Element Diagram	12

COMMUNITY SAFETY ELEMENT

I. Purpose and Relation to Other Elements

The Safety Element is intended to describe natural and man-made disasters which may pose a hazard to the residents of Atherton. It sets forth policies for responding to threats to public safety. *It includes identification of unreasonable risks, and policies for the protection of the community from such risks. The goal of the safety element is to reduce the potential short and long-term risk of death, injuries, property damage, and economic and social dislocation resulting from fires, floods, droughts, earthquakes, landslides, climate change, and other hazards. (Existing Section with Proposed Additions in Italics)*

The Safety Element is closely related to the Circulation, Land Use, and Open Space and Conservation Elements *as development plans must adequately account for public safety considerations, and open space for public health often incorporates area of increased hazard (for example, increase hazard associated with dam safety within the Bear Gulch Reservoir open space). (Existing Section with Proposed Additions in Italics)*

II. Background Information

Seismic Hazards

The primary seismic threat to the Town of Atherton is represented by the San Andreas fault and its attendant rift valley which lies approximately five miles to the west of the Town. This fault has a long history of earthquake activity. While there are no known active or potentially active faults within the Town of Atherton, it is subject to periodic, very strong earthquakes which originate either on the San Andreas or from the Hayward and Calaveras faults in the East Bay. Most geologists agree that an earthquake of comparable magnitude to that which occurred in 1906 may well be experienced by the current generation of Bay Area residents. *(Existing Section)*

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones are regulatory zones, delineated by the State Geologist, within which site-specific geologic studies are required to identify and avoid fault rupture hazards prior to subdivision of land and/or construction of most structures for human occupancy. There are no Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones within the Atherton Town limits. The closest such zone, the San Andreas Fault Zone, is located in Woodside, approximately one-half mile southwest of I-280. Other such zones are located in the East Bay and include the Hayward Fault Zone and the Calaveras Fault Zone. *(Proposed New Section)*

Seismic hazards associated with earthquakes include the following:

Surface Rupture

Seismically induced surface rupture refers to a break in the ground's surface and associated deformation resulting from the movement of a fault. Surface rupture is usually limited to a narrow zone along the fault. Since there are no known active or potentially active faults within the Town of Atherton, it is unlikely that significant seismically induced surface rupturing will occur within Town. *(Existing Section with Proposed Additions in Italics)*

Ground Shaking

Seismically induced ground shaking poses a serious potential hazard to Atherton. In the future the major source of earthquake damage is likely to come from the San Andreas Fault system, including the Hayward Fault and the Calaveras Fault branches in the East Bay area. The worst earthquake magnitude should likely not exceed the 1906 level of 8.3 on the Richter Scale, according to authorities. The principal effect of such an earthquake in most of the Town will be a sudden, unexpected initiation of a strong shaking motion of the ground, which could last approximately one minute or more. This ground shaking can be expected to be hazardous to people during the earthquake. *(Existing Section)*

Ground Failure

Seismically induced ground failure refers to mudslides, landslides, liquefaction or soil compaction caused by a seismic event. The California Department of Conservation has mapped areas where previous occurrence of landslide movement, or local topographic, geological, geotechnical and subsurface water conditions indicate a potential for permanent ground displacements such that mitigation would be required. Mitigation in this context means those measures that are consistent with established practice and that will reduce seismic risk to acceptable levels. *(Proposed New Section)*

Tsunami

A **tsunami** refers to a series of waves generated in a body of water by a rapid disturbance that vertically displaces the water. These changes can be caused by an underwater fault rupture that generates an earthquake, a volcanic eruption, or underwater landslides typically triggered by earthquakes. The California Emergency Management Agency has prepared a series of maps plotting the potential inundation line for a tsunami runup along the San Francisco Bay shoreline. The inundation line represents the maximum considered tsunami runup from a number of extreme, yet realistic, tsunami sources. In the Atherton vicinity, the potential inundation line follows the southwesterly shoreline of the Westpoint Slough and the Ravenswood Slough located in the salt evaporators within the margins of San Francisco Bay. A runup of approximately 4 feet at Ravenswood Point (East Palo Alto) could occur, as estimated by the US Geological Survey. The inundation line runs approximately ½ to 1-mile northeast of the dike protecting the east Menlo Park and Redwood City industrial area. As the inundation line is located approximately 1 to 1 ½ miles northeast of the Atherton City Limit along Bay Road, there appears to be little chance that a tsunami would affect land within the Town. Further since the inundation line is located approximately ½ to 1-mile northeast of US 101 there appears to be little chance that a tsunami would affect that major evacuation route. *(Proposed New Section)*

Seiche

Seismic **seiches** (sloshing) are standing waves set up on rivers, reservoirs, ponds, and lakes when seismic waves from an earthquake pass through the area. A seiche can overflow or even erode an embankment, potentially releasing significant volumes of water that could flood and damage developed areas downstream. Bear Gulch Reservoir is the only body of water within Atherton large enough to be subject to a seiche. A potentially damaging seiche at this location could adversely impact properties and development downstream. *(Proposed New Section)*

Dam Failure

The Bear Gulch Reservoir Dam is the only dam in Atherton and is large enough to endanger lives and property in the event of a failure. A seismic event could cause the dam to fail and endanger an estimated population of approximately 1,000 people, according to the Atherton Emergency Operations Plan. The flood plain that would result from catastrophic failure of this dam has been mapped by California Water Service Company (Cal Water), the dam owner; the map is on file with the Office of Emergency Services.

The California Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD), (a division of the Department of Water Resources [DWR]) routinely and periodically inspects the dam for performance and problem identification. Should a problem be identified that could lead to failure potential the dam owner (or as directed by the DSOD) takes mitigating actions such as reducing the water level to avoid catastrophic loss of water or other actions specified in its Emergency Action Plan.

The Atherton neighborhood most seriously threatened by dam failure and wildfire hazard is the Walsh Road neighborhood. This neighborhood has only one primary evacuation route; Walsh Road, which is a narrow, two lane residential street that intersects with Alameda de las Pulgas. Two other evacuation routes have been identified:

- The main secondary automobile evacuation route is the road at the end of Reservoir Road through the Cal Water property adjacent to Bear Gulch Reservoir connecting to Moore Road. Cal Water must open the gate at the entrance of the road for this to be passable. Cal Water maintains a 24/7 presence at the Bear Gulch site. Calling 1-855-CAL-WATER, then selecting "1" for emergency will provide access to a Cal Water employee who will notify an on-site employee to unlock the gate.
- There is a pedestrian only exit using the horse tunnel from Valley Court under highway 280.

In the event of a fire or flood, a warning siren has been installed at the Cal Water facility on Reservoir Road. The siren can be activated by the Fire or Police Department to advise residents that an evacuation should take place. The Police Department is working on an upgrade to this warning system including use of upgraded technology.

An all-volunteer group of concerned Atherton residents formed the Atherton Disaster and Preparedness Team (ADAPT) to collaborate with town officials, Menlo Park Fire, Atherton Police and other professional emergency responders and the California State "Get Ready" and FEMA's/US Citizens' Corps programs to help educate, communicate with and aid fellow Athertonians in preparing for major emergencies and natural disasters. *(Proposed New Section)*

Slope Instability

Landslides include all movements of soil, rock, or debris as a result of falling, sliding, or flowing. Most landslides are a combination of two or more types of motion and/or material. Landslides are categorized according to the types of motion and material involved. They can be directly caused by earthquakes or be completely independent of them.

- Falls describe the sudden movement of material from vertical or near-vertical slopes and are generally labeled by the type of material displaced (e.g. soilfall, rockfall).
- Slides refer to movements in which the material moves more or less as a unit along recognizable shear surfaces. If the shear surface is concave, the slide movement will be rotational and is denoted by the term "slump." If the shear surface is planar, transnational movement occurs and the term "slide" is used alone. Both slides and slumps are further classified according to the type of material involved (e.g., earth slump, rockslide, debris slide where "debris" refers to combinations of soil, weathered bedrock and/or organic material).
- Flows describe the movement of material in which a myriad of small-scale movements rather than massive sliding is the dominant mechanism of transport. This category is further broken down by the type of material involved and the rate at which it moves (e.g., debris flow, mudflow). The modifier "avalanche" is used to describe exceptionally fast flows.

Much of the land surface in Atherton is relatively flat and not subject to slope instability. Land west of Alameda de las Pulgas however is steeper and therefore subject to slope instability. A map prepared by San Mateo County which shows the general location of existing landslides, characterizes the area west of Alameda de las Pulgas as having "few landslides". Another map, produced by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) identifies "earthquake induced landslide study zones" and "rainfall induce study zones" each contain a few acres on the south side of Walsh Road and near Bear Gulch Reservoir. *(Proposed New Section)*

Land Subsidence

Land subsidence is defined as the lowering of the land surface. Many different factors can cause the land surface to subside. Subsidence can occur rapidly due to a sinkhole or underground mine collapse, or during a major earthquake. It may happen slowly in the case of groundwater withdrawal or natural gas extraction. In Atherton the subsurface composition is such that sinkholes have not occurred nor are there any mines or natural gas fields. There has been groundwater withdrawal, however the withdrawal has not resulted in significant land subsidence. A program to monitor measurements of land-surface elevations and future subsidence is on-going and described in the Open Space and Conservation Element. While there could be seismically induced land subsidence in Town during a major earthquake, such an effect has not been known to have occurred in the past. *(Proposed New Section)*

Liquefaction

Loose sand and silt that is saturated with water can behave like a liquid when shaken by an earthquake. This phenomenon is called **liquefaction**. During an earthquake the soil can lose its ability to support structures, flow down even very gentle slopes, and erupt to the ground surface to form sand boils. Many of these phenomena are accompanied by settlement of the ground surface, usually in uneven patterns that damage buildings, roads and pipelines.

A map, produced by ABAG identifies liquefaction susceptibility hazards in Atherton. In general, the area of Town northeast of a line formed by Euclid Avenue/Monte Vista Avenue/Camino por los Arboles is characterized as having a “moderate susceptibility”. The narrow band of land adjacent to the Atherton Channel is characterized as having a “very high susceptibility”. The balance of the Town is characterized as having a “very low to low susceptibility”. *(Proposed New Section)*

Flooding *(Proposed New Section)*

Flooding *(Proposed New Section)*

Flooding has not presented a significant, extensive hazard in Atherton in the past. There have been numerous recurring localized areas of flooding. During the 2001 Town-wide Drainage Study, 97 localized flooding complaints were identified and evaluated. These events were classified by type of problem such as building floods, saturated or clogged drywell, channel or ditch overflow, driveway and intersection floods, and storm system overflow or clog. Many of these problem areas were addressed with improvement projects implemented since 2001 or with maintenance activities.

In 2015 the Town-wide Drainage Study was updated. During that process 17 localized flooding complaints were identified; three of which coincided with flooding complaints from the 2001 Drainage Study. The report includes general and specific recommendations for mitigating these hazards.

There are no Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identified flood prone or hazard areas in Atherton. The Town has chosen not to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

There are areas within the Town, due to their proximity to the Atherton Channel or in portions of lower-lying Lindenwood, which require raised finished floor elevations (typically by approximately 1 foot) during new construction. Finished floor elevations in these areas are recommended by the project engineer based on studies required by the Town during the grading and drainage plan review process.

Flooding resulting from failure of the Bear Gulch Reservoir dam is a hazard that is addressed under the topic of Dam Failure in this Element.

Atherton has entered into a partnership with the jurisdictions of Redwood City, Menlo Park, and San Mateo County to complete the planning for the proposed **Bayfront Canal/Atherton Channel Flood Protection and Restoration Project**. The Atherton Channel and Bayfront Canal watersheds have experienced decades of repetitive flooding in the lower reaches of the channels in Redwood City. This project is further discussed in the Conservation Element.

The proposed Atherton **Water Capture Project**, a runoff diversion, storage and filtration system is discussed in the Open Space and Conservation Element.

The use of green infrastructure techniques and systems can help to reduce the impacts of localized flooding associated with stormwater runoff, the Atherton Channel, and Bayfront Canal while also assisting the Town in satisfying the provisions of the MRP.

Source: CD+A

Urban and Wildland Fires *(Proposed New Section)*

Fire protection for Atherton is provided by the Menlo Park Fire District; a special district that serves the cities of Menlo Park, Atherton, East Palo Alto and portions of San Mateo County. Backup assistance for the Fire District is available through mutual aid agreements. All fire agencies in San Mateo County have signed the California Master Mutual Aid Agreement and participate in mutual aid operations as required. The Menlo Park Fire District also has specific Mutual Aid agreements with the cities of Palo Alto and Redwood City.

The Fire District actively works to prevent structural and wildfires through its regulations, education and training programs; some of which include residential and commercial fire sprinkler requirements, plan review of new construction, periodic inspection of commercial buildings, weed abatement, defensible spaces, home ignition zones, disaster and emergency preparedness.

Wildland fire is a hazard that exists throughout the Town of Atherton. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has mapped fire threatened communities in the State. The entire Town of Atherton has been identified as a "Community At Risk". The entire Town has also been included in the "Wildland-Urban Interface" (WUI); originally a zone of transition between unoccupied land and human development, WUI zones now include heavily vegetated, low-density suburban areas such as Atherton, Woodside, Portola Valley and Los Altos Hills. These lands and communities are at risk of wildfires.

Wildfire hazard in the Walsh Road neighborhood is a topic that is addressed in the Dam Failure section of this Element.

Emergency Operations Plan *(Proposed New Section)*

The Town of Atherton Police Department and the Menlo Park Fire Protection District have jointly prepared the Town of Atherton **Emergency Operations Plan** (EOP) which describes how the jurisdictions will manage and coordinate resources and personnel responding to emergency situations. The Atherton EOP, along with a companion document; the Atherton **Hazard Mitigation Strategies** (HMS) is the Town's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan specified in the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-390). The HMS contains policies designed to mitigate hazards identified in the EOP.

The Atherton Town website currently has a section entitled "Evacuation Plan & Emergency Siren" that provides information about the Walsh Road emergency siren and evacuation routes in the event of a fire or flood. The same website section provides general information about the **Atherton Disaster and Preparedness Team (ADAPT)** a Police Department sponsored emergency preparedness and action program as well as other preparedness resources for the community.

The Town of Atherton EOP is designed to be consistent with Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) requirements. The plan:

- Conforms to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)
- Provides Emergency Operations Center (EOC) responders with procedures, documentation, and user-friendly checklists to effectively manage emergencies
- Provides detailed information of supplemental requirements such as Public Information, Damage Assessment, and Recovery Operations.

The Town of Atherton Emergency Operations Plan is a document that is continually evolving. The EOP provides a comprehensive emergency response document that includes detailed information covering Emergency Operations Center procedures, documentation and reference and support information.

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65302.6, the Atherton Emergency Operations Plan together with the Atherton Hazard Mitigation Strategies are hereby adopted by reference and included in this Community Safety Element. Further, any future amendments to the EOP and HMS are adopted by reference and included in this Element.

The Town also participates with a coalition of San Mateo County cities and special districts in updating and adopting the San Mateo County Hazard Mitigation Plan.² This plan includes an assessment of the risk and vulnerability to the impacts of natural hazards, develops a mitigation strategy consistent with a set of uniform goals and objectives, and creates a plan for implementing, evaluating and revising the strategy.

Climate Change *(Proposed New Section)*

Atherton’s proposals and policies related to climate change are contained in its adopted³ **Climate Action Plan**. The Town’s Climate Action Plan serves as a guiding document to identify methods that the Town and community can implement to significantly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The Plan provides a comprehensive roadmap of programs that can be implemented to reduce emissions and increase sustainability. Transportation aspects of the Climate Action Plan are addressed in the Circulation Element. Energy, water and solid waste programs and policies are addressed in the Open Space and Conservation Element.

Atherton has adopted a target of reducing emissions to 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020.

Evacuation Routes and Peak Load Water Supply Requirements

Pursuant to the State Planning Guidelines, evacuation routes have been designated in the Policies below. State Planning Guidelines require the Safety Element to include a statement specifying the peak

² Adopted October 19, 2016

³ Adopted October 19, 2016

load water supply requirements of the Town. Peak load water supply requirements currently average just under five million gallons per day during the months of August and September. *(Existing Section)*

III. Goals, Objectives, Policies and Actions

Goal CS-1:	The Town recognizes the potential danger to public safety that may result from natural or man-made causes and seeks to minimize the public risks in such hazards. <i>(Existing Goal)</i>
------------	--

Goal CS-2:	Reduce the risk of injury, structure and property damage from exposure to seismic activity. <i>(Proposed New Goal)</i>
------------	--

Policy CS-2.1: Require preparation of site-specific geologic or geotechnical reports for development and redevelopment proposals in areas subject to earthquake-induced landslides or liquefaction as mandated by the State Seismic Hazard Mapping Act in selected portions of the Bay Area where these maps have been completed, and condition project approval on the incorporation of necessary mitigation measures related to site remediation, structure and foundation design, and/or avoidance. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy CS-2.2: Recognizing that some faults may be a hazard for surface rupture, even though they do not meet the strict criteria imposed by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, identify and require geologic reports in areas adjacent to locally significant faults. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy CS-2.3: Recognizing that the California Geological Survey has not completed earthquake-induced landslide and liquefaction mapping for much of the Bay Area, identify and require geologic reports in areas mapped by others as having significant liquefaction or landslide hazards. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy CS-2.4: Support and/or facilitate efforts by the California Geological Survey to complete the earthquake induced landslide and liquefaction mapping for the Bay Area. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy CS-2.5: Require that local government reviews of geologic and engineering studies are conducted by appropriately trained and credentialed personnel. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy CS-2.6: Establish and enforce provisions (under subdivision ordinances or other means) that geotechnical and soil-hazard investigations be conducted and filed to prevent grading from creating unstable slopes, and that any necessary corrective actions be

taken prior to development approval. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy CS-2.7: Establish requirements in the Town zoning ordinance to address hillside development constraints, especially in areas of existing landslides. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy CS-2.8: Public education, research and information dissemination on seismic hazards and emergency response shall be encouraged. *(Existing Policy)*

Policy CS-2.9: The Town shall seek to improve interjurisdictional cooperation with other agencies for geotechnical safety in land use planning, hazard prevention and emergency response. *(Existing Policy)*

Goal CS-3:	Reduce hazards related to natural flooding and potential inundation from failure of the Bear Gulch Reservoir Dam. <i>(Proposed New Goal)</i>
------------	--

Policy CS-3.1: Establish and enforce requirements for new development so that site-specific designs and source-control techniques, **including green infrastructure,** are used to manage peak stormwater runoff flows and impacts from increased runoff volumes. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy CS-3.2: Support the hazard reduction policies and mitigation measures included in the Atherton Emergency Operation Plan and its companion document, the Atherton Hazard Mitigation Strategies, as well as the adopted San Mateo County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Policy CS-3.3: Encourage and implement green infrastructure opportunities, measures and techniques as identified in the Town's Green Infrastructure Plan to aid in the reduction of natural flooding. (Proposed New Policy)⁵

Policy CS-3.4 Promote collaborative and integrated partnerships between public and private agencies, jurisdictions, property owners, and sites to assist in stormwater management and treatment. (Proposed New Policy)⁶

Commented [SB1]: No flood control districts in Town. So not relevant to Town. Reference to wastewater agencies in context of natural disasters from flooding not applicable or relevant.

⁴ Source:CD+A

⁵ Source:CD+A; Town required to adopt Green Infrastructure Plan by Municipal Regional Permit.

⁶ Source:CD+A

Goal CS-4: Prevent and reduce risks to property and protect residents from urban and wildland fire hazards. *(Proposed New Goal)*

Policy CS-4.1: Review new development proposals to ensure that they incorporate required and appropriate fire mitigation measures, including adequate provisions for occupant evacuation and access by emergency response personnel and equipment. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy CS-4.2: Develop a clear legislative and regulatory framework at both the state and local levels to manage the wildland-urban-interface consistent with *Fire Wise* and sustainable community principles. *(From Town of Atherton Disaster Mitigation Strategies)*

Policy CS-4.3: Minimum road widths and clearances around structures shall be in accordance with generally recognized minimums consistent with fire protection.

Goal CS-5: Ensure the Town's ability to respond effectively to natural and human-caused emergencies. *(Proposed New Goal)*

Policy CS-5.1: Support the preparation, implementation and regular update of local preparedness and evacuation plans, training and education; and multijurisdictional cooperation and communication for emergency situations. *(Proposed New Policy)*

Policy CS-5.2: Continue to participate in regional emergency planning efforts. *(Proposed New Policy)*

Policy CS-5.3: The emergency evacuation routes established in this General Plan Element are El Camino Real, Middlefield Road, Marsh Road, Alameda de las Pulgas, *Atherton Avenue/Fair Oaks Lane* and Valparaiso Avenue. *(Existing Policy with Proposed Additions in Italics)*

Town of Atherton

2019 General Plan Update Project

DRAFT
MITIGATION MONITORING AND
REPORTING PROGRAM

Prepared by:
Town of Atherton
Planning Department
91 Ashfield Road
Atherton, CA 94027

April 2019

Section 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code requires a Lead Agency to adopt a “reporting or monitoring program for the changes made to the project or conditions of project approval, adopted in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment” (Mitigation Monitoring Program [MMP], §15097 of the *CEQA Guidelines* provides additional direction on mitigation monitoring or reporting). The Town of Atherton is the Lead Agency and the project sponsor for the 2019 General Plan Update IS/MND project and is therefore responsible for enforcing and monitoring most of the mitigation measures in this mitigation monitoring program.

The Draft IS/MND was prepared to address the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. Where appropriate, this document identified project design features or recommended mitigation measures to avoid or to mitigate identified potential impacts to a level where no significant impact on the environment would occur. This MMRP is designed to monitor implementation of the mitigation measures identified for the project in the Draft IS/MND.

The MMRP for the 2019 General Plan Update Project will be in place throughout all phases of the project. The project sponsor shall be responsible for implementing all mitigation measures unless otherwise noted. The Town’s existing planning, engineering, review and inspection processes will be used as the basic foundation for the MMRP procedures and will also serve to provide the documentation for the reporting program.

Environmental Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone	Responsible Monitoring Party
AIR QUALITY			
<p>Impact: Dust and emissions resulting from construction, demolition and earth-moving activities from projects developed pursuant to the General Plan Update.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure AIR-1: In order to reduce impacts on air quality resulting from construction, future new developments shall implement the following measures:</p> <p>Basic Construction Management Practices. The Project shall demonstrate proposed compliance with all applicable regulations and operating procedures prior to issuance of demolition, building or grading permits, including implementation of the following BAAQMD “Basic Construction Mitigation Measures”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All exposed surfaces (e.g., parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, graded areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered two times per day. • All haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off-site shall be covered. • All visible mud or dirt track-out onto adjacent public roads shall be removed using wet power vacuum street sweepers at least once per day. The use of dry power sweeping is prohibited. • All vehicle speeds on unpaved roads shall be limited to 15 mph. • All roadways, driveways, and sidewalks to be paved shall be completed as soon as possible. Building pads shall be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used. • Idling times shall be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to 5 minutes (as required by the California airborne toxics control measure Title 13, Section 2485 of California Code of Regulations [CCR]). Clear signage shall be provided for construction workers at all access points. • All construction equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer’s specifications. All equipment shall be checked by a 	<p>Prior to issuance of building permits and during construction of each project</p>	<p>Town of Atherton and construction contractor</p>

	<p>certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition prior to operation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact at the Lead Agency regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The Air District's phone number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.		
--	---	--	--

CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Environmental Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone	Responsible Monitoring Party
Impact: To reduce impacts on Historic Resources	<p>Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Historic Resources protection measures</p> <p>In order to reduce impacts on historic resources, future new developments shall implement the following measure: In the event a future specific project is proposed that may have the potential to cause a significant adverse change in the significance of a historic resource, the Town shall require an evaluation of the resource by a qualified professional. The evaluation shall be conducted according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for evaluation of historic resources. Project specific mitigation measures shall be included and implemented in accordance with the Secretary's Standards.</p>	Prior to issuance of a building permit	Town of Atherton
Impact: To reduce impacts on Archaeological and/or Paleontological Resources	<p>Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Archaeological Resources protection measures</p> <p>In order to reduce impacts on archaeological resources, future new developments shall implement the following measure: In the event that subsurface archaeological and/or paleontological resources are encountered during the course of grading and/or excavation, all development shall temporarily cease within 25 feet of the find until the Town's Planning Department is contacted and a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist assesses the resources and makes recommendations for their disposition. Construction activities could continue in areas more than 25 feet away. If any findings are determined to be significant by the archeologist, they shall be subject to scientific analysis; duration/disposition of archaeological specimens as agreed to by the Native American community, land owner, and the Town. This report would be filed with the Northwest Information Center.</p>	Upon discovery of an archaeological and/or paleontological resource	Town of Atherton
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY			
Environmental Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone	Responsible Monitoring Party

<p>Impact: Erosion and sedimentation resulting from construction and earth-moving activities from projects developed pursuant to the General Plan Update.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure HYD-1: In order to reduce impacts related to erosion and sedimentation, future new developments shall implement the following measures: Erosion and sedimentation control measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule grading and excavation work for dry weather only. • Stabilize all denuded areas, install and maintain temporary erosion controls (such as erosion control fabric or bonded fiber matrix) until vegetation is established. • Seed or plant vegetation for erosion control on slopes or where construction is not immediately planned. • Protect storm drain inlets, gutters, ditches, and drainage courses with appropriate BMPs, such as gravel bags, fiber rolls, berms, etc. • Prevent sediment from migrating offsite by installing and maintaining sediment controls, such as fiber rolls, silt fences, or sediment basins. • Keep excavated soil on the site where it will not collect into the street. • Transfer excavated materials to dump trucks on the site, not in the street. • Contaminated Soils • If any of the following conditions are observed, test for contamination and contact the Regional Water Quality Control Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unusual soil conditions, discoloration, or odor. ○ Abandoned underground tanks. ○ Abandoned wells ○ Buried barrels, debris, or trash. 	<p>Prior to issuance of a building permit</p>	<p>Town of Atherton</p>
<p>Impact: Potential flooding from Bear Gulch Reservoir Dam Failure</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure HYD-1: In order to reduce impacts related to dam failure inundation, future new developments shall implement the following measures by the dam owner in compliance with SB 92 (2017): Dam failure prevention measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Dam Failure Inundation Maps to the CA Department of Water Resources in accordance with the DWR schedule. 	<p>Currently and every 10 years thereafter</p>	<p>California Water Service Company (Dam owner)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit an Emergency Action Plan to the California Office of Emergency Services subsequent to submittal of the Dam Failure Inundation Maps. • Submit updated plans and maps every 10 years. • Coordinate the Emergency Action Plans with the affected local governments. 		
NOISE			
Environmental Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone	Responsible Monitoring Party
Expose people in project area to excessive noise levels	<p>In order to reduce noise impacts, future new developments shall implement the following measure:</p> <p>Recognizing that aircraft and any associated issues thereto are federally regulated, the Town will work with nearby communities and other interested agencies to bring about a reduction of noise levels by private, military, public and commercial airplanes and helicopters.</p>	Prior to issuance of a building permit.	Town of Atherton