

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT



*View from Radke Martinez Regional Shoreline*

### 3.1 | INTRODUCTION

This element combines two State required general plan elements: Open Space (Government Code Section 65302 (e)), and Conservation (Government Code Section 65302 (d)).

Martinez is enhanced by its abundance of open space: the seasonally green and gold hills along the western border, the picturesque wetlands adjacent to the Carquinez Strait, and Alhambra Creek and its tributaries meandering through the valley. These and many other natural features and resources have historically played an important role in shaping the form and growth of Martinez and have come to provide many of the attractive characteristics of the area. The preservation of open space throughout the City is important not only because of its aesthetic and ecological value, but also for the role it plays in public safety and recreation.

This Open Space & Conservation Element is legally required by the State due to the ever increasing value and rarity of open space and other natural resources, especially in highly developed regions like the Bay Area. The intent of this Element is to guide future planning and development in a manner that preserves the community's open space and natural resources, and encourages resource- and energy-conscious development.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT



*Kite at Radke Martinez Shoreline (Source: Kevin Murray)*

Conservation does not preclude growth; rather, it calls for more efficient use of resources and an understanding of the interrelatedness of natural and manmade systems. Typically, conservation is thought of as preserving natural lands, but it also includes other important concerns such as water, energy, and resource use. While there are numerous ways to address these issues, one of the easiest ways to begin is by addressing tangible local conservation concerns. In the case of Martinez, this means preserving open space, our primary natural resource, given its significant role in bolstering the City’s identity and vitality. In addition to open space, this Element also addresses the following topics as they relate to local circumstances: agriculture and mineral resources; biological resources; watersheds; water quality; air quality; and energy and resource use.

The Open Space & Conservation Element includes the following sections:

- 3.2 Regulatory Framework:** This section describes the types of open space in Martinez; the open space inventory in Appendix OSC-A and Figure 3-1; and the Native American Tribal Consultation process for this General Plan.
- 3.3 Open Space Setting:** This section describes Martinez’s existing open space and recent reductions that have occurred.
- 3.4 Agriculture, Soils, and Mineral Resource Conservation:** This section describes Martinez’s agricultural lands and soils and mineral resources.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

- 3.5 Biological Resource Conservation:** This section discusses the habitat types that support wildlife in Martinez.
- 3.6 Energy Conservation:** This section describes opportunities for energy conservation and resource use in buildings and transportation.
- 3.7 Water and Watershed Resource Conservation:** This section describes Martinez’s groundwater resources and watersheds.
- 3.8 Flood Hazard Management:** This section discusses the flooding and the Alhambra Creek Watershed Management Plan.
- 3.9 Watershed Quality Conservation:** This section discusses point- and non-point source pollution and their effects on water quality.
- 3.10 Alhambra Creek Enhancement Program:** This section discusses the Alhambra Creek Enhancement Program adopted by City Council in 1992.
- 3.11 Effects of Development on Public Land Resources:** This section briefly discusses how the development described in the Land Use Element can affect natural resources and public lands.
- 3.12 Fisheries:** This section describes the history of fishing in Martinez. It also describes how the General Plan’s policies will improve water quality for the Carquinez Strait and improve the area’s recreational fishing.
- 3.13 Open Space & Conservation Element Goals, Policies, and Measures:** This section lists the goals, policies, and implementation measures for the Land Use Element.

### 3.2 | REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Government Code Section 65302(d) requires a general plan to include a conservation element for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources including water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources. The conservation element must also consider the effect of development within the jurisdiction, as described in the land use element, on natural resources located on public lands. The conservation element is also required to identify rivers, creeks, streams, flood corridors, riparian habitats, and land that may accommodate floodwater for purposes of groundwater recharge and stormwater management. Pursuant to Government



# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Code Sections 65302(e) and 65560, a general plan is also required to include an open space element.



*(Source: Kevin Murray)*

### **Types of Open Space**

Open space is defined as any parcel or area of land or body of water that is essentially unimproved and undeveloped including parks, ridges, and slopes, creeks, unique natural areas, wildlife habitats, and areas suitable for nature study. State planning law (Government Code

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Section 65560) provides the requirements for the preservation of open space, including the following:

- **Open Space for the Preservation of Natural Resources.** This includes, but is not limited to: areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life and habitat; areas required for ecologic and other scientific study purposes; rivers, streams, bays and estuaries; and coastal beaches, lakeshores, banks of rivers and streams, and watershed lands.
- **Open Space for the Use of Managed Production of Resources.** This includes, but is not limited to: forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands and areas of economic importance for the production of food or fiber; areas required for recharge of groundwater basins; bays, estuaries, marshes, rivers and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries; and areas containing major mineral deposits, including those in short supply.
- **Open Space for Outdoor Recreation.** This includes, but is not limited to areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lakeshores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors.
- **Open Space for Public Health and Safety.** This includes, but not limited to: areas that require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions. This type of open space might include earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, floodplains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of water quality and water reservoirs, and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality.
- **Open Space for Tribal Resources.** This includes the protection of places, features, and objects of Native American historical, cultural and sacred importance.

### Open Space Inventory

The open space inventory is a map of any parcel or area of land or water within the City of Martinez's city limits and sphere of influence that is essentially unimproved and devoted to open space use for natural resources, the managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, public health and safety, and tribal resources, as required by California Government Code §65560(b). Open space parcels in the inventory are mapped in [Figure 3-1](#). The map in

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

[Figure 3-1](#) includes parcels which are subject to the Protected Open Space and Parks Overlay (POPO) designation that was created by the Martinez Open Space and Park Protection Initiative (Measure I). Measure I was passed by voters on June 5, 2018. According to the language in Measure I, the purpose of the initiative was to increase protections for open space, park and outdoor recreation land in the City by requiring approval by Martinez voters for any General Plan amendment to change allowable uses or land use designations for such land. The Initiative was also intended to help ensure that those lands and their valued uses are not changed to uses associated with more intensive development without approval by Martinez voters. The full text of Measure I is included as Land Use Element [Appendix LU-A](#) Full Text of Measure I: Martinez Open Space and Park Protection Initiative. On September 18, 2019, the City Council adopted Resolution 115-19 approving a General Plan amendment to clarify Measure I. A copy of Resolution 115-19 is included as Land Use Element [Appendix LU-B](#) Resolution 115-19 Approving a General Plan Amendment to Clarify Measure I. See Land Use Element 2.0, Section 2.5 – Land Use Designations; Section 2.6 – Land Use Map; and Policy LU-P-1.2 for additional information and policies regarding Measure I and the Protected Open Space and Parks Overlay (POPO) land use designation.



*(Source: Kevin Murray)*

### **Native American Tribal Consultation**

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Consultation with the appropriate tribes is essential to both accurately identify those areas needing protection, and to protect the confidentiality and dignity of sensitive resources. Jurisdictions must consult with Native American tribes during an amendment or update to a general plan (Gov. Code § 65352) regarding public land containing any Native American sanctified cemetery, place of worship, religious or ceremonial site, or sacred shrine; and Native American historic, cultural, or sacred sites. Prior to this General Plan’s adoption, letters of consultation were sent to: the Native American Heritage Commission; Ann Marie Sayers, Chairperson, Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan; Rosemary Cambra, Chairperson, Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of SF Bay Area; Irene Zwierlein, Chairperson, Amah Matsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista; Michelle Zimmer, Amah Matsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista; Ramona Garibay, Representative, Trina Marine Ruano Family; Andrew Galvin, The Ohlone Indian Tribe; Linda G. Yamane; Katherine Erolinda Perez; Jakki Kehl, Martinez Historical Society; and the Contra Costa County Historical Society. The consultation letters requested information on sites and tribal concerns. Although responses were received from the Native American Heritage Commission and the Martinez Historical Society, no sacred or cemetery sites were identified. The Native American Heritage Commission recommended consultation with two tribes: Wilton Rancheria (which declined consultation), and the Lisjan Confederated Villages Tribal Council. Consultation with the Lisjan Tribal Council resulted in confirmation of the General Plan polices regarding disturbance of human remains and the addition of two polices to this element and one policy to the Historical, Cultural, and Arts Element.

### 3.3 | OPEN SPACE SETTING

#### Existing Open Space

Martinez is fortunate to have substantial open space resources available to its residents, including over 175 acres of City-owned, leased, or granted parks; approximately 2,200 acres of privately-owned open space within the City limits or sphere of influence, protected by the General Plan’s Parks and Open Space Protection Overlay (POPO) designation; and thousands of additional acres of adjacent regional open space or parks owned and operated by East Bay Regional Parks and U.S. National Park Service (Briones Regional Park, Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline, Radke Martinez Regional Shoreline, Waterbird Regional Preserve, and John Muir National Historic Site).

The value of any given open space is multiplied because its characteristics likely serve many purposes. For example, the Franklin Hills provide habitat for wildlife, absorb and filter runoff, provide recreational opportunities, stabilize sloped topsoil, and are an aesthetic amenity for residents across the City. Redundancy of any given purpose or service is also valuable. This may



# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

simply mean different parts of the City have access to a given amenity, or that function is utilized in different ways. For example, while two distinct open space patches may appear to be the same, for certain wildlife, one may only be suitable for gathering food, while the other only for rearing young. Nuanced systems like these are important to keep in mind when planning.

In addition to habitat and scenic value, open space in Martinez serves agricultural purposes, and provides for public health and safety by supplementing City flood control efforts, reducing the urban heat island effect, removing toxins from our air and water, and more. For these and other reasons it is important for the policies in this Element to guide development in a manner that protects lives and property while preserving the benefits open space provides.



*View from Radke Martinez Regional Shoreline*

### Open Space Reductions

**Waterfront:** Open space in Martinez includes low elevation waterfront areas as well as hill areas. The waterfront open space areas are potentially affected by sea level rise which is mapped and discussed in greater detail in the Public Safety Element. Impacts on use of open space along the waterfront due to sea level rise will be further documented and discussed in a Marina and Waterfront Trust Land Use Plan.



# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Pine Meadows Golf Course Parcel:** Areas in Martinez designated as open space include an approximately 25-acre parcel at the corner of Vine Hill Way and Center Avenue that was formerly the Pine Meadows Golf Course. The golf course ceased operations and the parcel was sold for residential development. This required a rezoning of the property from open space and recreation to low density residential use. Litigation ensued after City Council approval of the rezoning. The settlement agreement designates approximately 9.5 acres as open space and recreation use, and the remaining approximately 15.5 acres as low density residential. The largest portion of the open space of 8.22 acres will become a neighborhood park and has been added to the list of parks in the Parks & Community Facilities Element. The park's addition will create greater public access and use for a portion of the area that was previously restricted to golfers. The reduction in open space for the remaining area rezoned to residential is offset by the potential creation of approximately 60 homes that will be added to the housing supply to meet a portion of the City's state mandated housing production goals. The land use map (Figure 2-4) in the Land Use Element reflects the reduction of open space for this parcel.



*Viano Winery & Vineyards on Morello Avenue*

### 3.4 | AGRICULTURE, SOILS, AND MINERAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

#### Agricultural Lands

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Statewide, soils are monitored for their agricultural value. Martinez has a very small amount of Prime Farmland and a small amount of Unique Farmland within the Planning Area, which is used for viniculture. In addition, the western hills provide a significant amount of space for cattle grazing.

The only area within the City limits with an agricultural land use designation is the western hills area designated as “Alhambra Valley Agricultural Lands (AV-AL)”. This land use designation includes private lands, generally in hilly areas that are used for grazing livestock or dry grain farming. The primary purposes of the AV-AL designation is to preserve and protect lands capable of and generally used for the production of food, fiber and plant materials; and provide opportunities for rural residential single-family homes.

In addition to the Alhambra area there is a vineyard at the eastern portion of the City at Morello Avenue and the Burlington Northern railroad tracks. The Viano Vineyard is primarily designated on the land use map as open space which allows agricultural uses. This portion of the vineyard is outside the City limits but within the City’s sphere of influence. The remaining 4.3-acre portion of the vineyard is within City limits and is designated for low density residential.

The [California Department of Conservation](#), as part of its Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), prepares Farmland Maps used for analyzing impacts on California’s agricultural resources. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status, and the best quality land is called “Prime Farmland”. The other agricultural classifications are “Farmland of Statewide Importance”, “Unique Farmland”, and “Farmland of Local Importance”. [Figure 3-2](#) shows the agricultural lands in the Martinez Planning Area. Per the diagram on the next page, areas of the Viano Vineyard are designated “Unique Farmland” and “Prime Farmland”.

As shown in the diagram, the Viano Vineyard consists of four parcels:

- **Parcel 1** – This parcel is within the City limits. It has a General Plan land use designation of “Residential Low (RL)”. Almost all this parcel is also designated by the State as “Unique Farmland”.
- **Parcel 2** – This parcel is also within the City limits and has a General Plan land use designation of “Residential Low (RL)”. There are no mapped agricultural lands on this parcel.

# 3

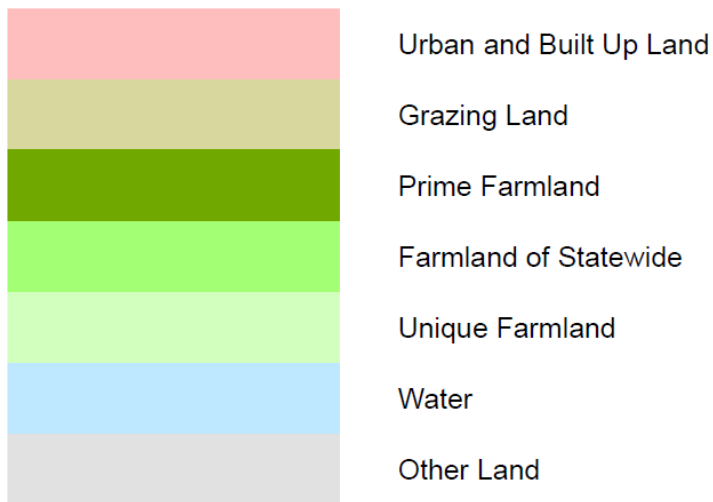
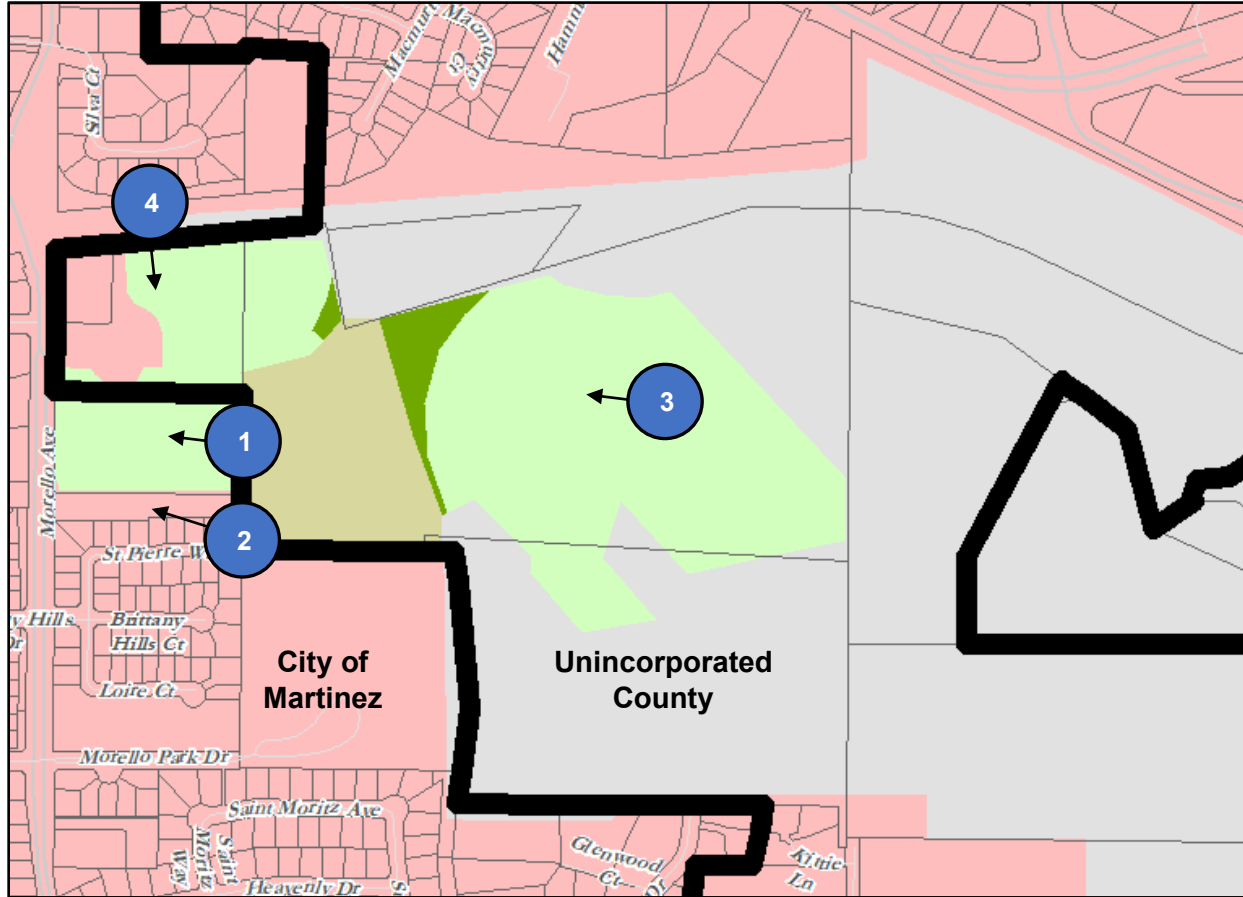
## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

- **Parcel 3** – This parcel is outside the City limits, but within the City’s SOI. It has a General Plan land use designation of “Open Space (OS)”. Portions of this parcel are mapped as “Unique Farmland” and “Prime Farmland”.
- **Parcel 4** – This parcel is also outside the City limits, but within the City’s SOI. It also has a General Plan land use designation of “Open Space (OS)” with a portion of the parcel mapped as “Unique Farmland”.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

### Farmland Mapping for Viano Vineyards Area





# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

### Soils and Mineral Resources

The Martinez Planning Area contains no identified mineral resources of regional or Statewide significance (“MRZ-2 Zones”), as classified by the State Division of Mines and Geology. The Planning Area does contain MRZ-1 Zones (areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral resources are present, or of little likelihood), an MRZ-3 Zone (an area containing mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated from the available data), and MRZ-4 Zones (areas where available information is inadequate for assignment to any other MRZ Zone).

### 3.5 | BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

As part of the San Joaquin Delta, Martinez is home to several distinct habitat types that support a diverse assortment of wildlife. Before Western settlement, Martinez was predominantly covered by oak savannah and grassland habitats, both which can still be experienced in the western hills and smaller pockets throughout the City. Oak savannahs typically exist on northern and eastern slopes and can be identified by the presence of grasses and scattered oak trees. Grasslands, consisting of seasonal grasses, shrubs, and flowers, occupy southern and western slopes. Over 100 bird species, from hawks to turkeys, have been identified in these areas, as well as coyotes, snakes, deer, a mountain lion, and many others.

Salt marsh and riparian habitats are two other primary environments found within Martinez. Riparian habitats are associated with hydrophilic (water-loving) vegetation and intermittent or continually running water; they can be found along the Alhambra Creek corridor and its tributaries. Beavers, minks, fish and herons depend on this habitat. Salt marshes, such as those along the Carquinez Strait, are defined by tidal action and salty or brackish water, and are dominated by halophytic (salt-tolerant) herbaceous plants. Shorebirds, water birds, and small mammals are commonly found in this area.

Special status species are those plants and animals included on any federal, state, or other authority list indicating that the species is threatened or endangered, or is a candidate to be classified as such. Species are placed on these lists due to their acknowledged rarity or vulnerability as a result of various causes of habitat loss or population decline. There are 11 listed plant species and 14 listed animal species that are known or are believed to reside within one mile of the Martinez Planning Area, or use it as part of their territory. [Figure 3-3](#) sets forth the various woodland, grassland, riparian and wetland areas that make up these various habitats.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

### 3.6 | ENERGY CONSERVATION AND RESOURCE USE

We rely on energy and all sorts of natural resources in our daily lives. From the global population boom to climate change, there is a need to make efficient use of the resources on which we depend. Since the Industrial Revolution, most of our energy has come from non-renewable sources and as we live in an ever more “plugged-in” world. It is important that we ensure the continuous availability of affordable and reliable energy. While Martinez’s role may not directly contribute to innovative, sustainable technologies, it can promote the use of such technologies as they become available. In Martinez it is particularly relevant to address the issues of energy, water, and raw materials use as they relate to buildings and transportation.

#### **Buildings**

In the United States, buildings account for approximately 72% of electricity consumption, 39% of total energy use, 83% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, 40% of raw materials use, and 30% of waste (by weight). By building more sustainably, the degree of these impacts is drastically reduced. Better insulation reduces the need for heating and cooling. Mixed-use infill development in the downtown preserves open space while also bringing more people downtown. Harnessing solar energy through the use of solar panels is a practical way to generate clean energy on site.

Yards and other forms of landscaping require an incredible amount of water. Employing xeriscaping strategies (landscaping and gardening in ways that reduce or eliminate the need for supplemental water irrigation) is a great alternative to typical planting schemes. Planting native plants is the most straightforward way of doing this, as they are acclimated to the climate and provide the additional benefits of providing natural habitat and a unique and authentic sense of place. Building rating systems and programs such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), developed by the [U.S. Green Building Council](#), address these and other aspects of development by providing both guidelines and standards.

#### **Transportation**

The transportation sector is also extremely taxing on energy in natural resources. In addition to requiring a lot of space, cars contribute to nearly 50% of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) in Martinez, and vehicular infrastructure is expensive to construct and maintain. Development patterns are a huge factor in determining how we move around, and certain patterns encourage less driving. For example, infill construction in mixed use areas can make walking a viable means of transportation for certain activities. Also, electricity saved through energy-efficient buildings allows more of it to be available for the use of electric vehicles. For more information on energy use in Martinez, see the City of Martinez [Climate Action Plan](#).

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

### 3.7 | WATER AND WATERSHED RESOURCE CONSERVATION

#### Groundwater

The City currently has no active groundwater well sources. All of the City's raw water supply is from surface water provided by the [Contra Costa Water District's](#) Contra Costa Canal. The City has no major groundwater production facilities for water supply, and there are no major groundwater basins underlying the City. The nearest significant groundwater basin is the Ygnacio Valley groundwater basin (Basin 2-6) on the east side of Interstate 680 and Taylor Road.

Subsequent development projects under the General Plan, such as residential, commercial, industrial, and roadway projects would result in new impervious surfaces and could reduce rainwater infiltration and groundwater recharge. The City must evaluate individual projects as they are proposed to ensure that they would not result in a significant interference with recharge. Policies in this element and the Land Use Element contribute to the proper use and recharge of groundwater resources.

#### Watersheds

Watershed management is a necessary component of open space preservation. Defined by ridges and other high points, a watershed is a landform that contains all the land and water features that drain water to a specific geographic feature in the landscape, whether as runoff or through the soil. While the topography and related flora and fauna of a watershed can add to a city's vibrancy, hazards like flooding and landslides can be issues of great concern if development is not compatible with the watershed's natural systems.

The City limits of Martinez include portions of six watersheds. Most of Martinez (including downtown) belongs to the lower third of the Alhambra Creek watershed, which originates in Briones Regional Park. The headwaters and upper watersheds of the Hidden Lakes, Virginia Creek, Vine Hill Creek, and Peyton Creek watersheds originate within Martinez. The Shell-West watershed lies both within the City limits and on PBF property in the County and is the only watershed whose effluent receives treatment. Additional discussion of watersheds and policies are set forth in the Public Safety Element.

Discussion of water development, supplies, demand, and coordination with County and other regional water agencies is a requirement of Government Code Section 65352.5. This discussion and related policies are set forth in the utilities section of the Circulation Element. Additional

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

discussion and policies regarding waterways, riparian habitat, floodwater management, and related policies, are found in the Public Safety Element.

### 3.8 | FLOOD HAZARD MANAGEMENT

Flooding is an ongoing challenge in Martinez. The relatively high flood risk in Downtown and elsewhere negatively affects property values and economic vitality. In response to flooding in 1997, a group of dedicated and concerned citizens, representing a wide variety of stakeholders, developed the Alhambra Creek Watershed Management Plan. The intent was to improve the creek channel to provide 100-year flood protection from Marina Vista to the Railroad Bridge as part of the Intermodal Transit Station improvement. In 1998, the City Council identified four projects to alleviate flooding. They include the following:

- Restoration of the Marsh area;
- Upgrade of the Union Pacific Railroad Bridge to 100-year flood level of protection;
- Enhancement of the Alhambra Creek channel from Marina Vista to Green Street; and
- Maintenance and cleaning of the creek upstream of Green Street.

Aspects of the Alhambra Creek Watershed Management Plan were largely implemented between 1997 and 2001 as part of flood control and landscape improvement projects and resulted in the daylighting of Alhambra Creek at the plaza south of Main Street. Improvements to Alhambra Creek have reduced the frequency of flood related events from four to one event every 10 years. Additional discussion and policies regarding flooding and hydraulic force are found in the Public Safety Element.

**Lower Alhambra Creek Watershed Management Plan:** In March 2022, the City Council adopted the [Lower Alhambra Creek Watershed Management Plan \(LACWMP\)](#) with [Appendices A-D](#). The plan was developed by the City, with assistance from the [Alhambra Watershed Council](#), to guide future maintenance, management, and enhancement of Alhambra Creek. The planning effort involved representatives of the Alhambra Watershed Council, [Friends of Alhambra Creek](#), the [California Native Plant Society](#), other community members and organizations, representatives of the City engineering and planning departments, [California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#), and the [San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board \(RWQCB\)](#). The plan was prepared in order to meet a regulatory requirement of the RWQCB to produce a community-based plan which would:

- Guide future flood management measures;
- Streamline future maintenance activities and permitting;



# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

- Provide a transparent plan for both maintaining and enhancing the creek to prevent unintended conflicts amongst community groups planting the creek and City maintenance activities; and
- provide community-based oversight for wildlife management, including beaver management.

The plan formalizes on-the-ground technical protocols to guide creek maintenance, management, and enhancement. The plan also provides a process for coordination among the Alhambra Watershed Council, City representatives, and representatives of state agencies with oversight over creek resources and water quality on all future lower watershed management and habitat protection activities. The plan assigns the Alhambra Watershed Council, whose membership is open to all interested community members, to collaboratively coordinate and direct maintenance and enhancement projects, including management of beaver and other wildlife and their associated habitats. Although the plan focuses on the watershed below Green Street, it is the appropriate approach for also addressing upstream flooding, sediment production, and other watershed management issues. The RWQCB has directed the City to collaborate periodically with the Alhambra Watershed Council to review the success of the plan and plan outcomes. The Alhambra Watershed Council is to review the plan at least once every three years to assess watershed conditions, maintenance, management, and enhancement activities and needs, and then recommend plan revisions to the City based on these assessments. The RWQCB also encouraged the City to initiate watershed and habitat educational activities.

### 3.9 | WATER QUALITY CONSERVATION

The [San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission \(BCDC\)](#), established to both protect and direct development of the Bay and its shoreline, recognizes that the Bay is a single body of water, in which activities or conditions affecting one part may also affect other parts. Pollutants affect both surface and ground water and compromise the quality of our drinking water, health, and the environment.

Monitoring and regulating point source pollution, such as effluent from a refinery or municipal sewage discharges, is relatively straightforward. The Clean Water Act, adopted in 1972, has been critical and very effective in reducing the impacts of point source pollution. Now, non-point source pollutants pose the greatest threat to our water supply. Non-point sources include polluted urban runoff from streets and parking lots, erosion from construction sites, pollutants in freshwater inflow, leaching of pollutants from toxic waste sites and dumps of all kinds into the water supply, fertilizers and other agricultural runoff, direct spills of pollutants into the San Francisco Bay waters, dredging, and vessel waste discharges.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Non-source pollutants are pervasive and abundant. They are particularly dangerous because people are generally unaware of the damage they can cause or think that their own use of these pollutants is inconsequential. Small amounts of pollutants distributed throughout a watershed can be extremely harmful once they are all flushed to the same area, like Alhambra Creek. Further, not everyone is aware of what non-source pollutants are or how they relate to water quality.

The nutrients from one pound of leaf clippings are enough to support the growth of 300 pounds of algae. Algae blocks sunlight, killing aqueous plants. Once enough plants die, not enough oxygen is produced to support animal life in the water body. Another frequently overlooked condition is the effect of relatively warm urban runoff (especially from asphalt), flowing into creeks and other bodies of water. Fish are particularly sensitive to water temperature and runoff from a storm may raise the water temperature enough (even as little as 3 degrees) to devastate an entire population.

Making small changes throughout the watershed is the most effective way to address this type of pollution. These changes include reducing the prevalence of pollutants, decreasing the amount of impermeable surfaces, employing best management practices for watershed management, and incorporating toxic-remedial plants throughout the watershed, but especially along impermeable surfaces and the creeks, Carquinez Strait, and other bodies of water.

### 3.10 | ALHAMBRA CREEK ENHANCEMENT

The Alhambra Creek Enhancement Program was adopted by the City Council in 1992. The Program is a vision for Alhambra Creek in which trail, habitat enhancement, and bank stabilization proposals have been designed to complement each other. A long-term goal of the program is to provide a continuous trail system that connects the neighborhoods with Downtown, schools, parks and with the regional recreational trail network. The program was designed to encourage people to walk or bicycle in safety to Downtown, with opportunities to stop and enjoy the restored natural setting. Educational exhibits would be available to describe the natural processes of the creek, its historic importance, and the process of habitat restoration and bank stabilization. The improved habitat would bring a rich biological diversity into the center of Martinez. Stabilization treatments for the channel, its banks, and the adjacent properties would work in concert with habitat restoration and would accommodate trail construction. The Alhambra Creek Enhancement Program has the following objectives:

- Create a greenway corridor along Alhambra Creek which balances the community desires for public access, natural area restoration, wildlife habitat value enhancement, flood protection, and bank stabilization;

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

- Create an access and enhancement plan which maintains the privacy and security of creekside properties and residents and the safety of those using the creek;
- Improve the habitat values for wildlife in the riparian corridor and for fish in the creek;
- Create an access and enhancement plan that maintains or improves, where possible, the existing level of flood protection along the creek;
- To the extent consistent with wildlife habitat, flood protection, and public safety, create a safe route for pedestrians and bicyclists along the greenway corridor linking the neighborhoods, existing trails, public open spaces, and the downtown commercial core of the City of Martinez;
- Create public, creek-related educational options throughout the greenway corridor; and
- Enhance the economic health of the downtown area through the creek enhancement process.

### 3.11 | EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT ON PUBLIC LAND RESOURCES

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65302(d) the conservation of natural resources must take into account the effect of development described in the Land Use Element on natural resources and public lands. Public lands include publicly owned open space, parks, facilities, and infrastructure. Many of the resources and conservation policies described in the Section 3.13 of this Element have an effect on public lands. The Land Use Element and 2015-2023 [Housing Element](#) encourage development in the Downtown area adjacent to the public waterfront open space and recreation area. The effect of this land use policy will be a greater use of natural resources in the waterfront area as the Downtown population increases. Future planning for the waterfront area, including the preparation of the [Marina and Waterfront Trust Land Use Plan](#) for the Marina area will consider natural resource conservation and utilization. When the Housing Element is updated, it will also examine the effect on natural resource use and conservation if increased residential densities in the Downtown are proposed to meet State housing production goals.

### 3.12 | FISHERIES

Fisheries are an important component of California's economy, and their careful management ensures their viability into the future. This section provides information about the Martinez

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

fishery and the location of policies to protect the fishery that are found in other general plan elements and related plans.

The Martinez Shoreline was once a fishing village starting in the in the 1870's. A portion of the Italian population who migrated to Martinez were fishermen who caught salmon from the Martinez Shoreline and the Carquinez Strait. During 1882, Martinez was the site of two of the twelve fishing canneries in the bay area and about 2,500 fishermen were working the Carquinez Straits. In 1950 state regulation ended commercial fisheries in the immediate area.

Fishing continues in Martinez for recreational fishing only. The main fish that are caught in the area are striped bass and white sturgeon and both are generally caught in the Strait from both recreational boats and the Martinez fishing pier. The presence of Bullheads (staghorn sculpin) increases in mid-summer, while in late summer to fall the lower flows of the rivers feeding the Strait increases salt water which in turn increases the presence of saltwater perch.

General Plan policies that help improve water quality for the Carquinez Strait will support the area's recreational fishery. Although the mix of fresh and saltwater constantly changes with variations in the volume of fresh river water feeding the Strait, good water quality that supports the recreational fishery is to a major degree a function of the upstream agricultural and nearby industrial operations that may contribute pollution and degradation of water quality. The operation of these facilities is outside the City's direct regulatory control. There are, however, local city land uses and waterways that connect to the Strait that should be managed to maintain or improve the health of the waters and fishery. Section 3.13 of this Open Space & Conservation Element contains policies regarding water resources flood management and water quality. The utilities section of the Circulation Element contains information and polices regarding sanitary wastewater treatment, recycling, litter, and solid waste disposal which can affect water quality through control of pollution sources. The Land Use Element contains policies regarding protection of waterways when approving new development including adding requirements to the Zoning Ordinance and project conditions of approval for waterway protection plans. The Land Use Element also includes polices regarding the support of riparian habitat and the enhancement of the Marina and fishing pier.

In addition to General Plan polices there is also information and implementation measures in the City's [Climate Action Plan](#) regarding sea level rise and GHG reduction which may have a positive effect on the waters of Carquinez Strait. Similarly, the City's [Water Management Plan](#) addresses water quality measures. The new [Marina and Waterfront Trust Land Use Plan](#) will be developed as a requirement of the City receiving control over several waterfront area parcels in trust from the State Lands Commission. The plan will include policies and implementation measures to address waterfront land uses and measures to ensure preservation of riparian, tidal and wetland habitat in the area.



# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT



*Kites at Radke Martinez Regional Shoreline (Source: Kevin Murray)*

### 3.13 | OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT GOALS, POLICIES, AND MEASURES

**GOAL OSC-G-1: Maintain and enhance the integrity of Martinez’s visual and natural environment and preservation of habitat.**

**Policy OSC-P-1.1:** Where feasible and appropriate, preserve visually significant skyline vegetation, particularly major woodlands and ridgelines.

**Measure OSC-I-1.1a:** Consider the establishment of standards in the Zoning Ordinance and adopted design guidelines to minimize visual impact to ridgelines from potential development.

**Measure OSC-I-1.1b:** Through the subdivision and design review entitlement processes, discourage construction and the creation of lots on or near ridgelines. Where no alternative construction site is feasible, ensure that building forms and tree canopies reduce the visual impact of new construction from lower vantage points.

**Policy OSC-P-1.2:** Explore opportunities for maintaining and enhancing major scenic routes, including the official designation of scenic routes.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Policy OSC-P-1.3:** Encourage and support development of large-scale landscaping areas between adjacent parcels to create an overall sense of continuity and buffer when possible.

**Policy OSC-P-1.4:** Protect and enhance vegetation along the drainage channels of riparian zones. A riparian zone refers to the land area that encompasses the river channel and its current or potential floodplain.

**Measure OSC-I-1.4a:** As a condition of approval for appropriately located development, require restoration and enhancement of adjacent riparian corridors.

**Measure OSC-I-1.4b:** Collaborate with responsible agencies to plan and implement an integrated management plan for the long-term conservation and restoration of riparian and wetland habitats.

**Policy OSC-P-1.5:** Support open space acquisition efforts by the East Bay Regional Parks District, the John Muir Land Trust, and other organizations.

Measure OSC-P-1.5a: Consult with culturally affiliated Native American Tribes prior to amending the General Plan and adopting or amending specific plans, and when a tribal cultural site is to be placed in permanent open space, consistent with State law.

Measure OSC-P-1.5b: Consult with culturally affiliated tribes prior to designating open space in order to protect the identity of any cultural places that exist on the proposed open space, and develop a management plan for any such cultural places.

**Policy OSC-P-1.6:** Preserve the visual quality of ridgelines by limiting or prohibiting development on or near ridgelines.

**Policy OSC-P-1.7:** Continue to coordinate with residents, developers, East Bay Regional Park District, and other groups to provide visual continuity between natural vegetation and developed areas using landscaping, planting street trees, and other “natural” buffers along natural areas.

**Policy OSC-P-1.8:** Ensure that development proposals include riparian corridor preservation, protection, and restoration.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Policy OSC-P-1.9:** Encourage shade structures, trees, high-albedo “cool” roofs, vegetated “green” roofs, and specialized paving materials in the downtown and other highly paved and highly built up areas to reduce the heat island effect.

**Policy OSC-P-1.10:** Encourage future designation of park and open space sites well in advance of an area’s development, even if the sites do not presently lie within the incorporated City boundaries and acquire them as funds become available.

**Measure OSC-I-1.10a:** Support programs to preserve open space lands. Consider a variety of methods to pursue public ownership and/or public use of open space lands, including fee simple purchase, secured options for the future purchase of land, installment contracts, purchase and lease-back, purchase (or acquire) less-than-fee interests, easements, transfer of development rights, rights of entry, land trades, or assistance by a land trust.

**Measure OSC-I-1.10b:** Apply for federal grants to aid in open space acquisition.

**Measure OSC-I-1.10c:** Support efforts by the East Bay Regional Park District, John Muir Land Trust, and others to acquire lands to protect hillsides and ridgelines as visual resources.

**Policy OSC-P-1.11:** Maintain existing open space areas through implementation of the Protected Open Space and Parks Overlay (POPO) designation as set forth in Section 2.5 of the General Plan Land Use Element.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT



*(Source: Kevin Murray)*

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

### GOAL OSC-G-2: Maintain safe hillside communities.

**Policy OSC-P-2.1:** Encourage the preservation of open space as an attractive means of reducing the risk of natural hazards, including fire hazards as set forth in the Public Safety Element.

**Measure OSC-I-2.1a:** In areas with identified geologic conditions, including but not limited to, unstable soils, landslides, or soil creep, development shall conform to geotechnical report mitigation measures and/or the proposed project or site modified to respond to site-specific hazards and conditions, typically requiring the placement of hazard areas within parcels to be designated as open space.

**Measure OSC-I-2.1b:** Follow fire mitigation policies in or adjacent to fire hazard open space areas set forth in the Public Safety Element.

**Policy OSC-P-2.2:** Discourage the large-scale alteration of the topography to accommodate incompatible development patterns, and require planning and engineering review of soils and hydrology reports to prevent severe erosion and hydrologic hazards.

**Policy OSC-P-2.3:** Encourage grading alterations which do not induce or accelerate natural channel degradation, sheet erosion, gully, and other forms of erosion, through adoption of conditions of approval as part of the development process.

### GOAL OSC-G-3: Preserve productive agricultural lands.

**Policy OSC-P-3.1:** Encourage the preservation of productive agricultural lands by establishing programs which secure permanent agricultural use on lands so designated in the City and/or Contra Costa County General Plan.

**Measure OSC-I-3.1a:** Through the subdivision entitlement process, encourage consolidated development, with appropriate land use buffers of parks, open space, and trails, for proposed major subdivisions adjacent to agricultural lands.

**Policy OSC-P-3.2:** Foster the fiscal viability of existing viticulture operations by continuing to accommodate small-scale commercial winery and wine growing operations.



# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Policy OSC-P-3.3:** Minimize impacts of development on agricultural uses by requiring new development to provide appropriate buffers of open areas and/or landscaping between the new urban uses and the existing agricultural uses.

**Policy OSC-P-3.4:** Reduce the potential for conflicts between existing agricultural uses and new urban development by requiring homebuyer notification of agricultural operations on nearby sites.

**Policy OSC-P-3.5:** Encourage grazing for watershed and fire protection, as well as a tool for land management, weed control, and native grass restoration.

**Measure OSC-I-3.5a:** Amend the zoning ordinance to establish a setback standard for non-agricultural structures adjacent to cultivated agriculture.

**Measure OSC-I-3.5b:** Consider adoption of a Right to Farm Ordinance, which protects ranchers and farmers within a historically agricultural district from nuisance complaints and unreasonable restrictions and regulations on farm structures or farming practices.

**Policy OSC-P-3.6:** Require adequate setbacks for any non-agricultural structures adjacent to cultivated agriculture through the subdivision and site development entitlement process.

### **GOAL OSC-G-4: Protect and maintain the quality of biological resources.**

**Policy OSC-P-4.1:** Preserve and protect special status plant and animal species in a manner consistent with the state and federal endangered species acts, including protection of their habitat.

**Measure OSC-I-4.1a:** Prior to development within identified sensitive habitat areas, the area shall be surveyed for special status plant and/or animal species. If any special status plant or animal species are found in areas proposed for development, the appropriate resource agencies shall be contacted, and species-specific management strategies established to ensure the protection of the particular species.

**Measure OSC-I-4.1.b:** Participate with regional, state, and federal agencies and organizations to establish and preserve open space that provides habitat for locally present wildlife.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Measure OSC-P-4.1c:** Revise the design review guidelines and landscape ordinance to encourage the use of native plants in urban landscaping as a way to provide additional natural habitat for native wildlife.

**Policy OSC-P-4.2:** Preserve woodlands, marshes, and sensitive tree species such as oaks and black walnuts, and remove invasive exotics whenever possible or feasible.

**Policy OSC-P-4.3:** Development in sensitive habitat areas should be avoided or mitigated to the maximum extent possible.



*Radke Martinez Shoreline (Source: Kevin Murray)*

### GOAL OSC-G-6: Reduce energy, water, and resource consumption.

**Policy OSC-P-6.1:** Reduce energy, water, and resource consumption wherever possible as they pertain to buildings and construction.

**Measure OSC-I-6.1a:** Identify opportunities for creating energy conservation and efficiency programs for application in all City facilities, schools, and local businesses.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Measure OSC-I-6.1b:** Institute a water conservation program for all City facilities to include such features as installation of waterless urinals and low flow toilets.

**Measure OSC-I-6.1c:** Continue to implement zoning guidelines for landscaping to absorb pollutants.

**Measure OSC-I-6.1d:** Continue to incorporate measures to reduce runoff and control stormwater.

**Measure OSC-I-6.1e:** Continue to support the building material recycling program through education of the public, contractors, and developers.

**Measure OSC-I-6.1f:** Continue to support programs that reduce waste, improve recycling rates, divert organic waste from the landfill, and recover edible food as set forth in the Climate Action Plan

**Policy OSC-P-6.2:** Promote and encourage compliance with sustainable building standards.

**Policy OSC-P-6.3:** Strongly encourage landscaping that promotes more efficient use of water and energy including an evaluation of xeriscaping (no/low water use landscaping plants), native plants in landscaping, drip irrigation, and irrigation controls.

**Policy OSC-P-6.4:** Encourage existing buildings and new construction to incorporate renewable energy and energy- and water-efficient technologies.

**Policy OSC-P-6.5:** Cooperate with PG&E, Contra Costa County, State of California and all relevant public and private organizations efforts to retrofit existing homes with energy saving devices.

**Policy OSC-P-6.6:** Support the use of solar power by streamlining the permitting process.

**Policy OSC-P-6.7:** Encourage use of recycled-content construction materials.

**Policy OSC-P-6.8:** Encourage rehabilitation and reuse of buildings whenever appropriate and feasible as an alternative to new construction.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Policy OSC-P-6.9:** Continue supporting recycling and composting programs.

**Policy OSC-P-6.10:** Continue to support the use of electric and other alternative fuel-sourced vehicles.

**Policy OSC-P-6.11:** Promote land use patterns which minimize energy consumption.

**GOAL OSC-G-7: Reduce energy use to limit air pollution and likelihood of power outages.**

**Policy OSC-P-7.1:** Continue to support the efforts of MCE Clean Energy and Pacific Gas and Electric in identifying projected energy demands for residential, commercial, industrial, and other land uses and promote alternative energy such as the use of solar.

**Measure OSC-I-7.1a:** Consider adoption of an ordinance implementing “green” building practices that include the use of solar power.

**Measure OSC-I-7.1b:** Adopt an ordinance that limits or prohibits the introduction of new wood burning stoves in new or remodeled residential buildings.

**Policy OSC-P-7.2:** Support incentive programs that promote reduction of energy use.

**GOAL OS-G-8: Protect water resource systems to maintain the natural habitat within the watershed and enhance the biological value of the City.**

**Policy OSC-P-8.1:** Water resources such as the Alhambra Creek Watershed, wetlands, flood plains, recharge zones, riparian areas, open space and native or natural habitat should be preserved.

**Measure OSC-I-8.1a:** Require proposed projects located near watersheds or riparian areas to protect the natural resource consistent with flood management and recharge objectives.

**Measure OSC-I-8.1b:** Consider completion and adoption of an Alhambra Creek Watershed Management Plan.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**GOAL OSC-G-9: Protect high quality water from pollutants and protect the resource.**

**Policy OSC-P-9.1:** Protect and improve the quality of water in all of Martinez’s watersheds, creeks, and water bodies.

**Measure OSC-I-9.1a:** Review all projects in watersheds to limit runoff and preserve water quality by requiring appropriate mitigation measures as part of development.

**Measure OSC-I-9.1b:** Manage storage of hazardous materials, especially underground tanks that may leak into existing waterways, to prevent pollution.

**Measure OSC-I-9.1c:** Consider the establishment of buffers between development and water resources to prevent contamination of the water from urban pollutants.

**Policy OSC-P-9.2:** Enforce federal, state and local mandates regarding water quality such as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

**Measure OSC-I-9.2a:** Support the Contra Costa Clean Water Program and continue to implement a stormwater clean water program to reduce pollutants according to NPDES mandates.

**Measure OSC-I-9.2b:** Require new development to incorporate treatment measures, site design techniques, and source controls to address stormwater runoff pollutant discharges and prevent increase in runoff rates in development projects.

**Measure OSC-I-9.2c:** Reduce impervious surface areas associated with projects and encourage design that reduces stormwater flow and volume.

**Measure OSC-I-9.2d:** Enforce development guidelines that protect areas susceptible to erosion or other factors that would pose significant impacts to local waterways.

**Measure OSC-I-9.2e:** Encourage the use of pest-resistant, native species and drought-tolerant landscape design and features, and promote the use of design that incorporates stormwater detention and retention in development projects.

**Measure OSC-I-9.2f:** Support the use of vegetated “green” roofs to reduce runoff flow rates and volume, absorb and filter pollutants, supply green habitat and nesting areas, and help lower urban heat island effect.



# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Measure OSC-I-9.2.g:** Continue to strengthen the City’s Water Conservation in Landscape Ordinance, and update the ordinance when necessary.

**Measure OSC-I-9.2h:** When appropriate, utilize the Bay-Friendly Landscape Guidelines and native species in order to reduce water consumption.

**Measure OSC-I-9.2i:** Support the efforts of Contra Costa County Sanitation District with respect to their reclaimed water management project.

**Measure OSC-I-9.2j:** Promote reclamation and reuse of wastewater for irrigation and to recharge aquifers.

### **GOAL OSC-G-10: Reduce flood hazards while enhancing the creekside environment.**

**Policy OSC-P-10.1:** Support measures that would decrease the likelihood of flooding and/or reduce the amount of damage caused by flooding.

**Measure OSC-10.1a:** Continue to enforce flood management control standards when development is proposed within flood basins or watercourses.

**Policy OSC-P-10.2:** Regulate overgrazing, clearing, burning, and other activities which could reduce vegetation cover within the Alhambra Creek Drainage Basin. Unless absolutely necessary, prohibit the construction of impermeable surfaces over permeable soil and geologic areas and the removal of permeable soils by extensive grading and scraping practices.

**Policy OSC-P-10.3:** All other waterways and their banks should be protected from encroachment and degradation and restored or enhanced visually through appropriate landscaping where deemed necessary. Integration of these into park or trail systems and other common open spaces should be required as a condition for development of adjoining lands.

**Policy OSC-P-10.4:** In all hilly areas, grading practices for drainage purposes should restore natural patterns of surface water run-off with respect to volume of flow.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Policy OSC-P-10.5:** As funds allow and/or as a condition of approval, sites in the first and second order tributary sub-basins of the Alhambra Creek Drainage Basin should be developed for flood retention purposes and for additional recreation or livestock watering uses where appropriate. Retention dam sites should be chosen with due consideration to soil and geologic conditions related to slide hazard.

**Policy OSC-P-10.6:** Support the revegetation of watercourses and enforce the use of native vegetation, providing the type of vegetation is compatible with the watercourse's maintenance program and does not adversely alter channel capacity.

**Policy OSC-P-10.7:** Where feasible, enhance watersheds and aquifer recharge areas, as funds become available.

### **GOAL OSC-G-11: Preserve and enhance the quality of surface and groundwater resources.**

**Policy OSC-P-11.1:** Grading, filling and construction activity near watercourses shall be conducted in such a manner as to minimize impacts from increased runoff, erosion, sedimentation, biochemical degradation, or thermal pollution.

**Measure OSC-I-11.1a:** Continue to coordinate with Contra Costa County Clean Water Program on implementation of current National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board for the San Francisco Bay Region Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit requirements, including, but not limited to, the C.3 requirements for new development and redevelopment and the use of permeable surfaces.

**Measure OSC-I-11.1b:** Continue to work in collaboration with the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District to develop and enact best management practices for stormwater management.

**Measure OSC-I-11.1c:** Develop and adopt a Green Infrastructure Plan as required by the San Francisco Bay Region Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit and submit the framework and plan to the California Regional Water Quality Control Board for the San Francisco Bay Region by the required deadlines.

**Policies OSC-P-11.2:** Support efforts to phase out the use of long-lived synthetic compounds, such as pesticides and vehicle anti-freeze, and certain naturally occurring

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

substances which do not biodegrade. Encourage efforts to change manufacturing processes to use biodegradable materials, recycle manufactured products, reuse by-products, and use “green” products.

**Policies OSC-P-11.3:** Encourage retailers to stock nontoxic alternatives to hazardous products.

**Policies OSC-P-11.4:** Continue to promote keeping our waterways clean and pollution free by eliminating non-stormwater discharges to storm drains, creeks, and the bay.

**Policies OSC-P-11.5:** Support alternatives to impervious surfaces in new development, reuse and/or public improvement projects to reduce urban runoff into drain systems, creeks and other drainages.

**Measure OSC-I-11.5a:** Development project approvals should include the use of vegetated areas to absorb and filter fertilizers, pesticides, and other runoff pollutants.

**GOAL OSC-G-12: Improve cooperative planning between all agencies within each watershed-wide area.**

**Policy OSC-P-12.1:** Support the formation of an inter-jurisdictional group to consider issues that affect watersheds across jurisdictions.

**Measure OCS-I-12.1a:** Continue to work with other jurisdictions, including through the creation of an inter-jurisdictional group, to coordinate strategies addressing preservation and enhancement of watershed-wide water quality.

**GOAL OSC-G-13: Increase Alhambra Creek’s value as a community asset.**

**Policy OSC-P-13.1:** Promote Alhambra Creek as an integrated greenway.

**Measure OSC-I-13.1a:** Consider the adoption of a tree planting program for streets and other open spaces along the creek in which riparian-related plants are used to enhance and expand the corridor, visually enhance the space, support wildlife and fish habitat restoration, and provide additional shade.

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Measure OCS-I-13.1b:** Continue to implement the Alhambra Creek Enhancement Program as both public CIP projects and through conditions of approval placed on development adjacent to Alhambra Creek.

**Policy OSC-P-13.2:** Limit and control public access in sensitive wildlife areas.

**Policy OSC-P-13.3:** Provide natural and artificial barriers to habitat in high public use areas.

**Policy OSC-P-13.4:** Maintain the privacy and security of creekside properties and residents while also permitting safe public access along portions of the creek. Develop a public access system which is easily monitored for the safety of the users.

**GOAL OSC-G-14: Ensure the preservation of natural resources by determining appropriate land use and compatibility with natural resources, the built environment, and open space.**

**Policy OSC-P-14.1:** The City will, where feasible, protect and preserve open space and remaining natural areas, including, oak/woodland, riparian vegetation, creeks, saltwater and freshwater marsh, native grasslands, wildlife corridors, and sensitive nesting and habitat areas.

**Policy OSC-P-14.2:** Where feasible, all projects shall avoid impacts on wetlands. If not feasible, appropriate mitigation measures shall be implemented consistent with federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations and policies.

**Policy OSC-P-14.3:** Recognize the US Army Corps of Engineers as the designated permitting agency that regulates wetlands.

**Policy OSC-P-14.4:** Provide the public appropriate access to wetlands.

**Measure OCS-I-14.4a:** Continue to work with federal, state and local agencies to promote long term sustainability of natural resources.

**Measure OCS-I-14.4b:** Design public access to avoid or minimize disturbance to wetlands, consistent with the appropriate mitigation standards, with necessary buffer areas and associated wildlife habitat, while facilitating public access and enjoyment of wetlands as

# 3

## OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT

an open space resource. Consider ordinance amendments to require setbacks and/or other appropriate protection measures for wetlands.

**Measure OSC-I-14.4c:** Lands adjacent to riparian areas shall be protected as public or private open space through dedication or easements. Consider ordinance amendments to require setbacks and/or other appropriate protection measures for riparian habitat.

**Measure OCS-I-14.4d:** Condition projects or modify proposals to preserve natural transitions along the edges of habitat areas, requiring that adequate buffers are maintained between development and sensitive habitats, such as riparian corridors, marshlands, and oak woodlands.

**Policy OSC-P-14.5:** When feasible, require full restoration or replanting of vegetation as part of development adjacent to riparian habitat.

**Policy OSC-P-14.6:** Promote the preservation of wildlife corridors and habitat by including buffers and prohibition of development.

**Policy OSC-P-14.7:** Limit development in areas which support special status species.

**GOAL OSC-G-15: Provide a network of trails linking people to open space and recreation opportunities.**

**Policy OSC-P-15.1:** Plan for connectivity between open space through use of trails, open space corridors, and development, through the preparation of a City-wide trails map per the policies of the Parks and Public Facilities Element

**Measure OSC-I-15.1a:** Encourage and coordinate efforts with the EBRPD, CCWD and the Contra Costa County Flood and Water Conservation District for the implementation of trails as shown on the adopted Parks Master Plan. Where applicable, require, as a condition of project approval, installation of trail segments within project boundaries and/or links to adjacent regional trails.