



GENERAL PLAN REFERRAL

November 19, 2020

Case No.: 2020-009859GPR
Block/Lot No.: N/A – unimproved land in Alameda County
Project Sponsor: SF PUC
Applicant: Rosanna Russell – (415) 420-6996
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San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
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Recommended By: 
Rich Hillis, Director of Planning

Recommendation: Finding the project, on balance, is **in conformity** with the General Plan

Project Description

The applicant, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), proposes to sell a recently-purchased 20-acre parcel of unimproved agricultural land in Alameda County to the East Bay Regional Park District (District). The parcel is a non-contiguous piece of the 767-acre Wool Property in SFPUC's Alameda Creek Watershed, purchased in 2019 as part of the of the SFPUC'S Watershed and Environment Improvement Program (WEIP), a strategy to protect natural areas and open space, prevent development and other activities that may degrade water quality, and enable the SFPUC to protect water quality as well as native terrestrial and wildlife species and their habitats in the watershed.

The 20-acre non-contiguous parcel is surrounded by existing East Bay Regional Park District land. The District wishes to add the parcel to its neighboring parkland to preserve it as open space for the public and enhance its existing natural conditions and historical resources. The SFPUC no longer desires to keep the 20-acre parcel in its real estate portfolio and has agreed to sell the parcel to the District.

Environmental Review

The proposed real estate transaction would not be defined as a project under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15378 and 15060(c)(2) because it would not result in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

General Plan Compliance and Basis for Recommendation

As described below, the proposed avigation easement to CCSF is consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 and is, on balance, in conformity with the Objectives and Policies of the General Plan.

Note: General Plan Objectives are shown in **BOLD UPPER CASE** font; Policies are in **Bold** font; staff comments are in *italic* font.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ELEMENT

OBJECTIVE 1

ACHIEVE A PROPER BALANCE AMONG THE CONSERVATION, UTILIZATION, AND DEVELOPMENT OF SAN FRANCISCO'S NATURAL RESOURCES.

Policy 1.2

Improve the quality of natural resources.

The proposed project will support improvement of natural resources that impact San Francisco's water quality in the Alameda Creek Watershed in the long-term, while also enhancing and connecting open space for all San Francisco Bay Area residents on East Bay Regional Park District land in Alameda County.

OBJECTIVE 2

IMPLEMENT BROAD AND EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

Policy 2.1

Coordinate regional and local management of natural resources.

The proposed project demonstrates a commendable coordination of regional and local management of natural resources, with SFPUC and the East Bay Regional Parks District collaborating to help preserve land for watershed protection and better connect open space for public use.

OBJECTIVE 5

ASSURE A PERMANENT AND ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF FRESH WATER TO MEET THE PRESENT AND FUTURE NEEDS OF SAN FRANCISCO.

Policy 5.2

Exercise controls over development to correspond to the capabilities of the water supply and distribution system.

The project will ensure that undeveloped land in Alameda County important to San Francisco's water quality will be preserved and protected forever as open space.

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**OBJECTIVE 2****INCREASE RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE TO MEET THE LONG-TERM NEEDS OF THE CITY AND BAY REGION****Policy 2.1**

Prioritize acquisition of open space in high needs areas.

Policy 2.7

Expand partnerships among open space agencies, transit agencies, private sector and nonprofit institutions to acquire, develop and/or manage existing open spaces.

The SFPUC's purchase of the Wool Property in 2019 supported the City's goal of open space acquisition in an area important to water quality in the Alameda Creek Watershed. The PUC's land sale of a small, non-contiguous piece of the Wool Property to the East Bay Regional Park District for expanded and connected public open space demonstrates the value of regional partnerships and collaborations to both preserve open space for land protection and expand access to open space for the public.

OBJECTIVE 4**PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE BIODIVERSITY, HABITAT VALUE, AND ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY OF OPEN SPACES AND ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN THE DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT OF OUR OPEN SPACE SYSTEM****Policy 4.1**

Preserve, protect and restore local biodiversity.

Policy 4.2

Establish a coordinated management approach for designation and protection of natural areas and watershed lands.

The proposed real estate sale would preserve and protect local biodiversity in the greater regional area. The sale demonstrates that a coordinated management approach for protection of natural areas and watershed lands is effective to ensure both natural resource protection and public open space access.

Planning Code Section 101 Findings

Planning Code Section 101.1 establishes Eight Priority Policies and requires review of discretionary approvals and permits for consistency with said policies. The Project is found to be consistent with the Eight Priority Policies as set forth in Planning Code Section 101.1 for the following reasons:

1. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced;

The proposed land sale by SFPUC is located within the unincorporated County of Alameda, and would not affect existing neighborhood-serving retail uses in San Francisco.

2. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods;

The proposed land sale by SFPUC is located within the unincorporated County of Alameda, and would not affect existing housing and neighborhood character in San Francisco.

3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced;

The proposed land sale by SFPUC is located within the unincorporated County of Alameda, and would not affect San Francisco's supply of affordable housing.

4. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking;

The proposed land sale by SFPUC is located within the unincorporated County of Alameda, and would not affect commuter traffic, MUNI transit service or neighborhood parking in San Francisco.

5. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced;

The proposed land sale by SFPUC is located within the unincorporated County of Alameda, and would not affect the City's industrial and service sectors, or future employment opportunities for residents.

6. That the City achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake;

The proposed land sale by SFPUC would not directly affect the City's preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake. By preserving land important for the City's long term water quality, it helps ensure access to fresh water is available to all residents at all times, including in the immediate aftermath or an earthquake or other natural disaster.

7. That the landmarks and historic buildings be preserved;

The proposed land sale by SFPUC is located within the unincorporated County of Alameda, and would have no effect on the City's Landmarks and historic buildings.

8. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development;

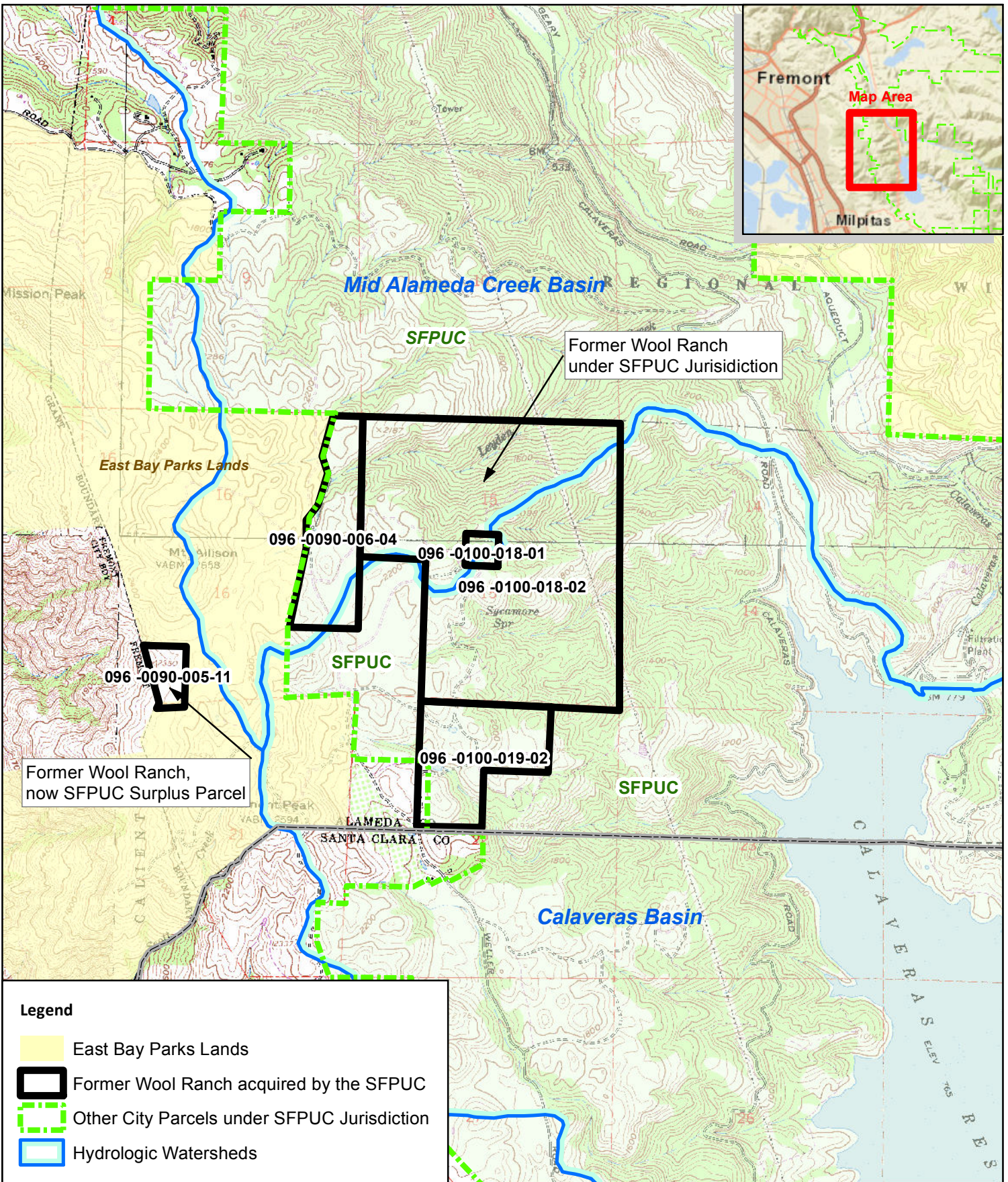
The proposed land sale by SFPUC is located within the unincorporated County of Alameda. While it would protect open space from development in unincorporated Alameda County, it would have no effect on San Francisco's parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas.

Recommendation: Finding the project, on balance, is in conformity with the General Plan

Attachments:

Map of the Project Site, with Wool Property and noncontiguous parcel to be sold shown, with East Bay Regional Park land delineated

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Legend

- East Bay Parks Lands
- Former Wool Ranch acquired by the SFPUC
- Other City Parcels under SFPUC Jurisdiction
- Hydrologic Watersheds



Services of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
 Natural Resources and Lands Management Division



Alameda Watershed

**Wool Ranch
For Sale**